Changing Professional Identities of Foreign Language Lecturers in the Irish Higher Education System

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Abstract

In this study I argue that professional identity is changed to a large extent by the effects of time and space on both individuals and groups. By using Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, capital and field in relation to each other, this small-scale research project into the changing professional identities of German language lecturers in a number of Irish higher education institutions demonstrates how the choices made are influenced by individual and collective history (conceptualised by habitus and capital over time) and the social spaces or institutions within which these agents interact (fields). With the reduction in demand for German over the last decade lecturers have been obliged to refocus on new disciplines and specialisms or, in the case of part-time staff, have had to adapt to moving completely out of the profession. The thesis begins by outlining the background of structural changes that have affected the professional identities of language teachers and academics. It goes on to position the project within a framework provided by Bourdieu's concepts. As an affected member of this professional group, I use the concept of reflexivity to show how an insider's perspective gives insights into power relations within a higher education institution undergoing constant structural change. The fields of European, national and institutional language policies are analysed and this leads on to a critical engagement with the narratives of a group of 13 German lecturers and former lecturers from one institution who have been obliged to cope with challenges within a specific institutional field and with a professional habitus similar to my own. The conclusion highlights the factors that have affected successful and unsuccessful transitions in professional identity, suggesting that the passage of time and the creation of a unified professional space can support the formation of stable individual and collective identities.

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Sociologists cannot be unaware that the specific characteristic of their point of view is to be a point of view on a point of view. They can re-produce the point of view of their object and constitute it as such by resituating it within social space, but can do so only by taking up that very singular (and, in a sense, very privileged) viewpoint, being obliged to place themselves there in order to be able to take (in thought) all the points of view possible. And it is solely to the extent that they can objectify themselves that they are able, even as they remain in the place inexorably assigned to each of us in the social world, to imagine themselves in the place occupied by their objects (who are, at least to a certain degree, an alter ego) and thus to take their point of view, that is, to understand that if they were in their shoes they would doubtless be and think just like them.

[1](Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 625-6)

1

Introduction

I was 32 years old when I got my permanent and pensionable job as a German lecturer in a technological college in Ireland. Having spent five years as a part-time lecturer in a sister college, with all the insecurity of employment and lack of status that this implied, my first thought was joy at attaining the position I had wanted, mixed with relief that I would be paid regularly, reasonably well and all year round. My second thought was: 'Oh no, now I'm going to be stuck here in the same place doing the same job for the next 33 years until I retire!' At last I had reached stability in my professional life and it did not occur to me to contemplate change – how wrong I was.

The first change was that the technological college I had joined did not remain a college for very much longer. After a history as an Irish educational institution that went back almost one hundred years – catering mainly for the disciplines of engineering and the built environment and apprentice training in mechanics and construction – in 1993 the college was amalgamated with a number of others in the geographical area to form the Metropolitan Institute of Technology (MIT).

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[1] Publication dates throughout the thesis refer to the dates of publication in English. In the reference section the publication dates of Bourdieu's work originally published in French are also given in square brackets.

New institutional structures combined with a reform agenda in the Irish higher education sector to bring the regrouping of the colleges into faculties – completed formally in 2001 – and the introduction of quality assurance procedures across all programmes. This was something I viewed positively as offering opportunities to widen my teaching remit from the 'German for engineering' role I had been assigned to other wide-ranging and stimulating areas such as 'German for special purposes' in media, business, tourism or music. I also hoped that these changes would integrate German more equitably into the engineering programmes I was already involved in so that, rather than being viewed as a 'service teacher' whose subject was merely peripheral to the main discipline of engineering, I and my language lecturer colleagues would have an equal input and our subject would carry equal value on the programmes that students were offered.

However, the second change that occurred negated these hopes. German had been introduced onto almost all engineering programmes in my college in the late 1980s, at a time when many engineering graduates were expected to emigrate to find work and many students went abroad during their summer holidays to earn money for their studies and gain some practical experience linked to their discipline. I saw my role as equipping students to take up these opportunities in a German-speaking country, having gained a reasonable knowledge of the language and culture that would await them there. Towards the end of the 1990s, as the Irish economy became more and more successful and students and graduates could find work at home, this function began to seem unnecessary to many, including MIT Engineering Faculty managers and institutional decision-makers and professional bodies across Ireland. Within little more than ten years of taking up my permanent position, German was removed from all MIT engineering programmes without thought for the effects of this decision on the future professional life of German lecturers. All of my part-time colleagues were let go, to find whatever work they could in a contracting market for German teachers, while I was left without a timetable.

In the years since coming to terms with this professional challenge I have gained several new academic qualifications and taught a wide range of modules including European studies, communication, English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Spanish and professional development for engineering students. I have supervised student dissertations and undertaken new administrative duties. MIT's policy of funding further study and giving time allowances to academic staff to pursue these studies has greatly supported me in my endeavours.

Through all these changes the greatest threat was to my professional identity as a German lecturer – and I was not alone. Similar challenges were faced by colleagues in many higher education institutions in Ireland, especially in the institute of technology (IoT) sector where languages were rarely seen as a stand-alone discipline. German could be removed readily from programmes across the sector once student demand fell below what was considered a viable level and, while part-time teachers could easily be dispensed with, permanent staff were put in the same position as me and forced to reinvent themselves professionally if they were to find a role within their institutions. I became curious to find out how colleagues were coping with these changes and how their professional identities were being reshaped under the pressures they and their discipline were undergoing. The EdD programme of the University of Sheffield was the catalyst to allow me to research and analyse the process of change to my own and my colleagues' professional identities and this thesis is the culmination of my analysis.

Threats to the professional identity of language teachers in higher education

While academics across many disciplines have been obliged to cope with widespread changes in the higher education field in recent decades I would like to focus here on the specific challenges faced by teachers of modern languages in higher education institutions. What could be more of a threat to their

professional identity than the discovery that their subject was no longer required and that they would lose their jobs, as has happened to the part-time lecturers I have interviewed for my study, or, in the case of permanent staff, that they could be required to retrain and work in a completely new discipline? But the process of redundancy, of both the person and the subject, is not unique to Ireland. In Australia, for example, the history of language teaching in higher education has followed a somewhat similar trajectory (Martín 2005). The removal of the foreign language requirement for both university entrance and as a component in degrees, followed by a decline in interest in language learning at second level, led in the 1990s to a severe cut in language provision at Australian universities and the amalgamation of languages with other disciplines – fuelled by the market-driven policies popular in the institutions at the time.

A striking example of the upheaval brought about by underlying political and social change is the case of former East German higher education language teachers, as described by Evans (2006a, 2006b). Unlike in western capitalist nations, in the former German Democratic Republic academic work did not enjoy high status and academics were marginalised within the society (Evans 2006b). Nevertheless, the sudden transition brought about by the unification of the state with West Germany in 1990 did not bring an improvement to the sense of professional identity of the language teachers examined by Evans. The subjects taught by many of them, Russian and other languages, were abandoned in their institution in favour of English. Some, therefore, retired or left the profession; some continued as best they could through the institutional changes around them; others retrained or reorientated themselves. The 'backdrop of total insecurity' (Evans 2006b, p. 3) experienced by these lecturers and many others in their society meant that, more than a decade and a half later, they had not all adjusted successfully to their new professional identities.

Change in other societies may be less overwhelming but it is nonetheless present in the professional lives of language teachers in many countries. In the

UK, for example, the challenge to languages comes from a mindset that sees foreign language learning as unnecessary and an interest only of the elite (Willis 2004). The government policy of encouraging language learning at primary level, which is followed by a drop-off in the upper level of secondary schools when it is no longer compulsory, leaves an unbridgeable gap for the continuity of modern language degrees at universities (and consequently in the education of new foreign language teachers). This anti-language policy allows individuals to 'collude in their own exclusion' (ibid, p. 179) from the wider benefits of communication across cultures and between nations and lessens their cultural capital on the international stage in the mistaken belief that English is enough.

Of course, it is not the language of the UK or Ireland that the entire world now wants to learn but the English of the largest economic and military power, the USA. Learning English has become an economic necessity for so many throughout the world who are also native speakers of other languages. If English native speakers remain reluctant to learn foreign languages or fail to gain sufficient levels of proficiency, they lose out in employability to those who can combine speaking fluent English and other languages. Brumfit (2004) argues that this situation will bring about the cultural isolation of English-speaking nations and have political consequences for the future.

The rise of English as a lingua franca of professional communication has created a form of neo-colonialist thinking whereby a type of cultural triumphalism rules. Outside of English-speaking countries the effect of being obliged to use English in academic discourse in order to be published has led to an impoverishment of the professional register of other languages, for example in Sweden (Swales 1997), and has even caused the loss of cultural and scholarly genres. If we recognise the value of diversity in culture and academic discourse, then, Swales maintains, it will become necessary to fight off the 'insidious spread ... of anglophonicity' (p. 381).

The idea of language teaching as a culture in itself has also been the subject of discussion. Becher and Trowler's (2001) conception of disciplines as separate tribes with clearly defined boundaries is one that modern language academics have taken on board. Evans (1990) contends that 'language people', who have come from a traditional humanist education that involved critical analysis of canonical texts, are seen as different by academics from other disciplines as well as by those students who are on programmes that combine languages with other professional disciplines, such as law, business etc. The teaching of languages, Evans argues, is a relatively recent phenomenon in higher education. Its status is low because it is a skill that can also be acquired outside academia and it is undervalued because it does not appear to have content – unlike literary studies, sociology or engineering, for example. It is therefore seen as merely a medium for the content of other disciplines. Recognising the changing needs of society for language teaching that is removed from the traditional university approach, Hedgecock (2002) proposes a form of apprenticeship for novice teachers based on Lave and Wenger's concepts such that 'acquiring a new professional identity must entail appropriating knowledge and behaviour sanctioned by the target community of practice' (p. 303). In fact, many of my respondents, who have worked in Irish IoTs for several decades, will have already acquired such a professional identity – without formal teacher training to take account of the IoT remit to educate students for the needs of employers and professional bodies, they would have had to educate themselves into their role as teachers of languages for specific purposes. The recent institutional changes I describe later in this thesis will show some of them moving in the opposite direction and reverting, at least partially, to the more humanist tradition of their own student experience.

In the UK, the policy of institution-wide language programmes, which brought students together from many disciplines to learn foreign languages in specialist language centres, has not always been successful – because, while language centres report large increases in student numbers across all disciplines, modern

language departments are in decline and staff have been dismissed (Coleman 2004). This phenomenon demonstrates a paradigm shift in university language teaching from the classical liberal tradition based on the translation method to the instrumentalism of teaching communicative competence in order to meet the requirements of potential employers (Quist 2000). Quist suggests that language teaching cannot increase in status while viewed purely pragmatically on the basis of economic needs. Instead, it must combine pragmatism with critical thinking and allow students to develop an awareness of the power relations of the target language and its culture, as well as the motives behind communication itself – thus generating 'a greater understanding of the "self" and an appreciation of the "other"' (p. 138). This viewpoint brings language learning into the realm of identity construction: by crossing the boundaries between different cultural spaces and confronting the 'other' that is the inevitable object of foreign language learning the sociocultural identity of both the teacher and student is formed in the language classroom (Duff and Ichida 1997).

Another aspect to the undervaluing of the merits of language learning in higher education is the confusion that exists between the benefits of language *knowledge* and language *study*. My own experience can attest to the difficulty in persuading non-'language people' of the value of learning languages beyond the (not always achievable) goal of proficiency or fluency. In support of this view, Reagan (2004) suggests that: (1) epistemologically, the metalanguage of grammar teaches students that different languages construct the world differently; (2) there is a socio-political value, especially for English-speakers, in developing an awareness of power and domination, as it is exerted through language and (3) interpersonally, learning a foreign language can make English native speakers more cognisant of differentials in language competence – what it *feels* like not to be the most competent speaker in a foreign language situation, something English speakers are less and less likely to encounter. The European language policy discourse, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5, is, in

my opinion, an attempt to counteract the hegemony of English and of English-speakers in a European and global context.

Specific research into individual language teachers' ability to cope with widescale changes to their professional identity, such as described by Evans (2006a, 2006b) in Germany, does not appear to be available in Irish or UK contexts. My study will, I hope, make a fresh contribution to this area and give a voice to language teachers as they attempt to forge a new professional identity out of the changes they have had to face which are similar but not identical to the challenges experienced in other higher education systems across the world.

International perspectives on changing professional identity

With the exception of Evans's (2006a, 2006b) work in the former East Germany, most of the literature discussed in the previous section was written for or about the English-speaking world. I would now like to turn to the perspective from outside in order to explore whether the issues of change and reform within higher education also concern our international colleagues.

Not surprisingly, change is a factor in many higher education systems (Altbach 1996, 1998). Altbach (1998) points to the erosion of the traditional power of academics in favour of administrators as well as changes in students' expectations from higher education. The overwhelming use of English in international academic exchanges has led to difficulties in publishing research in other languages – as discussed above – but it has also resulted in a new and increasing phenomenon: foreign student exchanges. While this has been encouraged by European Union policy in recent decades, the pull of English has resulted in the flow of students tending towards English-speaking countries, with countries with lesser-spoken languages finding it difficult to attract a balance of students in return. Altbach argues that curriculums will need to change to take account of the needs of foreign students. This will naturally also

affect the professional identity of academics: in the case of my study, a number of respondents have been obliged to become teachers of English to foreign students instead of teachers of foreign languages to mainly Irish students. Even where foreign languages are offered to students as an elective module, it often transpires that the majority of students who take them up are foreign students looking to put together enough credits under the European credit transfer system (ECTS) to satisfy their home institution.

It would seem also that the international collaboration among academics beloved of European policymakers is not always as successful as might be hoped: national quirks in the systems, language barriers and the difficulties in acquiring field knowledge across various national sites cause problems that can at times result in waste of time, effort and money and failure to complete the research (Teichler 1996). This does not negate the value of international research collaboration but its limitations need to be recognised.

Higher education 'reform' has been widespread across many national systems. In Sweden's case (Askling 2001) reform was intended to promote diversity and equality across institutions and do away with the previous binary system. A move towards managerialism has brought change to the working conditions of staff which involved evaluation of academic performance and affected salaries. It has also brought competition for students and differentiation among institutions according to their strengths. Increased institutional autonomy has led to a perception among academics that they have lost individual and collective professional autonomy while, on the other hand, abolition of the old policy of separating staff into research professors or lecturers who teach has been recognised as a support for academic identity overall.

In Germany, a similar sense of ambivalence towards change has been observable (Weiler 2005) but here it is on a more systemic level. Although, as was discussed earlier, huge transformations were required of former East

German language lecturers individually, reunification did not of itself cause any major changes in the higher education system. German universities' attitude to change, Weiler suggests, is due to 'a fundamental tension in modern society about the university's purpose' (p. 177) which means that universities cannot decide whether to embrace or resist change in areas such as: the priority of teaching and research; the autonomy of the individual or the institution; whether to centralise or decentralise decision-making; the relationship with the state and business (p. 179). Although Weiler argues that educational reform in Germany has not yet had the widespread effects seen elsewhere, this is no longer the case. While reunification was not a catalyst, the Bologna Process was – a completely new academic structure has now been adopted which encapsulates the English-language concepts of 'bachelor' and 'master' degree programmes (Stumpf 2007), bringing to an end the centuries-old Humboldtian system in favour of what is perceived as a more cost-effective and efficient Anglo-American model and suggesting that the struggle between the universities and the state and business has been resolved in favour of the latter.

In the southern hemisphere, too, radical changes have been observed. In New Zealand the new situation is the inverse of that observed in Sweden: according to Robertson and Bond (2005), research and teaching, which they see as equally constitutive of academic identity, are being treated increasingly as separate. On the other hand, a study of a teacher education college in South Africa that has become part of a university (Robinson and McMillan 2006) shows that the requirement to undertake research has resulted in a reorientation of professional identities for many staff members. Having previously seen teaching as caring and professionalism as commitment towards students, lecturers struggled to accommodate their values to take account of the new research agenda. Suggested strategies to help weave together the old and new identities of these people include staff seminars and discussion on new workloads as a way of accessing the values and personal perspectives of individual staff members which should take place before change is put through.

Recent research into change in the education systems of the Iberian peninsula appears to be limited to teachers in schools. Bolívar and Domingo's (2006) research on Spain is a reminder of the emotional effects of change: the anxiety and resistance and the vulnerability felt by teachers is brought about by insufficient training and lack of professionalism within the system generating the change. Flores and Day's (2006) work on new Portuguese teachers argues for the importance of identity as a mediating force between agency and structure and the need to encourage a collaborative culture if positive attitudes of professional identity are to be formed.

While it is clear that educational reform has become an issue in many national systems, relatively little qualitative research has been done into the effects of change on the professional identities of the teachers and academics involved – or, at any rate, research published in English. Evans's (2006a, 2006b) work on East German language teachers is the closest in scope to my own project although Askling (2001) and Robinson and McMillan (2006) have examined individuals' responses to transformations taking place in higher education institutions in Sweden and South Africa respectively. The Irish higher education context will have its own tale to tell of the effects of structural change on the lives and identities of language teachers and academics.

The issue of identity

There is a common thread running through much of the material I have looked at on the subject of teacher professional identity and related themes. This thread is the underlying attempt to understand identity itself – which brings me to two basis questions related to the concept: what is professional identity and how is it formed?

Clearly, professional identity cannot be understood in any essentialist way. You cannot *be* a teacher before *becoming* a teacher. Much of the literature on the subject is concerned with how teachers or academics construct their professional identity (MacLure 1993, Kelchtermans 1993, Antonek et al 1997, Beijaard et al 2000, Zembylas 2003, Bathmaker and Avis 2005, Findlay 2006, Alsup 2006, Warin et al 2006, Salling Olesen 2007, Jawitz 2007). In cases where this identity remains unchallenged it could be seen as a 'legitimizing identity' which Castells (1997) posits as the form of identity that creates civil society and supports it through the dominant institutions that have power within it. Where educational reform and structural changes have forced a challenge to teachers' status quo (Nixon 1996, Abbas and McLean 2001, Stronach et al 2002, Harris 2005, Beck 2008), 'resistance' and 'project' identities may be observed – with resistance identity understood as being created by minorities to oppose the power of the dominant institutions of society while the goal of a project identity is to seek to change the structures of society and it may frequently develop from a resistance identity (Castells 1997, pp. 8-10). These forms of identity may be dependent on generational differences (Hargreaves 2005, Day et al 2005, Lasky 2005) or on the location where change occurs (Kogan 2000, Nixon et al 2001, Sikes 2005, Clegg 2008, Jawitz 2009) and thus illustrate some of the effects of time and place on identity formation.

Finally, there is the issue of whether identity can be seen as an individual or collective construction. Is the agent involved in making a new professional identity the individual teacher or academic or is it the group of professionals affected together? Much research has taken the individual as the object of scrutiny (Giddens 1990, 1991); others have seen the collective as the vital aspect of identity formation (Castells 1996, Jenkins 2004). In my own project I will be focusing on individual lecturers' stories of the transformations in their professional lives but I will also remain conscious of the power of collective agency to effect change and to limit or promote a new professional identity, as

well as the structural constraints or opportunities presented by the institutions in which these changes have occurred.

The structure of the thesis

Before beginning to outline the structure of the thesis you are about to read I would like to focus on the thesis title which, while of no great literary merit, was nonetheless carefully chosen. In selecting the word 'changing' in the title *Changing professional identities of foreign language lecturers in the Irish higher education system* I was conscious of its two meanings: as an adjective it describes the process of change that has taken place in the professional identities of the protagonists; as a verb it implies the active participation of the protagonists as agents in their own changing identities – both meanings are at play in my analysis. I chose the term 'foreign language lecturers' rather than the more specific 'German language lecturers' to suggest that the situation is not innate to the discipline of German but has the potential to arise for any foreign language that is not deemed to be of immediate value. I used the word 'lecturers' rather than 'teachers' because that is the official title for the post, even if the day to day reality for most language lecturers is to teach in small groups rather than stand in front of a lecture theatre filled with hundreds of students, but also to allude to the status issue of being a lecturer which, in the Irish system at least, has greater academic prestige than being a teacher. Finally, I chose to speak of 'higher education institutions' rather than 'institutes of technology', despite the overwhelming concentration of my research on just this sector, precisely because I wanted to be able to widen the parameters and consider the IoT sector with its binary opposite, the university sector, of Irish higher education.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first three are designed to set the scene for the remaining chapters where the bulk of my own research and analysis are presented. In this introductory chapter I have outlined the

background to the changes that have affected my own professional life as a German lecturer and those of colleagues in my own institution and across the IoT sector of Irish higher education. I have also explored some threats to professional identity that are specific to language lecturers and how English-speaking countries have begun to deal with issues of systemic and institutional reform when compared to non-English-speaking environments.

Chapter 2 explains the conceptual framework behind my research. In writing my thesis proposal it became clear that Bourdieu's theory and practice offered both a template for conducting my research and an analytical tool for understanding it. Here I trace the development of Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, field, capital and reflexivity through a number of his works and outline my own conceptualisation of them. I examine some critiques of Bourdieu's theory and show how his concepts have begun to be utilised in recent educational research. The chapter ends with an explanation of how I have intended to use the concepts throughout the research and in the thesis.

In chapter 3 I tell the story of the research process and the epistemological standpoint that lies behind it. With Bourdieu's research practice shaping my progress from the outset, I show how I set about gathering the data and what type of data I selected, the stages the project underwent over the more than two years of its duration and how I proceeded to analyse the results, using a methodology derived from Bourdieu's thinking.

At this point the stage has been set to introduce my own contribution to knowledge of the processes and strategies involved in coping with change among social groups and individuals positioned within changing institutional, sectoral, national and international fields. In chapter 4 I begin by looking at an example of a German lecturer who faced a complete transformation in her professional identity when confronted with overwhelming change within the institution in which she worked. Again using Bourdieu's example as a template,

I trace the personal and educational history of this individual and show how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital give a sociological explanation to the choices made while an exploration of the institutional field helps to position the choices of this agent against the structural background of the organisation – I am that person and MIT is that institution.

Chapter 5 takes a different perspective and begins with an analysis of the field furthest removed from the daily lives of my German lecturer colleagues and myself but that has nonetheless affected our professional identities, the field of European language policies, and moves from there in ever-decreasing circles through the Irish national language policy discourse to the higher education field and on to the IoT sector of that field. Here I include information gained from interviews with respondents who are or were German lecturers in four IoTs and one technological university in order to show the effects of change in the field on their professional lives and identities. I then focus in on one smaller field, the Languages School of MIT, and begin to position my thirteen remaining respondents within that field in terms of their permanent or part-time status at this time of upheaval within the discipline, their academic achievements and linguistic competences and their professional development within the field. This is preparatory to the analysis of their stories which takes up the next chapter.

In chapter 6, the longest in the thesis, I set out the narratives of ten permanent German lecturers who are still employed at MIT and three former part-time lecturers who have moved on to other work and identities. The purpose of the chapter is to give voice to their stories and to provide an analysis, using Bourdieu's concepts, of how these individuals have dealt with transitions that were forced on them through changes in the fields that surround them. Not everyone I interviewed had to make appreciable changes to their professional identity and not everyone who was obliged to change attempted to struggle against it. Even those who did resist for a time have mostly come to an

acceptance that change is irreversible and that they must make the best of the choices available to them. Bourdieu's concepts became a powerful analytical tool in highlighting and making sense of these choices and in reflecting some participants' growing awareness of how their professional identity has changed, partly as a result of this project itself.

In chapter 7, which concludes the thesis, I draw together the results of my own research in the preceding three chapters with themes from current literature on the professional identity of teachers and academics and review them through the prism of my chosen conceptual framework. I argue that the creation of a unified professional space could ensure the formation of stable individual and collective identities over time. I outline some limitations to my research as well as some potential future projects and suggest the possible direction of the professional lives of German lecturers within the ever-changing field of Irish higher education.

2

Bourdieu's theory and practice as the basis for a theoretical framework

The theorist and sociological practitioner whose concepts I have found to be most apposite for my research into the changing professional identity of language lecturers in Irish higher education is Pierre Bourdieu. However, despite his large and influential output on the subject of education at all levels throughout the 1970s and 1980s (especially Bourdieu and Passeron 1977 and Bourdieu 1988), as far as I have ascertained, Bourdieu did not engage directly with the term 'professional identity' itself although his work and his key concepts have been used by many others since then to examine the construction of identity among the teaching profession and within higher education. It would be difficult to envisage research into higher education in any modern society that did not take account of Bourdieu's thinking on how individuals and institutions interact within the French higher education system that was the object of his analysis. His failure to employ the term 'professional identity' as such does not lessen the power of Bourdieu's concepts to throw light onto the issue – his theory comes from an angle which helps to open out the term and subject it to rigorous scrutiny as an object of study, rather than accepting it as given. It is the purpose of this chapter to elucidate the aspects of Bourdieu's work that I have drawn on to help formulate, design and analyse the results of this research project into changing professional identity.

While he may not have employed the concept of professional identity, Bourdieu did discuss to a limited extent both 'identity' and 'profession'. With regard to 'identity' his focus has been on manifestations of social identity (Bourdieu 1984), as it relates to lifestyle and appearance, and to regional and national identity which is manifested in linguistic dialects, accents and standardised

national linguistic norms (Bourdieu 1991) and national categories (Bourdieu 1999). On the use of the term 'profession' he has made very specifically targeted comment (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu argues that the concept of 'profession' which has been uncritically accepted by those who are within it, has been historically constructed and gives the appearance of being a scientifically based reality when it should be perceived as a 'structured space of social forces and struggles' (ibid, p. 243) whose boundaries remain contested, in other words a field (one of Bourdieu's key concepts which I will examine in more detail shortly). In his view, it is an essential part of any research project to question the presuppositions that underlie its starting point – such questioning is undoubtedly a part of Bourdieu's sociological practice that even his harshest critics could value as being from someone who is 'good to think with' (Jenkins 2002, p. 176).

Throughout this project I have used Bourdieu to think with in two specific contexts:

(1) Reading the 'Understanding' chapter in *The Weight of the World* (Bourdieu et al 1999) has given me a methodology and a set of guidelines for conducting interviews with professional colleagues in an objective and reflexive manner (outlined in chapter 3), while Bourdieu's examination of the French education system (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) and especially his posthumous 'non-autobiography', *Sketch for a Self-Analysis* (Bourdieu 2007), have provided a sense of legitimation to the exploration of my personal trajectory through the Irish education system and, later, as a German lecturer which forms the basis for chapter 4 and which I would have been reluctant to undertake without his example;

(2) Gaining an understanding of Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, field, capital and reflexivity has allowed me to employ these analytical concepts in the way that Bourdieu intended them to be understood – as tools of empirical research that can be used to explode the dualisms of subjectivity and objectivity and structure and agency to explain both the durability and

transformability of structures and behaviours of individuals, groups and institutions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Leaving the first of these points to be dealt with in chapters 3 and 4, it is the second point that I would now like to examine in some detail, beginning with an explanation of the concepts as developed by Bourdieu, moving on to review some of the criticism and perceived shortcomings of the concepts and the usefulness of their application in educational settings, higher education institutions and educational policy. Finally, I will explain how I have used these concepts to give a theoretical framework to my research project.

The concepts of habitus, field, capital and reflexivity

It is clear that, just as there is a need to retrace the history of the emergence of concepts such as 'profession' in order to avoid their becoming mere products of the object of study (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), Bourdieu's concepts have their own history which can be traced through his work – the various changes of emphasis and meaning, of which he has been accused (as discussed in Nash 1999, Reay 2004, Mills 2008) can thus be explained by the effects of these same concepts, habitus, field and capital, on each other over time. Indeed, it would be surprising if a highly productive sociologist such as Bourdieu did not amend and adjust his concepts over a span of almost four decades of research, as the following examination of the history of 'habitus' will show.

According to Jenkins (2002), Bourdieu first used the term 'habitus' in 1967, a term already in use in sociological discourse and originating from the Latin meaning for 'a habitual or typical condition, state or appearance, particularly of the body' (ibid, p. 74). Bourdieu himself explains (1988) that he initially began by using the word 'ethos' as a systematic set of dispositions that include an ethical dimension but then adopted the concept of 'habitus' from Greek philosophy because it better encapsulated both the theoretical and practical

aspects of what he sought to explore and highlighted the permanent dispositions that have been acquired by the body through individual history. At the same time he chose not to simply use the word 'habit' for this concept because he wanted to make clear that habitus does not involve merely mechanical reproduction but generates and transforms new dispositions in new social conditions, although even a transforming habitus is bound by its historical conditioning. It is not wholly autonomous and, even while it changes, it can only change so far.

In the context of exploring the development of lifestyles and taste Bourdieu (1984) defines habitus as 'a structured and structuring structure' (p. 171). What does this mean? As a *structuring structure*, he asserts, the habitus organises the practices and perceptions of people's differing lifestyles – while, as a *structured structure* it reflects the perception of the social world divided into distinct social classes. The dispositions engendered by and through the habitus are inscribed in the structure of the system of differing lifestyles which are themselves the products of habitus – this dialectic, according to Bourdieu, is the result of misrecognition of power relations and the distribution of capital in its various forms (to which I will return later).

It is clear that Bourdieu does not see habitus here as pertaining solely to individuals. In fact, he makes the point that:

> The practices of the same agent, and more generally, the practices of all agents of the same class, owe the stylistic affinity which makes each of them a metaphor of any of the others to the fact that they are the product of transfers of the same schemes of action from one field to another (1984, p. 173).

Thus, while habitus is learnt, it also goes beyond what has been directly learnt by the individual and can be transposed and generalised into a universal application.

Bourdieu later (1990) gives an expanded explanation of habitus as a system of dispositions that comes from practice and is always orientated towards practice while always related to the social conditions in which it was formed. As a 'durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations' (p. 57) habitus is the embodiment of history – for the individual – such that all future action is circumscribed by the past.

He asserts here, too, that collective habitus, also a product of history, which is brought about by similar conditions of existence within a group or class, is objectified in the institutions and structures of society to the extent that it becomes almost unconscious. At the same time this does not mean that individual and collective habitus are different concepts: the individual habitus incorporates objective meaning that transcends the subjective. Agents, as individuals or groups with similar histories, can and do share a worldview without being impersonal or interchangeable. The generative aspect of habitus ensures that individuals make different choices based on their own previous experiences, although he also argues that individual habitus, dominated as it is by the earliest experiences of the person involved, can make individuals resistant to change and likely to miss beneficial opportunities. As he puts it:

> (...) the persistence of the effects of primary conditioning, in the form of *habitus*, accounts (...) for cases in which dispositions function out of phase and practices are objectively ill-adapted to the present conditions because they are objectively adjusted to conditions that no longer obtain (ibid, p. 62, italics in text).

This facet of Bourdieu's understanding of habitus seems highly apposite to my chosen research topic or any research into individuals' ability to meet the challenge of structural change in society. It is the relation to power and 'the chances objectively offered him by the social world' (ibid, p. 64) that delineate the probable future that it is possible for the individual to attain.

In *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991) Bourdieu deals with linguistic habitus as a subset of habitus as previously outlined. Linguistic habitus is learned from the earliest age and is bound by both the social class and the body, the mouth, the tongue of the individual speaker who endeavours to produce 'correct speech' when outside the social class of his or her original dispositions. It is directly related to linguistic capital, a subset of cultural capital, which again has resonances for my own study and to which I will return below.

Similarly, in his detailed and long-ranging study into the changes brought about in the French higher education system by the effects of the May 1968 demonstrations (Bourdieu 1988), Bourdieu captures a number of the issues that pertain to my research into my own academic institution and others. Specifically in relation to the concept of habitus, Bourdieu defines it as 'a system of *shared* social dispositions and cognitive structures which generates perceptions, appreciations and actions' (p. 179, note 2, my emphasis) and points to the necessity for the sociologist researching academic institutions to be aware of the habitus he or she inevitably shares with other academics who may be the object of study.

And so, the 'structured and structuring structure' of habitus is a concept that explains behaviour and perceptions, allows freedom to change within certain boundaries and gives a possible explanation for the resistance of some agents – be they individuals or groups – to changes in the social conditions of the fields that surround them.

What is a field?

The term 'field' also has had its history, its shifts of emphasis and redefinition within Bourdieu's work. For example, according to Thompson (1991), Bourdieu uses the terms 'field', 'game' and 'market' as synonyms, although in my own reading I have not encountered his use of 'market' in a conceptual way, other

than his reference to a 'linguistic market' (Bourdieu 1993). However, I have found him to use 'field' and 'game' together frequently as a method of conceptualising forms of societal structure – although, at times, he seems to use 'game' purely as a metaphor (Bourdieu 1990) while, elsewhere, it is seen as part of the process by which fields function in the social world (Bourdieu 1984, 1993). Another set of terms, 'space' or 'social space', appears to have been understood by Bourdieu in similar ways (Bourdieu 1990, Bourdieu et al 1999), although these terms have not been taken up by analysts of Bourdieu to any great extent. What unites these various locutions is that they all refer to sites of struggle where agents employ their cultural capital in order to gain advantage.

What does Bourdieu categorise as fields? At one point (Bourdieu 1984) he suggests that examples of fields are: the fields of production; of consumption; of social classes and of the dominant class as well as the field of 'struggles among the classes' (p. 246) and the field of power, while elsewhere (Bourdieu 1988, 1993) he refers to the educational field or the university field and the fields of philology, fashion and religion, among others. He even refers to the field of origin and field of reception of texts that are in circulation internationally (Bourdieu 1999).

One difficulty that arises in trying to employ the concept of field is in deciding whether it refers only to an overarching structure like the educational field or the university field or whether it can also be understood to operate in smaller units such as an individual institution – Bourdieu has himself suggested that fields can exist within fields (Grenfell 1996, Mills and Gale 2007). Marginson (2008) has suggested that educational institutions should be regarded as parts of subfields, either mass or elite, within the field of higher education, and this may be valid when examining higher education in a national and particularly a global context. Others (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, Swartz 2008, Vaughan 2008) make the case for organisations to be analysed as fields because they can be shown to operate, not as 'single unified actors' (Swartz 2008, p. 49), but as sites

of continuous struggle. Grenfell's (1996) understanding is that an object of study is to be conceptualised as a field and that field must then be analysed as a 'field within fields' (p. 291). Essentially, a field is defined by its boundaries: 'an agent or institution belongs to a field inasmuch as it produces and suffers effects in it' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 232).

When 'game' is used as a metaphor for field (Bourdieu 1990), it seems legitimate to equate field with a specific site or institution where all the players are engaged simultaneously. Bourdieu explains that 'membership in a field implies a feel for the game' (p. 66) in which those who take part have invested in it, see it as completely meaningful and thus have an interest in the outcome. However, unlike in real games played out on a pitch or board, the players of games in social fields do not choose them consciously – their learned habitus ensures that they accept the conditions of the field tacitly as self-evident. New entrants to the game or field are equally compliant. Their sense of acceptance is the recognition – mirrored in the shared habitus discussed earlier – of having already invested in the field in which they believe they belong. This recognition, which fails to identify the structures that formulate the field, is what Bourdieu calls misrecognition.

Bourdieu provides a more nuanced understanding of fields when he defines them as

> structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their positions within these spaces and which can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (which are partly determined by them) (1993, p. 72).

The structure of a field, and the struggles that are a feature of fields, is thus made up of the power relations among the agents or institutions involved. Partial revolutions occur in a field but do not shake the foundational rules of the game because the history of the field (analogous to the history of the habitus mentioned above) is valued by all who invest in it. Similarly, Bourdieu suggests, the shared interests of the agents underlie all the apparent antagonisms

that are manifested in the struggles within the field. Conversely, he goes on to state that 'those who dominate the field have the means to make it function to their advantage; but they have to reckon with the resistance of the dominated agents' (ibid p. 88). It is difficult to reconcile these apparently contradictory positions within the same concept but, as with the resistant habitus discussed earlier, it shows how Bourdieu attempted to explain the possibility of resistance within fields.

Forms of capital and reflexivity

Fields do change over time, nonetheless, and the fluctuating value of capital is the key to this – in Bourdieu's conception, capital is the stake for which the game is played, the cause of the struggle for domination within a field. While economic capital may have a role in changing a field, it is the impetus to increase other forms of capital – such as cultural, social or linguistic capital – that motivates agents to try to gain dominance of the field, legitimate their own control of it and gain the profits (further capital) that the field generates (Bourdieu 1984, 1988). This is exemplified most clearly in the cultural world of art production and reception: new art supersedes older styles as new artists, with less capital initially, subvert the commonly-held tastes of cultured society and begin to dominate the artistic hierarchy as the older styles and artists fall out of favour (Bourdieu 1984). The same could be said to explain changes in social movements over time in many arenas, including the educational field.

Capital in the form of economic, social and cultural capital also has a role in forming the habitus of individuals and groups such that those who start out with high levels of these forms of capital have a good chance of making more of them throughout their lifetimes, of becoming dominant and thus legitimating their dominance through the acquisition of symbolic capital in the form of status and power (Bourdieu 1990). Different types of capital have currency in different fields: money and social connections may never be enough to allow an agent to

achieve status in fields where these are valued less than a particular form of cultural capital if the agent does not also possess enough of the cultural capital required.

Cultural capital can be divided into a number of subsets, including academic and intellectual capital. In fact, Bourdieu differentiates very clearly between these two sub-concepts: for him, academic capital is the form of capital held by those academics who successfully control the institutions and fields in which they operate while intellectual capital is 'linked to scientific renown' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 76). The 'academic' capital of Henkel (2004) and others is in fact Bourdieu's 'intellectual' capital, although his term has not gained much support in the debate.

The idea of linguistic capital, as another subset of cultural capital, is also of importance to my study. It gives insight into why the teaching of foreign languages is not valued in some fields, such as the field of engineering education or the Irish educational policy field, and also why the predominance of English has been weakening the power of other languages in the international academic field (Bourdieu 1993). An understanding of linguistic capital also has a role in gathering much of the information for my study: the interview process itself. According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al 1999), in a research study in which it is 'the investigator who starts the game and sets up its rules' (p. 609) the relative linguistic capital of the interviewer and interviewee must be taken into account in order to avoid or reduce the 'symbolic violence' that is inherent in their relationship. Symbolic violence is that which exerts domination upon dominated social agents, with or without their complicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Following Bourdieu's experience of long practice as a sociological researcher, rather than a theorist – a point he has been keen to emphasise (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) – can enable me to avoid exerting too much symbolic violence

on my own interview respondents given that our shared habitus of 'social proximity and familiarity provide two of the conditions of "non-violent" communication' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 610). The other side of this coin, however, is that the very interchangeability of the researcher and respondents can lead the researcher to putting herself so much into the position of the respondent that a 'double socioanalysis' (p. 611) takes place – so that what 'goes without saying' (p. 612) is never actually brought out to be analysed.

This is where the concept of reflexivity comes into play, allowing us to gain knowledge in a research situation only if we have knowledge of our own presuppositions and if we remain aware that this is a process of construction whose underlying social structure and the effects it produces in the social interaction of an interview must be taken into account. In researching higher education while himself a player in the field, Bourdieu recognised the necessity of using reflexivity as a tool of research, so that:

> A reflexive sociology can help free intellectuals from their illusions – and first of all from the illusion that they do not have any, especially about themselves – and can at least have the negative virtue of making it more difficult for them to bring a passive and unconscious contribution to symbolic domination (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 195).

With this awareness in mind as a guiding principle towards research among my peers I would now like to explore some recent critiques of these concepts.

Critiques of Bourdieu's concepts

A criticism often levelled at Bourdieu's concepts is that they offer too static a model to account for transformation within the social world (Swartz 1997, Jenkins 2002, Grenfell 2007). However, this is not actually the case. As Bourdieu himself has asserted (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), it is the field, not the individual, that is the primary force in society and, with the constant struggles for dominance within a field, it is the habitus of individuals and

groups that structures the field and avoids the volatility of constant change within it. On the other hand, it is clear that wide-ranging change is rare throughout human history – as even the aftermath of May 1968, the object of much of Bourdieu's focus throughout the succeeding decades, can attest (Gartman 2007). The habitus of individuals and groups has been shown through Bourdieu's empirical research to be of such durability that, much as his Marxist-orientated political philosophy might have wished for the overthrow of dominant groups (Robbins 2007), the reality of the social world has generally shown otherwise. In his later work, Bourdieu argued that it is the application of reflexivity to social problems that brings about change (Costa 2006). By producing a true vision of the structural forces that surround social agents, the researcher can mobilise these agents from being merely adaptive to becoming transformative (Adkins 2004, Mouzelis 2007).

In his desire to limit the preponderance of the subjective in analyses of the social world (Jenkins 2002) Bourdieu has also been criticised for over-objectifying agents by stressing the structured nature of human thought and behaviour, yet he has also described habitus thus:

> To speak of habitus is to assert that the individual, and even the personal, the subjective, is social, collective. Habitus is a socialized subjectivity. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 126)

Given Bourdieu's propensity for redefining his definitions throughout his work, is Jenkins right to suggest that he uses concepts such as habitus like Humpty Dumpty in *Alice in Wonderland* – words mean what I say they mean (Jenkins 2002) and can be used in so many different ways as to become meaningless?

In my view there are two particular aspects to these concepts that make them analytically useful. Firstly, there is the point, mentioned earlier, that Bourdieu's intention in developing his concepts was that they should not form part of a grand theory (Karakayali 2004) but are to be used as 'thinking tools' (Bourdieu

and Wacquant 1992, p. 160) of empirical research, a view supported by numerous commentators and researchers since (Grenfell 1996, Zipin and Brennan 2004, Ball 2006, Mills and Gale 2007). Secondly, the concepts can only function effectively if used in relation to each other – using habitus, for example, on its own to explain social phenomena would be meaningless because it would fail to take account of the equally relevant effects of fields, capital and reflexivity upon the problem in question (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). While such thinking was employed in studies in the past (Nash 1999), much recent sociological analysis has emphasised the necessity of combining the concepts relationally if they are to add insight into issues of sociological interest, for example in the analysis of organisations (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, Swartz 2008, Dobbin 2008, Vaughan 2008).

Reay et al (2001) have also discussed the concept of institutional habitus but they take a perspective quite different from my own and appear to equate it with the effects of the institutional field on individuals. In my understanding, institutional habitus is the form of habitus engendered in individuals and groups through their history within an institutional field and it informs their behaviour and dispositions within the institutional setting – should they move on to another institution they would continue to exhibit the behaviour and dispositions previously learned until sufficient time in the new social space had allowed them to modify their habitus to fit the rules of the new game.

Bourdieu's concepts at use in educational settings

In the main, recent educational research literature has made use of Bourdieu in two ways. Several academics (Grenfell and James 2004, Mills and Gale 2007, Zembylas 2007, Mills 2008) have promoted the adoption of his concepts in order to give a critical edge to educational research; encouraging a theoretical understanding of the educational field, the role of habitus in forming and transforming agents within the field, the various forms of capital that hold sway

and the necessity of researcher reflexivity in order to reveal the workings of power within the field. A second focus of interest has been upon operationalising Bourdieu's concepts to formulate and guide research – using the toolbox of concepts as a method of researching teacher education and professional development (Grenfell 1996, Colley et al 2007, Hardy and Lingard 2008) and also institutional change within further and higher education (Zipin and Brennan 2004, Naidoo 2004, Kloot 2009).

Grenfell (1996) has used the concepts of habitus and field as a method of analysing the training of modern language teachers. He shows how Bourdieu has deconstructed the concept of 'profession' and advocates that the solution is to conceptualise 'profession' as a field and to treat it as an object of study in itself. Grenfell proposes that using Bourdieu's method (from Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) involves studying the field of language teacher training on three levels. The researcher must:

> 1. Analyse the habitus of the agents; the system of dispositions they have acquired from a particular life context.
> 2. Map the objective structure of relations between positions in the field.
> 3. Analyse the position of the field within fields; in particular, to those defining the legitimate content of the discourse (Grenfell 1996, p. 291).

This methodology has echoes of Bourdieu's own research in *Homo Academicus* (1988) and is a useful way of looking at the development of professional identities within educational institutions from a Bourdieuian perspective.

Teacher professional identity was the focus of a more recent study by Colley et al (2007) who discuss the changing professional identities of two teachers at further education (FE) colleges in the UK, one a language teacher, the other a teacher of English as a second language. They show that Bourdieu's field theory can be used to explain how these established teachers became marginalised within the field of FE, itself a marginalised field within higher education in the

UK, through a focus on the distribution of power and position and its relation to individual choices and practices.

Hardy and Lingard (2008) show how a Bourdieuian analysis that includes an array of concepts operating together can explore the influence of the field of educational policy on the field of teachers' work. They assert that the institutional habitus of school principals acts to mediate between the two fields and that varying capitals and interests on the part of policy implementers and teachers affect the logics of practice of teachers' work. This explains for them why policy does not change teachers' practice in the way envisaged by policymakers. Hardy and Lingard operationalise Bourdieu's analysis in a thorough way that shows the potential for similar analysis in my own work in the field of Irish higher education.

Recent pressure towards change in world-wide higher education, brought about by internationally promoted neo-liberal and neo-conservative policies of marketisation, managerialism and individual responsibility (Gewirtz et al 1995, Apple 1998, Ball 2003, Ball 2007) as well as US hegemonic domination of the field of higher education (Marginson 2008), have led to transformations across national and institutional fields. In analysing the changes wrought by these forces in the Australian higher education system Zipin and Brennan (2004) have used Bourdieu's methods of systematically using 'broad-based interviews, statistical data analysis and policy document analysis' (p. 31) in order to link 'the life-world with broader social practices and structures of the field' (p. 20). This has enabled them to show how changes in dispositions and habitus in a changing field affect professional identity. They have also highlighted the ethical dilemmas that can ensue from these changes – a point that echoes Bourdieu's own awareness of the ethical dimension of habitus. Naidoo (2004) and Kloot (2009) have used similar methods and a similar conceptual framework in their studies of change in the field of South African higher education.

According to Deer (2003), Bourdieu, in his early work, did not envisage that higher education could be transformed in such a radical way or that it would become a commodity of the economic field as its autonomy was weakened and its forms of capital superseded by economic and political interests. Meanwhile, van Zanten (2005) attributes the French distrust of education policy to the legacy of Bourdieu's work on the capacity of the education system to reproduce inequality. Lingard et al (2005) attribute the loss of autonomy in the education policy field to 'cross-field effects' (p. 761) from the economic field and the field of power of the state and Maton (2005) argues that governments have begun using higher education as a policy lever for increased competitiveness but he also reminds us of Bourdieu's view that autonomy must be researched rather than assumed – it must be an object of study like any other.

Having taken a look at how Bourdieu's concepts have been used in educational research, I would like to end this chapter with an outline of how my own study has been shaped by his theory and his methodological toolkit.

How I use Bourdieu's concepts to frame my research project

Clearly, a research project that sets out to use Bourdieu's concepts as a structuring framework must begin with the first methodological step recommended by him and those who have since followed his lead. This first step is to identify the object of study. This I have set out to do in the preceding chapter by setting out the issues that surround my object of study: the changing professional identity of German language lecturers in selected Irish higher education institutions.

It was also my intention to employ a comparative stance between the various agents and higher education institutions I planned to study, in line with Bourdieu's view that comparison is one of the most fruitful methods of studying

higher education (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). However, as shall become clear later in the thesis, the scope of the project did not allow for the vast quantitative analysis of groups and institutions that was a feature of Bourdieu's work on education (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Bourdieu 1988). I have employed the suggested methodological process of 'broad-based interviews, statistical data analysis and policy document analysis' (Zipin and Brennan 2004, p. 31) with the methodological tools and analytical framework outlined by Grenfell (1996) of analysing the habitus of agents, examining the relation of positions within the field of study and analysing the position of the field within fields. Yet it was the approach taken by Bourdieu in his later work, specifically *The Weight of the World* (1999), that was to give the voices of my respondents the most resonance in the project, allowing them to speak despite the possibility that their testimony might be unreliable (Mills and Gale 2007) and putting the individual, and individual habitus, at the heart of this study.

Beginning with the concept of habitus, I designed the project to examine its operation on a number of levels, using unstructured and semi-structured interviews with respondents who were German language lecturers in MIT and a selection of other higher education institutions in Ireland (mainly other IoTs) and whose professional identities had been affected by changes in the provision of language teaching in these institutions, as well as their CVs and a variety of supporting institutional documentation. Given the understanding of habitus outlined above, I expected to discover some aspects of a shared habitus in these people's stories but also some differences – which I hoped to explore by comparing their narratives as evidence of the history of individual habitus and dispositions. It could be anticipated, therefore, that a native German part-time lecturer whose teaching job disappeared in the changing circumstances of the last decade would have a different set of dispositions and perceptions of their professional identity than an Irish-born permanent staff member who had gone on to teach new subjects, such as EAP or cultural studies. On the other hand, a

collective habitus as language lecturers might be expected to give them a sense of group history and common purpose.

Bourdieu's concept and recent academic research derived from it would lead me to anticipate evidence of the operation of linguistic (Bourdieu 1991), academic and intellectual (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) and professional habitus (Grenfell 1996, Reay 2004, Hardy and Lingard 2008). Interviews with staff in managerial positions were also to be employed in order to study the working of organisational (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, Vaughan 2008) and institutional habitus (Hardy and Lingard 2008) and explain why their habitus may have allowed them to support change that may not always have been in the best interest of staff members and their discipline.

The issue of habitus as an ethical background, discussed by Zipin and Brennan (2004) and alluded to by Bourdieu (1993), could also be explored in the context of lecturers who, by their actions or inaction, supported the removal of their part-time colleagues and took over the vacated teaching hours with or without question. In examining if this was actually the case I hoped to tease out how these actions fit the habitus of the individuals concerned and whether the events that brought about the changes described in this project have also triggered a collective sense of identity of being a dominated group within an institutional structure. At the same time, differing habitus may also show differing forms of resistance to change, where the structural background has permitted.

Essential to an understanding of the working of habitus is the issue of the various kinds and levels of capital that come into play within the institutional field: varying levels of social capital may be found to have eased the transition of identity for some respondents more than others while different levels of cultural capital, especially linguistic and academic or intellectual capital, may be shown to have offered a variety of opportunities for those who had sufficient capital to take advantage of them. Economic capital, too, could well affect the

decisions of lecturers, particularly but not only part-timers, in choosing how to behave and how to respond to change, while the symbolic capital held by those in managerial positions could be used to support or undermine lecturers during this period of transition and beyond.

I suggested earlier that the concept of field should not be taken as solely referring to overarching fields such as higher education in Ireland but that it can also be seen as something that functions on a smaller scale, in an institution or even a discrete part of an institution such as schools or departments which operate as fields within fields. It seems to me that such an understanding of the concept offers a framework for operationalising the idea of struggle within fields. The idea of the game and the feel for the game, that the players have an underlying set of mutual interests while trying to position themselves to best advantage, appears just as appropriate a notion in the context of language lecturers in a given department or institution as it does between competing institutions within the overall higher education arena.

By interviewing lecturers in different institutions and analysing the structural support (or lack of it) in implementing change, I hoped to show whether different institutions have created different outcomes for the staff involved and what the staff's own perceptions are of how successfully change was managed. To do this I set about interviewing German lecturers at a number of IoTs and, by way of further contrast, a lecturer at a technological non-traditional university. By also having the opportunity to interview managers from different areas within the institution of my main focus, MIT, I hoped to uncover a structural aspect to their decision-making and position-taking and the supports they were able to put in place to help their colleagues make the required transitions.

An examination of the institutional policy documents that are publicly available (such as institutional websites, staff handbooks, strategic plans, etc.) would help

to position them within the field of Irish higher education, while European Union and Irish government policy documentation on language teaching and learning issues would also give perspectives on the wider national and international fields and give me an opportunity to study the effects of these policy fields on the institutions and the language lecturers who work in them.

Figure 1 gives an overview of the relationship of the individual habitus of my respondents to the institutional field in which they were positioned, the IoT sectoral field and the fields of national and European policy on language teaching and learning.

Figure 1: The relationship of individual habitus to fields
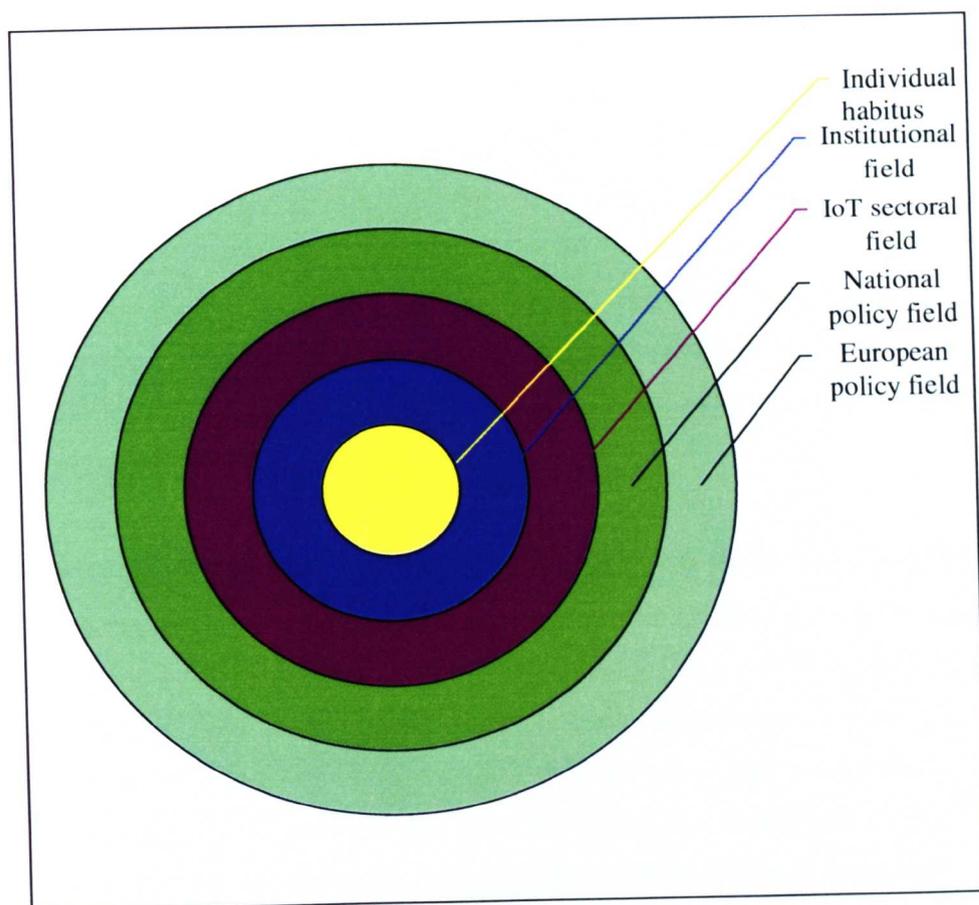
The final tool in the conceptual toolkit I intended to employ – reflexivity – has to do with my own role in the research process. Having had no previous experience of undertaking primary research, I have remained conscious throughout this project that I am myself a part of my object of study. I have undergone the same changes as many of my language lecturer colleagues and can see the applicability of the concepts of habitus, capital and field in my individual circumstance and choices made. There is a need to avoid extrapolating my own responses onto my respondents – or subjectifying the object. In such circumstances an interviewer must be at pains not to exert symbolic violence on his or her respondents but must strive towards 'non-violent communication' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 610) by listening, responding and encouraging in a way that does justice to the respondents' individual stories.

Bourdieu's reflexive sociology allows the researcher to legitimately study an object of close interest provided that reflexivity is used to objectify the familiar field. The use of documentary evidence would help to highlight the structural issues behind the testimonies of language lecturer colleagues and give a greater depth of understanding of the objective forces behind the changes described than interviews alone could achieve. My goal has been to elucidate the structural forces that are at work as clearly as the efforts of the agents affected by changes to their professional identities.

The theoretical framework provided by Bourdieu gives insight into the choices that individuals have made: why some have accepted change while others have resisted, why some mourn the loss of their professional identities while others are happy to move on. It also throws light on how the historical trajectory of individuals' professional lives, crystallised as habitus, is inexorably linked to the social spaces of the fields that affect these lives and is mediated by the amounts of capital available to each individual. The next step is to do what Bourdieu has always recommended – to take this theory and put it into practice. The following chapter shows how I have put this methodological toolkit to work

and how, over the course of the project, the tools that were intended to build a metaphorical chest of drawers have ended up making a bedside table – but, hopefully, an interesting one.

3

Research methodology

In this chapter I set out the epistemological and methodological standpoint that has informed the data collection and analysis of this research project – in other words, the reasons why I chose to gather certain types of data and how I went about collecting and analysing them.

The starting point to this project was my own position and my recent experiences of change within the higher education institution in which I had worked for more than twenty years. When the sudden removal of German from engineering programmes in MIT left me without students, without a timetable and with a sense of insecurity about my future career and professional identity I was lucky, as a permanent member of staff, to have the support of the teachers' union (TUI). While I did not need to fear unemployment, unlike my part-time colleagues who were let go once there were no German teaching hours available, I did need to find an occupation and a way of contributing within the institution that continued to employ me. Similar events were occurring across the institution and the IoT sector of Irish higher education as German fell in popularity among students and was deemed unnecessary among academics in other disciplines and faculties. I wanted to find out more: to see how colleagues were coping with change to their professional identities; what they were doing to shape that change and how their institutions were affecting and facilitating German lecturers' shift into new and heterogeneous professional and academic identities.

My research questions were therefore informed from the outset by this history and these events which unfolded over the years from 2001 onwards. The first question I wanted to find an answer to was: **what has been the scale of change**

for German language lecturers in selected Irish higher education institutions in the last decade? This type of question presupposes a desire to quantify the problem, to discover its extent and its boundaries and it was indeed an objective of this study to gain an understanding of the size of the problem, the number of people involved and the extent of change they had been required to contend with. As was explained in the previous chapter, Bourdieu's concept of field, defined as a 'configuration of relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon the occupants, agents or institutions' (quoted in Grenfell and James 2004, pp. 509-10), was chosen as a method of delineating the various levels of power and influence at work upon the professional lives of German lecturers within their department or school, their institution, the higher education sector to which it belongs, as well as the national and international policy fields within which all these sub-fields operate.

However, my interest was not solely in the structures that have affected the changes made by my colleagues. I was also interested in their individual choices and how they as agents had shaped their professional lives since the demand for their subject had collapsed. My second research question was therefore: **how are individual academics in Irish institutions coping with changes to their professional identities?** On a conceptual level this focus on individual experiences and trajectories brought Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital into the framework and allowed the project to examine the influence of these concepts on individual professional identities in flux. As a result, the main data gathering mechanism was qualitative, the conducting of unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Fontana and Frey 2005), most of them with German lecturers affected by change over recent years but others with informants who had had an institutional role to play during the period of change and since then and who were able to provide some of the background information surrounding this period of individual and structural upheaval.

A key objective that developed with ever greater intensity throughout the life of the project was a desire to demonstrate the usefulness of Bourdieu's 'socio-analytical toolkit' (Zipin and Brennan 2004) as a thorough methodological approach to data collection and analysis. Unlike Nash (1999) and Reay (2004) who discuss the use of habitus as a methodology, I wanted to use the gamut of Bourdieu's concepts from habitus, capital and field to reflexivity not only to inform a theoretical understanding of the object of study but also to shape the progress and the process of the project itself. I will return to the specifics of this approach to data collection and analysis later but first I would like to concentrate on one aspect – reflexivity – in order to explain my position and my consciousness of being an insider researcher on this project and to relate it to Bourdieu's understanding of the concept as discussed in chapter 2.

Reflexivity and the issue of insider research

I do not believe it necessary, from the epistemological standpoint of the qualitative researcher, to argue the validity or the valuable insights that can be gained from insider research (Sikes and Potts 2008) – given that 'there is really no such thing as pure objective observation of much human behaviour in real work situations' (Smyth and Holian 2008, p. 37); that 'all observation is theory laden and dependent on past experience of the observer' (ibid) and that this holds true for the participant who is as much interviewing as observing her colleagues. In undertaking insider research, as a person who not only is employed in one of the institutions explored in this study but has also personally experienced the changes I describe, I have the not inconsiderable example of Bourdieu before me, whose *Homo Academicus* (1988) examined the phenomenon of change within the French higher education system of the 1960s and 1970s – albeit with many more participants, at much greater length and over a longer time span than this project can offer.

It is nonetheless essential to remain aware of the positive and negative aspects of insider research, in order to counteract the negative aspects as much as possible while taking advantage of the positive aspects for the benefit of the project. Some of the positive attributes of insider research are that it brings a pre-understanding of the issues involved (Smyth and Holian 2008) and it can allow greater access to information and to respondents who may be more open to a colleague than they would be to an outside researcher (Potts 2008). Negatives include: issues related to anonymity, ethical matters and credibility (Smyth and Holian 2008), validity, power differentials between interviewer and respondents (Sikes and Potts 2008), the possibility of self-censorship by the researcher because of an oversensitivity towards the effects of the research (Potts 2008) and the risks and tensions involved in continuing to work within the same environment after the research is completed and made public. I have been conscious of these issues at various stages of the project and will explain how I dealt with them later in this chapter.

One of the most effective ways of guarding against the negative aspects of doing insider research is by maintaining a high level of reflexivity as, according to Aléx and Hammerström (2008), reflexivity enhances 'the credibility of findings by taking into account the researcher's values, beliefs, knowledge and biases' (p. 170). If that is what reflexivity *does*, what *is* it exactly? As Tripp (1998) explains it, reflexivity has several meanings, one of which encapsulates the idea of reflecting, as in a mirror, but also in the sense of reflection as thinking back over things. This type of 'memory work', when employed in research, takes the form of life history narratives such as those that have resulted from the interviews with my respondents and my own autobiographical account in the following chapters. It is seen as constituting identity (Tierney 2000) while, it is argued, the 'political nature and potential of memory' (Sikes and Goodson 2003, p. 48) sets it up in opposition to history which is 'perpetually suspicious of memory and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it' (Nora 1989, quoted in Sikes and Goodson 2003, p. 49). This

understanding of reflexivity allows for the expression of forms of truth and experience that are not normally in the public sphere. The researcher, therefore, can give a voice to those memories and reflections that are so often lost and forgotten, as well as to the people who have and share them.

D'Cruz et al (2007) identify at least three alternative meanings for the term 'reflexivity' ranging from the application of (1) a 'skill to process information and enhance decision making' (p. 77) to (2) a critical awareness of the self and of knowledge as a social construction (p. 85) to (3) a still more heightened awareness of 'the influences on knowledge creation, from the interplay between cognition and emotion and the connections between structural power and interpersonal relationships' (p. 82). While I have kept all these meanings in mind throughout the research project it is particularly those meanings 2 and 3 above that have affected how I have approached the analysis of the data collected and how I have attempted to record the process of analysis itself. My stance can be summarized as

> an attempt to identify, do something about, and acknowledge the limitations of the research: its location, its subjects, its process, its theoretical context, its data, its analysis, and how accounts recognize that the construction of knowledge takes place in the world and not apart from it (Smyth and Shacklock 1998, p. 7).

Bourdieu's espousal of reflexive sociology, described by Wacquant as 'his signature obsession with reflexivity' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 36), demonstrates how he has 'continually turned the instruments of his science upon himself'. In so doing Bourdieu was anxious to avoid the bias of the sociologist or intellectual who objectivises the object of study but omits to objectify his own role and position within the field of which he is also a part. A further danger lies in confusing the reflexivity which derives from psychoanalysis with that related to socioanalysis; to Bourdieu the more popular 'psychoanalytic reflexivity' derives from a desire to individualise experience and provide

therapy while 'sociological reflexivity ... makes us discover things that are *generic*, things that are shared, banal, commonplace' (ibid, p. 72, italics in original).

It is these ordinary social experiences that I have been intent on examining in this project. In fact, it was my effort to avoid engaging in personal therapy that caused me to state in the proposal for this thesis (O'Shaughnessy 2007b) that I did not want to indulge in an autobiographical account of the events described here or project my own experiences onto the accounts of my respondents. Nonetheless, there has been a therapeutic value in telling the story and attempting to make sense of past events, both for myself and as expressed to me by several of my interviewees (Merrill and West 2009), while remaining conscious that it is the social and structural background to personal choices that gives an additional layer of meaning to the research findings and contributes to my 'sociological imagination' (Mills 1959) as a new researcher. At the same time I am aware that Bourdieu too was not averse to an autobiographical standpoint which increasingly appeared in his work as he got older; I will explore this perspective in the following section.

Auto/biography and the life history approach as data

It was with great reluctance that I came to realise that a research project into my professional colleagues would not make sense without including an account of my own professional trajectory and the changes I have undergone in my career as a lecturer in German. My reluctance stemmed from a number of sources. In researching a paper exploring the usefulness of life history as a methodological approach (O'Shaughnessy 2007a), I was struck by the openness of some educational sociologists (Carr 1995, Roberts 1998, Sikes and Goodson 2003) who were prepared to bring their own life histories into their work, almost as a way of apologising for their intrusion into the life histories of the subjects of their research. At first I was enchanted by their stories and pleased to see that

there could be a link between the literature and humanities subjects of my own academic past and the discipline of sociology that I was now about to enter. However, as I looked in greater detail at their accounts of how they had grown up to be academics far removed from the social trajectory that was expected of them within their (generally working-class) family circles, I became frustrated by some of the writers' lack of critical analysis of the social structures that had surrounded their choices and allowed them to change their social class when others could not. It seemed to me that there was something missing from their stories, mediated as they must have been by many years' experience of writing as academics and memories filtered by their expertise in interviewing and producing qualitative research.

Another point was that these autobiographical accounts were written by people with a long track record in their discipline who, having spent years examining the lives of others, had earned the right to talk about themselves in the same way, if they wished. An intellectual autobiography is not unusual towards the end of a distinguished academic career, as the intellectual autobiographies of Ricoeur (Hahn 1995) and Gadamer (Hahn 1997) can attest. As a new researcher I did not feel I had earned the right to bring my own life history or intellectual trajectory into my first serious research project.

Then I read Bourdieu's posthumous *Sketch for a Self-Analysis* (2007), which he had written – perhaps tongue in cheek (Robbins 2007) – intending that 'this is not an autobiography' (Bourdieu 2007, p. x), and saw my own fears expressed from the very first lines. What Bourdieu set out to do in this work was to 'try to gather together and present some elements for a self-socioanalysis' (p. 1) while conscious of his 'apprehensions, which go beyond the habitual fear of being misunderstood' (ibid). What the book shows clearly is how issues that affected his formative years – his peasant background in Béarn, his boarding school experiences and later academic formation in elite institutions in Paris and his time in Algeria during the war of independence – went on to form the basis of

some of Bourdieu's best known and most influential works (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Bourdieu 1988, 1990, 1991, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Aware of 'the scale of [his] path through social space and the incompatibility of the social worlds that it links without reconciling them' (Bourdieu 2007, p. 1) Bourdieu used the 'point of view of sociology' to explain and understand himself and his life choices as if they were 'any other object' (ibid).

Bourdieu was not always so confident in putting himself into the frame, as his account of the writing of an article in the mid-1970s based on his observations at a village dance in Béarn explains: 'at the time I felt compelled to "disappear". I contrived to use impersonal sentences so as never to write "I" (...)' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, pp. 162-3). In *Homo Academicus* (1998) too, he may have contrived to avoid using 'I' but he, very clearly, intended to include himself in his analysis of the French academic world, so that, as a reflexive sociologist, he could fix his gaze upon himself as 'one representative of a category' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 203) and thereby 'say aloud the truth of others by speaking about myself' (ibid).

It was this point which brought me to the realisation that my study of German language lecturers required my own sociological self-objectivation if it was to offer a thorough insight into the positions and dispositions of my colleagues. Given that I had informed the participants of my project before they had agreed to take part that I would not delve into their personal lives during the interviews unless they were open to doing so themselves, I found that very few were. I had also asked my respondents to provide a curriculum vitae, while guaranteeing their anonymity, in order to provide some background information to their academic trajectories that might not surface during the interviews, but most did not do so. It began to seem impossible, therefore, to examine the workings of the individual habitus of my interviewees as 'a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions...' (Bourdieu and

Wacquant 1992, p. 18) if I did not have the opportunity to go back into their family history and their personal trajectories from before they had begun their academic careers. Turning my socioanalysis onto myself provided a solution that allowed me to go back to the formation of the habitus of at least one representative of the category of German language lecturer. It also helped me to position my professional experiences within the field of German language teaching and the specific institutional field where I have been employed for so many years. My account will form the basis of the following chapter of this thesis, chapter 4.

The realisation that I would need to include myself came towards the end of collecting my primary data, after I had conducted two rounds of interviews and gathered numerous institutional and policy documents. The interviews were the main data source and fell into three functional categories. The first category involved 19 German lecturers, either permanent staff who were still in employment or former part-timers who had moved on to other work and studies, from a number of higher education institutions. With this group, whom I refer to as 'respondents', I used a life history interview approach in a semi-structured and open-ended format. A second group of five interviewees, defined as 'informants', were asked to provide information on the structural background to the changes that occurred in the professional lives of German lecturers in the institution which was to become the main focus of the project – MIT. Finally, having decided to concentrate mostly on this institution I returned to the respondents who continued to work there and re-interviewed nine of the ten lecturers from the first round (the tenth person being unavailable at the time). The second interview was targeted at eliciting responses relating to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, field and reflexivity and therefore took a more directed approach than the life history-style of the first interviews. I also emailed similar questions to the six interviewees from the other institutions and received thoughtful responses from all of them – in practice, these interviewees turned out to be as much informants about the institutions where they worked as

they were respondents to questions about their career histories. The remaining interviewees from round one, the three former part-timers, were not contacted to provide further information on the basis that they were no longer in the institutional field that had ejected them several years earlier and that had triggered but no longer directly affected the changes that their professional identities had undergone.

A limited form of life history interviewing was therefore one of the main sources of information for my research. Before embarking on the interview process I wanted to be sure that I understood exactly what the term meant.

It is clear from the literature on life history research that, without the reflexivity discussed above and an awareness by the researcher that her autobiography shapes both the research itself and her response to the data that is uncovered (Scott 1998, Tierney 2000, Usher 2001), life history may amount to no more than storytelling (Goodson and Sikes 2001, Usher 2001). As Bourdieu points out (Bourdieu et al 1999), it is the interviewer who starts the game, sets out the rules and has the obligation to avoid symbolic violence to the person whose story is being told. However, it must always be remembered that there are two people in any interview situation and that the biography of the interviewee also comes into play. He or she takes the opportunity to create a narrative account, sometimes about a subject that has not been given voice to before – and this can amount to a political act (Merrill and West 2009) which brings the present and the future into the recounting of past events. Life history is a narrative statement and a retrospective account (Tierney 2000) that imposes a chronology to the unfolding activities of a life while also creating boundaries around the happenings and situations that form the focus of the research (Elliot 2005). In creating a narrative an individual gains a sense of herself as an 'intentional agent with continuity through time' (ibid, p. 126) and constitutes an identity in the act of constructing the narrative.

For Scott (1998) biographical narrative involves 'recursive dilemmas' (p. 32) because it bends back on itself – it is a 'text constituted in and through history' (p. 35) in which social actors shape public events through their own autobiography. This suggests that life history is not merely the recounting of memories but is mediated through the social structures that surround the events narrated and the agency of the participants on both sides of the interview table – the respondent and the researcher have a role in the construction of the narratives that eventually form the story of the research project itself. Bourdieu's interview methodology (Bourdieu et al 1999) supports this view by arguing that, for the researcher, 'understanding and explaining are one' (p. 613).

Having looked at some of the epistemological issues that affected my choice of methodology during the course of this project I would now like to explain the process I undertook to find answers to the two research questions I began with.

The story of the project: collecting the data

Unlike Bourdieu, who came to regret his failure to keep a diary during his research into French higher education (Bourdieu 1988), I was fortunate to have been encouraged to keep a research journal from the earliest stages of the EdD programme. At first this amounted to little more that a summary of my thoughts and experiences of the Part I study weekends and some ideas for future assignments or for the thesis. Once the thesis proposal was underway the research journal became a space to plan out the work I needed to do and the interview schedules; to note my impressions and thoughts after interviews with respondents and meetings with my supervisor; to record new ideas and changes of direction as the research progressed and to motivate and ground myself at times when the research did not seem to be progressing at all. My research journal became the red thread that held the project together although, given the part-time nature of the research, there were often long gaps while I got on with other aspects of my professional life. At other times, such as when I was

hurrying to complete an analysis of the first interviews of the participants I was planning to interview a second time and then conducting the second interviews within a short and busy time-frame, I regret that I did not find the opportunity to record my impressions of most of these second-round interviews and must now rely on hazy memory to remind me of the background details. While not as thorough as it might have been, my research journal has become a valuable document in reconstructing this account and in providing internal validity (Elliott 2005) to the research process by triangulating the facts as they occurred at the time, my analysis of the interviews themselves and my memories and impressions from the distance of more than a year later (Schostak 2002).

As a starting point to gaining an understanding of the issues that surround the concept of 'professional identity' I undertook a thematic review of the literature. The purpose of a literature review, according to Schostak (2002), is that it gives focus to the 'key foundational debates' (p. 27) that surround the central interests of the researcher. By reading deeply, but not too widely because otherwise there would be no limit, it becomes possible 'to find one's own questions, see how other writers have tried to answer these and then formulate one's own responses' (ibid). In my case, because I was not based near the University of Sheffield library and would have had considerable difficulty in accessing many of the books I might require, I concentrated mostly on journal articles. This had the advantage of allowing me to search through journal archives online as well as getting immediate access to the most recent writing on the subject. By setting up Zetoc alerts through my own institutional library I was instantly contacted by email as soon as specified sociology and education journals and articles containing certain key words – such as 'professional identity', 'academic identity' and 'teacher identity' – were published. In this way I was kept abreast of newly published work and was able to incorporate new and interesting insights throughout the project.

I undertook a similar process with regard to working out my conceptual framework. Having decided during the thesis proposal stage that Bourdieu's concepts looked most appropriate to my research, in helping to provide answers to such questions as what identity is and how it changes under certain structural conditions, I proceeded to write a reflective essay on how Bourdieu could be used to frame the methodology of the project. Reading a number of key primary texts (Bourdieu 1984, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1999, Bourdieu et al 1999) and some secondary sources, including Swartz (1997) and Grenfell (2004, 2007), gave me a preliminary understanding of how Bourdieu's work could shape theory, methodology and research methods. Since then I have continued to widen my reading of Bourdieu, including Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Bourdieu 2007, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, and of some of the numerous writers who have discussed his work, particularly as it relates to education, educational institutions and organisational analysis. I again set up a series of Zetoc alerts (using key words such as 'Bourdieu', 'habitus', 'social capital', 'symbolic capital' and 'academic capital' – the term 'field' turned out to be too wide in its usage and turned up many irrelevant topics) and have kept up to date with journal articles on these subjects. The results of this continuous literature review have informed my thinking throughout the planning and writing of the thesis but have been applied particularly to the chapter dealing with my theoretical framework, chapter 2.

With this preparatory work in hand I was ready to begin selecting interview participants for the project in March 2008. The first step was to follow the ethical guidelines of the University of Sheffield and put my proposal through the ethical review procedure. I drew up an information sheet for potential participants which described in straightforward terms the aims, objectives and methodology of my research and why they had been selected: because they were either lecturers in German whose professional identities had been affected by change or were in management positions during the time this change took place. I assured the ethics review committee that the information given by

participants would remain confidential and anonymous and would be safely stored in my office at home. However, on the advice of my supervisor, I alerted potential interviewees that I would be unable to give an absolute guarantee of anonymity because of the relatively small pool of German lecturers and higher education institutions in Ireland but would use pseudonyms for both themselves and the institution they worked at and try to ensure at all times that they could not be identified and would be fairly represented in the thesis. The project was given approval to proceed in April 2008 and I went on to contact potential interviewees, some of whom were known to me personally for many years, others whom I knew through mutual acquaintances, by email and telephone.

My original thought was to contact all the German lecturers I was aware were working at MIT as well as several former part-time lecturers whose contact details I already had access to. Not expecting that everyone would want to take part in my project I emailed twelve permanent lecturers at MIT and received a positive response from eleven of them, although one individual subsequently withdrew on receipt of the participant information sheet. Later, at the first interview stage, two lecturers wanted further verbal assurances that their audio recordings would not be used in public – at that point I realised that the information sheet had not been clear enough in expressing my intention to use only transcripts of audio recording, not the voices themselves, in the event of presenting my research at conferences. The first round of interviews with German lecturers and former lecturers took place between April and June 2008.

At the same time I also included a small number of managers from MIT who had been involved in or aware of the decisions to remove German from several programmes across the institution, because it seemed likely that very little of that decision-making process would be available in documented form. One of these informants suggested approaching a human resources (HR) manager to give a different perspective on how lecturers at MIT had changed their careers. I conducted an interview with this informant in July and discovered at that point

that he had not been employed at MIT at the time in question – nonetheless, I found him very helpful and willing to explain the current institutional viewpoint. Subsequently, I decided to include a teaching union perspective by interviewing a former TUI official who had been actively engaged in the events that triggered this project. That interview took place in early September 2008 and marked the last of the first round of respondent and informant interviews.

Apart from MIT participants, I had decided initially that I would concentrate on two other IoTs and made contact with three lecturers in each institution. Unfortunately, at the first of these, one lecturer was not available on the day I had arranged and then went on extended leave. At the second IoT one lecturer withdrew on receipt of the participant information sheet and another was not available on the day I came to interview him. The third lecturer was extremely helpful and gave me an overview of her institution as well as her own situation. At that point I decided to widen out my approach to get a more general sense of the issues at work across the IoT sector and therefore contacted two more German lecturers from two different IoTs. For contrast, and to give some insight into the issue of academic identity in the university sector (Henkel 2004, 2005, Harris 2005, Archer 2008, Clegg 2008, Kolsaker 2008), I also contacted a lecturer at a university where languages are more often applied to the needs of industry and technology, as in the IoT sector, than the traditional university view of languages as pertaining to literature and philosophy.

Over the summer of 2008 I began a preliminary analysis of the 23 interviews I had by then conducted by listening many times to the recordings I had made on a digital voice recorder and by writing a summary of each one. Never having had any experience of conducting research interviews, I had been very nervous at the outset that the technology would function as required, although I had practised using it several times. For the first interview, my respondent Tony (a pseudonym) had agreed to come to the building where I worked and we sat in a room that would normally be quiet at that time. Unfortunately, within several

minutes of the start of our interview a group of porters entered the room and proceeded to move out all the furniture – noisily – except for the chairs we were sitting on and the table that the recorder was balanced on. For fear of stopping and starting the recorder and finding out later that it had not recorded Tony's narrative fully, I continued with the interview and Tony soldiered bravely on through the noise. This was not the most auspicious start for a novice interviewer – fortunately, when the recording was uploaded onto my computer the sound was not affected and the summary was written up like all the others, although I always laughed to hear the background noise of chatter among the porters and the screech of chair legs across the wooden floor. I also worried that the disruption had affected Tony's responses but felt that the second interview I conducted with him six months later would give him the opportunity to give a more reflective account and counteract any distortions.

While I attempted to find a quiet place for the subsequent interviews, which were all held in institutional settings, several more involved interruptions. The difference was that I now trusted my technology and could stop and start the interviews smoothly, when required.

A feature of all the interviews I conducted for this project was that they did not begin and end when the digital recorder was switched on and off. In the case of some of the managers, who had given me a particular time-slot for the interview, there was just time for a brief preamble and my explanations of the project often took place as part of the recorded interview itself. In contrast, with many of the German lecturer respondents I often had a lengthy conversation before switching on the recorder and even more so once the recorder had been switched off. This was partly due to the stance I had adopted towards the practice of conducting life history interviews. I had considered using the biographical narrative interpretative method (BNIM) espoused by Chamberlayne (Chamberlayne et al 2000, 2002) and Wengraf (2006) but rejected it because it required a collective approach to the interpretation of the

interviews based on grounded theory, and I was a lone researcher, and because it tended to emphasise psychological rather than sociological explanations (Wengraf 2006). What I did like about the method was the open structure it allowed for in a first interview, something also supported by Goodson (2005), who advises not to prepare for life history interviews too much. By not supplying questions in advance, as some respondents had requested in order to prepare themselves for our interview, I was able, as a reflexive researcher, to take part consciously in the construction of the life history narratives of my German lecturer interviewees as they took place.

The recorded interviews typically began with an open question, such as 'tell me about how you came to be a German lecturer and how the recent changes have affected your perception of your professional identity' and proceeded with questions by me as prompts to the respondents to expand in greater detail on the issues surrounding their professional experiences. After reviewing the first six respondent interviews I realised that I had not always got a clear definition from each person regarding how exactly they defined their professional identity – I therefore emailed them to ask how they described what they did and received several responses, some of which I have quoted in my analysis, where appropriate.

I was always conscious that I did not want to cause difficulties or provoke anxiety for my respondents – some were clearly editing their narratives while the recording was going on and were much more revealing of their feelings, and often frustrations, when the recording had stopped. Because of the ethical duty I owe to these individuals I decided not to include most of these asides (except for a few anonymous examples to illustrate the power relations between the interviewees and myself which I will discuss below). I saw the summaries of our interviews as a form of contract – in the sense that 'this is the information I will include, not anything else that may have transpired between us'. When I sent each of the interviewees a copy of their individual interview summary in

early September 2008 I invited them to comment or correct any misapprehensions on my part. A few respondents replied to correct factual misunderstandings and the HR manager asked me to amend any impression that he was commenting on events that took place before he was employed at MIT – I was happy to do so.

The duration of the interviews ranged from about 22 to 52 minutes and ended when I felt that no new material was being produced and we had reached saturation point on the issue of changing professional identity and the events that engendered it. The summaries were on average 2 to 3 pages in length and included occasional direct quotations from the interviewees, wherever these appeared particularly expressive or pithy.

The second round of interviews with nine of the ten respondents from MIT took place in late October and November 2008. The tenth person had gone on extended leave by then and did not respond to requests for an interview. This time the interviews were more structured and directed towards answering questions that sought to map the lecturers' accounts onto Bourdieu's concepts according to a matrix that I had devised as part of the analysis of the first round of interviews. (The matrix and analysis will be discussed in the next section.) I also prepared questions specific to each interviewee in order to explicate gaps in their career trajectories that seemed apparent from the first interview. Conscious of the intrusion (Bourdieu et al 1999) of returning a second time to people who had busy professional lives I said from the outset that the interviews would be short (about 15 minutes) and that I would provide a full transcript. The transcript was to show where I would be drawing the bulk of their quotes from in the thesis but at this point I feared that some respondents might withdraw from the project if they felt that they had been too open and critical – fortunately for me, no one did. As mentioned earlier, I also emailed questions based on the matrix to the six German lecturers from the other institutions but did not contact

the former part-time lecturers or the MIT informants for any further information.

Copies of the interview transcripts were sent out in February 2009 with a covering letter which drew out one further discussion point from each interview and invited the respondents to comment on my analysis of this point. Two respondents, Anna and Marlene, commented briefly on the points I had raised and another, Rachel, wrote an extensive and reflective response on the evening after our interview. I have included some of these comments in my analysis of their stories (apart from one point made by Rachel which she asked me to keep confidential) (all names used in the thesis are pseudonyms). Two more respondents, whom I met several months after the second round of interviews, passed general comments about the transcripts but did not put these in writing.

This, then, was the extent of my primary data; the boundary had been fixed and the next stage was to work with what I had been given in order to provide a meaningful analysis of the changes my respondents had made in their professional lives and how these changes were affecting their professional identities. Secondary data sources included MIT institutional documents, such as quality assurance and review documentation, minutes of meetings and institutional policy and position papers, as well as information and policy documentation from Irish academic staff organisations, the IoT sector and the national and European higher education policy fields. The majority of these documents were found online: as a staff member in MIT I had access to papers published internally on the institutional intranet, while previous research into the Erasmus programme of the European Union had given me an insight into the available sources for national and international policies on higher education. With regard to the minutes of MIT Engineering Faculty meetings (cited in chapter 4) which took place in the years 2000 and 2001 and of which I had been told at the time there was no record, some detective work was required. I discovered that such institutional documentation was removed to a small storage

room on the retirement of the holders of the documents – half a day's rummaging during the Easter break of 2008 uncovered the file that recorded the decision to remove German from Engineering Faculty programmes, thereby unleashing the changes that affected my own professional life and that of many others.

Writing the story: analysing the data

On one level data analysis is synonymous with data collection itself. The process of collecting, and constructing (Bourdieu et al 1999, Guéranger 2009), interview data involves the simultaneous process of understanding and analysing what is being said. It is essential to the 'non-violent communication' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 610) that should take place between the researcher and the respondent but, equally, between the researcher and the reader of a research project that the 'intentions and procedural principles' (ibid p. 607) should be explicit at all times. The social proximity and familiarity between the researcher and interview respondents must be reflected in the analysis that is produced. I have tried to do this by placing myself within the same analytical space as my respondents and by objectifying myself in order to take on the point of view of my interviewees. I have done so as openly as possible by including a whole chapter on my own experiences, both personal and professional (see chapter 4 below). At the same time I have kept in mind Bourdieu's precept that the researcher must attempt to provide an objective perception of the people being questioned while avoiding objectifying them (ibid). At all times my 'point of view' in analysing the data of the interviews has been to 're-produce the point of view of (the interviewee) and constitute it as such by resituating it within social space' (ibid p. 625).

To do this I needed to take a somewhat different approach to that outlined by Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al 1999). In *The Weight of the World* (ibid) Bourdieu and his colleagues concentrated on collecting interview data where in previous

works he had also employed statistical data, surveys (Bourdieu 1984, 1988) and observation (Bourdieu 1990) and he later went on to use memoir and autobiography (Bourdieu 2007) to great effect. I have combined all of these research techniques to some extent (except perhaps observation in an ethnographic sense) and, while I found Bourdieu's 'Understanding' (Bourdieu et al 1999, pp. 607-626) enormously helpful for conducting interviews, my analysis needed to find a way to combine this data with the material from secondary sources to allow the reader to situate him- or herself in the social space of my respondents' views.

An approach provided by Warren and Webb (2006, 2007a, 2007b), that draws on Bourdieu to move beyond the individualising tendencies of life history research so as to connect individuals' habitus to the social structure that affects their lives, is one they term 'recursive methodology' (2007b). Here data collection and analysis become an iterative and reiterative process as the researcher constructs a series of narratives that derive from a first interview; the analysis of that interview; a second interview that takes account of this analysis; interviews with informants that throw light on the social structures that surround the respondent and the analysis of documentary evidence to add to a fuller understanding of the forces at work in the field of power. Each layer of narrative deconstructs and reconstructs the original life history and the habitus of the respondent under the objectifying gaze of the researcher.

Following this methodology my summaries of the first round of interviews with German lecturers and former lecturers became the first narrative layer in the recursive process. In preparation for the second round of interviews with MIT staff and the email contact I was intending to make with the non-MIT respondents I analysed the interviews again, this time from the perspective of how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, field and reflexivity could be observed at work in the narratives. A second set of narratives was thereby produced and from this I derived a number of themes that were common to all

the respondents and that required further exploration. I compiled six general questions, mapped to the issues on which I required elaboration from the respondents and to how Bourdieu's concepts were linked to the notion of professional identity. I called this an interview methodology matrix, a copy of which is shown in Appendix A.

I used the matrix to ensure that the second round of information-gathering would provide details that were directly linked to my conceptual framework. For example, I hoped that respondents would use their own reflexivity to think about and express their views on their professional identities; on how their previous life history and experiences (their habitus and capital) had affected their ability and willingness to change; on how their institution had helped or hindered them in adapting to change and in shaping their professional identities, changed or otherwise. I also planned to use the contrasting experiences of lecturers from different institutions to build a case for the argument that different social spaces created different possibilities for those who were positioned within them. In the end, once I had come to the conclusion that I would need to include a large amount of material about myself and my experiences in my own institution, there was not enough space and time left to explore this issue to its fullest extent – I would hope to use the information provided by the non-MIT respondents to examine this aspect in more detail at a later date.

Before deciding to include myself, however, I still hoped to elicit from the second round of interviews accounts that would delve willingly into the personal histories of my respondents and help to explain the formation of their professional and academic habitus from their personal trajectories. In discussion with my supervisor the idea emerged to try to shake up the interview experience and engender a new kind of dialogue. My plan was to conduct the second interviews sitting beside rather than opposite the interviewees so that I could use a more graphic representation of the questions I wanted to ask. During the

interviews I drew a circle to represent identity and asked them to mark how much of this circle was taken up by professional identity, how much by other types of identity. I then drew a time line representing their careers and asked that they consider times when they had encountered or initiated change and whether they had behaved in the same way or differently then than they had during the changes we were discussing. While all the respondents answered these questions, most did not seem comfortable with pursuing the topics back into the personal realm. Not wanting to impose symbolic violence on my interviewees I withdrew my questioning to the professional arena.

Recalling this experience brings me to a brief discussion of the power relations at play within the interview situation. Many writers have drawn attention to the idea that, by instigating the research and conducting the interviews, most of the power is in the hands of the interviewer (Goodson and Fliesser 1995, Scott and Usher 1996, 1999, Schostak 2002, Goodson 2005). While not wishing to appear naïve as an insider researcher in the 'pursuit of innocence' (MacLure 2003, p. 103) I did not always feel that this was true in my case. When interviewing managers who were higher in the institutional hierarchy than me, although they were always friendly and helpful, the fact of being occasionally kept waiting before an interview or the interruptions during some of them certainly balanced out any power differential that control of the questions and the voice recorder may have given me.

In the case of lecturer colleagues I encountered several examples of individuals resisting any perceived power imbalance. One example was an interviewee who was so hesitant and evasive when I tried to open out the discussion beyond professional identity that I knew the subject must be dropped. Once the recorder was switched off she expressed her discomfort but later sent a very open and informative email when she had reached the comfort zone of her own home. A second interviewee, with whom I was chatting after our second interview, burst out laughing when I admitted that the results of my research would hardly have

any noticeable effect on her professional life – I had been at pains to equalise our status by acknowledging that my research could not affect her, while she made it clear that such an outcome would be ridiculous anyway. A final example was the response of a third interviewee on meeting me after he had received a copy of his first interview summary: he made a cat snarling noise and a clawing gesture which I took to mean that he felt that the critique he had voiced had actually come from me, and that I was being catty. It was a funny gesture but I was shocked that an interviewee might think I was skewing his views – on the other hand, this interviewee did not pursue the matter further and was even more critical in his second interview, of which he received a full transcript. The point to be made here is that all the interviewees who took part in this process took the opportunity, to a greater or lesser extent, to voice opinions that had not been elicited previously. They may well, as Bourdieu has pointed out (Bourdieu et al 1999), have been closer to mastering the interview situation than I was as the interviewer. Overall, I was very grateful for their generosity in sharing their time and thoughts with me and hope that a sense of 'fair trade' (Goodson and Fliesser 1995) prevailed.

One final opportunity presented itself to get further comments from respondents when I sent their second interview transcripts with a covering letter and a copy of the interview methodology matrix. By including the matrix I wanted to show where the questioning for the second interview had derived from and give them a chance to get involved in the analysis of their own stories (Merrill and West 2009). While two people did answer an individualised question pertaining to their professional identities, no other comments emerged. I hope to present some of the analysis and conclusions of this thesis to interested participants in a seminar and discussion forum in the future.

Returning to the recursive analysis, the first two narrative layers, the second interview transcripts and the MIT informant interviews and secondary documentation were now used to begin to construct a further layer of analysis

that would shed light on the structural background to the stories of my respondents. Appendix B gives a sample of this recursive analytical process at work in the case of one respondent, Anna.

At this point it was necessary to consider how the thesis was going to be put together and how the different layers of analysis could be brought together in a way that would prove interesting and accessible for the reader. Table 1 (on the next page) gives an overview of the various levels and layers of analysis that were at play at this stage. I began by separating out my own autobiography from that of other German lecturers. Using Bourdieu's (2007) sociological approach to autobiography, as explained above, I wrote an account of my personal and professional trajectory. Using the recursive methodology of Warren and Webb (2007b) I interwove this account with historical and structural accounts of the higher education field and the institutional field where I had spent the greater part of my professional life and where my professional habitus had been formed. The personal and institutional changes that had taken place over the last decade were analysed through the conceptual prism of habitus, capital and field, with reflexivity as the key analytical tool. These different analytical layers came together to form chapter 4.

Having taken a similar approach to the large quantity of data produced from 24 interviews, nine re-interviews, email responses and a wide range of documentation, I was anxious to, in Bourdieu's words (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 624), 'provide the reader with tools for a comprehensive reading, a reading capable of reproducing the stance that gave rise to the text'. In my autobiographical chapter I had started from myself and worked outwards so, to avoid a sense of repetition and predictability, I decided to approach the remaining data from the outside in. Looking at the fields within fields in which the professional habitus of my respondents was constructed I began with the largest field and worked my way in to the field closest to each individual

Table 1: Analytical layers and their relation to Bourdieu's concepts

Levels	What sources I have	Layers of Analysis	What concepts?
1. Personal level	EdD personal statement, personal reflection and memory, MIT documentation on modularisation, strategic plan, historical monograph, minutes of meetings etc.	Relate my own personal and professional identity to Bourdieu's concepts and *Sketch for a Self-Analysis* (Bourdieu 2007), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and level 3 below	**Habitus, capital, field, reflexivity, positioning; professional habitus, institutional habitus?**
2. MIT colleagues	Interviews: round 1 (10), round 2 (9) and responses by email	1. Round 1 interview synopsis 2. Narrative analysis of round 1 interviews, making links to Bourdieu's concepts 3. Round 2 interviews and transcripts 4. Covering letters with individualised question and (possible) response 5. Review narrative analysis based on all the above sources + level 3 6. Comparative analysis according to age, male/female, native/non-native German speakers and responses to change	**Habitus, capital, field, reflexivity**
3. MIT institutional	Interviews (5), LS review document, MIT institutional documentation	Narrative analysis of informants' interviews. Relate to previous levels, 1 and 2	**Field, positioning, institutional habitus?**
4. MIT part-time lecturers	Interviews (3)	Narrative analysis of interviews. Relate the analysis to levels 2 and 3	**Habitus, capital, field, reflexivity**
5. IoT and university lecturers	Interviews (6) and responses to emails	Narrative analysis of interviews. Relate the analysis to levels 2 and 3	**Habitus, capital, field, reflexivity**
6. Irish national policy	HEA, DES, Forfás, business groups, Language Strategy Network etc. documentation and website information	Analyse and relate to level 3 and how it affects levels 2, 4 and 5	**Field, positioning, symbolic capital**
7. International policy	EU, Council of Europe and other documentation	Analyse and relate to levels 3 and 6 and how it affects levels 2, 4 and 5	**Field, positioning, linguistic capital**

habitus, the institutional field of MIT. Starting with the field of European language policy I moved on to the national higher education field and the sectoral field of the IoTs before coming to the institution itself – this became the basis for chapter 5.

Chapter 6 presents the description and analysis of the individual stories of my MIT respondents, divided into four groups: those who were willing to change; those who were resistant to change but who eventually responded to institutional pressure; those who were not required to change their professional identities and, finally, those who had been part-time lecturers and who, on losing their jobs, had no choice but to change. Again, in writing this chapter I was anxious to avoid too much repetition and therefore structured the sections in slightly different ways, sometimes outlining the individuals' stories separately, sometimes as a group, while also sometimes conducting individual analysis, at other times grouping the analyses together and providing an analytical synthesis linked to Bourdieu's concepts at the end of each section.

In transcribing, summarizing, commenting on and analysing my respondents' accounts I concentrated on the content rather than the form or the performance of the interviews (Elliot 2005). While MacLure (2003) argues that literal quotations in texts are an attempt to imitate the 'real' (p. 159) and therefore a form of fabrication, I have preferred to take on board Bourdieu's view that using interviewees' speech can 'provide a more accessible equivalent of complex abstract conceptual analyses' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 623) and have used many direct quotations – mainly from the second round of interviews but also from the first interviews and email communications. It is my view that, having taken the time to be interviewed, the respondents deserve to maintain the agency of their own voices. Even if the resulting account is ultimately my construction, it allows in part for the articulation of a discourse 'which might never have been spoken, but which was already there, merely awaiting the conditions for its actualization' (ibid p. 614).

For the transcription of quotations I chose readability over the formal notation of conversation analysis (Bourdieu et al 1999). Conventional literary punctuation was used, with round brackets to denote words omitted from the text, (…), and square brackets denoting words inserted by me into the text.

Finally, although I had set out on a project that would present a comparison between a number of institutions and show the influence of fields and social spaces on the habitus of individuals who were obliged to change, this was not exactly what this thesis has produced. As outlined earlier, the wish to find a way to explore the functioning of habitus caused me to include a chapter on myself and left insufficient room for all the data I had gathered from other institutions – of course, that information has informed my understanding throughout the project and has been included, if only briefly, in the section on the IoT sectoral field in chapter 5. However, what I have actually produced is a case study of MIT and the structural forces within the institution that have affected the professional lives of more than a dozen German lecturers, both currently and previously employed there.

As defined by Stake (2005) case study research is 'not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied' (p. 443) while Eisenhardt (1989) defines it as 'a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings' (p. 534). Case study research allows for a combined approach to data collection, taking in archival material, interviews and observation and for multiple levels of analysis (ibid). The historical, social, and cultural contexts are often taken into account and the multiplicity of sources and perceptions allows for triangulation of the case. Such research also facilitates the conveying of the experience of the actors involved because researchers concentrate on the subjective data of participants and witnesses (Stake 2005). All of these factors have been present in my research but where mine differs from the case study research described by Stake is that my analysis has not been

bounded completely by the institutional setting. By looking at the policy fields beyond MIT I have been able to analyse where some of the structural forces at work there have their origins and what outside forces may cause future change in institutional language policy. On the other hand, my use of Bourdieu's theory to explain the interaction of agents and the institutional structures of MIT could be seen as a method of theory testing, with Bourdieu himself having employed a form of case study research to build the theory (Eisenhardt 1989) of habitus, capital and field that derived from his study of the people of Algeria (Bourdieu 1990).

Having outlined the methodological standpoint that shaped the progress of this research project I would now like to move on to the core of the thesis: the argument that professional identity is formed and changed to a large extent by the effects of time and space on individuals and groups and that Bourdieu's concepts are a useful socioanalytical tool for explaining the process of change to both structures and agents. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 set out to provide the material and the analysis to support this argument.

4

The construction of a professional identity: one language lecturer's story and one institution's history

In this chapter I intend to use Bourdieu's 'socio-analytic toolkit' (Zipin and Brennan 2004, p. 20) of habitus, capital and field to explain the development of professional identity in the trajectory of an individual lecturer in German in an Irish higher education institution – namely, myself. As was made clear in chapter 2, Bourdieu's concepts can only function effectively when used in relation to each other in a context that examines the effects of time and space on the 'object of study' (Grenfell 1996) itself. The professional identity of an individual can be shown to derive from the interplay of personal habitus, which is formed from early family background and its cultural, economic and social capital, the individual's educational and academic experiences and the fields traversed in the course of her professional life. By means of a detailed description and analysis of my own personal history combined with the history of the institutional field in which my professional habitus was primarily shaped I hope to show the effectiveness of Bourdieu's concepts as a framework for explaining the formation of professional identity and the ability of one individual to deal with the challenges of change.

An attempt at self-objectivation

I come from a middle-class family background but did not grow up with a middle-class lifestyle. Both my parents are from an Irish city, my mother from a family that included a state pathologist, a deputy police commissioner, photographers, artists and numerous sports journalists; my father is the son of a revolutionary in the 1916 Easter Rising, later an intermittently successful

businessman who had tried his hand at running a stud farm, a dairy, a pharmacy, a bus company and a garage. My father attended two elite Catholic secondary schools but left without academic success and went on to become a motor mechanic. Coincidentally, he completed his apprenticeship in the institution where I have spent the greater part of my professional career.

Because of the precarious nature of my father's work in a private company, I grew up with a constant awareness that money was scarce and could not be guaranteed. My father's fears were not imaginary as he had already suffered a year's unemployment before I was born and much later he was to be made redundant while on annual holidays. He only discovered that fact at the tea-break of his first day back to work when the manager realised that they had forgotten to tell him – he was in his fifties at that point and never worked again. My mother went to secondary school and then trained as a secretary. She often worked in part-time jobs, which was quite unusual for married women with children at the time but the extra income was always welcome. Like many women of her generation, she had been obliged to give up permanent work when she married because of the operation of the so-called 'marriage bar', which pushed most married women out of the workforce until the early 1970s.

We lived in a small village only nine miles from the city centre but nonetheless so remote that it did not provide a public water system until I was about ten years old. Until then, water was collected in rain barrels and drinking water came from a communal pump in the centre of the village. Like Bourdieu (2007), I often had the experience at secondary school and as a student that many people I met had never heard of the place. With the recent construction of several thousand houses in the area, this is no longer the case. The village had no school at that time so I went with all the local children to a primary school in the next village. Girls and boys were educated separately and the girls' school consisted of two teachers who shared all eight primary classes between them. I was among the best pupils in my class in most subjects except sewing and

singing but became somewhat lost in the subject of mathematics after a confusing experience with a substitute teacher and long division two years before the end of primary level.

At the age of twelve my school friends and I were separated by our parents' choice of second level education. I was the only person to go to the secondary school my parents chose; three other girls went to separate secondary schools and the rest went to the nearest vocational school which at the time offered a maximum of three years of second level schooling (to Intermediate Certificate) before possible training for a trade. In my secondary school, which took in about one hundred and twenty girls each year into five classes, pupils in the top two or three classes usually went on to complete the five-year Leaving Certificate path; the remainder left after the Intermediate Certificate.

I was oblivious to the social class-based choices that were being made for us at this stage but I still remember my hurt at my former primary school friends who were now going to the vocational school and who would not sit beside me on the bus home because I was 'a snob'. This behaviour can perhaps be attributed to what Zembylas (2007), extrapolating from Bourdieu's concepts, has identified as a type of group habitus which predisposes 'individuals to select particular forms of conduct with *others* such as avoiding to socialise with them or feeling discomfort to sit next to them' (p. 449, italics in text). Such an explanation demonstrates the development of my primary school friends' social class habitus at the outset of second level which they had not exhibited while we were together at primary school. Unfortunately for me, because of the long distance from school to home and the irregularity of the bus service, I had very little social contact outside of school hours or during holiday periods with the new secondary schoolmates with whom I might have been expected to develop a common group or class habitus from then on.

A choice I was allowed to make for myself at the start of my secondary studies was in the optional subjects to select: I chose science instead of home economics and art instead of Latin or commerce. I can recall no discussions with my parents as to the consequences of these choices for my future and I was certainly not aware that by not choosing Latin – which I (then, and with the arrogance of youth) considered boring and a useless dead language – I had precluded my entry to a number of universities where Latin was still a prerequisite. Fortunately for me this requirement was removed shortly afterwards and a modern language was acceptable in its place – I had chosen French rather than the other alternative, Spanish.

One fact did strike me at the time however: the school stressed its opposition to streaming on entry and we were told that we would be grouped into classes according to the subject choices we made. Having not chosen Latin, I soon realised that I was not in the highest level class – this was the preserve of the boarding school girls and those who came from the more middle-class estates on one side of the school who had attended the fee-paying junior school. It was also clear that those who had selected Spanish or commerce tended to be in the lower streams which, despite the stated policy, were easily recognisable. The girls in these streams were also often marked out by their accents as coming from the working-class estates on the opposite side of the school from the higher-streamed pupils. My enduring memory of these perceptions suggests a subconscious awareness of Bourdieu's contention that 'it is principally through the medium of the initial streamings (...) that social origin predetermines educational destiny' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, p. 80) and if the school was making an attempt to offset the educational destiny of some of its pupils it was not particularly successful.

After winning a class prize at the end of first year I was moved into the top stream and was told by the terrifying headmistress that I would now be learning German because, she insisted, I had previously said I wanted to – I have never

been able to recollect knowing that German was to be offered that year or that I had said I wanted to learn it; thus, the arbitrary nature of the process that led to my career as a German lecturer never ceases to surprise me. Having moved once more into a new social group I never again stood out for my academic prowess in school. I became disengaged and increasingly bored and made very little effort to do well in examinations. While I cannot claim to have had the same insights as Bourdieu, I recognise something of his realisation that many of the choices he made throughout his life 'manifested themselves above all in refusals and in intellectual antipathies that were most often barely articulated' (Bourdieu 2007, p. 2).

When it came to the end of secondary school my choices were almost as arbitrary as at the start. I thought briefly of architecture but was put off by the realisation that mathematics would have to be involved and, similarly, a good result in biology could not be pursued because mathematics would be an intrinsic part of a science course. My interest in studying languages at university came from a sense of relative ease in learning French and German at school and a desire to escape, travel and see the world. Bourdieu would have seen my choice as attributable to both class and gender categories as my selection of an Arts degree in modern languages clearly puts me in the categories of working or middle class and female that tend to choose humanities subjects rather than more prestigious disciplines such as law or medicine (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

Even in the best stream in my final year of secondary school only two other girls in the class went on to university – for the majority nursing, which was not university-based at the time, or secretarial work were the goals. Pupils who attained better Leaving Certificate results than I did not appear to consider higher education as an option. Again, I have no recollection of discussing my choice with my parents although my entry to university was dependent on obtaining a grant to pay the fees as they would probably not have been able to

afford the cost involved. Swartz (1997), summarising Bourdieu's standpoint, attributes academic selection and the choice of whether to drop out or pursue further education as directly based on the 'structurally determined products of parental and other reference-group educational experience and cultural life' (p. 197). If this was the case for me it was entirely unarticulated in either the home or school environment. While my parents were never opposed to my idea of going to university I was certainly under the impression that, without a grant, it might not be possible to achieve.

Knowing no other student who was in receipt of a grant at the time, I kept this fact hidden from my new friends as much as possible. This is one aspect in which I certainly differ from Bourdieu – his trajectory through the French academic system appears to have had no bearing on his family's ability to fund him. In his detailed study of the French education system (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) he makes little reference to the costs other than to point out the added difficulties for working class students who need to work part-time during their studies (p. 89). Presumably, therefore, fees were not the selection factor in the French higher education system that they were in Ireland of the time. Bourdieu's research concentrates more on the lack of cultural capital as the factor that minimised the likelihood of poorer pupils progressing through the school system. In my case, and in Bourdieu's terms, the cultural and linguistic capital of my family background had allowed me to circumvent the career or school choices that my lack of economic capital had in store for me and once I had a place as a university student, which someone of my weak economic capital did not often attain, I was keen to hide the fact in order to keep my cultural capital and the social capital of my new student milieu in balance.

An aspect of social capital that smoothed my transition to university was my mother's contacts, through her job, with a German company. Because of this I was able to find work as an au-pair with a family in Germany for the three months before beginning my degree course. With only four years of German at

school I was not particularly comfortable in the spoken language but after my summer in Germany I was confident of my language skills and of my ability to cope well in a new cultural environment. I was put into the highest level German classes from the outset which meant I was in a group of about thirteen students in contrast to my other major subject, French, where I was part of a cohort of several hundred – in both cases the majority of students were women. Bourdieu's conclusion that 'girls are still consigned more often than boys to certain types of study (Arts subjects in the main), the more so the lower their social origin' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, p. 182-3) again supports my experience here.

One of my biggest regrets about this time at university was that I was too immature to take the best advantage of it – I was barely seventeen on starting and still nineteen on graduating with a mediocre grade on an honours Arts degree. After initial enthusiasm I became disengaged, as I had done at secondary school. On the rare occasions I allowed myself to become engrossed in a topic I found it exhilarating to learn and explore new ideas – however, this was usually just before exam periods when I had left myself barely enough time to cover the basics needed to pass the exams. I always got better results than I deserved, considering the amount of time and effort I had put in, but probably much less than I was capable of. My main interest was reserved for the long summer holidays which I spent in France and Germany, working as an au-pair, a hotel chambermaid and on the grape harvests. These were times of great excitement and adventure and the changes of cultural environment were enormously stimulating to me after the boredom of my schoolgirl summers of the past.

In the summer before my final exams, too, I had an experience which was much more interesting to me than the revision to which I should have been applying myself – I was invited by a group from my local parish, among them some of my former primary school friends who had hardly spoken to me since we were

twelve years old, to go with them on a three-week visit to Hildesheim in Germany. As the only person in the local area known to speak German I was asked to act as the group's translator and interpreter. It certainly gave me a great sense of satisfaction and involvement to be the person who could function as a channel of communication between the Irish group, their German counterparts and the local dignitaries whom we met during the trip. My experience of German and Germany during these undergraduate years was therefore very much based on cultural communication and the immediacy of face to face encounters. I was less well able to engage with the more academic and theoretical aspects of my studies.

I was, however, immediately conscious of the missed opportunity to do well in my degree once it was too late and the exams were over. As before, I did better than I deserved but I was annoyed and frustrated with myself, especially as there was no career pathway to follow that particularly interested me. I had expressed an interest in interpreting and translating but the only course I was aware of was based in Germany and was fee-paying – I did not see how I could manage to afford to go there. One thing I was convinced I did not want to do was secondary teaching and yet there seemed to be no other possibilities available – and, although teaching jobs were themselves very hard to come by, the one-year long teaching diploma at least gave me and many of my student colleagues a fall-back qualification and an extra year to consider what to do next.

The Higher Diploma in Education (H. Dip. Ed.) required weekly teaching practice in a school and, whether through inertia or lack of social contacts elsewhere, I applied and got a place in my old secondary school. This turned out to be a very bad idea as I felt as if I had hardly been away from the institution at all. I feared that when I was qualified the likelihood would be that my best chance of getting any teaching position would be there and a future of remaining as a teacher in the same school where I had been a pupil was a

depressing prospect. The most surprising aspect, however, was how much I enjoyed the teaching process itself and the interaction with pupils but it was not enough to overrule my aversion to teaching as a career choice.

After a summer spent working as a tour guide in French and German in a historic building in Dublin I undertook to find work abroad. My idea was to spend a year in Germany and then in France and thereby build up my fluency with a view to reopening the possibility of interpreting. Through my mother's work contacts I was able to locate a German shipping company that agreed to take me on in a trainee capacity for one year. There I gained a knowledge of German business practices and fluency in the language. Living alone for the first time was a maturing process that was enjoyable but at the end of my time there I was keen to return to Ireland. The option to spend a year in France did not materialise and I was no longer interested in pursuing it.

The early 1980s were a difficult time of recession in Ireland and jobs were hard to find. I took part-time work in pubs, did a government-funded management traineeship and several substitute teacher jobs until eventually I applied for a civil service post that was selected by examination. Previous qualifications and experience did not count in the allocation of a particular position, so I was appointed to the accounts branch of the Department of Finance. Part of my daily function was to ascertain the validity of expenses claims of civil servants and to initial hand-written cheques while I was also responsible for keeping monthly, quarterly and yearly accounts of all non-salary expenditure for the Department, which I found ironic considering my disinterest in mathematics. After several months at this work I began to consider what forms of intellectual stimulation were open to me and realised that there was an opportunity to improve on my Arts degree results by means of an 'MA qualifying exam' – essentially, repeating the final year of one of my degree subjects and reaching a level that would allow me to undertake a master's degree.

After gaining the requisite result I was accepted onto a one-year master's programme in German which had a taught component of three two-hour lectures per week, four exam papers and a short thesis written in German. The subject of my thesis was a comparison of the works of two East German writers: the political scientist Rudolf Bahro, who had been overtly critical of the East German political regime and therefore fled to the United States to be free of it and the novelist Christa Wolf who remained covertly critical of the system but continued to live in East Germany until the country ceased to exist – I was interested in how individuals learn to compromise within a political structure which they have grown to reject.

During this year I continued to work full-time but as the lectures had been arranged for 5pm I was permitted to leave work an hour early on those days and was also allowed a week's study leave in the exam period. I began to appreciate that further study could be a way out of what I felt to be a dead-end career situation as the civil service had a policy of awarding year-long study breaks to suitable candidates – in other words, this structural support gave me an opportunity to activate my own agency and widen my horizons. A course of studies in the USA, involving a teaching assistantship, seemed like a good way to have course fees paid and provide enough money to live on while gaining new experiences abroad. Through the American embassy I successfully applied for the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Cincinnati and obtained a year's study leave from the civil service.

Cincinnati was an interesting academic experience. For the first time I was part of an academic community where our life and our studies were very closely entwined. There were more European students (Germans, Swedes and me) than Americans on the graduate programme and we spent most of our time together socially as well as during lectures and seminars. I discovered that I had a good historical overview and understanding of German literature from my Irish university studies and I enjoyed the language teaching that I was required to do

as part of the programme. I worked hard and got good grades in the varied topics I studied. However, as the year came to an end, I decided that I did not want to break my link with Ireland by not returning to my job at the end of the study leave period.

When I returned to the Department of Finance I discovered two things: the same desk and duties and some of the same files were waiting for me as if I had never left but, also, the civil service had just introduced a new concept called a career-break which meant staff could take up to five years away from their jobs without losing their permanent status and right to return. A chance meeting with a manager from the Languages department at a technological college (later to become part of MIT) encouraged me to apply there for part-time teaching hours in German. I felt that the autonomy and stimulation of teaching German language at a higher education institution, the reduction in working hours but at a higher level of pay, the long holidays and new opportunity were all worth the risk of taking on a precarious position as a part-time teacher. Once the Department of Finance granted me the career-break I was never to return there again until the day I submitted my resignation, five years later.

One more academic adventure marked my progress towards becoming a German lecturer in the Irish IoT sector. Having previously left the United States after a year because I did not want to lose my job in Ireland I began to feel, now that I had the much longer period of a career-break to play around with, that I should give the American university system another try. This time I applied to a number of prestigious Ivy League colleges and was accepted by Cornell University for a graduate fellowship – Cornell was rated at that time as having one of the top five German departments in the USA. Despite regrets for having to leave my part-time teaching job in Ireland which I enjoyed very much, I decided that the Cornell opportunity was too good to miss. There I met academics whose work I had quoted from in my MA thesis, one of whom was the head of the German department. I also got to hear our Humanities visiting

professor, Jacques Derrida, speak on two occasions. Bourdieu had also been invited to attend Cornell as a visiting professor in the 1980s but, unfortunately, not the year I was there.

Although I was asked to stay on to complete my doctorate and would have been offered a teaching assistantship in German literature for the remaining years of my studies, I followed my, by now, personal habitus and decided that I would prefer to return to Ireland and, if I were to complete a doctorate, I could do it in Dublin. Although I loved my experience at Cornell I did not feel as secure in my academic status as I had done in Cincinnati – many students spoke a post-modernist language (similar to Derrida's) that was completely alien to me and that seemed to be about scoring points in an incomprehensible competition to impress. Despite the head of the German department's assurances that I was a student they wanted to keep, I did not feel that it was the place for me in the long term. I could see the pressures of the US academic system of publishing and striving for tenure and did not want to enter the game. I was certainly not 'the fish in water' that Bourdieu speaks of when he explains how individuals take positions within a field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) and did not have the correct cultural capital for that field at that particular time.

At the same time I very much appreciated the distinction that had been shown to me by the Cornell academic elite in selecting and then encouraging me to remain in their field. While I did not want to be part of the game I felt I was now affirmed in my academic status – their legitimation meant that I knew I could belong if I wanted to.

On returning to Ireland I found that the college I had taught in still needed part-time German teachers and was given almost a full timetable – although, with no contract of employment, my hours could have been terminated at just one week's notice. In all, I spent almost five years teaching German there before the chance occurred to move to a permanent position in a sister college. I never did

find the time or a willing supervisor to continue with a doctorate on East German women's literature. As time went on, the desire to do a doctorate in German was tempered by the realisation that I was losing touch with German literature and, almost overnight, the subject of my interest was turned into a historical artefact through the momentous political events brought about by the collapse of the Berlin Wall. My daily experience of German now revolved around language for specific purposes, such as business, science or engineering, and I knew that any research I undertook would have to have relevance to my professional life if it was to hold meaning and interest for me. The permanent job I acquired in 1990 as a lecturer in German did not require a doctorate – in fact, my master's was more than adequate for the application – and so, one further motivating factor was removed.

The development of my personal habitus – a Bourdieuian analysis

Having outlined my trajectory to the point where I was about to embark on a long-term career as a lecturer in German in a part of the institution that was to become MIT I would like to review my story in the light of the objective I set out earlier – to sketch my history as a self-socioanalysis. I have already intimated how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital can shed light on some of the choices I have made. The cultural and social capital obtained from my family background have helped to compensate for a lack of economic capital, such that the educational choices I was able to make were relatively free from the limiting factors of a low family income. My personal habitus had also, perhaps, embodied a middle-class linguistic habitus that was not common among most of my primary school peers.

By following Bourdieu's example in *Sketch for a Self-Analysis* (2007) I have been able to identify a pattern in my behaviour that has involved taking on, or being obliged to take on, new experiences but withdrawing from them after, typically, a year when the novelty had worn off or a different level of

commitment was required. Underlying this set of dispositions has been a desire for a form of permanence in a field I could feel comfortable with, as evidenced by my reluctance to leave my civil service job without the safety net of a career break or my unwillingness to leave Ireland for more than a year at a time. Another recurring pattern was a failure to undertake the hard intellectual work necessary to achieve my academic potential and later regretting my underachievement. This appears to stem from an early facility with learning whose consequence was that I was constantly obliged to move into new social circles to the point where I no longer was prepared to engage with change. This disengagement was later replaced by an awareness that studying, and in particular studying German, could be an escape out of routine and lack of opportunity. My experiences in American academia were an affirmation that I had the necessary academic or intellectual capital to succeed in that field however, unlike Bourdieu, I did not have a personal sense that I could play the game – perhaps proving the validity of his research (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) that showed the frequent failure of working and middle-class students to attain the pinnacle of elite higher education. On the other hand, as Grenfell (2007) has argued, Bourdieu may well have encountered a similar phenomenon in his own turning away from the elite discipline of philosophy to the much more low-status discipline of sociology, although he ultimately raised its status by his own achievement.

Most of my life has been involved in some way in the field of education: as a pupil, a student, a trainee and substitute teacher at second level, a post-graduate student and potential academic and, finally, as a language teacher or lecturer in higher education – most recently combined with doctoral research into the professional lives of my colleagues and myself. Bourdieu's concepts have offered a way of discovering why one sub-set of this field, the institution where I have worked for the last two and a half decades, suited me while others of a greater or less academic nature did not. The effect of taking an objectifying perspective on my trajectory is that I have concentrated on producing 'a

sociological analysis excluding psychology, except for some moods' (Bourdieu 2007, p. ix). Others have been more inclined to explore the existence of an emotional dimension to habitus (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, Zembylas 2007). By leaving out this aspect I am aware that this account is not the full story but then I would not have wanted to attempt to write a traditional autobiography, any more than Bourdieu was prepared to do so.

Keeping in mind Bourdieu's contention that 'to understand is first to understand the field with which and against which one has been formed' (Bourdieu 2007, p. 4), I would now like to turn my attention to the field that has formed the greater part of my professional identity since I began working as a part-time German lecturer there twenty five years ago.

The field of MIT – a historical overview

As explained above, it was a chance encounter that introduced me to the possibility of finding part-time hours teaching German in a technological college at Location X (later amalgamated with several others in the 1990s to create MIT), a place whose existence I had never previously been aware of because it did not offer any courses that I would have been interested in studying. I do not think it would be possible for many students to be so unaware of MIT today because higher education choices are now the subject of much public discussion while MIT has greatly expanded its range of programmes and raised its profile by advertising itself in newspapers, on the radio, and even on buses.

Irish higher education is ostensibly a binary system with the seven universities on one side and MIT and thirteen other IoTs on the other – however, this is an oversimplification of a sector that is made up of at least four groupings, including private colleges and specialized colleges of education, art and design etc. A 1995 policy report on the future development of higher education

supported 'retention of the binary system and the orientation of its parts respectively towards "academic knowledge" [in universities] and "practical applications" [in IoTs]' (Skilbeck 2001, p. 137). Despite this policy MIT would claim to be active on both sides of the binary divide. It is one of the largest higher education institutions in the state and describes itself as a 'multi-level higher education institution' (MIT doc 1, p. xix, see Appendix C for a full list of MIT documents used in the thesis) – in other words, it combines apprentice training with a full range of awards up to PhD level in disciplines such as engineering and the built environment, science and technology, business and finance, social science and law, media and performing arts, tourism and food. MIT's most recent strategic plan emphasises its

> unique position in Irish higher education: a modern 'university' by international standards, with what some might call an eclectic mix of craft education, undergraduate and postgraduate learning and research, music performance, innovation and industry links (MIT doc 2).

The use of the phrases 'a modern "university" by international standards' and 'what some might call an eclectic mix' gives an intimation of how MIT management is striving to position the institution within the Irish higher education field against the more academic and traditional forms of university that are located on the other side of the binary divide. This is somewhat at odds with the role set out under the Act that brought together several pre-existing colleges to constitute MIT, which was to 'provide vocational and technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the state' (quoted in MIT doc 1, p. xvii.)

Being 'ever-mindful of history (which remains) fundamental to the development of a truly relational organizational analysis' (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, p. 35), I want to outline briefly the history of MIT in order to examine the underlying relationships between the fields that have helped to shape my professional habitus within the institution.

The college where I began my career as a German lecturer, situated at Location X, was actually the first of the constituent colleges, founded more than a century before MIT legally came into existence. Set up as a technical school where the bulk of the classes were for second level pupils in the 14-16 age group, it offered a number of higher level courses catering for the training of teachers of science, while the management committee included representation from the higher education sector. By the end of the first decade of the school's existence it had an enrolment of almost 1000 and a spread of disciplines that included: science; art; technology and commerce (which included bookkeeping, shorthand, writing and languages – English, Irish, French and German) – as well as a discipline described as 'women's work (dressmaking, cookery and laundry work)' (MIT doc 1, p. 6).

The nucleus for the various colleges that were to evolve across the city in the succeeding decades was already present in this first technical school. For example, mechanical and civil engineering and construction courses were transferred to a new technical institute at Location Y in the early part of the 20th century, which also initiated new courses in architecture, surveying and motor engineering. The fact that 'courses in aeroplane construction were introduced in that first academic year, the year that Blériot first flew a heavier-than-air machine across the English Channel' (MIT doc 1, p. 10) demonstrates how the institutes that later constituted MIT strove to respond to technological developments and the needs of industry from the outset.

The philosophy behind the setting up of the colleges was egalitarian; it offered educational opportunities to the working class, including women, while being responsive to the requirement of business and industrial employers for a well-trained workforce (MIT doc 1). This history, in my view, forms the backdrop to the resistance among some MIT staff towards the positioning of MIT as a

'technological university' when this began to be promoted by MIT management from the mid-1990s onwards, a point I will return to shortly.

Over the century that the colleges remained separate much of the second level work was passed to vocational schools as the colleges concentrated more on developing full-time courses leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees. From time to time the idea surfaced to create a unified institution for technological education in the city but political or financial factors always contrived to prevent this going ahead. In the 1970s, however, an ad hoc Metropolitan Institute of Technology, with a joint academic council and governing body, was set up. While this may have helped to consolidate the administrative and organisational culture of the institution as a whole over the ensuing decades, 'the strong identity of the individual colleges and their reputation in their specialist areas continued to influence the externally perceived image' (MIT doc 1, p. 43) until very recently – hence the need for advertising the institution as 'MIT', mentioned above. Within the colleges themselves many staff members, from my own recollection, viewed the creation of MIT as a logical move towards strengthening technological education. If there was nostalgia for the history and identity of individual colleges I was not very conscious of it at that time and, in any case, individual college identity has not yet died and may even be about to be resuscitated, if the most recent proposals for again restructuring the institution are to come into effect.

Parallel to the desire to amalgamate all the colleges of MIT administratively and academically was a dream, which survived over several decades before running out of political or financial will in the late 1970s, to bring everything onto one dedicated site. This dream resurfaced in the 1990s with the possibility of a move to a single campus. The planning for this relocation is well-advanced and it is intended that individual faculties and schools should begin moving to the new campus over the next several years although, perhaps cynically, no colleagues

of my age to whom I have spoken about the plans expect to actually work at the new campus before they retire.

A third issue that echoes through the history of MIT and its constituent colleges, and to which I have briefly referred earlier, is the contradiction between the aspiration for recognition as a 'university' and the wish to remain close to its origins as an egalitarian organisation that caters to the needs of technical workers and their employers. Since the foundation of the first technical school there has always been an academic connection, which later developed through a partnership arrangement with a university to allow for the recognition of honours degrees and for postgraduate research activities to take place in the colleges. More recently, a successful institutional quality audit has empowered MIT to award its own degrees up to doctoral level.

This success forms the background to the MIT governing body's drive to seek designation as a university (MIT doc 1). Another factor was the hope that university status would give greater financial autonomy and bring the institute under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the funding, planning and policy development body of the universities of Ireland, as opposed to being directly under the control of the Department of Education and Science (DES). At the time, a document was circulated asking staff to lobby their local elected representatives in support of university status. I remember it causing much heated debate among colleagues who feared the loss of the unique combination of apprentice training and higher education that had allowed many of them to teach across a wide range of courses from trades to degree level and beyond and, for their students, the loss of the ladder system of education which gave students who started out as apprentices the chance to progress through certificates and diplomas to an eventual honours degree and postgraduate studies if their inclination and academic prowess allowed.

The campaign for university status was, perhaps predictably, unsuccessful as it did not comply with the policy of the DES to maintain the binary system (Skilbeck 2001). Nonetheless, since then, the IoTs have been brought under the remit of the HEA and, regardless of government policy, it remains an objective of MIT senior management to 'progress the campaign for University designation' (MIT doc 2). By proclaiming its links with higher education institutions internationally and its membership of both the European University Association and the International Association of Universities (MIT doc 3) it implies that, while Irish political agendas may be preventing MIT's true recognition as a university, the outside world is not blind to its academic strengths and credentials. Recent institutional documents stress the multi-layered offerings of the institute from apprentice training to postgraduate research opportunities, thus attempting to counter the objections of staff who fear being left behind in the push towards a more academic focus, having, in some cases, come through the apprentice system themselves. On the other hand, many colleagues who have come from a traditional university background do not see the claim to university status as legitimate and would both disparage MIT's academic pretensions and mourn the loss of the more applied and hands-on educational system that they had chosen to join and become acculturated to.

While these position-takings were being played out throughout MIT and between MIT and the wider higher education field, I was employed first as a part-time teacher of German in Location X, then as a permanent German lecturer at Location Y. Following Swartz's (2008) view that Bourdieu 'shows that habitus is continuously adaptive and that organizations themselves can instil certain dispositions that do not trace back to early family socializations' (p. 48) I would next like to explore how the organisation that is MIT has shaped my identity as a German lecturer since I first joined it two and a half decades ago.

Developing a professional identity in a changing field

Becoming a language teacher was not a conscious career decision on my part. As was explained earlier, despite an antipathy towards studying for a diploma in second level education I undertook it because of a lack of opportunity for any other career path at the time of graduation. While I enjoyed certain aspects of the teaching role during teaching practice, particularly the sense of stimulating in pupils an interest in a foreign language and culture, as a substitute teacher I sometimes had problems with discipline and control of teenagers in the classroom situation – a point also made by several of my interviewees who had tried second level teaching before finding a more comfortable niche for themselves in higher education. Another negative aspect of the work was that the presence of state examinations meant a highly structured syllabus had to be followed while teachers would often be made to feel personally responsible for the success of their pupils in these exams.

As was alluded to earlier, Location X had a tradition of foreign language teaching from its inception. In the 1960s the college introduced compulsory French or German for all full-time students, in what were known as 'service' courses (MIT doc 4) – they were regarded as minor subjects by all but those who were employed to teach them. When I began there in 1983 I found that I had a very free hand in what I taught and how it was to be examined – as a part-timer I was not given any syllabus or guidance because, as the then head of the Languages department told me, part-timers needed 'to be kept on their toes'. I was not required to be available for meetings or examination boards once the teaching year was at an end although I did set and mark the examination papers of the classes I had taught, using previous years' papers as a guideline. In some cases I shared class groups with other colleagues, as classes of more than 25 students would be split, yet there was rarely any discussion about ensuring that we covered the same material or even about agreeing to use the same textbook –

the sense of professional autonomy within the classroom situation was almost absolute. While I was surprised about this fact at the time, it reflects the points made by Hardy and Lingard (2008) about the individualistic nature of teachers' work and their unwillingness to work collaboratively. This viewpoint was also endorsed by the TUI, the representative body of 4,000 lecturers within the IoT sector (Flynn 2009), whose documentation stressed that teachers could not be obliged to adopt a teaching methodology that was not of their own choice. I was introduced to a more collaborative approach in later years when I had teaching hours on a languages and business diploma which required a joint approach with other German language colleagues across the programme.

After a year studying and speaking German daily in the USA and my previous experience of living and working in Germany I felt confident in the 'language for specific purposes' approach that was required with different student groups. As a service teacher I was expected to teach German that had relevance to electrical and electronic engineering, science, photography and later business, bakery management and ophthalmology. A development that helped to forge a collective sense of professional identity with colleagues across the IoT sector was the setting up by the Goethe Institut of a study group to develop pedagogic materials for the wide variety of specialised German language that we used in our teaching. As part of the group I travelled to Düsseldorf on two occasions, which totalled more than three weeks duration, and became involved in producing materials for the areas I taught. This was very useful as a support for the notion that language for special purposes could have the same academic rigour attached to it as other higher education language teaching and was a way of connecting across institutions with colleagues with similar backgrounds and work environments.

Although I enjoyed teaching German very much there were often difficulties and frustrations with being a part-timer. It was made obvious that I had little right to office space, although that did change in my final year when new

accommodation came on stream. Like all part-timers, I could never be sure that I would be taken on again at the start of each new academic year. From May till the end of September there were no teaching hours so I often worked as a tour guide and took French, German and English-speaking groups on week-long trips around the country. In my fifth year of teaching there was a huge breakthrough in the conditions for part-time teaching staff. The TUI negotiated a long-term contract for what became known as eligible part-time teachers (EPTs) across the IoT sector – these were part-time staff who were regarded as fully qualified for the teaching they were doing but, because of an embargo on recruiting permanent staff, they had not been offered permanent positions. More than twenty percent of MIT lecturing staff at that time were part-time and this new deal meant that we would be paid on the same basis as permanent lecturers and would have the expectation of continuous employment unless the teaching hours we were doing were to disappear.

At that time my part-time colleagues and I could not envisage that teaching hours in German would reduce. German was being promoted heavily as a guarantee of good graduate job prospects and numbers at second level and on our courses were increasing every year. I had come to the end of my civil service career-break but had no thought of returning and resigned without qualms. I began to attend exam board meetings in early September of that year, although the EPT contract had not yet come through, and because of that I heard of a permanent lecturing job that had been advertised for Location Y but that I had not seen in the newspaper – the deadline had been extended so I was just in time to put in an application. I almost considered not applying as I was content to stay where I was, in the belief that an EPT contract would be as secure as a permanent appointment. However, I went ahead with the interview, medical check and oral Irish test and was sanctioned to start in Location Y the following March, despite feeling sorry to leave Location X and the support of a large cohort of language teacher colleagues.

Unfortunately, Location Y did not have a dedicated Languages department. While, according to a retired Engineering Faculty manager, German had been on offer to engineering students there intermittently since the 1960s, it was offered by non-specialist staff, for example 'a structural engineer who had spent time in Germany'. The impetus to offer German was based on the pragmatic need to provide students with the opportunity to work abroad in the summer months and this need increased as 'then we hit the late 70s into the 80s and there was no work so everyone then became aware that languages became particularly important' (retired Engineering Faculty manager). It was to be the late 1980s before a permanent position was sanctioned which was the job I took up in 1990.

My experience in Location X had undoubtedly helped me to pass the interview – I could project the professional habitus of a specialised language lecturer who could apply her skills to the specific needs of students within the higher education technology sector and the institutional habitus of someone who already knew the system and the rules of the game. Unfortunately, however, by the time I arrived in Location Y an apocryphal story had already travelled over from the sister college and caused opposition among students and staff to the widespread introduction of German. As the retired Engineering Faculty manager saw it:

> The students didn't like it because of what was going on in [Location X]. (...) *They* always had languages and you could fail your engineering degree because you failed your language and people were held up because they were failing language.

I joined a small number of part-time teachers who were trying to cope with this negative attitude as German was introduced to all years of the engineering programmes except the final year. There was to be no question of German being allowed to affect the marks of final year students, as was the case in Location X, or of a formal examination structure being put in place for the other two years

(for diplomas) or three years (for degrees) of the programmes. For the next decade before the removal of German from these courses, I and my colleagues had to contend with the fact that we would not be fully supported at examination boards if students failed German assessments but no other (engineering) subject. While I always got on well personally with engineering colleagues, Becher and Trowler's (2001) argument that disciplines and disciplinary groups create their own 'tribal' culture and barriers with other disciplines was exemplified daily in my professional life. Equally, Bourdieu's concepts of capital and field demonstrate the difficulty for an individual with the wrong academic capital – a linguist in the field of engineering education – of competing for a dominant or, at the very least, equitable position within the field.

An example of this continuing struggle to be part of the game was the creation, after a number of years, of a review group within the Engineering department, consisting solely of (male) engineers, which was tasked with examining how German was being taught and what changes might be required in view of the large number of teaching hours that the introduction of German had involved. Tellingly, the review group had conducted three meetings, where they discussed how German was taught to engineering students in other institutions, before they invited my colleagues and me to inform them of what we actually did in Location Y. They were particularly interested in the system used in University College Dublin (UCD) which consisted of only one year of lectures followed by a 3-hour translation exam (with dictionaries). Once we explained the more intensive and applied nature of our language teaching and its aim of supporting students to gain employment in a German-speaking environment, they became fully supportive of our approach – to the point of asking me to write up the report of their findings, which were that no change was required. Whether they asked me because they recognised my communicative abilities, because they felt that a woman would be better suited to such secretarial functions or because they thought that my time was less valuable than theirs, I do not know. My own

reason for agreeing to write up the report was to ensure that the case for German was made in the most persuasive way possible.

Building a collective identity with my German teaching colleagues was not easy because German had been grouped in with all the other service teaching in the college into a catch-all department that included science, mathematics, business studies and sociology. We had no separate space or language-teaching equipment, while a policy by MIT management to avoid giving part-time teachers the right to a long-term EPT contract meant that teaching hours per person were often limited. The result was that we would have, for example, four part-timers teaching less than half the full contract hours rather than two on full hours; often they would not be able to support themselves financially on such a small income and would need to work elsewhere also; they could leave at the end of the academic year and move on, understandably, if a better offer came up – all this meant that there was little continuity among the group. Remembering my own experiences as a part-timer, I could at least ensure that new colleagues were given a welcome, a key to the office, a copy of the German syllabus and were included in meetings relevant to our teaching.

On the positive side, I had complete autonomy to rewrite the syllabus of my courses to reflect a more modern communicative approach to language learning. As Engineering department external examiners did not concern themselves with the peripheral subject of German I could shape the language curriculum according to what I perceived to be the needs of engineering students and included a focus on German for specific purposes for third year students to prepare them for summer work in Germany or for later employment in German-speaking countries. Based on my experience with the Goethe Institut project of 'didacticising' specialist texts for teaching purposes I devised and compiled a 100-page handbook of texts and exercises for these students to compensate for the fact that there were no suitable textbooks for their language learning requirements. Over the years I found that my teaching practice developed in a

way very similar to that identified by Beijaard et al (2000) – I moved from being more concerned with the subject matter of German language (including accuracy, grammar, etc) to an approach that focused on facilitating students' learning and stimulating their interest in German culture in general, and specifically in German engineering and technology.

Professional development was never an issue that came up for discussion with my head of department but was at all times personally motivated. I undertook summer language courses and became involved in computer-aided language learning (CALL) through an initiative in the IoT sector, known as 'training for trainers'. This prompted me to undertake a small-scale research project in 1997-98 into the use of CALL in the Irish higher education sector, which was funded by MIT's newly-formed Learning Development Centre. The project allowed me to purchase and evaluate a quantity of computer materials for German language teaching and culminated in a presentation at an MIT showcase. However, because I had no access to computers for teaching my own students I was unable to put any of this material to use – in spite of my initial hopes that a more technological approach to language teaching would stimulate greater interest among my engineering colleagues and students and bring German more into the centre of their concerns.

Despite this constant struggle to position myself within the 'terrain of contestation' (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008, p. 6) of engineering education, there appeared to be a breakthrough as a result of the revalidation process of a number of engineering programmes in 2000-01 when we got a commitment that German assessment could now include end-of-year exams. I saw this as proof that German was to be taken seriously at last. Another improvement was that quality assurance policies had been adopted in MIT after the amalgamation of the institute and I was now being asked to attend course committees where colleagues seemed supportive of German as an equal component that deserved equal support.

Unfortunately, at the same time as this apparent affirmation for my discipline was taking place among my engineering colleagues, on another level, among engineering managers, a completely opposing viewpoint was being agreed upon which led to the removal of language teaching from all engineering programmes in MIT. Since the amalgamation of the different colleges in 1993, new faculty structures were gradually being put into place and the two separate Engineering departments in Location Y and Location X were starting to come together as an administrative and management unit as a precursor to the creation of newly designated schools within an Engineering Faculty. An ad-hoc committee of heads and assistant heads of the existing departments, calling itself the Senior Management group (SMG) and including my own head of department, met on a regular basis during 2000-01 and agreed, according to the minutes of its 6 November 2000 meeting: 'Languages: Remove from courses. Offer on a yearly basis as an elective, additional result. Use the UCD model' (MIT doc 5). We were informed of this decision in the spring of 2001 and by September 2001 German was no longer offered as part of the Location Y engineering programmes. While we were encouraged to promote German classes as an extra subject to first year students only, no credits or certification were included – the 'UCD model' of one year's obligatory language tuition had been dropped. Unsurprisingly, no students were prepared to take up this offer.

The background to this decision which went on to affect the professional lives of many colleagues, especially those part-timers who lost all their teaching hours and were obliged to look elsewhere for work, emanated from changes within the field of engineering education itself. It demonstrates the difficulty of maintaining a position within a disciplinary field to which one does not belong by means of education or acculturation. It also shows how the same development – the establishment of MIT from the existing colleges – managed to cause two different effects among the dominant and dominated actors within the field: the managers came to a conclusion to remove the teaching of German

at the same time as engineering lecturers were prepared to make room for the subject as an equal component on their programmes. Not surprisingly, the dominant position holders prevailed. I can only speculate that their decision was motivated in part by the impending crystallisation of the new structures within MIT – which could possibly have strengthened the position of the new Languages School (LS) within the institution and made it more difficult to act to remove languages later – as much as by the changing emphasis on the importance of teaching languages to engineering students. In any event, this account of the position of German teaching in Location Y makes clear the constant struggle to find a space for a subject whose importance to engineering education fluctuated with changes in the economy and society outside the institution. The policy of recruiting permanent language lecturers into disparate disciplinary areas meant that, while decisions on the usefulness or otherwise of a discipline like German for engineering education could be made quickly and without compromise, the effects on individuals could affect the rest of their professional lives.

Having interviewed a number of MIT managers who had a role at that time it becomes clear that there were several strands to the decision to remove languages:

- the negativity towards languages, particularly German which was perceived as 'difficult', and the lingering apocryphal story of the student who was denied an honours degree because of failing German;
- falling student numbers in some disciplines (especially science) and the need to reduce class contact time as part of MIT's drive towards university status;
- the costs involved in teaching many small language classes rather than large lectures, as was more often the case for other subjects;
- the strength of the Irish economy which meant that Irish students no longer needed to find summer work abroad or plan for emigration on graduation;

- Engineers Ireland, the professional body for engineers in Ireland, dropped the requirement for a foreign language from their accreditation guidelines.

The Engineers Ireland decision, understood by an MIT Engineering School manager as 'all they wanted was an *opportunity* to take a language', gave MIT Engineering School heads permission to act to remove German at a time when many degree programmes were being revalidated and allowed them to state openly the criticisms some had had from the outset; after all, it was because of Engineers Ireland that languages had been offered in the first place:

> The way languages came into our programmes, came in via that route. It didn't come in for any pedagogical or what one would call philosophical idea, it was tacked on as an addendum to the programmes without any form or shape. (Engineering School manager)

From the minutes of the SMG meetings it would appear that no-one at the time felt that German or the staff affected were worth defending. As the Engineering School manager (who was present at most of the meetings in an observer capacity) told me, discussions were carried on over a number of meetings before the decision was made and, ultimately, 'German wasn't our discipline so we were under no obligation to defend German, (...) that was someone else's role'.

The immediate effect was that four part-time teachers of German lost their jobs while the remaining permanent staff have attempted to deal with the consequences of losing our professional identity as German lecturers once we no longer taught the subject. The following year languages were dropped from Location X engineering and science courses although, as some compensation, new programmes involving languages were introduced later as the new faculty structures allowed the LS to develop its remit across MIT.

In the next section I will look at the structural changes that were taking place within the field of MIT as a background to the threat to German teaching and

how these played a role in the choices I made and the changes to my professional identity.

Structural changes at MIT and their effect on professional habitus

Simultaneously to the changes taking place at an academic level within the discipline of engineering which affected individual German language lecturers, across MIT as a whole, new structural and administrative developments were taking shape. A 1987 report on technological education and consultations with the DES led to the demand for MIT to become an autonomous institution with an integrated structure (MIT doc 1). Before this, the idea of restructuring the colleges into faculties, subdivided into schools and departments of different disciplines, had already surfaced (ibid), with schools being the lowest rung of the new hierarchy to retain budgetary control. For some of the existing colleges, faculties or schools could very easily be formed to match the disciplines that were already on offer. Other faculties, like the Engineering Faculty which coexisted in Location X and Location Y, had to straddle both sides of the city and find a way for personnel to work together on new faculty boards and other committees across the geographical divide. After a lengthy period of discussion with staff unions the restructuring of the institute was agreed, with all faculties and schools finally coming into administrative effect in September 2001.

One of the difficulties of the transition from a college to a faculty basis was the problem of finding a home school or department for staff who had originally been recruited to 'service' the needs of other disciplines. While there were individuals scattered across many MIT locations who were in this position, my department in Location Y was a unique case of being an entire department of service teachers. When consulted, many of the staff of this department did not want to join a school based in another location with disciplinary colleagues and managers they had never met, when they had been recruited to a college where they had worked to apply their original discipline to the needs of engineering,

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architecture or a related area. On the other hand, for those of us teaching German the move seemed to offer a welcome opportunity to coalesce and gain the support of language colleagues throughout the institute; after all, most of us had had the experience of teaching German in a part-time capacity on at least one of the other MIT sites. Lecturers in the department were given the choice of moving completely to the school of their discipline, moving to the faculty or school where they taught the majority of their hours or selecting a combination of both, which meant they could continue to teach as before but report to the school of their discipline.

Like me, languages' lecturers across MIT were generally in favour of moving from a college-based to a faculty-based structure in the belief that this would allow us to form part of a discipline group even if not physically on the same site. The view was that we could now belong to the new LS while continuing to teach engineering, marketing or tourism students at different MIT sites, for example. We would be supported by like-minded academics from our own discipline and a school management structure that would allow greater opportunities for professional development, time allowances for research interests and a strengthening of our academic identity.

Over the several years that the new structures were being negotiated I attended LS meetings and fully intended to choose the option to continue teaching my current classes while reporting to the LS. I was looking forward to gradually expanding my professional horizons to teach new student groups on other sites as the opportunity arose. The sudden removal of all my teaching hours made this choice unworkable and the structural changes I had initially welcomed now began to seem more threatening: I did not want to have to start again from scratch with an entirely new set of teaching hours and specialisms on any number of MIT sites. It felt like being given a completely new job without having applied for one.

The support I hoped for from Languages management and colleagues was not forthcoming. A day-long team-building meeting organised in the spring of 2001 seemed like the perfect chance to gain their backing for a policy to strengthen our hand and prevent the removal of languages from courses in the arbitrary way I was experiencing. Unfortunately, they did not see this as a threat and were not prepared to engage with the issue. I came away from the meeting with a sense that they had no understanding of the weakness of their position. As I have already explained, the new Engineering Faculty attempted to remove languages from Location X courses the following autumn, but held off for a year while they underwent the appropriate quality assurance paperwork. Very soon afterwards the language teaching hours in engineering, science and a number of other courses were dropped and the part-time teachers lost their jobs. The position of the permanent staff never became as precarious as that in Location Y, because of the existence of a joint languages and business degree.

One final hope to prevent these changes was the proposal of an LS manager to make a presentation to the SMG group. Its purpose was to inform senior engineering managers about a new 'languages for all' policy that would allow all students in MIT to choose elective LS modules in either a foreign language (currently French, German or Spanish) or intercultural studies, English for professional purposes or English as a foreign language over the first three years of their programmes. The proposal required a fixed block of hours to be made available for students to attend these classes as well as extra credits for successful completion, which would be shown on their official transcripts. This would necessitate the inclusion of these language electives into all the relevant course documents. As recounted to me by the Engineering School manager who was present, the outcome of the presentation was less than successful:

> Interestingly about the presentation it already accepted the status quo that, the decision to drop languages, it didn't challenge that issue and it didn't challenge the implications for that. But what was presented was the possibility of incorporating, now if I remember correctly, not just language

itself but also cultural studies (...) that there was a possibility of incorporating them as elective modules but that was never followed up on or there was no follow-up. The meeting, the thing began and ended at that meeting.

Seeking a Bourdieuian explanation for the LS manager's apparent acceptance of the removal of German from engineering courses without presenting a strong counter-argument, it could be argued that she had recognised that she was not in a position to compete in the field of engineering education, in which she did not have the appropriate capital or any hope of dominance. Instead she chose to focus her attention on positioning the emerging LS within the new space created by the development of the MIT faculty structure. There Languages would have a stronger position within the Arts Faculty in an arena where the symbolic capital of the language disciplines could hope to have a greater impact. Languages were indeed introduced onto joint programmes within the faculty, although the failure of some of these new programmes to retain students over the longer term has again meant the reduction in language teaching hours on several newer programmes. The 'languages for all' policy has not succeeded in being adopted across the institution as a whole. It serves mainly as a facility for Erasmus exchange students to gain credits in English and other European languages and, while fulfilling an obvious need among these students, its popularity is partly due to the fact that it reduces their contact with more technologically difficult subjects.

In any case, this re-positioning of language teaching in response to structural change across the institution affected my own position-taking in a very immediate way. Disillusioned with the role of the LS in protecting my interests as a German lecturer I now aligned myself with my own departmental colleagues who did not want to have their service department broken up. The TUI continued to negotiate on our behalf and, as the new faculty structures were about to come into operation in September 2001, a fourth option was put on the table by MIT management. This allowed for the continued existence of the

department although retiring positions would not be replaced so that, over time, it would die out and new staff would be recruited directly to the school of their discipline. Staff who wanted to opt for a complete move to the school of their discipline were facilitated and the numbers in the department dropped by about half. The department came under the remit of a newly formed Engineering School and became responsible for the delivery of some general engineering programmes.

There was no role for me in this restructuring. While I could remain where I was under the agreement, all language teaching hours were the responsibility of the LS and there were not enough hours to fill the timetables of all permanent German lecturing staff. Because the previous head of my department retired at the same time as these changes were occurring there appeared to be no one available, other than me, to inform the part-time teachers that their hours were gone. Even now, I resent that I was obliged to take on this responsibility and see the position I was put into by the confluence of structural change and the timid institutional habitus of some managers as a form of symbolic violence – to me, but more especially to my former colleagues. My decision to stay on in this department became an 'act of resistance' in Bourdieu's terms. I did not want to simply go away and solve the problem created by Engineering management's decision to drop German – they could get rid of my subject and my professional identity but they could not get rid of me as a permanent member of staff. This view was supported by the TUI. According to the former union activist I interviewed for this project: 'The position simply was that you were contracted to teach German and that was it, and that was the union's position'.

The result of taking this position was that in the academic year 2001-02, despite my best efforts to encourage incoming engineering students to voluntarily take on German as an additional subject without extra credit, I had no teaching hours at all. A well-intentioned offer by the new head of department meant that I was moved to a large spacious office in a different building for several months –

which felt very much like a case of 'out of sight, out of mind'. However, it did give me time and space to come to the decision that I would not just wait to have solutions offered to me. Instead I undertook what can by now be identified as a recurrent aspect of my habitus and began studying Spanish. This choice derived from a number of realisations: I had become interested in learning Spanish because of personal travel experiences in that country when I had become frustrated by my inability to communicate; I was aware that Spanish had become a more popular language option among students in recent times and was hoping that the push towards learning German that I had experienced in the 1980s might be reproduced for Spanish at the start of the new millennium; I had discovered that the Open University would give me credit towards an honours degree in Humanities with Spanish from my previous language studies which meant that I could complete a degree in a relatively short time and be qualified to teach it at MIT (in fact, it took five years.)

During that year there was one meeting with my newly-appointed Engineering School manager and the LS manager and I agreed to begin teaching in what was the new growth area in languages – EAP. I had never taught English before but found it immensely stimulating as I appreciated for the first time the benefits of being a native speaker of the language you are teaching and the fact that native speaker teachers become a resource in their own right in the language classroom. On the negative side, I avoided dealing with grammar because I did not know how to teach it and felt nervous that students might ask for grammatical explanations that I would not be able to answer adequately. This sense of insecurity is common to several of the respondents who have also begun teaching EAP to fill their timetables (discussed in chapter 6). The training in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) came about in my third year of English teaching. I found it instructive on two levels: it gave me a knowledge base for the subject of English as a foreign language and it introduced me to up-to-date teaching methods involving pair and group work techniques which I have since found useful in other teaching situations.

Another pedagogical technique I had begun to explore before the removal of my German hours had been problem based learning (PBL). This had been promoted in the first years of the existence of the MIT Learning Development Centre and I had been interested in trying to use it as a way of freshening up my pedagogical approach. I found that it could not be easily applied to teaching the ab-initio stages of a foreign language and had not been able to use it in teaching German. Now, as I was being asked by managers in other Location Y departments, who knew of my predicament, to take up teaching hours in communication to engineering technology students and European studies to management students, I discovered that PBL offered me a chance to take on these subjects without the heavy advance workload of lecture preparation. I was able to do some background reading, develop challenging problems and facilitate students' learning in an incremental way – I was learning as much as my students and enjoying the stimulation and challenge involved. I was also asked to undertake another task I had not done before but found equally interesting, which was the supervision of undergraduate student dissertations in a management-related area.

More recently I have been involved in tutoring on a professional development module on an engineering programme, which brings me back to teaching in the faculty where I nominally 'belong'. I have been nominated as the Erasmus coordinator for the school in which I am based, a post for which I volunteered on the basis that it would keep me in touch with foreign languages, both linguistically and culturally. The European studies, communication and dissertation supervision hours have gone and I now teach a beginners' Spanish module. On completion of this doctorate I will require extra teaching hours to fill my timetable and do not yet know what other changes may be in store in my professional life.

An interim conclusion

In terms of my professional identity, if I were to answer the questions I have posed to my interview respondents, I still have difficulty in explaining who I am or what I do. I usually say that I am a lecturer whereas, before, I said I was a German teacher and then made clear where I taught – now I seem to need to position myself more clearly as belonging to the higher education sector as the number of subjects I teach goes up and I appear to act more and more like a secondary school teacher who can be expected to turn their pedagogical skills to any subject. While I do not miss the repetition involved in teaching German for specific purposes to engineering students, I do mourn the loss of my fluency in German through lack of use and the connectedness I felt with the country and its culture. Although I have partially replaced this with a new language, Spanish, I know I will never attain the same level of fluency or sense of belonging that the encounter with German and Germany had on my younger self.

I have shown earlier in this chapter how my personal habitus was formed and how it tended to lead me towards new academic endeavours as a way of dealing with negative situations. Clearly, this disposition has remained durable throughout the changes I have experienced in the last decade. While I undertook one act of resistance by refusing to join the LS as anticipated – which I may have cause to regret as MIT moves to one site, if there are new opportunities opening up for my language colleagues which my position in another school precludes me from availing of – I have remained open to change in a variety of new areas. Yet I reacted to the change to my professional identity in a similar way to how I reacted on previous occasions in my life. My resistance, a 'maladjustment between opportunities and expectations' (Gartman 2007, p. 400), was short-lived as I came to terms with what was available to me.

I was fortunate that one change in the field, MIT's striving for university designation which involved promoting research and increasing academic

qualifications, suited my personal habitus and allowed me the financial support and time to pursue further studies. I still remain on the edge of several fields (engineering education, languages and intercultural studies, academic research) and experience the struggle to take a position in each both liberating and exhausting. I have no overriding goal but feel that the completion of a doctorate could be the time to fix on one. The amorphous structure of MIT, as I have experienced it over the last decade, may offer opportunities that I cannot yet begin to pinpoint although, not being positioned within the school of my discipline, I have not been able to take full advantage of MIT's new career development and planning system, known as Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), which will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

On the question of reflexivity, which I have addressed to my respondents as a way of measuring their awareness and acceptance of change in their professional lives, clearly this thesis is proof of my intense engagement with the concept. Despite some sense of regret for the loss of my previous professional identity I am in the process of shaping a new one which will increase my academic capital and perhaps allow me to gain a stronger and more satisfactory position within a game whose rules have inevitably changed to meet the forces of the fields that surround it. Exactly what these fields are will be explained in the next chapter.

5

From the outside in: the fields that surround the professional lives of German lecturers

In the previous chapter my goal was to begin with an individual habitus, to show how it developed through the trajectory of a life and how it was affected by encountering the field of German language teaching within the ever-changing institution that is MIT – in other words, from the specific to the more general. Here and in the following chapter I want to alter the perspective and begin my analysis of the information provided by a total of 24 interviewees and the policy and institutional documentation collected during the course of this research project by moving from the general to the specific.

I begin by analysing the fields that have affected the choices of my German lecturer colleagues, starting at the level of European policy towards foreign language learning and teaching and moving through the Irish national policy field into the field of German in higher education and in the IoT sector. I briefly quantify and examine the changes that have occurred to the professional identities of German lecturers, focusing in particular on information from interviewees at four IoTs and one non-traditional technological university. I then look at the field of MIT, the LS and my MIT respondents. This analysis will give a somewhat differentiated point of view on the structure of the field of MIT from that which was explored in chapter 4, the purpose being to objectify the institutional field from the perspective of the interview participants rather than from my own experience; to give them 'the space of points of view' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 4) of their professional environment. The effects of these overlapping fields will form the backdrop to understanding the accounts of MIT German lecturers who have gone on to develop a wide range of new professional identities, including lecturing in history and European myths;

tutoring in intercultural studies and communication; teaching other modern languages or designing web-based teaching materials; administrative duties; law and life coaching, to give an idea of the spectrum of changes undergone.

Fields within fields – European, national and sectoral

In this section I propose to examine the fields within which the analysis of my respondents is set, whose policies have influenced how individual lecturers have reacted to their changing professional identities over the last decade. As it is the discipline of German, and the changing societal attitudes towards the teaching and learning of it, that lies at the heart of this study I would like to begin by focusing on the international, specifically the European, field of languages and language policy as the largest field whose effects can be shown to have had a role in these changes. European bodies have no direct day-to-day administrative or funding role within Irish higher education – apart from such programmes as Erasmus which I will look at shortly. It is, therefore, specifically the areas of policy and attitudes towards foreign language teaching and learning that best illuminate the effects of the European field on the object of this study, which is, in the words of one of my respondents, 'a profession that died while I was in it' (Joseph, 1st interview, June 2008).

Within Europe there are two overlapping fields of influence in language and education whose roles have often been confused: the Council of Europe and the European Union. The confusion has not been helped by the convergence of their policies over time but they started out with very clearly differentiated perspectives, as I will show.

Council of Europe policies

The Council of Europe, which has no stated political or economic remit and currently has 47 member countries, began its involvement with language

teaching as early as 1957 with its first intergovernmental conference on European cooperation in language teaching. In 1963 it launched its first major project on language teaching and has continued to develop and expand its language projects since then. Most recently, the focus of these projects has been to promote 'democratic citizenship and social inclusion' (Council of Europe 2006-2009). The strategy that the Council of Europe has adopted to support these aims has been to push for the diversification and intensification of language learning across Europe under the banner of 'plurilingualism' which is defined as

> the repertoire of varieties of language which many individuals use (...); it includes the language variety referred to as 'mother tongue' or 'first language' and any number of other languages or varieties. (...) This perspective places not languages but those who speak them at the centre of language policies. The emphasis is upon valuing and developing the ability of all individuals to learn and use several languages, to broaden this competence through appropriate teaching and through plurilingual education (...) (Council of Europe/ Department of Education and Science 2008, p. 6)

Two of the most widely known projects of the Council of Europe have been the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). The CEFR is a 'document which describes in a comprehensive manner

- the competence necessary for communication
- the related knowledge and skills
- the situations and domains of communication.' (ibid p. 56)

As a result of its wide acceptance across Europe the CEFR has come to be seen as one of the most important standards of measurement of language proficiency and has been introduced in language textbooks, in assessment, language training and examinations. The ELP 'is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language – whether at school or outside school – can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences' (ibid). Both of these

documents and the policies from which they have derived have had an effect on the professional lives of language teachers throughout Europe but it is the creation of Language Education Policy Profiles, focusing on individual countries and their language education policies, that has most clearly delineated the issues at stake in the Irish language education field.

Since 2003 thirteen countries have undertaken or are in the process of undertaking an evaluation of their state language policies under the guidance of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe 2007). The aim of the reports that are produced through this process is to give the authorities and members of civil society the opportunity to examine the current status of language education in the country concerned (including national language(s), minority languages and the languages of recent migrants as well as foreign or second languages) and reflect on possible future language policy developments. With the goal of encouraging plurilingualism, and using the CEFR and ELP documents to measure and support language learning at all levels and throughout the life course of all members of society, the reports promote language education from pre-school to higher education and beyond. From the point of view of introducing language teaching into higher education, a stage that is regarded by many as too late, the Council of Europe's stance is encouraging because, although it recognises that the early introduction of languages to the curriculum is often a successful way of promoting plurilingualism, it is best seen as a stepping stone towards a wider and more diversified approach to language learning which would continue throughout a person's life and involve different levels of competence in different languages at different times (Council of Europe 2007, pp. 104-5). The completed report on Ireland's language policies was published in 2008 (Council of Europe/ Department of Education and Science 2008) and I will return to the specifics of that report below.

It is worth noting, however, that Ireland is the only English-speaking country within the membership of the Council of Europe to have instigated a Language Education Policy Profile – although the city of Sheffield's profile is currently in the final stages (www.coe.int/lang, accessed 12/01/2010). Given the demand for the learning and teaching of English across Europe, and globally, the Council of Europe has decided to tackle this issue head on. Instead of being content to bask in the good fortune of native competence in the language, the Council suggests that it is the responsibility of English speakers and teachers of English to promote plurilingual and intercultural awareness to prevent the dominance of English to the detriment of social inclusion and democratic values across Europe. Learners must be made aware of the value of plurilingualism because without it 'some command of English will be perceived as exempting learners from having to learn other languages' (Council of Europe 2007, p. 105). The aims of the Council of Europe, to which the English-speaking countries – as well as the non-English speaking countries where over 200 languages and linguistic variants are spoken – have signed up, can best be promoted by encouraging learners and decision-makers within each state to value plurilingual competence. This would include 'positive acceptance of linguistic diversity and social integration' (ibid, p. 106) and would form part of

> an educational responsibility collectively incumbent upon all European citizens, their elected representatives and democratic cultural organisations, since it is not only an organisational question but fundamentally a political and cultural matter (ibid, p. 106).

If such policies had been pursued in Ireland in recent years the changes made by my respondents who have been obliged to move from teaching exclusively German to teaching English and intercultural studies may not have been so pronounced. On the other hand, as plurilingualists themselves they have been well placed to promote the ideas of plurilingual education and bring to the teaching of English an awareness that English alone is not enough.

Within the European field the European Union's (EU) separate but converging set of policies concerning languages in the Union has had an influence over language education in Ireland. As I have shown, the Council of Europe promotes plurilingualism, defined as separate and different from the concept of 'multilingualism' – which it relates to the geographical area where different languages are spoken although individuals within the area may themselves be monolingual (Council of Europe/Department of Education and Science 2008, p. 6). The EU, on the other hand, seeks to differentiate its language policy aim by calling it 'individual multilingualism' (Commission of the European Communities 2007, p. 5) while its goal is more specifically 'to enable citizens to be fluent in two languages in addition to their mother tongue' (European Commission 2008). With 27 member states, 23 official languages and 60 other 'heritage' languages (Commission of the European Communities 2008) within the Union, the formulation of EU language policies has become essential to cope with the reality of a multilingual and multicultural society – as, with the increase in migration of recent decades, upwards of 438 languages are spoken today within its borders (Commission of the European Communities 2007).

In my view, this EU objective of mother-tongue-plus-two constitutes an astute way of coming to terms with the pervasive position of English within the education systems of member states. Studies have shown that 90% of pupils in secondary education across the EU learn English and that over 70% of those citizens surveyed support the view that one foreign language should be spoken by all EU citizens while almost the same percentage believe that this one language should be English (Commission of the European Communities 2007). By promoting the idea of learning two languages the EU accepts the currently inevitable fact of the high demand for English and subverts it by asking citizens to learn another language also. For native speakers of English the same concept ought to apply, obliging all pupils in secondary education to take on two foreign

languages and allowing for the learning of a diversity of languages throughout the education and training system. Unfortunately, this is far from being the case in Ireland – while over 90% of people in many of the smaller countries of the EU claim to speak a second language, in Ireland this number is a mere 34% (with the UK in second-last position at 38%) (European Commission 2008), although this statistic does not appear to take account of the position of Irish which, though a national language, is actually learned as a second language in school by the majority of Irish citizens.

The EU has only relatively recently begun to generate policies related to the education systems of member states. Until the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 the EU had no real remit to involve itself in education policies – under the principle of 'subsidiarity' educational matters were the responsibility of individual member states, with the EU mainly concerned with the areas of vocational training and the recognition of professional qualifications (Keeling 2006). Since then, the legally defined role of the EU in supporting the education systems of member states has resulted in the production of new strategies, proposals and discussion documents with a view to fulfilling the Lisbon goal of agreeing 'a challenging programme for building knowledge infrastructures, enhancing innovation and economic reform and modernising social welfare and education systems' (European Council 2000, quoted in Pépin 2007, p. 128).

The promotion of language learning has been recognised as central to this goal and has moved from an emphasis on the learning of the official languages of the EU to a much wider understanding of the benefits of multilingualism for the individual as well as for 'economic growth and social cohesion' (Commission of the European Communities 2007, p. 5). Among the most recent developments at EU level has been the creation in 2007 of a portfolio for multilingualism, assigned to a specific Commissioner and uniting all Commission services and policies that deal with multilingual issues.

Now recognised as one of the eight 'key competences for lifelong learning' (ibid) communication in foreign languages is to be supported by the European Commission which, according to the High Level Group on Multilingualism,

> should encourage the creation of local/regional language learning
> networks comprising of schools, vocational training, higher education, and
> adult education institutions, cultural institutes and other pertinent
> organisations, and support their collaboration at European level.
> (Commission of the European Communities 2007, p.11).

The business community has also been supportive of these policies, recognising the loss of business across Europe 'as a direct result of linguistic and intercultural weaknesses' (Business Forum for Multilingualism 2008, p. 1). They have seen that, while English is accepted as a global business language, it is the mastery of other languages that can give enterprises a competitive edge. Apart from encouraging practice-orientated language learning throughout the education system, they want regional partnerships to be developed between higher education and training institutions and local businesses which would improve the level of foreign language competence of business communities. Several of the points raised by the Business Forum show the importance for European enterprise of the type of foreign language teaching (language for specific purposes, languages in combination with business and other disciplines) which used to be a feature of the language courses offered across the IoT sector in Ireland – the very courses that have been dropped because of lack of student demand or because the professional bodies concerned were not prepared to support the allocation of study time to foreign languages in the belief that English would be sufficient. Another factor, the perception that languages are difficult to learn and easy to fail, has been identified by the European Commission (Commission of the European Communities 2008) as a reason for students' unwillingness to learn foreign languages and this has also been a feature of the Irish fall in demand.

The EU programme that has had the greatest effect on Irish higher education is the Erasmus programme, proclaimed on the EU's website as its 'flagship education and training programme' (http://ec.europa.eu/education/ , accessed 29/06/2009) with a goal of three million student exchanges by the year 2012. Since 2007 Erasmus has been part of the EU's lifelong learning programme and it is responsible for promoting and partially funding the mobility and training of students and teachers across the member states. While some studies have suggested that the academic outcomes of student exchanges have not been as successful as intended – with time abroad not always fully recognised by home institutions although guaranteed by the Erasmus programme itself – there can be no doubting the intercultural, linguistic and personal benefits of a period of study in a foreign higher education institution (Maiworm 2001, Teichler 2004). There is also evidence that students who take part in the Erasmus programme are more likely to undertake advanced study, have better employment prospects after graduation and throughout their careers and may continue to maintain international connections throughout their professional lives (Bracht et al 2006).

These are all very good reasons for encouraging Irish students to participate in Erasmus programmes during their studies. However, statistics show that Irish students have been reluctant to get involved with the Erasmus programme to the same extent as continental Europeans, with frequently less than half the number going abroad than the number of European students who wish to spend time in Ireland (HEA 2002). The most popular countries for Irish students have been France, Germany and Spain (ibid), which are also the countries whose languages have been most widely taught in the Irish second level system, suggesting that language competence is an important factor in choosing which country to go to. Throughout Europe, the mostly widely spoken foreign languages, after English (at 38%), are German and French (14% each) and Spanish and Russian (6% each), with German and Russian both having

increased their dominance as a result of EU enlargement in 2004 (European Commission 2008). The EU policy of funding intensive language classes in the other, less widely spoken, languages does not yet appear to have affected students' choice of country to study in to any great extent.

The EU has also supported specific projects administered by higher education institutions across Europe and directed at increasing foreign language competence among students. One example of this was the ENLU project which was based at a university in Berlin and was funded up to 2006 with the following goals, that all graduates should: be able to communicate in a minimum of two languages as well as their mother tongue; know how to learn new languages effectively; have the confidence to learn a new language when need or opportunity arose; have first hand experience in working and learning in other countries and in collaborating with other countries; be familiar with other cultures and have intercultural skills (European Network for the Promotion... 2004). One Irish university had an involvement in the project and acted as the contact for Irish higher education institutions. The European Language Council (ELC, www.elccel.org, accessed 06/07/2009), an independent and permanent organisation open to all higher education institutions in the EU member states, currently manages a second similar project known as MOLAN whose aim is 'to investigate the policies, practices, and initiatives set in place in various European higher education institutions with the goal of motivating students for language learning' (Tudor 2008, p. 2). Under the banner of 'languages-for-all' (ibid, p. 4) case studies from 38 institutions across Europe, including one Irish IoT, have been gathered in order to identify successful strategies for foreign language promotion among students (MOLAN 2007). These include both pedagogic and institutional initiatives which encourage the learning of languages within and beyond the students' curriculum.

Language education policies in Ireland

Having taken a look at the discourse and some of the policies of both the European Union and the Council of Europe that are hugely supportive of linguistic diversity and the teaching and learning of foreign languages at all stages of the education system and beyond I would now like to focus on the field of education policy in Ireland itself – in particular as evidenced by the recent *Language Education Policy Profile – Ireland 2005-2007* produced jointly by the Council of Europe and the Irish Department of Education and Science (2008).

The first point in relation to language education policy in Ireland, as noted in the document, is that higher education is, strictly speaking, outside the remit of the whole process of developing a language education policy profile. Unlike the discourse that was present in other European policy documents, here higher education is regarded as autonomous, although the authors do recognise that second level education policy has an effect on higher education and vice versa and do then go on to discuss some issues related to higher education throughout the document. Here their main concern is the impact of the reduction in the provision of foreign language teachers, caused by the falling numbers of students opting to study foreign languages at universities and affecting the professionalism and effectiveness of foreign language teaching at primary and second level. The proposed solution is to find a way to allow higher education institutions and the DES to plan the education of language teachers together so as to ensure their initial competence and their continuous professional development.

An aspect noted by the authors of the profile is that the framework under which languages are studied in higher education has changed in recent years so that high-achieving students tend to study languages in combination with law, business or another discipline and do not consider going into language teaching

on graduation. This means that 'departments of languages do not always attract the best students nor those who have already acquired a high level of proficiency in the foreign language concerned' (Council of Europe/Department of Education and Science 2008, p. 30), leading to the view that 'foreign languages do not seem to benefit from a very positive image among third level students' (ibid).

The report suggests that higher education institutions have had an effect on foreign language choice at an earlier stage in the education system: the National Universities of Ireland (NUI) universities have traditionally required a pass grade in a third language (after English and Irish) in the Leaving Certificate examination for entry to most of their programmes. As there is no compulsory foreign language requirement in the secondary education system itself, the possible removal of the NUI demand could put language learning at second level in a very precarious position. The profile points out that Ireland is the only country in Europe (other than Scotland) that does not have a compulsory foreign language, apart from on the (academically less taxing) Leaving Certificate Applied and Vocational programmes. This leaves language learning open to being seen as a low prestige activity and certainly does nothing to support either the Council of Europe's plurilingual policy or the EU's 'mother tongue plus two' ideal.

One area of growth in foreign language teaching and learning has been the introduction of a primary school language initiative which involves introducing French, German, Spanish and Italian into the final years of primary schooling. Again, there is an issue of teacher competence here because primary school teachers had not been encouraged to learn foreign languages during their own education and training in the past. A follow-on initiative has been that higher education institutions, particularly in the IoT sector, have become involved in providing primary teachers with foreign language skills through a post-graduate diploma in some of these languages. However, the profile also draws attention

to the lack of continuity between the primary schools' initiative and the languages that can be taken in local secondary schools, especially since another initiative to provide language diversity at second level has resulted in the introduction of Japanese and Russian in some secondary schools and, consequently, continuity of language learning cannot be guaranteed. The dominance of French and the recent fall in the numbers learning German or choosing from a more diversified selection of languages is noted. In my view, however, this is not necessarily a negative feature of Ireland's foreign language policy because the Council of Europe does not impute a negative aspect to the learning of a multitude of languages at different stages of life and to a variety of levels of competence (Council of Europe 2007) – indeed, this seems to be the essence of plurilingualism, as I interpret it.

Ultimately, the most important issue identified in the profile is that language policy must be part of a political decision taken at the highest level in the state, not just within the DES itself but across all government departments and related agencies. Clearly, the failure to make foreign language learning compulsory throughout the school system demonstrates that this has not been taken on board. Apart from ensuring the linguistic competence of language teachers and the introduction of a variety of languages at primary level, the issue of transparent certification of language attainment also needs to be pursued – the profile's authors recommend the use of the Common Framework and the ELP as the best means of doing this. Finally, and unsurprisingly, the report ends with a call to prioritise the view that 'English is not enough' (Council of Europe/Department of Education and Science 2008, p. 54) within Irish society so as 'to convey the message that the economic, cultural and European future of Ireland depends on the valorisation of plurilingualism' (ibid).

This call echoes the views of other cultural agencies within the Irish state, such as the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) (Ó Dochartaigh and Broderick 2006) which has proposed the setting up of a 'National Advisory Body' (p. 4) to work on

policy development and planning, oversee research and foster awareness of the economic and cultural benefits of multilingualism. One new area of interest, not taken up in the *Language Education Policy Profile* (2008), was a proposal to introduce beginners' level 'Language in Science' programmes (Ó Dochartaigh and Broderick 2006, p. 5) in higher education institutions to take advantage of the greater number of foreign languages available there than at second level.

The business case for foreign language learning

The RIA also endorsed the report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2005) that, while foreign languages are needed within the Irish workforce, these are not always required at high levels of fluency (which can be supplied by native speakers) – instead, a knowledge of languages for specific purposes and intercultural competence are necessary, the very aims of many language courses in the IoT sector that have recently fallen out of favour. Indeed the Expert Group's (2007) report comments on the fact that often

> the level of demand for training and education is not commensurate with the perceived need for it. One of the reasons is that individuals and businesses are not aware of their skills shortcomings (p. 97).

Despite this insight, which goes some way to explaining why Irish individuals and businesses are slow to embrace the European policy of plurilingualism/ multilingualism, the Expert Group goes on to propose the UK model of providing training and education vouchers so as to allow 'the development of a market where the consumer is the arbiter of what should be supplied and in what form' (ibid, p. 105). I find it illogical to suppose that the same consumers who are not capable of recognising what skills they lack could simultaneously be the deciders of what should be provided in the future. Without decision-makers and policy-makers taking on the initiatives outlined by the Council of Europe and the EU and forging an Irish policy for foreign language learning, individuals will continue to take the decision that they have been taking for the

last decade – that English *is* enough, despite evidence to the contrary. A survey conducted across the Irish higher education sector (Prospectus 2007) suggested that 'programmes should be offered regardless of demand if they meet economic, social or cultural needs' (p. 8) – if this were taken to its logical conclusion foreign languages in higher education institutions would never have been under threat.

In making the business case for foreign language learning in the Irish context the Expert Group's (2005) report shows that English is not quite the global language it is reputed to be: 75% of the world's population does not speak English at all while only 6% are actually native speakers of English (p. xi). On the World Wide Web about 50% of users prefer to use a language other than English and, as English-speaking users approach saturation point, its importance will decrease over time (p. 37). The lack of foreign languages has been estimated to have caused loss of international trade to Irish small and medium sized enterprises while, simultaneously, language student numbers in higher education continue to fall (with an 18% reduction between 1999 and 2002) (p. ix). Perhaps the only grain of comfort for an Irish reader of this report is the knowledge that, however abysmal the statistics are, the number of Leaving Certificate students taking a language examination paper (44,000 in 2004) 'actually exceeds, in absolute terms, the numbers taking A-level language papers in the UK (33,000)' (ibid).

The higher education field and the foreign languages agenda

If the state has not taken the initiative to formulate new policies for all levels of the education system, as recommended by so many bodies within and outside of Ireland, surely the agency responsible for planning and policy development for the whole public higher education system, the HEA, will have done so? Originally set up as the funding authority for the seven universities, the 'Institutes of Technology Act 2006 transferred exchequer funding and other

responsibilities for the institutes of technology from the Department of Education and Science to the HEA' (HEA *Strategic Plan 2008-2010*, p. 23). The HEA sees its new remit as allowing for the 'development of a unified strategic framework for both the universities and the institutes of technology in Ireland' (ibid). While the HEA is also responsible for the Erasmus programme in Ireland, it does not appear to have any specific policy to encourage the expansion of language learning in higher education institutions in line with EU goals, other than to administer the Lifelong Learning Programme's call for proposals to promote the key activity area of linguistic diversity and language learning. The issue of institutional autonomy (which does not include financial autonomy) mentioned in the Council of Europe/ Department of Education and Science policy profile (2008) clearly applies. It is therefore at the level of the institutional field that decisions have been and continue to be made with regard to the maintenance and development of language programmes. Without an overarching national policy local needs and local power plays and position-takings predominate. It would appear that, where language policy is concerned, it has been up to language lecturers themselves to create a space for their discipline within the shifting parameters of institutional fields. Although 'anything but an ideological hobby horse of the European Union and the Council of Europe' (Commission of the European Communities 2007, p. 22), without national support for multilingualism, the role of language lecturers under threat of change within an IoT language department and struggling to protect their discipline in the face of institutional indifference has often felt like riding a hobby horse, as the stories of my respondents will show.

It is difficult to get an overview of the current situation for languages, and specifically for German, within the IoT sector. As the events I described in the previous chapter – the removal of languages from science and technology programmes at MIT – were taking place in the early years of the new millennium, the same phenomenon was occurring across the whole IoT sector as demand for German fell away. Many part-time lecturers lost their jobs while

permanent staff took on other disciplines to fill their timetables, choosing new areas out of personal interest, previous skills and capital or the needs of their institutions. I have uncovered this information through anecdotal evidence over recent years but also from the details supplied by the five lecturers I interviewed from four IoTs across the country. Unfortunately, statistical data that would have given an overview of the situation a decade ago and the changes that have taken place since then do not appear to be in the public domain.

However, a survey of the position of German at higher education institutions in Ireland (Donovan and Mitchell 2006) gives some sense of how many people were involved in teaching German in both the university and IoT sectors in 2006. It is not comprehensive because it relied on individuals completing the survey with whatever information they saw fit, so that some institutions have supplied specific details of interest while others have not. My own interviews suggest that people who had already lost the bulk of their German hours by 2006 were not included in the statistics of some institutions but were in others. The information is therefore partial and its very existence in this form shows how the issue of the loss of German staff and the change in professional identity of some of those who remain in IoTs has been marginalised. German lecturers have attempted to compile this information themselves and to make it public but it is probably too little and too late to help form an accurate view of the events of the last decade.

What the survey does show is that, of the fourteen IoTs, only twelve give any information on German lecturers and that the total number of lecturers listed amounts to 45. In the case of one IoT it is stated that all three German lecturers were currently being retrained – given the small number of courses listed where German was included, it can be inferred that all three staff members would spend very little of their time still teaching German. In another IoT five German lecturers are mentioned, as well as an array of programmes including business studies at various levels, tourism, marketing, hospitality management and office

information systems but there is no indication of how many students are involved, whether numbers are growing or dwindling for German on these programmes or what may have changed in the years leading up to the survey.

In contrast to the IoTs, the seven universities would seem to be in a somewhat healthier position, with over 60 permanent staff members and a similar number of graduate students and others acting as part-time German language teachers listed in the survey. In fact, in a separate document, one university reported on the successful introduction of an institution-wide language programme, as a response to increasing student demand for foreign languages (Ruane and Gauthier 2006), at the same time as demand within the IoTs was collapsing. Although tangential to my concerns here but echoing an issue that was discussed in chapter 1, it is interesting to note that the field of language teaching within the university sector is the site of a struggle for dominant position between the traditional language departments, where the study of literature and postgraduate research are features, and language centres from which institution-wide language programmes would derive and which struggle for equal status as a higher education domain. Such position-taking is not an issue in the IoT sector where language teaching at all levels and for many purposes is the function of all lecturing staff.

The Association of Third-Level Teachers of German in Ireland, the compiler of the survey, has been anxious to present a united front to the challenges that face the teaching of German across the entire Irish higher education landscape. In a submission to a working group tasked with writing a report called 'Foresight in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences' (Association of Third-Level Teachers of German in Ireland 2008) the association points out that

> German used to flourish at twenty-three third-level institutions; but it is
> now under severe threat in a majority of institutes of technology (courses
> e.g. in Business and German have already been withdrawn) and it is also
> under considerable pressure at universities (p. 2).

The submission is clear on the reasons for the difficulties across the sector. Funding takes little account of the specific requirements for teaching languages, which involves small class sizes and high costs per student:

> The economics of scale and the short-sighted culture of budgetary considerations overriding all pedagogical considerations has killed or almost killed German at many institutes of technology with the severest consequences for both the economy and economically relevant intercultural research (p. 5).

It is hard to argue with this contention, considering the type of discourse I have already examined, whether from European policy documents or from the business community which does not normally propose the introduction of policies that involve considerable expense unless there is a clear long-term benefit. The long-term cultural and economic benefits of foreign language learning at IoTs have not been supported at national level because it was more expedient to reflect the fall in individual student demand for German than to devise policies to stimulate demand that would then have immediate financial consequences. The issue of the underfunding of higher education, especially in the areas of teaching and learning, has been a topic of discussion for years (Prospectus 2007).

The association's submission (2008) also tackles the issue of surplus staff, caused by these changes: 'The redeployment of staff to areas in which they have no expertise poses a serious threat to the quality of our education' (p. 5). This issue has remained largely unspoken among the respondents in my study but must underlie their sense of shaken professionalism and their feelings of insecurity on taking on new subjects, having already established themselves on a particular career path. It has, however, been articulated by the former TUI official at MIT (mentioned in the previous chapter) who argued that the move of former German lecturers into new disciplines, such as communication, deprofessionalised these disciplines by implying that anyone could teach them. Similarly, there appears to be an expectation that underemployed German

lecturers should readily agree to teach English and have the necessary skills to do so.

Information from the field: my respondents' experiences

Despite the lack of a clear statistical overview of the changing face of German language teaching activity in IoTs, what can throw some light is a summary of the changes made by the five lecturers I have interviewed for this study who are employed at IoTs other than MIT. Here's what happened to them:

- Therese was encouraged to replace German hours with French (her other primary degree subject), for which there was still some demand, and to supplement the shortfall in her timetable by undertaking training in guidance counselling and personal development. At the time of our interview she was tutoring for several hours per week in this new area.

- Orla took on several hours of tutoring in communication and, as she gained more confidence with the subject matter, was preparing to start lecturing in the discipline. She still taught German for about half her timetable and was reluctant to concede any more changes or loss of German teaching hours.

- Siobhán had got involved in an EU research project and was supervising master's students and designing an ICT language project. She had no German hours at the time of our interview.

- Claire, the only interviewee who was on a renewable year-long contract (EPT) at the time that all her German hours disappeared, was obliged to seek support from the TUI. As a result, she was kept on at the IoT on the basis that she would undertake a degree in computer technology – she has since gone on to teach office management systems and has not taught German for several years.

- Paula took on teaching communication and study skills as well as intercultural communication and also undertook doctoral studies unconnected with her primary discipline, although with little

encouragement and no time allowance for this on her timetable. She was teaching very little German at the time of our interview.

It is worth noting that those respondents who were instrumental in finding new tasks or roles for themselves – Orla, Siobhán and Paula – rather than waiting to have ideas imposed on them by their managers, felt that they had perhaps gone too far in accommodating themselves to the problem of a lack of German teaching hours, a problem that was not of their making. They had become aware that colleagues who were not so forthcoming and open to change were the ones who continued to teach more German hours. My respondents had come to believe that they had conceded too much and that the emotional loss of their professional identity was not always appreciated by colleagues or managers. Therese, who had not been so committed to German, having always preferred French, did not express the same sense of loss while Claire, whose loss of professional identity was greatest, did indeed concur with this feeling but was also glad to still have a job and was prepared to summon up the enthusiasm to take on whatever new changes would be brought her way. In her private life she still had a connection with German and Germany and continued to hope that demand for the language would revive and that she could regain her preferred professional identity in the future.

These five German lecturers' stories, briefly described as they have been here, give some inkling of the responses of individual institutions to the collapse in demand for German in the last decade – managers appear to have looked to individuals to solve the problem themselves and have been slow to recognise the loss of professional identity and the emotional toll that this has entailed. The contrast with the experiences of my final respondent is striking. Karl, a lecturer in a technological university who came from Germany with a successful history of developing and teaching specialised courses in German as a foreign language, was encouraged to complete a doctorate in an area linked to his teaching, and has since taken on an administrative role for a limited period, but

has not had to move out of his discipline in spite of wide ranging structural change in his institution – although his part-time lecturer colleagues did lose their jobs as German teaching was depleted. A detail that points to the changing field of Irish higher education and the employment expectations of language graduates of the last few decades is the fact that those who graduated in the 1980s (Orla and Siobhán) went on to do the H. Dip. Ed., which qualified them to become second-level teachers, while those who graduated in the 1990s (Therese, Claire and Paula) undertook postgraduate study in their discipline – suggesting that choices were less restricted during that period of heightened interest in German within Irish society. Table 2 gives an overview of all six respondents, the length of time they have been employed in their institutions and the range of changes they have made in recent years.

Table 2: Overview of non-MIT respondents and changes made

Name	Status/Duration in position (approx.)	Main changes made /new subjects taught	Initiated by self/others/jointly
Therese	Permanent IoT/ 8 years	Moved into French (other primary degree subject), guidance counselling and personal development	Jointly
Orla	Permanent IoT/ 15 years	Communication, tutoring and lecturing	Self mostly
Siobhán	Permanent IoT/ 15 years	EU project, master's supervision, designing a Moodle programme	Self mostly
Claire	Now permanent IoT/ 15 years – at time of change had EPT status	ICT, text processing for office management	Jointly, including teachers' union negotiation
Paula	Permanent IoT/ 9 years	Intercultural communication; communication and study skills, doctoral studies	Self mostly
Karl	Permanent University/ 15+ years	Completed a PhD; 5 year secondment into administration	PhD jointly, secondment self

Among the IoTs it is clear that no cross-sectoral position was taken on how to respond to changes in a planned way. It was left up to the individual lecturers to solve the problem as quickly and painlessly, for the institutions, as possible. However, language lecturers across the IoT field have recently taken on an initiative themselves, engendered as a result of the RIA's language policy and planning conference (Ó Dochartaigh and Broderick 2006), and set up the IoT Language Policy and Planning Network. The purpose of the network (http://www.learningcontent.edu.ie/modlang/blog/, accessed 03/10/2008), since renamed the IoT Languages Strategy Network, was to discuss and collaborate together on developing language policies within individual institutions – an attempt to position themselves within the sectoral field and shape the evolving agenda. The network includes members from eleven of the fourteen IoTs and meets twice yearly to promote the formulation of institutional language policies, as well as encouraging innovative teaching and learning practices and research as a form of continuous professional development activity. The network does not deal exclusively with German but draws its membership from all the language disciplines taught in IoTs. It is instructive, however, that the two lecturers who instigated the network were lecturers in German and were affected by the changes that are the subject of this study, while a survey conducted by the network over the last two academic years (2007-08 and 2008-09) suggests that the numbers teaching German in IoTs continues to fall.

Although a few MIT lecturers have taken part in meetings of the network, it does not appear to be an initiative that has captured the imagination of the bulk of MIT languages staff. Any institution-wide languages policy that was to be developed at MIT would therefore not have the benefit of learning from the experiences of other institutions within the IoT field. Despite being one of the largest Schools of Languages within the state it seems that the MIT Languages School would, in the main, prefer to go it alone.

This is where I would now like to turn my focus – the field in which the bulk of my interview respondents have been positioned while they have tried to negotiate the changes that the fall in demand for German teaching has meant to their professional identities.

The field of MIT and the rules of the game

As was outlined in chapter 4, languages have been taught at various locations across MIT since the beginning; however it was not until the restructuring of the institute into faculties, which came into effect less than a decade ago, that the LS took administrative and management control of all language teaching within the organisation. This did not automatically mean also taking control of all language teaching staff. Because of the history of separate colleges at separate locations, staff who had been employed in permanent posts in the institution before its amalgamation retained the right, negotiated by the TUI, to stay in their original location and teach exclusively within that faculty and site. A small number of language lecturers chose this option but the majority operated on the belief that there would be strength in grouping together with like-minded colleagues in the language disciplines within the newly created LS in the Arts Faculty. Location X seems to have been the automatic choice of home for the new school because the only stand-alone programme to have been generated from language disciplines, an international languages and business degree, was based there. However, as some of my respondents have pointed out, there were probably as many staff members employed at Location W but there they functioned as service teachers on tourism, hospitality management and culinary arts programmes.

Throughout the history of language teaching at MIT, service teaching was the norm. Whether on science, engineering, business, music or hospitality courses, languages (originally French or German, until Spanish and Russian were introduced in the 1980s) were an adjunct to the major disciplines and the terms

under which they were delivered were always decided by the management of these disciplines. Several of my respondents had worked at Location X long enough to recall that those were the conditions under which they worked at the start of their careers and that the situation had pluses (being simple, straightforward and involving little administrative work) as well as the obvious minus of lack of control over the structure and management of their professional lives. In an effort to gain some control in the institutional field, and to respond to societal demand, the then Languages department set up a two-year certificate in languages and business which eventually grew into the four-year degree programme that exists today and now incorporates six languages. The department had the necessary capital to allow it to set up the programme then because it also included several business lecturers whose expertise could be built on. Since the restructuring, such staff members belong to the Business Faculty so that the degree programme is now regarded as a cross-faculty venture whose management is shared. Other shared programmes within the Arts Faculty involve combining languages with journalism and media arts, although German now appears likely to be dropped from both programmes because of lack of student demand. The most recent proposal, to take effect in the next few years, is the introduction of a combined languages and tourism degree, however the languages component of the programme will, most likely, be delivered in combination with existing programmes and involve no additional teaching hours for German lecturer staff.

The removal of languages from engineering and science programmes, as described in the previous chapter, had an effect on the timetables of German lecturers at Location X. However, because of the existence of the business and languages programme and the expansion of new programmes, while most people suffered a reduction of hours they still had a base of German teaching, unlike some of the lecturers in other IoTs I described earlier. In Location W, meanwhile, a similar phenomenon was happening: in response to a lack of government policy and consequent student disinterest in languages various

tourism and hospitality programmes reduced their languages' content or made language modules optional. The newly-formed LS responded by expanding the number of short course options available in both locations, introducing new modules in a variety of languages, intercultural communication, Irish cultural studies and EAP. A few of these modules were taken on as part of existing programmes (in the manner of service courses of old) but the majority of students opting for the new stand-alone modules turned out to be Erasmus students looking for extra tuition in English or some insight into the cultural life of Ireland or were taking the opportunity to start learning another modern language.

What these changes have meant to many German lecturers on a practical level has been a worsening of their working conditions. Most short course modules have been offered in the evenings to take account of students attending from across the institution and they are usually in two-hour blocks. This means that lecturers must be prepared to use a variety of media and teaching methods to hold students' attention but, required to move from one location to another to teach different modules, they frequently have not had access to the required technology on different sites. They often have to carry large bundles of photocopies across the city and find that they have no personal or storage space when they arrive in another location – as one respondent put it, 'like being a part-timer' (Rachel). As for part-timers themselves, while there had always been a number of part-time lecturers of German in MIT and many permanent staff members had started out as part-timers before gaining permanent status, since the fall-off in demand there are now no part-time German teachers left in the system (MIT doc 4). The last of my former part-time respondents to teach in MIT finished in 2004.

Given that the creation of a new faculty structure and a new school management structure occurred at exactly the same time as the collapse in German teaching, it might be expected that structural supports would have since been put in place to deal with such a phenomenon – after all, it is not inconceivable that the same could happen again for some unpopular subject in the future and that MIT would need a policy for diverting staff from one unwanted discipline into another area of growth. In fact, this does not seem to be the case.

From the point of view of human resources planning, the process of adapting to change is very clear-cut. To quote the views of an MIT HR manager:

> So, to recruit somebody, you know, where you're going to make a
> considerable financial investment in them, so from the point of view of the
> institute it could be, you know, well over a million euros worth of
> investment over a lifespan of the individual but also where you are
> bringing in an individual to an organisation where he or she is going to
> commit, you know, a considerable portion of their time, build their
> lifestyles, build their families, I think there's an obligation on both sides to
> ensure that there is the capability of evolving as the market or the
> circumstances change.

To this HR manager the issue surrounding German lecturers should never have happened. Although he was not employed in MIT at the time of the restructuring and the initial loss of German teaching hours, he was very clear on how the structure is supposed to function, even if things would not be much better managed today:

> It seems to me that all language teachers in [MIT], irrespective of what
> faculty they're teaching in or programme they're teaching on should
> essentially be a resource managed by the [Languages School] (…). In that
> situation you would have a particular head of school/faculty responsible
> for looking at trends in language requirement and looking at the ability of
> [MIT] to meet those trends or looking at challenges to those trends in
> terms of [MIT] being over-resourced and I think if that structure is in
> place, *I don't believe it's fully in place at this point in time* (…) People in

third level institutions are highly trained, highly educated and per se should be very adaptable people (…). (HR manager, MIT, my emphasis)

Having identified that it is the responsibility of both the individual and her manager to find solutions to the type of problem outlined in this study, the HR manager was cautious about the role of HR in taking on such problems and forcing a solution. In his opinion:

> It can be very dangerous for HR to, em, get directly involved because at the end of the day the manager has a responsibility as a manager, to find solutions to problems (…) They need to find a solution and it is our job to work with them to help them find a solution but it's their problem, not our problem (…).

Given this viewpoint, it is not surprising that an LS manager found there was little support as she sought to fill the timetables of German lecturers without sufficient hours. She had had a previous experience of this lack of support when another lecturer's hours had disappeared in the past and had learned what to expect:

> I got the help from nobody. I could have just kept him on the staff list, poking round or, I don't know (…) and that was it. And then there would be trouble and saying 'why aren't you timetabling this person?' That's the way the system works. (LS manager)

Faced with a large group of staff whose hours were falling away her solution was to give them space to develop solutions for themselves:

> The way I presented it to the staff was that they had to, kind of, you know, maybe seize opportunities, that maybe opened, that instead of just sitting back and just teaching German because that was what they were employed to do or whatever, that they might actually think, you know, other things that they really want to do and pursue those, knowing that German was going to continue decreasing anyway, so some of the staff have taken that up. (LS manager)

By leaving it up to individuals to choose what interests they might pursue and what new areas they could work in, it does not appear that any group decisions were made or that the effects of the reduction in German hours were shared out equitably among the staff. Instead, LS management evaluated the individuals' ability to cope with change and acted accordingly, with no outside support or assistance:

> I've, I've taken it upon myself, kind of as I say, protect the staff as much as I could, making decisions as to who I was going to push and who I was going to, kind of, protect as much as I can and who, you know what I mean, and that was within the School and that, that's all I could do.
> (LS manager)

By the time of our interview, the LS manager was confident that the changes that had happened had been coped with; that, allowed enough time to come to terms with the situation, staff members had found a modus vivendi:

> it's not being introduced as a kind of a negative thing, it's being introduced as an opportunity, to turn something which can be negative and upsetting, and say 'oh my God, my whole world is collapsing' (...) and give the time and the space for it to happen, you know, and that is what I've done. (...) I've had nobody really upset, well they were upset about other things but not, not about this particular issue. (LS manager)

The only structural support that could have had an effect on planning the development of a new professional identity for these German lecturers in a systematic way was the introduction of PMDS which was not put into operation in the LS until the academic year 2006-07. Under the format agreed for institutions in the IoT sector, PMDS consists of an annual team management planning meeting where strategic priorities and objectives are set for each school or department followed by a personal development planning meeting between every staff member and his or her immediate manager. The purpose of personal development planning is to:
- review performance and achievement for the previous year;
- identify employee strengths and areas for development;

- agree work priorities for the year ahead;

- agree development and training needs and plans. (MIT doc 6)

For the LS manager interviewed for this study, PMDS is a continuation of the type of discussions already undertaken when German teaching hours were reduced. She does not share the cynicism shown by many of my respondents towards the ultimate aims of PMDS (as demonstrated in chapter 6):

> I take the PMDS as very much kind of, eh, for the person, I'm only the facilitator to get the person to reflect on where they are, what they have done, what they could do and, you know. So, obviously with the German staff it's, you know, looking at opportunities but in a kind of a positive way and say [inaudible] 'is there something that you want to do?'(…)

A recent LS self-review document (MIT doc 4) highlights the role of PMDS in identifying and encouraging the research interests of staff and points out that one third of the School staff members were currently research active, although there is no breakdown in the figures to show whether German lecturers were equally, more or less likely to pursue research, do more advanced study or attend conferences than lecturers of more popular languages. Another stimulus to developing a research culture in line with the institution's drive towards recognition as a university was the introduction of regular research seminars among languages staff. This is coordinated by a staff member and colleagues are encouraged to participate by presenting new research interests they may have. However, the response of the panel appointed to review the School's 'current position and its ability to respond to changing needs' (MIT doc 7, p. 1) has noted that research activity in the LS is relatively weak and recommended that more targeted and effective staff research strategies would help 'to reinforce its identity' (ibid).

Another phenomenon of change that affected the whole institution during the period under review here was the introduction of modularisation across all academic programmes and the semesterisation of the academic year. As I

mentioned earlier, the LS responded to the fall in teaching hours of staff by developing new short course modules to be accessed by students across all disciplines and locations – but this was not the experience of modularisation that was common across MIT as a whole. A report on the modularisation process (MIT doc 8) suggests that the concept of offering optional and elective modules across faculties has generally not been put into operation because of the concerns of academic staff working in disciplines traditionally shaped by professional bodies (architecture, engineering etc.) to ensure that all core modules must always be covered – a phenomenon observable in such disciplines across the international field (Winberg 2008). Here again, as in the days of service teaching, languages and the spin-off subjects offered by language lecturers have been seen as peripheral to the real matter of technological and scientific disciplines, demonstrating the incompatibility of the forms of capital available to language teachers in the field of technological education. Since students on these programmes are not allocated free time or space to choose non-core modules, the uptake of LS modules remains confined mainly to Erasmus and international students.

The report (MIT doc 8) shows that interdisciplinarity is a concept that has not been widely supported within MIT and here the institution marks itself out from the universities it is anxious to be equated with. In UCD, for example, the new Horizons programme is widely advertised as a concept that allows students to freely choose a certain number of modules per year from across the interdisciplinary spectrum of the university, thus personalising the learning experience and putting the choice into the hands of the students themselves (www.ucd.ie , accessed 02/07/2009). While similar rhetoric was used in introducing modularisation at MIT, it could not be effective while those who remained dominant within the field of technological education were reluctant to cede control and provide access for their students to other disciplines which they themselves did not value.

This failure has left the LS in a weaker position than it must have hoped for at the outset of the move to modularisation. With a large proportion of German lecturers' teaching hours now made up from teaching EAP or other short course modules their contribution is largely unrecognised across the institution because these modules do not form a component of the programmes of the majority of students, a point clearly understood by the LS manager:

> You see, for us, as long as people register on programmes and they are other people's programmes, our existence is kind of unknown. (...) We're never to be seen or heard or, you know, we're just part of a kind of a movement (...) Modularisation needs, and I hope that one day (...) you know, to get students registered on modules because then you see, if we offer a module that's common to four or five courses and we have loads of students on it then we will get recognised (...).

Another aspect of this attempt to gain a strong identity or recognised position within MIT is the 'languages for all' policy adopted by the LS, in line with EU policies mentioned earlier. As far back as 2001, when the management of the LS was attempting to maintain a niche for languages within engineering programmes, as described in the previous chapter, the policy was proposed but gained no further ground. The most recent documentation (MIT doc 4) mentions that the LS is currently engaged in 'actively developing' such a policy, demonstrating that it has not yet been possible to promulgate an institution-wide languages policy from within the school itself. As has been pointed out by one of my informants, a former TUI activist, the 'languages for all' policy demonstrates the continuing 'disarticulation' within MIT, in that:

> Managers can only manage within a framework of policies and strategies and so on, you know. It's not as if, if you're manager in the [LS] you can think up the institute's strategy for languages (...) it's not within your remit.

Again it would seem that the LS, and the disciplines represented by it, remains incapable of positioning itself as a powerful player in the institution as a whole. While MIT has increased its involvement in the EU Erasmus programme and,

by introducing modularisation, begun the process of adapting to the requirements of the Bologna Process (as discussed in MIT doc 8) it has not been prepared to take the decision to free up student study choices and make the 'languages for all' policy workable in practice. The traditional approach to maintaining core subjects as modules and allowing little cross-faculty selection of electives has left the LS in the position of trying to operate elective modules on the one hand and finding partners for more traditional joint programmes (such as languages and tourism) on the other. 'Ownership' of programmes by schools and faculties remains very much a feature of MIT thinking and the funding policy of programme-based unit costs does not encourage a rethink.

Happily, the latest statistics (MIT doc 4) show that numbers of students on the school's more traditional programmes are projected to rise. The international business and languages programme, from which miniscule numbers of students were graduating in German in recent years (only one student in 2007/08), has begun to see a rise in demand and is set to almost double across the four years of the programme within two years. With this increase and the start-up of the new programme in tourism and languages possibly offsetting a reduction in German teaching hours on other, less successful programmes, as well as the continuing expansion of incoming Erasmus student numbers and the retirement of two German lecturers, it would seem that German teaching hours may have stabilised – at least over the short to medium term. The conclusion of my respondent that the profession of German lecturer had 'died while I was in it' (Joseph) may prove overly pessimistic and may be as much a reflection of his own personal habitus as of the field of German teaching within MIT and in Irish higher education in general.

Positioning my MIT respondents within the field

Given the role of habitus in shaping individuals' reaction to change I would now like to approach the inner circle of the graphic I presented on page 40 (figure 1),

which represented the fields within fields and the centrality of individual habitus within these fields, and turn to the people concerned: the 13 MIT German lecturers, past and present, whose information formed the bulk of my primary research on this project and whose individual stories, and my analysis thereof, are the basis of the next chapter. As was explained in chapter 3, the interviews were conducted in two phases: an unstructured life history interview followed about six months later by a more targeted set of questions based on a matrix derived from key topics identified in the first interview and matched to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, field and reflexivity (see Appendix A). The matrix was designed initially to demonstrate the operation of these concepts throughout the professional life histories of all the respondents but was also used to pinpoint the areas that could be explored further in a second round of interviews with those respondents who were still being directly affected by the institutional field of MIT in their daily lives – the permanent lecturers, only nine of whom were re-interviewed as the tenth person was not available. The three former part-timers were not re-interviewed on the basis that, no longer being positioned within the field and no longer playing that particular game, the changes they had made would not be further affected by it.

In trying to shape my analysis of these respondents I began by grouping them according to certain shared characteristics. Firstly, looking at their employment history, I considered whether this could potentially have had some bearing on the institutional habitus they developed (or had no chance to develop, in the case of part-timers) and if it may have had a role in their capacity to change their professional identity when required. This employment history (shown in Table 3 below) took three possible forms: to have been employed directly as permanent staff members by MIT or one of the previously autonomous colleges of MIT; as part-time staff who later were employed in a permanent capacity or those who were only ever employed as part-timers.

Table 3: Lecturers sorted according to permanent/part-time status in MIT

Employed as permanent from outset	Period as part-timer	Part-time only
Joseph Monika Isabel	Ingrid Anna Rachel Tony Erika Marlene Peter	Richard Helen Rosi

Another factor that I considered could have had an effect on people's ability to face change as lecturers in German whose professional identity was threatened was whether the individuals concerned were native speakers of the language. Table 4 gives the details. When the choices left open to lecturers whose timetables could not be filled included teaching EAP at various levels or intercultural studies and intercultural communication modules conducted entirely through English, it seemed quite possible that native German speakers would be at a disadvantage here.

Table 4: Lecturers sorted according to German language acquisition

German native speaker	Non-native speaker
Anna Erika Marlene Monika Rosi	Ingrid Joseph Rachel Tony Peter Isabel Richard Helen

The amount of professional development undertaken by respondents since taking up employment at MIT seemed also to offer evidence of a willingness to

adapt to changing circumstances. Many former part-timers who had hopes of gaining permanent status were naturally anxious to ensure their continued employment by undertaking further studies and this has proven to be the case for the majority of them. Those lecturers recruited directly into permanent positions have seemed less prepared to engage in further post-graduate study while staff members employed in the last decade were more likely to have completed doctoral studies as a condition of their successful employment – this reflects MIT's ambition over the same time period to achieve university status by increasing the level of academic qualifications required by prospective candidates. Table 5 shows the academic qualifications achieved by respondents before joining MIT and since.

Table 5: Qualifications as evidence of professional development (permanent staff)

Name	Highest qualifications before employment at MIT	Qualifications since employment at MIT
Ingrid	MA	None
Anna	Staatsexamen	M. Phil x 2, TEFL cert
Joseph	MA	TEFL cert
Rachel	BA, H Dip Ed	MA
Tony	BA, H Dip Ed	M Ed
Erika	BA, H Dip Ed	TEFL cert
Marlene	Diplom-Kaufmann	MA
Monika	Staatsexamen	None
Peter	PhD	None
Isabel	PhD (in progress)	PhD (completed)

Note: Staatsexamen is the equivalent of a primary degree and teaching diploma, required for teaching at 2nd level in Germany, Diplom-Kaufmann is the equivalent of a business studies degree.

Table 6, meanwhile, shows what former part-time German lecturers have been required to undertake since losing their teaching hours at MIT in order to make themselves more employable at a time when the demand for learning German had all but disappeared in the country as a whole.

Table 6: Qualifications as evidence of professional development (part-timers)

Name	Highest qualifications before employment at MIT	Qualifications since leaving employment at MIT
Richard	MA	Solicitor
Helen	MA	H Dip Ed (primary level) in progress
Rosi	Staatsexamen	MA, PhD, Life coaching diploma

In exploring how to group these thirteen respondents in a way that would give the most conceptual clarity I concluded that, as an aim of the project was to highlight lecturers' experiences of coping with change, then adaptation to change must be the main focus of the analysis. I have therefore classified the respondents under four headings: those who were willing to embrace change in a self-initiated way; those who accepted change at the point where they felt that they could no longer resist the suggestions of management; those who continue to teach more or less as before; while the three former part-time lecturers who were obliged to move out of the profession are a clear case on their own. In chapter 6 I will set out their stories and my interpretation of how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, field and reflexivity give insight into the choices they have made.

6

Individual identities in transition

In deciding what constitutes change it must be understood that, while all respondents in this project have experienced a variety of changes throughout their working lives and have expressed varying perceptions on how much change they have been obliged to cope with, the defining criterion is how far these have involved a **change to their professional identities as German lecturers**, such that they have been required to take on a completely new subject area or discipline for which their appointment as German lecturers would not normally have prepared them. In other words, change within the discipline, such as new courses or new topics within the discipline of German are not being classed here as significant changes to professional identity whereas the move to teaching English or intercultural communication (through English) for someone who came to their job with no knowledge or experience of such an area would be regarded as significant. Table 7 gives an overview of how permanent German lecturers in MIT have been grouped. The remaining three respondents, Richard, Helen and Rosi, as former part-time lecturers, had no choice but to change their professional identity when they no longer had any German teaching hours.

Table 7: Permanent lecturers sorted according to level of change made

Embraced change to professional identity	Initially resistant to change to professional identity	Change within parameters of professional identity
Ingrid Anna Joseph	Rachel Tony Erika Peter	Marlene Monika Isabel

Reflecting these varied experiences and the significance of the changes made I have structured the sections somewhat differently throughout this chapter. In the first two sections I have dealt with individual stories, in the third and fourth sections I have clustered the stories of the participants together. Also, to prevent an over-repetitive structure to this long chapter I have varied the approach to analysis, sometimes incorporating it into the individual stories when it seemed most apposite but also including an analytical discussion at the end of each section. I will begin with the group of three respondents who have shown most willingness to embrace new subjects outside of the discipline of German.

Embracing change

Ingrid's story

Ingrid was the oldest of my interviewees and was due to retire from MIT within a year. She began work as a part-timer when Location X was a stand-alone college and became a permanent German lecturer in the early 1980s when jobs were hard to come by. She was fully qualified for a permanent position from the outset, having previously completed a translation diploma and an MA in German and English. Since then she has undertaken no new formal academic qualifications and has remained teaching in the same place for 36 years while Location X has been subsumed into MIT, faculties have been formed and the remit of the LS has widened across the institution. She has found difficulty in dealing with the increase in managerialism that the creation of this larger institution has involved:

> I really don't know what has happened, the last 15 years has seemed to be just in a quagmire with administrative work and it means more about how many students I have and the input and output than about the exciting things about, that I really do feel are still exciting. (Ingrid)

What still excited Ingrid were changes within her daily teaching life, such as 'the various changes that took place in teaching modern languages that was quite exciting', although she has found that German teaching methodology has been slow to accept innovation and she has often found herself benefiting from fresh thinking from other language disciplines. Over the years her work involved teaching German for special purposes to engineering, science and optometry students, among others, and later German for business. After languages were removed from most of these programmes, Ingrid took on a challenge which, while small in terms of teaching hours, was a new departure for her professionally: a move into teaching communication in English which has more recently expanded into intercultural communication.

It is significant that this change was not initiated directly by her or by the management within her school. Indeed it does not appear to have been recognised within the school management as a change worth noting. LS managers saw it as their role to protect staff who had been teaching German for a very long time from taking on new challenges that they might not welcome:

> the people who have been doing this, teaching German for whatever, their full career, I mean I didn't touch them, I didn't even ask them to change anything, I mean some of them will be retiring next year so, you know, they should stay with the flow and that's it. (LS manager)

However, Ingrid did welcome the challenge, particularly as it gave her the opportunity to work more with colleagues from outside her own school. What happened was that about five years earlier she and a languages colleague were approached directly by colleagues from a programme where languages had previously been removed to take on this new role on the basis that 'we are well-known for being *applied* teachers and not giving any lectures or anything like that so we sort of worked out a course and did it.' (Ingrid)

Nonetheless it is an area which had since caused her some insecurity because of a sense that she was not qualified or that students would view her as not being a specialist. However, having spent a lot of time on preparation she felt more confident and welcomed the chance to try a fresh teaching methodology which was possible because the subject was taught through English. She was able to invite guest speakers as subject specialists and thereby employ a highly interactive approach which she would also have liked to see applied to language courses in the future.

Ingrid's imminent retirement has meant that this late professional change was somewhat unfulfilling for her because there was no time left in which to gain an academic understanding of the discipline:

> (...) I would like to do more research because things are happening. It's also that, when we started there was absolutely nothing, communication wasn't seen as so important and now things are happening in that field. I just, I haven't got the time to follow it up and that is great frustration. It means that you don't really want to do it any more (...). (Ingrid)

However, her sense of frustration was not limited to the lack of time to do research. She regretted the loss of service teaching and did not accept the negative evaluation of it that was now current. She had an attachment to the older system and philosophy of the days when the college had a certain socio-political stance which gave it a unique status in Irish higher education: it catered for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, not necessarily students with low Leaving Certificate points. She has therefore found it difficult to lower her own standards in what she would accept from students' work and has felt herself castigated for maintaining these standards, to the point of being 'professionally undermined' and blamed for the reduction in student numbers for German: 'it's my fault (...) I fail students'. While this comment was accompanied by an ironic laugh, it is clear that maintaining standards has been an issue between Ingrid, her colleagues and the management of the school. The LS manager has noted that 'the results in German are always lower than the

other languages' and referred to an example of 'inflexibility' among German lecturers in the past, mentioned in chapter 4, which meant that an engineering student received a lesser grade in his degree because of a bad mark in German which had then caused 'hurt' among technology lecturers, leading to the negative view of German as a subject and the desire to remove it from all science and technology courses. Ingrid's opinion was that at least as many students had benefited from doing well in German in their overall marks as had done badly because of it.

Ingrid's response to these recent stresses has been to downgrade the importance of her professional identity in her life. Asked to quantify its significance to her overall identity she claimed that

> (...) twenty five per cent would be counting entire (...) I like my work and think about [it], so time-wise it's more than 25 percent but my professional identity is not, ok, I'm a lecturer in [Location X]. That I work for [MIT] is not something that I always like to say for various reasons.

It seems difficult to relate Ingrid's commitment to her job as she had actually embodied it for 35 years with her negative feelings towards her work and the institution as she approached retirement. In her view 'time-wise my life is consumed by work, as does my family say and complain, but when it comes to mentally, it isn't.' However, her personal habitus as revealed in our interviews suggests how she had been able to separate the mechanics of daily work from her emotional engagement with family, colleagues and students:

> quite frankly it was always a job, it was a job. And with my typical Scandinavian, Germanic mentality if, if you have a job to do you do it and you do it as well as you can, but to say that my heart was in it, no. (Ingrid)

At the same time, it is clear that Ingrid had formed an institutional habitus in the past at a time when the institution had a very different set of values. Two philosophies seem to underpin this view. The first was an egalitarian

administration of the structures that supported teachers and students which was something that she valued and that has been replaced in recent years by management structures that she could only disparage, commenting that 'I'm concerned with students, they are concerned with boxes and finances and things like that, put everything into a box and it has to fit (...)'.

The second was her understanding that the value of a well-rounded education and the role of language learning and teaching in promoting this were key factors in shaping the institution of the past which motivated her throughout her earlier career, and that this has now been lost:

> (...) languages should play a larger part in society as a whole and, and I also think it's an awful pity that, em, something that should be enjoyable that people see as a chore. I can't understand that. (Ingrid)

With regard to the changing institutional field of MIT it is clear that Ingrid had long since given up on the game. She had no wish to position herself within the school or the organisation as the field became more hierarchical and less interested in fulfilling the needs, as she saw them, of the most important but now least valued groups within the structure: 'and down at the bottom just like little figures from some sort of comic strip (...) with the lecturers there and the students there (...) it's incredible!' In her terms, the bureaucracy and administrative hierarchy of the organisation that has come about over the last decade or more is proof of the power games that have been at play and that have so frustrated her.

Further evidence that the institution and the school merely pay 'lip-service' to a commitment towards staff, for Ingrid, was the setting up of PMDS which was aimed at planning for the professional and academic needs of her and her colleagues. Ultimately, she viewed the process as a cosmetic exercise and used a phrase to describe it that was common to many of the interviewees from this organisation: 'I think it's a total waste of time'.

Not surprisingly, considering her frustration and her sense of being 'hampered through administrative idiocies', Ingrid was looking forward to retirement. She has recently been asked to get involved with an international examination in her native language, not German, and has decided that she does not want to lose the skills she has built up or her teacher identity after she retires. This could open up a new role for her and give her the opportunity to rediscover the side of language teaching that attracted her in the beginning of her career: 'I just don't want to lose it altogether. I mean now there are exciting things happening every so often, once you get away from the nitty-gritties here' (Ingrid).

Given the structural changes she has observed during recent times it is unlikely that she will miss the institution that MIT has become. For her it is 'a volatile blown-up organisation with very little substance when I scratch the surface, and I feel embarrassed about that'.

Anna's story

A respondent with a slightly sunnier view of the changes that have taken place in MIT is Anna, a German native who came to Ireland with a degree in Russian and Sozialkunde (a mix of social studies, politics and modern history). Her original career plan had been to become a secondary school teacher in Germany; consequently she found in Ireland that, while she could find part-time work easily as a German teacher in the 1980s at a time of high demand for the language, she was not regarded as qualified for a permanent position in MIT until she undertook a master's degree in German in the late 1990s. As a result she spent many years in the precarious position of part-time lecturer, always dependent on being given teaching hours at the start of each new academic year. This stabilised after Russian, a subject she *was* qualified to teach, was introduced to the international business and languages degree programme. The combination of teaching hours in both Russian and German put her beyond the

threshold which entitled her to an EPT contract and the expectation of continuous work as long as her teaching hours continued. Thanks to the efforts of the TUI Anna was eventually recognised as a permanent lecturer in 1998, once she had begun her German master's studies and eighteen years after starting to work in the institution, a history she has not been able to forget easily:

> they [part-timers] are treated so badly. (...) Because I've been there, that way so long myself, you know, and I think it's really bad (...) that they are treated so badly but that's a union issue. (Anna)

On reflection, Anna has been able to summarise very succinctly her attitude to the constant instability and change that she has experienced in her professional life, as communicated in an email after she received a transcript of our second interview.

> I would agree with you that my identity is not primarily as a German teacher but as a teacher in general. It probably has to do with my questioned identity as a German. I never thought that German is the one and only language worthwhile learning, it was just as useful as any other language. (Anna, email communication)

Anna mirrors a common theme among Germans of her age group who were students in the 1960s and 70s and who could not relate to nationalistic sentiment in the wake of the Holocaust and the West German economic miracle of the 1950s. They tended to be left-wing politically and had a desire to support political and social causes that would benefit the weak in society. Anna's habitus as formed from these early influences has remained durable. Some examples of this were the master's she undertook in Ethnic Studies, a career break to work as a volunteer overseas and her continuing commitment to voluntary work in Africa during part of the long summer holidays. She has also recently committed herself to work in her free time 'as a homework buddy for

unaccompanied minors (…), yet another new task' (Anna, email communication).

This habitus also underpins Anna's teaching in MIT. She has often been obliged to take on new courses and subjects, frequently at very short notice. Apart from German and Russian, she has been involved in teaching intercultural studies, EAP and modern history and she has begun supervising master's theses. She welcomed the opportunity to gain a TEFL qualification and teach EAP because it is a skill she could deploy in her overseas volunteer work, especially after retirement, and it also has allowed her to introduce topics that interest her. However, some changes have not been so welcome as she has been forced to step back into areas she had left behind. An unanticipated demand for Russian on the business and languages programme in the semester of our second interview had left her feeling stressed by the constant changes backwards and forwards:

> that felt terrible, to be honest. You know, because there I was, you know, just sorting out my EAP stuff and I had all plans to do this semester. I wanted to do human rights because it is the sixtieth anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration and I had all materials gathered, you know, and then suddenly I had to give up the EAP lessons and, to be honest, well, (…) it felt like being back, suddenly I had to get out my dusty materials from the Russian again and I feel now I have, of course, I have to go and brush up my Russian and I have to go to Russia again and all that. (Anna)

Like Ingrid, Anna has experienced a sense of professional insecurity because of taking on new tasks to which she has not felt fully adequate; for example, she has found herself teaching English in Ireland as a non-native speaker. As a result, she has not felt able to take on any of the more advanced EAP classes for fear of making mistakes. Apart from subject changes she has also been aware of a changing relationship towards students as more short modules have been introduced, often for as little as one semester, while in the past she would have had time to build a long-term relationship with her students over the four year duration of degree programmes. Her sense of the importance of social capital in

her life was clearly shown by her reference to how much she had enjoyed inviting students to her home – something she has missed in recent times.

Anna's concern for the social interaction involved in teaching has always informed her work but it has not been reflected by MIT as an institution. She found that while the institution was prepared to fund her studies in an area unrelated to her teaching, of which she was appreciative, it completely failed to acknowledge the insights she had gained from these studies or put them to use in the institution for the betterment of students. Her suggestions for the improvement of the experience of international students in MIT did not merit a response from higher management, despite their policy of encouraging an increase in (fee-paying) students from overseas.

Not surprisingly, Anna did not view MIT as supportive to her as an employee. She has found that when she has taken on new tasks, such as master's supervision in Location W, she has not been accorded the normal time allowances on her teaching load. PMDS has not been helpful to her as a development strategy because it has not supported her professional development in any way. However, she has not engaged in position-taking within the institution or the school because she has not been intrinsically opposed to change and has frequently welcomed it, stating that 'I think I like change, basically, so [laughs] (...) No, it's, it keeps you on your toes, it's like, you know, mental gymnastics.'

At the same time, Anna has not allowed the institutional field to limit her choices or alter her disposition towards social and political causes. As mentioned above, she made a conscious choice towards teaching English because it fitted her interests outside of MIT, agreeing that 'I definitely chose. I don't know whether I could have refused, actually though, some people did refuse'.

Taking part in this research project has made her more aware of how she has exercised choice to her benefit. Initially, her response was that she felt that change was being imposed on her from outside, such as when she had to return to teaching Russian without notice or that she may be obliged to teach more German in the future as colleagues retire and hours become vacant. However, she has come to realise her own role in initiating change so as to continue teaching subjects that interest her to students who are interested. Her years of instability in employment have not prevented a stability of professional identity: 'I, you know, regard myself as a teacher, not tied to a specific subject' (Anna).

Joseph's story

Joseph is the final person in this group of those who have welcomed change in their professional life. More than any other respondent, Joseph's professional identity has been all-enveloping: 'I'd say it's total' (Joseph). He has been a teacher at MIT for 25 years. This was preceded by two years spent as a student in Germany after completing an MA in German in Ireland and almost a decade of working in temporary or stopgap positions as a translator and lecturer. Some of his previous university roles involved replacing colleagues at very short notice and being required to step in to a large variety of possible functions such as language teaching or lecturing in literature at various levels. He was employed in MIT directly in a permanent position in what is now the Business Faculty. He viewed the beginning of his MIT career as a high point of student interest in learning German and recalled that the students' German society at the time had over 300 members.

Over the years, Joseph has worked in almost all MIT locations and has taken on administrative roles for certain periods. He was the first German lecturer to begin teaching EAP classes and, more recently, he has become involved in trying to promote the teaching of lesser-known languages and to set up a centre for Baltic studies to make use of underutilised facilities at MIT. This flexibility

of approach has been a constant feature of Joseph's life since he was a student. Having set out to study French and Latin, he transferred his interest to German but also made the point that: 'I would have liked to have had the chance, maybe, to do Spanish rather than German'. He had also had experience of teaching English in Germany before he began his postgraduate studies. At the same time, there is no suggestion that he has regretted his choice of career in general, because 'to do anything radically different like be a carpenter or an accountant or an engineer or science teacher or something would be out of the question'.

While Joseph has totally identified with his work as a language teacher, he has not taken either the surge in demand for German of more than twenty years ago or the drop off in demand since then as something that he could have had any control over:

> I believe that well within our working careers the whole business of, eh, language for special purposes for example, we have seen that come and go, we have seen, eh, the collapse, frankly, in modern language teaching which is actually nothing to do with us and cannot be considered our personal or professional failure. (Joseph)

Instead he has understood it as part of a cycle within education which he had already observed with the collapse of classical languages in an earlier decade. At that time the argument that Latin 'trains the mind' was used to no avail just as a similar argument has been used by modern linguists for the retention of German and French against the onslaught of English. Joseph's unsentimental view was therefore that:

> the whole European thing has coincided with our careers and has given us a job in language, languages, which wasn't possible before that and will not ever be possible again because Europe has all learnt English, as we know, one way or another, and so I think that it's important to see the lucky side of we were just in the right place at the right time.

Joseph has not opposed this change – his willingness to begin teaching EAP attests to his acceptance that 'the changes in languages and language teaching

have really been outside our control'. In only one aspect has he suggested that language teachers have been in a position to control developments that would affect them:

> There's some things that we initiate because we were the people at the spot, eh, at the correct time to do it – things like Erasmus would have begun with language teachers so we were obviously in a position to initiate some things there.

An area in which Joseph has maintained his initiative over the course of his career has been in relation to his commitment to research. In recent years he has been involved in writing a book chapter and a number of articles and has concentrated his interest on German Baltic writers. Nonetheless, he viewed this more as a hobby activity rather than as part of MIT's policy of promoting research, although, like Anna, he has welcomed the institution's willingness to fund conference expenses and course fees. This weak research culture is something he has had difficulty in coming to terms with because his earlier academic or intellectual habitus, acquired during his time in traditional university German departments, could not be transposed to the MIT setting. His work over the last 25 year has meant that he viewed himself now as a teacher rather than a lecturer and he actually found the use of the term *lecturer* 'embarrassing' while accepting that a traditional university lecturer would also have difficulty doing his current job in the conditions in which he has had to work. His institutional habitus, acquired over a long teaching career, still allows for regrets for what might have been, had career opportunities been different:

> To spend a life with books and so on, I think anybody would prefer that but, eh, that's a different type of question, I think. That is something that hasn't happened to us, eh, and not just a matter of choice. It's a matter of just what hasn't happened to us (...). (Joseph)

With regard to the institutional structure of MIT, Joseph has certainly not looked there for support in his professional life. Instead:

> I regretfully but firmly believe that [MIT] has long since lost its way and possibly never had it to begin with, and I think that, eh, the whole [MIT] project has been propelled by cynicism and opportunism (...). (Joseph)

Despite the many changes he has undertaken the structural supports have been lacking and PMDS has offered no way of helping because, like so many others, he does not 'take PMDS as a serious exercise'. In fact, his experience of taking part in these research interviews has, he suggested, given him a rare opportunity to:

> (...) well, basically to have your views respected and taken seriously in that I cannot think of a, a single other occasion, certainly not PMDS, where this has been (...) possible, other than in a totally informal context with friends. I can't say this has ever been possible since I came to [MIT], so I really appreciate the privilege of taking part in this project.

Perhaps surprisingly, after our second interview, Joseph suggested that he may have been too positive in how he had expressed his views. Clearly, his views towards MIT as an institution were in no way positive so it was perhaps his uniquely sanguine acceptance of the death of modern languages, both among students and as a career path – and given the opportunity to reflect on a professional life that is 'even in my nightmares' – that he considered he had glossed over too much. Certainly, his professional identity has been all-consuming: 'I don't do anything except my job and this has probably been a wrong choice in life (...)'. Like Ingrid, he has not found MIT to have been a supportive place in which to experience professional change. However, unlike her, he has not felt an attachment to any particular MIT location, having moved around so much during his career. He observed how colleagues from Location X had been hurt by the removal of German from technological courses because they mistook their personal relationship with science and engineering colleagues for their professional relationship as service teachers whose services were no longer required. Joseph, on the other hand, had enough distance from the situation to remain unaffected emotionally and was ready to accept that service teaching did not deserve a continuing role once the demand for it was gone.

Discussion: a Bourdieuian interpretation of Ingrid, Anna and Joseph's stories

Perhaps the most striking point of comparison between these three German lecturers, apart from their willingness to choose new areas of interest in their professional lives, is the fact that they are all within several years of retirement. Given Bourdieu's assertion that habitus embodies the historical trajectory of a person's life, the age profile of these three individuals must be seen as having had a particular effect on their choices. Nearing retirement, they have not found it worthwhile trying to resist the inevitable and, while they have not come across as especially happy with how their professional lives have gone, they have been prepared to move into more stimulating avenues in a situation they are powerless to alter, contradicting Hargreaves's (2005) suggestion that older teachers are more resistant to change. In each case, they have found a particular niche that they can build on for the future: for Ingrid this is the chance to use her teaching skills and her native language in a new role involving examination design; Anna hopes to use her new English-teaching skills in her volunteer work overseas and Joseph is still generating ideas about the creation of a Baltic studies centre.

Together these three lecturers have built up 88 years experience of working at MIT and have generally not expressed much appreciation of it as an organisation as it has taken on a more market-led and managerial structure. The most positive point in recent developments, as stated by both Anna and Joseph, is MIT's willingness to fund research. On the other hand, the pressure to conduct research, when more and more time has been taken up by administrative work, is something that both Ingrid and Anna have found stressful, having entered the institution and formed their institutional habitus at a time when teaching alone was the task demanded of language lecturers. Joseph, in contrast, already had acquired an academic disposition from his period working in universities before coming to MIT; consequently, the desire to involve himself in academic research has taken on the character of a hobby

because his interests could never match the type of applied research valued by an institute of technology such as MIT.

Apart from having no particular attachment to MIT, Ingrid, Anna and Joseph have also shown no particular attachment to teaching German, as opposed to the other languages that they also have competence in. For all three, this linguistic capital has allowed them to detach themselves to a large extent from the phenomenon of the decline in German and move on more readily to other goals. Instead, what Ingrid and Anna have remained attached to is the now out-moded concept of service teaching, which was current when they started out in their careers of teaching German for specific purposes, while Joseph has been prepared to accept that this particular educational philosophy has met its end.

In this he has shown a greater awareness of the changing institutional field than his two colleagues; he has reflected, to some extent and however reluctantly, the new institutional thinking that provides that if 'we commit resources to an area of decline (…) we are disadvantaging areas of growth because there are only limited resources' (HR manager, MIT). Joseph's idea to promote the teaching of lesser-spoken languages and to set up a Baltic studies centre has positioned him as an actor within the institutional field in a way that could allow him to achieve a goal that would be personally stimulating and simultaneously fulfil a societal need in a period of high immigration from Eastern Europe.

Because of a sense of antagonism towards the institutional structure of MIT, which is common to all three individuals, none of them was prepared to respond to any perceived obligation by management to fill the void in their teaching timetables created by the fall in demand for German. Instead, each has retained a feeling of having been agents in the choices that they have made in response to factors from the world outside the institution. Ultimately, all three have viewed their professional identities as unchanged because they see themselves primarily as teachers, regardless of the subjects involved, and they have been

able to use the opportunity of this research project to confirm the importance of this identity even as they get close to the end of their professional lives.

Resistance is futile?

In this section I present and analyse the narratives of four German lecturers in MIT who, unlike the previous group, were prepared to resist change to their teaching roles until they felt they had no alternative and were presented by their managers with options that they could no longer reject. Apart from this, they have a number of common features:

- They are all within the age group 40-55 years old – a group viewed by Hargreaves (2005) as more accepting of change than their older colleagues;
- All had primary degrees in German, with some other combination;
- All were offered teaching hours in English (EAP) once their German hours were reduced;
- Three out of the four refer to themselves mainly as 'lecturers' rather than 'teachers';
- Three of them spent a long period as part-timers and EPTs before gaining a permanent contract;
- Three of them have post-graduate qualifications.

I will begin with the respondent with the longest experience of working in MIT, who has also been the most resistant to change.

Rachel's story

Rachel began working as a part-time lecturer in MIT 25 years ago. She had previously completed a degree in German and history followed by the H.Dip.Ed. which qualified her to teach in second level schools in Ireland. She spent two years teaching English in Germany and on returning to Ireland she

worked as a research assistant, a temporary teacher of German and history in a secondary school and a library assistant. She got part-time hours in German in Location X where she spent four years before leaving to work in a tourism office. A year later she returned to MIT as a part-timer, this time in Location Y – she had heard of the vacancy through a former Location X colleague who told her there were hours available because German had recently been introduced to engineering courses there. As the number of teaching hours expanded over the next three years, Rachel's timetable reached the full quota of 16 hours and she became eligible for an EPT contract. Through the efforts of the TUI, which had been negotiating on behalf of all EPTs in the IoT sector throughout the 1990s, Rachel gained permanent status as a German lecturer in MIT about a year before 'German was scrapped' (Rachel) from Location Y. It had been decided by management within the Engineering Faculty, without consulting Rachel, that German was no longer required on engineering courses and would be removed from the start of the new academic year in September 2001.

Rachel found out about the removal of German and the disappearance of all her teaching hours in a way that hurt and angered her deeply, because 'I am a professional and was not treated very professionally'. She first heard about the change through a colleague but could not believe it was actually going to happen because she had not been officially informed by the management of the faculty. When she discovered in September that students still had German listed on their timetables (an administrative oversight) she went along to the first timetabled class only to be told by the students that German was gone.

Rachel then waited to be assigned new duties but this did not happen. The position of the TUI was that she had been employed as a German lecturer and the union was prepared to support her in this. At the same time, the Engineering Faculty had no further German teaching hours to give her and, Rachel believed, the management of the faculty hoped that she would therefore join the LS and be given a teaching timetable there. However, she was aware that the LS had no

German hours available either at that time and she was reluctant to accept this solution which would essentially mean starting over again 'pretty much like a part-timer' (Rachel). She had already left Location X more than a decade earlier on the basis that 'I'd said, "right, I'm not putting up with this, because it's only part-time hours", and I'd decided to move on and move out'.

After numerous meetings and negotiations with managers from the Engineering Faculty and the LS Rachel agreed to teach two EAP classes in Location X and some short modules in German at Location W but found that things were just as she had anticipated: she was moving to different sites, carrying books and photocopies and felt she was back to a stage she had been at twenty years earlier. Her response was to refuse to undertake any more of this work and, feeling that she had the support of the union, she waited to be assigned German hours in Location Y, the site at which she had opted to remain. She did take the initiative to set up elective German classes for students at Location Y and ran some of these modules for as long as students chose to attend what was, for them, a completely voluntary subject with no credits that they could offset against their study programme. These classes inevitably tailed off as students became busy with other subjects.

Rachel also undertook post-graduate studies which were being offered for the first time by the newly formed MIT Learning Development Centre and she completed a master's in higher education in the second year after German had been removed from Location Y. She has found that she has not been able to put many of her newly-acquired skills into practice because she has not had sufficient teaching hours ever since.

Over the years since 2001 occasional discussions had continued with MIT managers but the union's support seemed to have been withdrawn. Rachel's experience was that a TUI representative who had been advising her to resist being pressurised into teaching English was later promoted into a management

position and was then telling her the exact opposite. She found that the proposals that were made to her on how she could take on a new role in her current location never met any real needs, either her own or those of students, because '[e]ssentially, they wanted me to come up with suggestions for what I should do – and I didn't know what I should be doing and I found that very frustrating and insulting' (Rachel).

However, in the period leading up to our first interview she had recently been offered a way of 'reinventing' (Engineering School manager) herself and now felt that she had 'moved on' (Rachel). She was offered a place on a student recruitment trip to China and began to see that there was a genuine need for her to take on the role of 'international student tutor' for students who would come from abroad to study engineering programmes at Location Y. The trip also gave her the opportunity to work with MIT employees who were outside either the languages or engineering fields and this seems to have given her a refreshing new perspective. In the last academic year she had become involved in delivering a module on intercultural awareness to a group of international post-graduate students on the basis that 'I could see this was a *real* job and there was a *real* need for support with the international students (...)' (Rachel). However, by the time of our second interview a few months into this new course her view had begun to change again:

> Because I was very enthusiastic the last time I was speaking to you about getting involved in the international students but when push comes to shove it's, em, it's not what it seems and again it's, you know, fill a gap, do whatever you want to do but, like, there is no structure there, there's no real support is what I'm saying. (Rachel)

The concept of habitus, as a durable set of dispositions acquired during a person's life experiences and applied in situations in a way that reduces all the possible choices and reactions to a limited set of actions and behaviours, is particularly applicable to Rachel's story. She made several active choices in her

professional life, moving into and out of teaching at various times as her circumstances changed until she was able to find a stable position as a German lecturer in MIT. No sooner had her permanent status been confirmed than a new hiatus caused the loss of all her teaching hours and she again faced the prospect of starting again, 'feeling like a greenhorn'. Her reaction was to resist change 'because it was imposed on me, so I reacted in a different way, I think, I suppose. I reacted in a negative way because (…) I had no control over anything'.

In her previous experiences of career change Rachel had been able to maintain a sense of being in control of her choices even if she was reacting to economic forces that were preventing her moving beyond part-time work. In those circumstances she was prepared to adapt:

> I mean I stepped out of teaching because of the economics of it, there was no future in it for me, trying to get a mortgage and all that type of thing so that, in a sense, you had to change, you had to adapt and circumstances changed again so that's how I got back in to teaching, eh, so yes, I've adapted to change when I've had to. (Rachel)

The wish to remain in control also explains her recent feeling that the new avenue she has agreed to go down, in tutoring international students, may not work out for her and that she may again feel the need to retreat back into a position of refusal, as happened when she took on EAP classes:

> over the years I have reacted to change in that I've tried things [pause] and I've tried in a positive sense, but, I suppose the same old thing happens, eh, it's, the areas I'm in are not areas I feel very comfortable with and I'm at an age where I don't want to start at the bottom and to have to upskill to such an extent that that takes up all my time and to go in feeling like a greenhorn to every class whereas with my, as a German lecturer I would feel in control and I've done my training and I enjoy doing that, whereas in this area now it's a whole new kettle of fish and I haven't been given any training and it's kind of, go along and sink or swim and I don't like that aspect. (Rachel)

Here Rachel has identified a factor I have drawn attention to in discussing the previous group of respondents – the possible influence of age on a person's reaction to change. Although she has spent the same number of years in MIT as Joseph, Rachel differs from him in not having had the stability of a permanent job until just before she lost her German hours. She is also younger and would have considerably longer to go before retirement. Also, uniquely among the respondents who are permanently employed at MIT, she has lost all connection with teaching German, despite having had an emotional attachment to the subject which brought her back into teaching after having attempted several times to find a career elsewhere.

This loss of role has brought about a highly reflexive sense of professional identity. In the past her identity was not an issue because 'before, I used to say immediately "oh, you know, I'm a German lecturer, lecturing in German", now it's well, it's not that, what is it'? More recently, she has been forced to question her identity and has not been able to accept that it has changed:

> Well, if I'm not what I used to be, what am I, like there's nothing really to fill that gap, even if, though I've tried other things, it's still not what I am or what I spent my student life and my career building up, so the other things that I have been involved in, it's like starting off at the beginning and I don't see myself as that other thing because, as I say, my training, and choice, was to go into being a German lecturer. (Rachel)

Despite asserting that it was as much the actual teaching as the subject of German that she enjoyed, she was not prepared to take the opportunity to continue teaching language and using methodologies with which she would have been fairly familiar by continuing to teach the EAP classes she withdrew from. Here she chose not to deploy her capital as an experienced language teacher, despite having taught English as a young woman in Germany. Her recent decision to teach an intercultural studies module to international students is further from her skill-set than English would have been and consequently she has felt that she has been left 'to sink or swim' (Rachel). Her view that she had

spent her whole professional life attached to German as a discipline is somewhat contradicted by a point she made in reference to the possibility of committing to doctoral studies in the future: 'I wouldn't have liked to have continued doing, say, a PhD in German or some German theme because I just find the learning and teaching aspect of it more interesting' (Rachel).

Evidently, on their own the concepts of habitus and capital do not fully explain the professional choices that Rachel has made over the last several years. It is her reaction to the institutional field of MIT that fills in the gaps of this trajectory. Rachel expected to be supported by the institution during the upheaval in her professional life caused by the institution itself. She has not been prepared to position herself in such a way as to make the changes easier either for herself or for the management structure of MIT, except in one aspect. This was the initial support she got from the TUI which gave her the confidence to withdraw from teaching English even after having agreed to do it for an academic year and to refuse to teach anything except German until very recently. Once she understood that union support had been withdrawn she felt angry and alone in her struggle. While she did not play the game as those dominant within the institutional field may have wished, she had one new bargaining chip that she had not had when she was a young part-timer stepping in and out of teaching jobs while searching for stable employment. Now she was in a stronger financial position and could resist the changes she did not like without fear of the consequences, as she confirmed in an email communication shortly after our second interview:

> My economic situation has influenced my reaction to change also. If I didn't feel secure moneywise (...) then I think my response to change could have been very different. I would do whatever it takes to survive, if necessary. (Rachel, email communication)

Rachel's increased economic capital has therefore given her an added choice in the face of change – the choice to say no.

Apart from her honesty in pointing out factors that have affected her recent professional decisions, such as her age and her financial security, Rachel has shown enormous reflexivity during this research project, admitting 'God, what great therapy for me!' (Rachel, email communication). Finally, she has summed up her reaction to being asked to change her professional identity at this stage in her life as follows:

> I feel that if the effort and time I have put into my identity as a German teacher can so easily be taken from me, then it is really not worth my while investing my time and energy into other areas of teaching, e.g. English, communications ... which would mean not exactly beginning all over again, but would mean having to create a new identity and one which is not of my choosing (...) (Rachel, email communication)

The remaining respondents in this group have not taken resistance to the same level as Rachel but, as I will show, different amounts of capital and different positions within the institutional field have clearly had a role in affecting their responses to change.

Tony's story

Uniquely among the whole group of respondents from MIT, Tony did not discover an interest in foreign language learning until he was already an adult. After school, he undertook a course in hospitality management and took up beginner's level German as an obligatory component of this course. A series of practicals in Munich and a whole year spent in Berlin in 1979 opened his mind to new perspectives, particularly in relation to the historical background to the East-West divide. He has found that the whole phenomenon of German history of the 20th century has continued to enthral him ever since. As a result, he decided to continue his studies with a degree in German and history and spent one academic year at university in northern Germany where he concentrated on German history and literature. He then completed the H.Dip.Ed. because of an

interest in teaching German at second level. With his degree in German and history and his background in hospitality management, Tony found part-time work in MIT in 1987, teaching German to students on hospitality management courses similar to the one he had originally started out on. He eventually became a permanent lecturer in German as a result of the TUI negotiations after more than a decade on part-time and EPT contracts.

As part of a small cohort Tony built up German in Location W over more than twenty years, supported initially by funding from the European Social Fund which provided grants for many of the courses and students at this location. After these supports were withdrawn and, simultaneously, the German government had begun to play less of a role in encouraging the language abroad because of the pressures of unification, Tony began to experience a change in attitude towards teaching German at Location W. Structural changes within MIT have meant that Tony and his languages colleagues are now officially members of the LS but teach German within a completely separate faculty. As a result he has felt that he is no longer consulted about changes on programmes that could affect him while within the LS he has come to feel like 'a satellite which is consulted at times but, you know, we are usually left lying around, in orbit – of what, we don't know'.

Among the recent changes has been the unwillingness of students to undertake work experience abroad – exactly the experience that stimulated in Tony a love of Germany, German history and language and changed his career trajectory from becoming a hotel manager to becoming a teacher. German has become an optional subject on many of the programmes where languages used to be compulsory and student numbers on programmes where German is still taught have reduced drastically; from 12-14 students a number of years ago to as few as three or four now. As a result, Tony's German hours were reduced and he did not have a full timetable. For two years before our first interview he had resisted pressure to teach English classes to make up the gaps in his timetable. Finally,

he had agreed to teach a module in Irish culture and one in English for tourism to a class of foreign students of hospitality management. He felt that these modules would complement his interest in Irish history and, as he already had sufficient teaching qualifications from both the H.Dip.Ed. and an M.Ed., it was his view that he would not require any further training in teaching English as a foreign language. He has also been asked to consider developing an elective module for the LS on the subject of European history where he believed he could also apply his knowledge of Irish history. All these new options left Tony feeling that he was in danger of losing German as his primary discipline. He asserted that he 'wouldn't allow it to die' and that he had reached the limit of the changes he was prepared to make, 'otherwise you're surrendering your language'. However, by the time of our second interview Tony had already been obliged to take on more English hours (EAP) as German continued to decrease.

While on one level Tony has shown himself to have been emotionally engaged with German language and history, on another level he viewed his professional identity as a lecturer in MIT as something that he did not need to give total commitment to.

> I don't let my job interfere with my daily life. Em, it doesn't interfere with my weekends or if, or my leisure time, so in that case, I don't go around in a slot, saying I'm a German lecturer, no, I don't, I don't. (Tony)

Again, in Tony's case, as someone who is in the upper end of the 40-55 age group, age and length of time working in MIT may be a factor in this attitude, as he has himself begun to reflect upon:

> It could be also that one is getting older. I'm 20 years here in [MIT] so obviously you're reflecting, you're changing, your attitudes change, you're getting older, life changes, a person's circumstances change, your family grow up, eh. (Tony)

He has accepted that the changing demand for German over the length of his professional life is linked to factors within society which are outside his

personal control, yet there are two aspects that have caused him some difficulty. The first is the impoverishment of the student experience as he had experienced it himself, because 'from the perspective of students, I think students having a knowledge of, a solid knowledge of a continental language, eh, enables them to travel, better and at a higher quality.' Secondly, he was conscious of the fact that being a 'satellite' of the LS as well as being peripheral in the new faculty structure of Location W may have put him and his German colleagues at a disadvantage. It is the sense that they have not been treated fairly which has made him wary of the changes that have happened to date:

> Tony: (…) ok, change, I mean I studied management myself in the past and I know change is part of life, ok, so I accept that, ok. I don't kick against it but, you know, it has to be fair, it has to be equitable. *Interviewer: Mmm, and do you feel it has been, in your case?* T: Well, no, not really because we see that languages were being kicked off courses, I mean that doesn't make us feel good about ourselves. We feel that we're being undervalued and undermined.

Tony's view of the institutional supports that MIT has put in place in recent years is as critical as the previous respondents. With regard to PMDS he noted that, while he had fulfilled the demands for increasing his research output and contributing to in-house seminars, there would be no likelihood of financial support and time allowances for retraining. While there might well be allowances for doctoral research, he was annoyed that the time and money he had needed to invest in taking on new subjects were not appreciated or compensated for.

For him, another aspect of recent change in MIT was the increase in a more hierarchical management structure that has actually manifested itself physically in Location W by means of the construction of barriers to access – the old method of talking to a manager was to drop in to their office; now a meeting required an appointment through a secretary seated behind a high counter who guarded the entrance to the inner sanctum of the manager's office. In any

proposed move of the entire LS to a new amalgamated campus, Tony was anxious that the school would not reproduce such barriers and he would 'hope and expect to see interaction with other schools and other faculties, among staff and students as well.'

Tony is the first respondent in this narrative to predict a positive future for the teaching of German. He pointed to renewed interest for foreign languages among the Science Faculty as they have begun to realise that their students can no longer take advantage of Erasmus mobility programmes because they cannot speak any European languages. He was also aware of discussions between the LS and the faculty where he mainly works to create a joint degree programme since that faculty began to receive feedback from revalidation committees that 'there should be more of an Arts input into their courses because they're being too narrow and too focused' (Tony). Positioned as he was in Location W, Tony believed he would have the opportunity to increase his German teaching hours in the event of a combined programme being agreed.

Erika's story

Like the last two respondents in this group, Rachel and Tony, Erika spent about a decade as a part-time member of staff (EPT) before gaining permanent status. Initially she had studied German and music for teaching in Germany and moved to Ireland in 1988. After a very informal interview process she began teaching German in the business area, which later became the Business Faculty of MIT. In the early years she mainly taught beginner's level German, often to very large groups of up to 58 students for three hours per week. She was happy with the progress that students made and the enthusiasm they brought to the subject. Some business degree courses included German options and students could have up to five hours class contact time per week with the focus mainly on business German. However, she and a colleague were able to introduce literature topics and develop a wider syllabus over time and German was seen as

a successful and integrated component of the course. The working environment was initially sociable and open – heads of departments were very approachable and colleagues were supportive. This changed with the arrival of new management staff to the point that she and a colleague felt obliged to take a bullying case against the management. At that stage the Business Faculty was in the process of moving to a new site and, after having worked there for twelve years, Erika asked to be transferred to Location W, where tourism and culinary arts were the main focus.

This she found a happier place to work although there was a difficulty at the start because she was replacing part-time staff who did not have a contract and she felt she was being accused of taking the hours of colleagues. Location W was more language-friendly but she has never been able to feel fully part of the staff there, as she had done in her early years in the business area. By the time of her move to Location W the LS had been created and it was there that she now felt she belonged so, although she has continued to teach at Location W, it was the languages staff that she would regard as her immediate colleagues and the people she most identified with: 'that's where I would see my home' (Erika). In recent years her German hours at Location W have been reduced but have now stabilised. She has been involved in teaching on part-time evening programmes that include groups of about 12-15 students, most of them non-Irish and of mixed ability levels in German. However, because her timetable has been below the required number of teaching hours she has recently found herself shifting location to replace colleagues on leave. As a result she has been teaching a wider variety of courses including the international business and languages programme and German for music students. German for music students was particularly enjoyable because she was, for the first time, able to combine her own two degree subjects of German and music. She has realised that she would love to find a niche in this area in the future if her previous qualifications as a teacher of music were acceptable – but only if her hours did not encroach on other colleagues. She has become wary of initiating any change

in this area because of her past experiences on moving to Location W, because 'I've tried that, and I've failed miserably and it went really bad and that's been a lesson to me that, within my professional setup as it is at the moment, it's not do-able for me.' (Erika)

The changes described so far, while numerous and wide-reaching in their effects on Erika's daily professional life, have still remained within what could have been expected in a time of institutional restructuring. In the year leading up to our first interview, however, Erika was asked to undertake a new role that has taken her out of the discipline of German and into an area of insecurity. Like Tony (and Rachel who later withdrew), she has been persuaded to take on EAP classes but, unlike them, she is not a native speaker of English and until recently had no qualifications of any kind as a teacher of English. Despite considerable reluctance, she agreed to undertake TEFL training as a result of a PMDS meeting with her manager because:

> I think it's a time when you're vulnerable, where you, for whatever reason, it's hard to say no. Your boss talks to you directly and says, you know, this is the situation and you know you are, and you should and you haven't had full hours or whatever, yeah? It, eh, I feel vulnerable going in to it. (Erika)

This sense of vulnerability has meant that Erika reacted, or felt obliged to react, in a way that would not suit her normal disposition towards change:

> If it comes in from the outside I don't react that well at all because I'm, I'm stubborn as a, you know, as a personal trait (...), so I don't like being messed around. Em, if I want to do something, if I want to achieve something I'll go after it. At the same time if somebody wants to pressurise me into something I'll probably block it. (Erika)

Whatever her usual habitus, Erika's reaction in this instance was not that of a free agent. She resisted for a time but, as colleagues from Location W began to agree to take on EAP hours, she felt she was left with no choice but to accede to these new demands. By the time of our second interview she had been

pressurised into taking on yet another EAP hour because her timetable had not been completely filled.

Like Anna (another non-native speaker of English) she had a sense that she was not fully secure in her knowledge base as a teacher of English and was conscious of avoiding areas that she felt unsure of – such as grammar, for example. Nevertheless she has been able to identify some positive aspects to taking on this role. She found the TEFL teaching methodology to be creative and refreshing and has been able to apply it successfully in German classes also. By developing expertise in teaching English she is adding extra capital to her professional career and giving herself more choices for the future because, should she ever decide to return to Germany, English teaching would be a much more useful commodity than teaching German would ever be. Another point that has made English a stimulating prospect for her is the idea of working together with her new EAP colleagues (all former German lecturers) to form a 'subject group' (Erika) and generate a body of specialist knowledge of EAP that reflects the specific needs of MIT. As most of these EAP teachers have come from Location W, she would perhaps hold out hopes that they could work more successfully together than she has experienced so far working in the discipline of German across MIT sites because '[t]here isn't a lot of working together, outside the people in your own site' (Erika).

Erika is one of the few respondents in this study to have found any positive aspects to the introduction of PMDS but only because it did not have the negative repercussions she had expected and feared:

> (...) the only thing I was happy about is that, sometimes you've said, you
> know, that next year I will do such and such and it didn't actually come to
> that for whatever reason, so far, touch wood, nobody has come back to me
> and said, well, you actually said in your PMDS that you were going to
> ABC. That's something that I was afraid of that they might actually, you
> know, point to the page and say, but that's what we agreed on and you
> never did that. Hasn't happened, hopefully it won't happen. (Erika)

Nonetheless, it has failed in one of its primary goals where Erika is concerned because it has not been able to identify and assuage the fear of taking on new initiatives which she has kept hidden since her experience of moving to Location W. The result is that Erika has become habituated to avoiding risk to the equilibrium of her professional life and, for fear of failure, has withdrawn from taking part in the creation of a revitalised LS as the institutional structure of MIT has continued to evolve:

> I don't feel confident, or, no, confident is the wrong word, [pause], interested maybe, in pushing it and going, 'hey, I have this great idea, I'll develop this course now', that's, you know, I'll do it with somebody or somebody says, you know, 'would you be interested in working on this group?', yes, but I wouldn't say: 'hello, I've a great idea, can I come forward with this?' (Erika)

In a similar way, Erika has not decided to pursue further academic qualifications since coming to MIT. Like Rachel and Tony, she had been deemed to be fully qualified for a permanent position with her primary degree in German and music while remaining for a long period on an EPT contract but, unlike them, she has not gone on to back this up with post-graduate studies. Her main interest now would be to undertake post-graduate work in music but she has remained unsure as to whether she could find a role with such a qualification without standing on another colleague's toes. What she has referred to as her 'laziness' may be seen as a refusal to invest in increasing her academic capital because her knowledge of the institutional field has shown that this will not help to put her in a more dominant position – it will merely generate conflict that she is anxious to avoid.

Peter's story

Peter is a relatively raw recruit to MIT, having only joined the institution in a permanent capacity a mere decade ago. He had previously gained a PhD from

an elite UK university and had worked in a number of higher education institutions. He had also had a brief experience of part-time German teaching in Location X and was attracted to a permanent job as German lecturer because of the emphasis at the job interview on the need to employ PhDs with strong research interests – this policy formed part of MIT's bid for university status, which has remained unsuccessful to date.

Peter was sent to the Business Faculty to teach German on various levels of degree programmes in marketing, business administration etc., 'an extremely unpleasant experience for the five years I was there' (Peter). Personality clashes, an authoritarian management style and a growing antipathy towards German made the working environment intolerable. Student numbers, initially, were good but, in his view, the policy of active discouragement towards taking up German began to affect this. He was then transferred to a better environment in Location W, although he felt that the intellectual level of the courses was similarly low. Here, student numbers were small and Peter had the impression that he was being given the 'left-over courses' and had to begin again from the bottom. After a year of this he was recruited into developing the German language component of new degree programmes in journalism and media arts, which he welcomed. The only problem he encountered initially was criticism that the German modules were harder than the equivalent in other languages. With reducing student numbers in Location W he was asked to take up English three years ago and refused at first until his teaching hours started to go down. He has been teaching EAP for the last two years and has also developed an elective module on European myths which he has been offering within the last year.

Peter's view of these changes was related to a sense that his professional identity has reduced over recent years:

> I suppose there is a change in that [pause] the way in which you
> approached, and that has to do with your professional identity, what you

do has become in a sense less part of your life. That's actually a good way of saying it, it's, it's more a function that you fulfil than a function of yourself. That's what it is, it's as if you're privatised out, if there has been a change that's been the change. (Peter)

While taking on these new disciplines he has not received the support from the LS that he has required. An example of this is how he has felt himself to be in something of an experimental phase in teaching EAP, trying out new ideas as he goes along, and has not had the backup to assist him: 'It doesn't help when you are trying to reinvent yourself, (...) you have no other resources but yourself' (Peter).

As a result he gives the impression of someone who has become highly sceptical of the institution in which he has been employed, to the extent, almost, of having been recruited under false pretences:

> (...) even if you're treated like a factory worker or like chattel, and that's effectively what we increasingly are, and I'm, I'm not the only one who thinks that, em, you still have to somehow embrace the idea that you're, for your own sanity's sake, that you're doing something vaguely part of the project of education. (Peter)

Such views led to an assumption on my part that Peter's disaffection derived from an academic habitus acquired during his doctoral studies as well as a frustration born from his inability to use his academic capital in any meaningful way in the MIT institutional field. This seemed to be supported by Peter's confirmation that he has continued to involve himself in research, if in a limited way, and his preference for being identified as a lecturer rather than as a teacher, especially as it seemed to rankle that 'in languages you teach but in all the other subjects there seems to be the sense, they're lecturing' (Peter).

However, when this point was explored in further detail in our second interview the issue became less clear-cut. Peter has been out of the elite university game too long to have built up the research background to allow him back into it but

his distance has also coloured his perspective of that field sufficiently to have given him the following insight:

> I'm not sure I would like to follow the kind of, the academic, the conventional academic, eh, route. I mean I know some of the people I studied with and the route they've taken and I'm not very happy with, em, the way they turned out as people though they may well have got much further than I have. (Peter)

Whether it is that, the university field having been cut off from him, he would now choose to cut it out of his own ambit is not certain but one effect of the choices he has made and the challenges he has faced has been a deep pessimism, similar to that exhibited by Ingrid earlier, but encapsulating the whole field of higher education regardless of institution. As such his view was that:

> (...) it's clear that the way it's going is that we are kind of a training, we're training colleges basically and we're not training colleges for anything productive or anything that has to do with education or enlightenment. We're there to facilitate, em, the pliability of people to, to create in an industrial environment, to make sure that they operate smoothly, that they are obedient, that they do not reflect and that they fulfil the most primitive of processes and are able to apply them with a minimum of expectation in their life or the minimum of scope – eh, I feel part of that really. It's a very, I know it's a very drab idea but I think that's where we're going.

Intentionally or otherwise, Peter's views strongly echo Lyotard's (1984) critique of higher education as fulfilling the goal of performativity, the concept that abandons humanist and idealist discourse in favour of the inputs and outputs of a system based on technological efficiency; demanding 'clear minds and cold wills' and 'the renunciation of fables' (p. 62). Clearly, having sought to improve his timetabling situation by the creation of a new module on European myths, Peter would reject absolutely the increase of performativity within his own field.

Not surprisingly, he had no expectation that future structural changes within MIT would ameliorate the situation as he saw it: 'I mean, (...) I'd love there to be a plan but I see absolutely no, no plan in this institution whatsoever, it's not there'. And the role of this research project in triggering his reflexivity has led to a similarly depressing outcome:

> The, the unfortunate problem is that once you ask the question, you keep asking the question and you don't come up with a very convincing answer and it's actually sometimes annoying because you don't, you're kind of realising, no, I don't really have a plan. (Peter)

Fortunately for me as the interviewer and extractor of such negative views, Peter was kindly prepared to suggest that it was nonetheless a good idea to reflect on his changing professional identity. He would like to be able to develop EAP in a way that gives it more academic content and moves it away from the more 'game-playing' (Peter) methodology of modern English language classes, which was more appreciated by Erika and Anna. If EAP is to gain status, and (by implication) for its teachers to gain academic capital from teaching it, it would need to be established 'in its own right and in our own territory' (Peter) by Peter and his EAP colleagues. This is perhaps where there may lie some hope of positioning themselves as academics beyond the taint of service teaching but, for Peter, they could not do so while expecting any form of institutional support: 'Support, academic leadership? [Pause] Well, of course ten years ago I would have, yes, but now I don't expect, not at all, not at all (...)'.

Discussion: a Bourdieuian interpretation of these four resisters' stories

The most striking common feature of these four stories is that Rachel, Tony, Erika and Peter have all been located physically on the periphery of the LS. Before the amalgamation of MIT and the formation of the LS they operated on sites where they dealt directly with colleagues from the schools and departments whose students they taught German to. An aspect of the changing structure of

MIT that has been pinpointed by Peter, Tony and Erika has been a reduction, and in some cases a total breakdown, in the working relationships they had experienced in the days before the creation of the new faculty structures. Their early hopes that the LS would give them a stable base for their discipline and put them in a stronger position within the institution have been dashed. Instead they have found themselves to have become 'satellites' (Tony) shuttling from site to site, under pressure to fill their own timetables as German hours have reduced. Unlike Anna, located at the centre of the School in Location X, who chose to teach English from the outset, these respondents have felt obliged to accept EAP hours because of their weak position, not only in Location W where they used to teach all their German hours but also within the LS itself. Now they have found themselves back in the position of newcomers – both Erika and Peter referred to the sense of having to justify themselves, sometimes their very presence, whenever they appeared at Location X.

This feeling of being treated 'pretty much like a part-timer' was something that Rachel could not tolerate and, unlike the other three respondents, she was in a field position that allowed her to step back from the situation. Based in Location Y she, uniquely, was allowed to opt out of the LS and locate herself in a space that can no longer facilitate her desire to maintain her professional identity as a German lecturer. She is the only one of this group of resisters to change who has been able to continue to resist and, as part of her continuing contestation for a legitimate space, she alone has experienced a growth in her sense of professional identity. While Erika and Tony have learned to keep their professional identity compartmentalised and separate from their private lives and Peter has seen his professional identity reduce in the face of changes he has not been happy with, Rachel's professional identity has grown enormously as she has fought to deny the inevitable acceptance of change. Her emotional attachment to German is not unique – Tony has also struggled with the loss – but her ability to resist lies in her increased sense of agency, reinforced by strong economic capital, and the peculiarities of her position within the

institutional field. Such a position would no longer be feasible for a newcomer since the structural changes of recent years have become embedded within MIT.

All four respondents identified a lack of institutional support as a feature of the difficulties they have experienced while undergoing change and all have begun to recognise a need to create their own support structures. In undertaking to teach EAP Tony, Erika and Peter would like to strengthen their academic capital by developing a sub-field of specialism in the subject. This would give them a new collective identity as EAP-lecturers-who-used-to-be-German-lecturers and a chance to stake out a claim for legitimacy within the LS in one area that can be guaranteed to remain in demand for the foreseeable future: teaching English to Erasmus and international students. In view of MIT's stated policy to encourage Erasmus mobility among students, English would have an important place as a service within the institution as a whole. Given the past history of these German lecturers, creating an academic niche for EAP could avoid the perception of English teaching as just 'service teaching' and decrease the likelihood of repeating the weaknesses that this meant for the discipline of German.

In the case of Rachel, the institutional support she seeks is linked to her requirements as an international student tutor, a new role unsupported to any great extent within the Engineering Faculty at Location Y. She does not have the opportunity to build a collective identity with colleagues around her and has begun, again, to find the task overwhelming and to contemplate withdrawing from it. Without structured institutional and management support it is unlikely that she will succeed in creating a viable professional space in the long term and, alone among the MIT respondents I have interviewed, she has not been required or facilitated to involve herself in PMDS discussions – again she appears to have fallen through the institutional cracks and has not been helped to move beyond a debilitating sense that:

I can't say what I'm doing next week, never mind next year. It's still, that's what I live with from day to day, it's, I don't know what I'm doing, eh, and that's where, I suppose, the, what's the word I'm looking for, eh, the uncertainty, there's uncertainty there all the time and I find that difficult to cope with (…). (Rachel)

While Tony, Erika and Peter have hardly had positive experiences of the PMDS exercise and have felt pressurised into presenting research or taking on a new discipline, they have had structured opportunities to discuss their future development with their manager and, theoretically, alert her to their professional development needs – this has not been possible for Rachel in the same way. She remains reliant on her manager's sense of urgency to solve her dilemma, something that does not appear to have been a pressing concern thus far.

What has become clear from the stories of all four resisters is that each individual has been able to discover a positive aspect, however small, to the changes they have been obliged to make. This, in turn, may allow them to construct a viable professional future and reshape their identities to reflect the institutional and societal challenges to their former professional identities as German lecturers that they can no longer avoid.

Change is in the eye of the beholder

The last three permanent lecturers whose stories are analysed here, Marlene, Monika and Isabel, appear to have very little in common in terms of how their professional identities were formed but, while they have all encountered many changes in their professional lives since coming to work at MIT, none of them has been affected directly by the requirement to take on a completely new discipline as a result of the pressures caused by the reduction of German teaching hours over recent years.

While Marlene had been working at MIT for 18 years by the time of our first interview and had gone through the predictable pattern of part-time teaching, EPT status, followed eventually by a permanent position as a German lecturer, both Monika and Isabel had been recruited directly to permanent lecturing posts, Monika thirteen years ago, Isabel – as the newest recruit of all – a mere six years ago. It was also perhaps no coincidence that Monika and Isabel had both worked for a number of years on part-time renewable contracts in the same technological university, from which they had derived experience not just in teaching German but also intercultural studies. Interestingly, both Monika and Isabel were cited by an LS manager as examples of people who had been successful in adapting to the change brought about by the reduction of German teaching by taking on intercultural studies when, in fact, they had come to MIT with a previous knowledge base in the subject and then needed to apply this to the specific context at MIT.

Marlene and Monika are German natives and did not set out originally to become lecturers of German in Ireland. Marlene's primary degree was actually in business studies although, as she has pointed out, she was never the typical business studies student and would only have been interested in working in 'socio-marketing (…), marketing for something that's worthwhile' (Marlene) had she remained in a business career in Germany. She arrived in Ireland not intending to stay for long and with no experience or particular intention to teach:

> So I said ok, I just have to find something for a few months to tide me over and then we'll see (…) it was pure chance (…) and it's something I like and, eh, so one thing led to another and here I am. (Marlene)

Without a degree in German, Marlene felt obliged, like Anna above, to undertake a master's in the subject in order to make herself more eligible for a permanent position. She added to her academic capital still further by writing and publishing a German textbook which, she recognised, would have helped to

give her a stronger profile at interview. As the only person with no previous teaching experience, this achievement marked her out from her German colleagues and established her as an authority among her peers. In the face of the more recent threats to German teaching in MIT that are the subject of this study, Marlene has again returned to this successful strategy. Although she has not been able to attract a publisher for an up-dated version of her textbook she has continued to immerse herself in devising practical teaching materials for learners of German and has been seeking to publish these internally in MIT by means of a customised software package. She would see the dissemination of this material among colleagues and students of MIT as her contribution towards research within the LS.

In contrast to Marlene, Monika always intended to be a teacher of German but actually at second level and in Germany itself. The economic situation there at the time of her graduation meant that teaching jobs were impossible to attain whereas in Ireland there was more than enough work available for native-speaker teachers of German. She spent over a decade lecturing in a number of universities and another IoT before getting a permanent post in MIT.

Isabel, the only respondent in the entire group of MIT permanent lecturers under the age of forty, did not encounter the German language until she went to university to study applied languages. Despite having also selected French, 'I really kind of focused on German and took to German and liked the German language and all that kind of thing' (Isabel). Her particular interest was in Austria and she spent several years there, including one as a master's student. While lecturing part-time in the technological university where she had done her primary degree she began a PhD on Austrian identity which she completed after she had gained her permanent post in MIT in 2002. As with Peter, Isabel's recruitment took place during the time when MIT has been seeking to position itself for university status – the employment of staff with PhDs formed an obvious part of this policy. In another echo of Peter's experience, Isabel was

impressed at the interview with the interesting range of newly developed degree programmes that included German, such as journalism and media arts. When she took up her job, however, she was placed in Location W at the time part-time staff was being let go. Undoubtedly, the sudden dropping of German from some faculties and programmes and the slow process that would have been involved in sanctioning a new permanent post overlapped to the point that this appointment was no longer necessary. None of this was known to Isabel:

> I wasn't really aware of the changes that had taken place (…) I wasn't aware until a couple of months later that someone had been working here as a part-time lecturer (…) and I had no knowledge that someone else had disappeared at the same time as I started.

Unlike Erika, who had been in a similar position when she had moved to Location W a few years earlier, Isabel felt no sense of guilt that she had taken someone else's job (nor should she have). With her knowledge of intercultural studies she was able to develop a niche on a master's programme and later on undergraduate programmes as German hours continued to decline. Having arrived at a time when there were not enough teaching hours for the staff already in place, Isabel was given a newly created post as research coordinator where she 'tried to, I suppose, initiate, kind of coordinate, stimulate research' (Isabel) in the LS.

If these three respondents have not had to contend with changes to their professional identities in the terms I have previously set out, what then have been the challenges they have had to deal with in the face of the reducing demand for German? All three highlighted the difficulties brought about by falling numbers of students even as classes have continued to be held. For Marlene this meant never knowing if two, four or five students were likely to show up at a nine o'clock class and the planning and last-minute rearranging of materials that this entailed. Monika recalled the administrative glitch that meant that in her first year at MIT there were 100 first year students on the

international business and languages programme while now 'it is like giving grinds' (Monika). Feeling that she did not have the time to research new teaching methodologies to deal with these small numbers, Monika has tried a structural solution by attempting to combine class groups of similar language levels but has found this difficult to organise because 'this is [MIT] and, you know, trying to be flexible there …'. To Isabel, who had recently been relocated to teach on the international business and languages programme at Location X, these tiny numbers were bound to present problems for students in the future because it is 'not a great student experience to be in a group of three' (Isabel). In contrast, her intercultural studies classes have been oversubscribed.

Marlene and Monika, who have been based for their whole MIT careers at Location X, with some forays into Location Z to teach German topics on journalism and media programmes, have nonetheless had to deal with constant change while remaining within their discipline. For Marlene, every year and every module has meant a readjustment: 'I feel we have to adapt all the time and you have to be extremely flexible'. Monika was of the opinion that 'I think I *need* change' while maintaining a firm view on what types of change would be acceptable to her – not for her, as a non-native speaker of English, the possibility of taking on EAP classes in the future:

> I would say I would be very much in favour of change if it is, if I see it's changing to the better and if it's in my interest. I am very reluctant to accept change if it's just in my employer's interest. So if it was just in the interest of [MIT] I would be very reluctant and I have also resisted it to some extent, I mean that example that I gave you, I think, in the last interview was about if I wanted to teach English, for example. I don't find that in my interest at all because there's no professional development in that for me at all, whereas other things I think I'm very open to change and I have actually instigated change, you know, because I felt it was necessary, it was necessary for the institution and also necessary for myself that things need to be different and need to be changed and grow and develop. (Monika)

As someone who felt that she was already providing her expertise in two disciplines already, Monika was not prepared to dilute her academic credentials

any further by contemplating taking on more teaching subjects – this would give her the appearance of being a school teacher rather than a lecturer. The irony of her situation is that, despite having actively resisted the move into English teaching, unlike the German lecturers in the previous group, she has been cited by the school management as an example of someone who has successfully 'reinvented' (LS manager) herself to meet the crisis of German.

Of the three respondents, Isabel has never had a stable function as a German lecturer, having arrived in the institution after the changes examined in this study had already occurred. She has therefore always been obliged to take on new tasks and has learned to take them in her stride. Since starting at MIT she has: been involved in devising and teaching modules on intercultural communication; taught German at a variety of levels and on a range of programmes; supervised master's students; acted as research coordinator for colleagues in the LS and, most recently, undertaken a post-graduate certificate in teaching and learning to allow for an opportunity to reflect on her teaching experiences 'in a scholarly way' (Isabel). This is very different from the professional experience she would have had in a university setting, a point that Isabel has been well aware of:

> I would say my professional identity has changed significantly in terms of the areas I now teach in, in terms of the level of German that I teach and, I think, in terms of the research profile. (…) I think I've diversified, and sometimes you can feel like a jack of all trades and master of none, so, the fact that you have to diversify means that, you know, you go so far in those five or six different areas that are under development (…) whereas if you were in a less flexible environment the way in which you would develop is probably narrower, but you might achieve more in one area whereas because of the environment here it's like four or five areas have to be developed in tandem. (Isabel)

Uniquely in this study, Isabel has not expressed particular criticism of these developments or of MIT as the institution that has created them – she appears to have accepted the situation as it was when she arrived at MIT, not having

known the previous institutional structure and glad of employment in a languages department at a time of job scarcity.

Monika's perspective on her professional identity is that it has fluctuated over the years, sometimes in response to changes in her personal and family life. As her children have become more independent she has noticed that her professional identity has begun to grow:

> I think it's actually quite enjoyable to see it actually increasing again at the moment even though other things keep a nice balance then as well, you know. It definitely keeps changing, I would say, yeah. (Monika)

For Marlene the boundaries between her professional and private life have always been fluid and not easily separated:

> (…) it would be difficult to quantify, it's kind of 'cause it's interwoven. It's, I mean, I can't switch off, when I go home, in particular since I do an awful lot of work at home so I find myself, you know, planning classes under the shower or in bed (…). (Marlene)

As someone who came late and in an unplanned way to teaching German, Marlene has continued to forge an intense identity with the work and with students. Asked to comment on why she thought she constantly engaged in improving her teaching and the student learning experience her response was as follows:

> (…) I could tell you that it is because of my Protestant upbringing (no matter what you do, you do it properly!). But I'd say it has more to do with intrinsic motivation. I get great satisfaction out of classes that went well and I appreciate a good relationship with my students. Obviously, I have to put in the work to ensure that as many classes as possible succeed and that my students enjoy learning German with me. (Marlene, email communication)

What to Marlene appears as intrinsic motivation would point, in Bourdieu's terms, to the operation of habitus – a durable disposition on her part to always work conscientiously to facilitate student learning. However, the phrase 'that

my students enjoy learning German *with me*' (emphasis added) is telling. It suggests that she remains conscious of her position within the field of German teaching where the fact that students are learning with her is as significant as that they are learning German at all. The project she has taken on to devise a German teaching package for her own small number of students and those of her colleagues who choose to use it can be seen as another aspect of this positioning. If student numbers were to continue to decrease in the future the project would ultimately be pointless – this is not something that Marlene would contemplate – but as a method of positioning herself as a productive member of staff within the institution it could be a way of continuing to play the game until the rules become more favourable again in the future. The following quote from her lends some weight to this analysis:

> I mean I do hope I can survive in German and because of what I do now; the project is an open-ended project, I mean you can really keep on working on that, (…) so if [MIT] let, allows me to continue with that…

Marlene is not the only person to seek to position herself within this changing environment. Monika and Isabel both came to MIT from a languages school that has successfully carved a profile in a research-intensive university out of a previous history of service teaching. They have carried this academic habitus into MIT and continued to focus on research as part of what they do. While Isabel has been mainly concentrating on promoting the research of her colleagues to the exclusion of finding a way to apply her own research to her teaching, Monika has developed an interest in doing research unrelated to German and has focused in particular on Irish cultural studies. MIT's interest in promoting a research culture has meant that Monika's expenses and conference fees have always been paid but there are many other failings in this approach as far as she has been concerned:

> They could give me loads of time to do it, you know, that's the, you know, we've often talked about this and we've said, money is one thing but money, money doesn't, unless you can use the money to buy you time

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> (...) in our areas you don't even need loads of money, what you need is loads of time, yes, and if they wanted to give me time I would be very happy to pursue my research interests. (Monika)

With her strong sense of agency with regard to change, Monika has been very open in how she would deal with further threats to German. She was clear that 'what I would do immediately if my hours were reduced is I would actually use them for my research. I wouldn't even run round and kind of say, would you give me something else, please'. However, her viewpoint is not supported by the LS review panel, whose report (MIT doc 7) contends that the existing 'time allowances and the time available over the course of the year constitute a favourable research environment which all staff should avail of' (p. 1).

What Monika, Isabel and Marlene have all shown is their ability to forge a space for academic freedom that is rare among the respondents in this project. More than anyone else they have been doing what they want, what interests them and what they are committed to and have shown that, within the structure of the School, they have found the autonomy to do so. This is best exemplified by a comment of Isabel's, which shows her awareness of the freedom, within boundaries, that she has achieved:

> I appreciate my position here. I think it's generally a good working environment because there's a lot of independence in it and scope, really, I think there is scope to develop in different areas. It would be nice sometimes to have a nice cosy environment where you didn't have to constantly think on your feet about where you were going or what you needed to do next but it's not a bad situation either.

However, this has not prevented them from viewing the structural supports of the institution with a jaundiced eye, Marlene and Monika in particular. While Isabel was critical of the slowness of management to effect change – by constantly seeking consensus rather than undertaking decisive leadership – she alone among the group identified PMDS as an exercise with 'some merits' because it gives individuals the opportunity 'to identify what they are doing'

(Isabel). Marlene and Monika held the view that has been common among most respondents, as expressed here by Monika:

> I think that is a total waste of time (…) and I think it's an attempt by management to control us even more, you know, that's what it is. It's a power control thing and my experience so far is that it's a waste of time.

For Marlene the process appears to have been something intended to shake her sense of self-esteem, because 'PMDS, it makes you always feel like you're never good enough, you know, every year you have to list your weaknesses and again, oh God, January is coming up, you know, which area am I weak in now (…)'. However, the work she has continued to do on her German project has given her the confidence to recognise what her future training and development needs would be, something she did not require to be told during a PMDS discussion. On reflection, though, Marlene did recognise that PMDS had aspects that could be useful in helping to obtain funding to meet these needs while 'it allows you to tell your superiors in a more detailed way about the work you are doing and which problems you encounter' (Marlene, email communication).

Isabel was not oblivious to the critical viewpoint of her colleagues, noting that 'in the first year people were a little bit wary and they thought it was designed to trip us all up. I didn't really see it like that.' It is clear that Isabel's relative lack of history at MIT has given her a more pragmatic perspective, both with regard to her work and the institution itself. Coming to a first permanent job in an era of managerialist control within higher education, she has been quick to recognise the gaps and anomalies in the structure and find a way to work within them but has also been prepared to accept that such managerialism is inevitable in the modern institution – MIT may not be the most egregious example.

A final point of discussion with this group of respondents was whether their participation in this project had given them an opportunity to reflect on their professional identities. Because Isabel was on leave at the time of the second

round of interviews it was not possible to ascertain her views. Marlene and Monika, however, were the only participants to say that the study had not provoked any reflexivity in them whatsoever. Pressure of work was the reason given by both of them, as expressed by Monika:

> I think we're just, we're being asked to do so many things and we're just so busy that it is very difficult to kind of reflect over it. I think you need a certain distance from it. I don't have that at the moment at all.

While increasing workload is undoubtedly a factor, although not unique to these individuals, their lack of reflexivity also suggests a level of comfort with the changes they have experienced that has not been mirrored by either of the other groups previously discussed.

Bourdieu's concepts at work in these stories

While Monika, Marlene and Isabel have not been required to change their professional identity to the point of taking on a new discipline, the application of the concepts of habitus, capital, field and reflexivity offers clarity to an analysis of why this may have been the case.

In the case of Marlene, she developed a professional habitus as a teacher of German only after she had begun working at MIT – she started out near the end of an academic year not intending to stay long and replacing a colleague who had moved on to permanent employment elsewhere. Her professional habitus has therefore been marked by a need to make a legitimate space for herself among more experienced colleagues. She has developed a habitus where 'I can't compartmentalise my life like that' (Marlene) and is unable to separate her work from other aspects of her life. The 'consuming' nature of this professional habitus means that she has continued to develop projects – a German textbook earlier and now a software teaching programme – that mark her out from her colleagues and vastly increase her workload in a completely self-initiated way.

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Monika and Isabel have both brought an academic habitus from their previous professional lives and employment in a technological university into their jobs at MIT and have found ways to continue living this habitus within the changing structure of the institution. Despite not having pursued further academic qualifications since coming to Ireland, Monika has nonetheless continued to do research in areas that she has identified as interesting to her and has attended conferences and presented papers. Having reluctantly taken on administrative work linked to the teaching of students on Erasmus programmes and resisted a move into teaching English, her main goal remains the creation of further space for research. Isabel too, while she has had difficulties in continuing to do research relevant to her doctoral thesis, has found that her research expertise has given her a niche within the LS and she has also gone on to find a new focus in the area of teaching scholarship as part of an MIT certificate in teaching and learning.

The academic capital invested in by all three through the choices they have made since coming to MIT has proved beneficial in positioning them successfully within the changing field of the LS. This capital has been recognised by the school management as a particular asset and it has been instrumental in helping them to avoid changes that they would not have wanted. In contrast to Anna and Erika, both German natives also, Marlene and Monika have not had to countenance taking on EAP and, unlike many other respondents, Isabel has not had to feel pressure from the lack of a full teaching timetable – although, being a pragmatist, 'I know that in the last couple of years I have resisted invitations to develop in the teaching English area (...) I wouldn't absolutely say no' (Isabel). As the field has changed, therefore, Monika and Marlene have had the dispositions necessary to cope with the new rules of the game while Isabel, who arrived after the game had changed, was able to accept the situation as she found it, given how it mirrored to an extent a field in which she had already successfully negotiated similar changes.

Without the opportunity to have interviewed Isabel a second time, it is impossible to derive any conclusions about her views on the usefulness of this study in generating reflexivity about changing professional identity. She certainly exhibited an awareness of how her identity had already changed at MIT, as opposed to how she would have expected it to operate in a university setting. Marlene and Monika, on the other hand, are the only respondents at MIT to admit to having had no occasion to reflect on their situation between the first and second interviews. Of course, it is possible that all the previous respondents were merely being polite and telling me what they thought I would like to hear while Monika and Marlene were showing characteristic German directness – a German habitus, perhaps? However, several of the other respondents are also German and did not follow the same pattern. It is my contention, therefore, that the process of change itself has engendered the reflexivity shown by the other respondents. The disruption to their habitus, the need to develop new and recognisable capital and the awareness of their shifting positions within a changing field have caused them to reflect on where they are and what they are doing. Marlene and Monika did not reflect on their situation because they did not need to – their position appears secure and they do not envisage having to deal with changes that will affect their professional identity in any destabilising way in the future.

New choices, new identities

The final group whose stories are analysed in this study are three lecturers who started out in MIT as part-timers, as so many others had done, but they were never taken on as permanent staff members. Their mistake was to begin too late. Richard, as the longest-serving of the three, took up teaching in MIT in 1994 – four years after Marlene, the last of the earlier group of part-timers to have been given permanent status. He had high fluency in German, a master's in politics and had considerable experience of teaching English and a second foreign

language, Italian, to add to the mix. Helen arrived in 1997 with a master's degree in German and had specialised particularly in teaching German as a foreign language. Rosi was a German native with almost a decade's experience of teaching German at second level in Ireland and the authorship of several textbooks behind her when she took on teaching hours in MIT in 1999. In other words, they were all at least as well qualified as many of the earlier part-timers who had become permanent lecturers.

Two structural factors in the intervening period affected their chances and prevented them from continuing in employment in MIT beyond the early 2000s:

- The deal negotiated between MIT and the TUI in 1989 had meant that a large number of language lecturers, including five of the German lecturers discussed earlier in this study, had become eligible for renewable contracts (as EPTs) and, eventually, permanent jobs. A consequence was that MIT later limited the number of hours that newcomers would be permitted to teach to fewer than eight hours per week, thus keeping them below the threshold of eligibility for EPT contracts.

- The reduction in demand for German after the turn of the millennium, on courses in MIT and in the education sector as a whole, meant that teaching hours became more difficult to find and to hold on to. Teachers without contracts were let go immediately while those still on EPT contracts who had not yet been made permanent found their hours reduced. Once these hours fell below the threshold of eight per week the contracts could be terminated.

Richard was one of those who, having started at a time when EPT contracts were still available, saw his hours disappearing and recognised that he would not be able to continue at MIT for much longer, noting that 'I could see German, as it were, dying on its feet. I had gotten that one year renewable EPT contract but it wasn't enough to (...) get me right in the door'.

For the last few years of his decade at MIT Richard was prepared to take whatever hours were offered and found himself moving from site to site across the institution because 'the head made it very clear that hours were scarce (...) Wherever they sent me, I went'. However, he did not wait to be pushed and decided to take up an interest that had always been in the background – he began legal training as a solicitor and juggled the two activities until teaching became no longer viable for him:

> I know there was a final year where there were quite low hours; that was the year when I was studying for the legal exams. Really even in that last year I certainly saw the writing on the wall and there were just no more hours. (Richard)

How Richard was able to successfully create a new professional identity for himself can best be explained by an analysis of his career habitus.

He had never liked 'the idea of being pin-holed or pigeonholed'. After leaving school he did not 'have any ambition at that time (...) I thought I wanted to get out and live life' (Richard). He chose to go to Germany because he had had a very positive experience of the country while on a school tour. He spent five years there in a wide variety of jobs, always saving money to allow him to go off on long trips to India and Africa. He then moved to London and worked with a legal group for two years, foreshadowing his later interest in becoming a solicitor. On returning to Ireland, Richard completed a degree but deliberately did not choose to concentrate on German as he wanted to try something different. After a master's in politics he found himself gravitating towards teaching German:

> Among the many many jobs I did in Germany I did teach English and I found, you know, working with small groups (...) I had a reasonable facility for it and I built up a bit of experience doing that so then, having done my degree I had to look for a job or for work and the hours were there at the time. (Richard)

The decision to start teaching German meant that Richard then felt the need to back up his fluency in the language with academic capital in the form of further qualifications. He undertook a German business diploma as well as a translator's diploma, where he specialised in legal translation. The instability of his employment at MIT meant that he was prepared to try a variety of other jobs during the unpaid summer holidays or when his timetable was reduced. He was always able to see the positive side of this because 'I always was willing, you know, do a tour, do a conference, do a translation, interpreting, you know, anything connected with German. It was a very good way of picking up new skills'.

Given the opportunity, Richard would have been happy to become a permanent lecturer, however he has accepted that MIT was not necessarily to blame for the ending of his contract because societal factors were also at fault for 'this huge drop-off in interest in modern languages and in particular German'. He suggested, too, that his underlying interest in law would have surfaced in some form even if he had been a permanent German lecturer.

Richard had successfully avoided forming a conventional professional identity all his life and wished to continue doing so: 'I don't want to fit into any identity. I suppose ideally what I'm trying to look at is to build something of my own' (Richard). As a recently qualified solicitor he was hoping to use his previous experiences to create a hybrid and unique role for himself:

> Even within being a solicitor I would hope to define myself as so much more. You could even foster, for instance, good contacts, business or otherwise, with Germany, or the ability to translate or interpret legal German. (Richard)

His ultimate goal would be to put himself 'in a more interesting place' (Richard email communication) which keeps him on the boundary of a number of fields, allowing him to position himself where he could best use the wide variety of experiences he has built up. In the light of the 'downturn in legal fortunes'

(Coulter 2008) caused by the recent recession and the sudden increase in unemployment among newly qualified solicitors since our interview, Richard is well-placed to survive these difficulties because of his extreme flexibility. In the end his solution is that 'I just constantly reinvent myself', an attitude ingrained in his professional habitus that should help him to continue the struggle to find a comfortable position in the field or fields of his choice.

Unlike Richard, Helen started out with a clearly defined goal – to teach German. She pointed out in our interview that her MA in German had focused specifically on linguistics and teaching methodology. She then spent some time working in a university language centre and went on to complete a postgraduate diploma in the teaching of German as a foreign language in a recognised centre of excellence in Germany. This should have given her the academic capital to make her highly employable as a German language lecturer in an institution such as MIT. Unfortunately, she came on to the market at a time of qualifications' inflation within the sector, a point she was only too well aware of but was unable to do anything to affect because 'in order to get any kind of stable job in a third level institution you'd have to have a PhD and at that point in my life there'd be no way I'd have been able to do that, either financially or just logistically' (Helen).

When Helen joined MIT in 1997 as a part-time lecturer she was initially given teaching hours spread over two locations. The MIT policy of limiting the hours of part-timers to prevent them from becoming eligible for a contract affected her working life to the extent that she could never support herself financially from that job alone. Consequently, 'I think in my twenties (…) I'd say I taught in at least eight different third level institutions' (Helen). After the birth of her first child she decided to limit herself to teaching at MIT only but then lost most of her teaching hours as a result of the removal of German from engineering programmes. She continued for one more year, until 2002, teaching just two hours per week in another faculty. Having concentrated her energies on trying to

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carve out a career teaching German in higher education institutions, this was a blow, both professionally and personally, as she noted:

> Initially when the hours ran out in [MIT] I was kind of disgusted. You know it was a very bad time for it to happen. I was in my late twenties, about to start a family, I'd put an awful lot of time into this career, I'd got a lot of qualifications in it and it was coming to absolutely zero.

Faced with this reality, Helen had no choice but to move on – which she did literally and metaphorically:

> I remember when I was moving and I'd packed away all my German materials into a box and I was thinking I'll definitely be using them again and then we moved again and I'd look at them, going 'these are never going to be used' and it was very difficult. And the funny thing was that I thought I had thrown them out and about a year later I was sorry I had done so but I found out recently that I didn't, so obviously something in my head – they were sitting in my friend's house. (Helen)

In a somewhat 'haphazard' (Helen) way, she took a job in the civil service because stability was now a priority for her and her family. In the three years she spent there before taking a career break she had harboured hopes of getting into the training area of the civil service. A period working as a school secretary then propelled her back into teaching. First she worked as a substitute teacher of Irish in a second level school and since then has gone on to teach in an Irish-medium primary school on the basis that 'I'm very interested in languages, full stop, and in the teaching I'm doing now I'm teaching in an all-Irish school so that kind of feeds that habit, a bit' (Helen).

Helen has realised that teaching was what 'feels natural to me'. After leaving the civil service she began to believe that there could be an opening back into German teaching if she was to gain a qualification to teach at second level. Unfortunately she was forced to come to the conclusion, given the fall off in demand for German, that a H.Dip.Ed. was not going to boost her employment prospects. Instead, the recent state policy to encourage the teaching of foreign

languages at primary level was the catalyst for her realisation that a primary level teaching qualification would hold out more opportunities within the educational field. Now that she has gained some experience of primary teaching this has become her main professional focus:

> Given my, say, twenty years out of school I've realised I do want to be in education and if it's not going to be German, well then, let it be something else and hopefully bring German back into it but the main thing is to stay in education. (Helen)

By the time of our interview Helen had committed herself to starting an on-line post-graduate diploma in primary teaching which she hoped to complete by September 2011. At the same time she was aware that there could well be problems in recruiting permanent teachers into the education system if a recession were to take hold. Sadly, this has since proved to be the case and again Helen has been unfortunate in her timing. How this will affect her future professional identity is impossible to say, given her views as expressed in June 2008 while working as a temporary teacher:

> Well, I say 'this week I'm a primary school teacher' (...) I do feel now that this is it, I really don't see myself trying other things (...) If this doesn't work out that's it, I'm giving up and I'm going to write a book, then I'll be a writer, [laughs] but I'm not trying any more other types of job. (Helen)

It is clear that for Helen her teacher identity has become a source of stability, in that it has given a sense of continuity to the choices she has been obliged to make throughout her professional career thus far but it can also help to give economic stability to her and her family in the future, if she can be successful in gaining permanent employment as a primary school teacher. Despite expressing a slight nervousness about this future she ended our interview on a hopeful note:

> I'm happy now. Things would have been a lot easier, especially when the kids were smaller if I didn't have to reinvent myself every second week, that would have made things a lot more straightforward and I would have really appreciated some payback for the ten years I spent and kind of

building myself up professionally for it to come to nothing was kind of a blow but now (...) I'm at a different stage of my life and I am happy. (Helen)

As one of the youngest interviewees in this study and with a precarious career ahead of her, hope is a sentiment she may need much more of if she is to successfully negotiate a permanent position within the educational field. So far, every form of capital she has invested in has proved insufficient as the rules of the game have continued to change before she got the chance to gain a stable position within it.

Rosi, too, has been forced out of teaching and has been spending time and a lot of energy in trying to find a way back in. As she put it: 'I've been a language teacher for nearly thirty years now' but she has also been a librarian, a writer of German language textbooks for business, a master's and doctoral student, a life coach and 'an emotional energy practitioner' (Rosi, email communication). Like Richard and Helen, she was employed as a part-time lecturer at MIT but, in her case, for the relatively short time of three years up to 2002. Despite its briefness it was a significant period in Rosi's professional life because 'I'd say my highpoint in teaching was when I changed from teacher to becoming a lecturer' (Rosi) in Location W. She felt herself to have been highly effective in applying language teaching to the specific skills of other disciplines, such as culinary arts, in a unique and original way. For example, she took a group of students to a culinary festival in Germany and got them to complete tasks that involved language learning in a natural and stimulating environment.

Rosi believed herself to be appreciated by colleagues and managers in Location W and was encouraged to complete an MA in German because, as a German native with a primary degree in English and music, this would make her eligible for a contract and guarantee her continued employment. Oblivious to the changing institutional structure of MIT, which meant that language lecturers would come under the remit of the new LS, Rosi voluntarily reduced her

teaching hours to give her more time to concentrate on studying for the MA. Having originally been offered a timetable of twenty hours, she had wanted to keep on eight hours but finally agreed to take seven: 'And little did I know that the reason for that is that if you have eight hours you've got rights and if you've got under eight hours they can do with you what [they] like' (Rosi).

As permanent German lecturers from the LS were short of timetabled hours, part-timers without contracts were obliged to give way. In Rosi's case this happened literally as she stood in front of her first group of students at the start of the new academic year:

> Actually I was taken right out of my first eh, where I had my students already there, introducing them to what we're going to do and so on, right out of that I was taken out by the person who was coming in after me, saying, 'so, I'll take it on from here'. (...) That was basically my last day, when this guy came in. (Rosi)

Because she had never met the management of the LS she sent emails explaining her financial predicament as the main earner in her family but was met with 'no compassion for my situation'. Even the manager in Location W who had previously been responsible for giving her a timetable was unsympathetic, saying 'this is the way it is, that's what happens to part-time contract lecturers' (Rosi). Not surprisingly, she felt hurt and angry towards MIT as an organisation, describing her reaction movingly as: 'it was hard and hard and, oh, I felt like chaining myself to the radiators, having the media coming in (...) My anger was so strong (...)'. Despite the 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu et al 1999) of this event, six years later Rosi had been able to come to terms with what has happened. How has this been possible?

Firstly, she finished the MA which gave her a stronger sense of professional identity as a German teacher as well as giving her a more positive view of her own national identity – like Anna above, Rosi had grown up with a highly critical view of German identity. The master's also triggered an interest in doing

a PhD in philosophy, which also helped with 'another childhood issue' caused by her father's belief that 'I'm going to end up in the gutter ... He had a PhD and I was to prove that I could get one too' (Rosi).

She also found a permanent but part-time job as a library assistant, something she had already had experience of in Germany many years earlier, although 'becoming a librarian never really did anything for me' (Rosi). While continuing to work in the library, she trained as a life coach because of the realisation that 'I am a teacher; I want to teach, what else can I teach?' The one-to-one nature of life coaching has not turned out to be as stimulating as working with small groups. Her latest idea, therefore, has been to create a series of modules on 'emotional energy' and try to interest schools and parents' groups in taking them on. Her enthusiasm for this project has enabled her to view the past in a more positive light:

> I hate to admit it, but it is really like that, in a way, when one door closes another one is opening and I would have never ever left German teaching, if that hadn't happened so brutally to me but looking back I'm actually, I quite like it, the idea because I have been forced to move on and I moved on into something that I find, I have to nearly admit, much more valuable than just the language because you're dealing with people's lives. (Rosi)

Of the part-time German lecturers who lost their jobs Rosi was the most unprepared for this eventuality. She appears to have been so intensely caught up in teaching and in making the learning experience as memorable as possible for her students that she was completely unaware of the changes happening in the field around her. While she believed that she was positioning herself in a way that would assist her in gaining a permanent job on completion of an MA, she actually facilitated her removal by reducing her hours below the threshold for a contract. Rosi also seems to have had insufficient social capital, in that she did not know the right people in management after the institutional structures had changed. Of course, there was no guarantee that she could have prevented the loss of her job any more than Helen or Richard were able to – although Richard

did continue for two years more until his contract hours could no longer be filled.

While all three were ousted from the field of higher education, and MIT in particular, this was not due to any inability on their part (any more than those who went before them but who remain in the field to this day). Unfortunately for them, the stakes had got higher and the academic capital that had been acceptable a number of years earlier was no longer sufficient to keep them in the game.

Bourdieu's concepts at work in these stories

Despite the career changes forced upon them by these circumstances all have exhibited a durable habitus throughout their professional lives. Richard, with his interest in law, languages, travel, teaching, tour guiding, translating, etc. has found a way to carry on doing many of these activities. His habitual behaviour has been to avoid trapping himself into one identity. He has recognised this in himself and has been prepared to live out his choices:

> I just constantly reinvent myself (...) I suppose if I'm teaching German
> I'm a German teacher, if I'm a guide, I'm a guide, yeah, I've always been
> flexible in that sense. (Richard)

Helen has tried to combine her love of the German language with a love of teaching but has come to realise that, in current conditions, this may no longer be possible. Nonetheless, she has not given up hope and has tried to find ways to bring German into her professional life in whatever form of teaching is open to her. Given the cyclical nature of the promotion of foreign language teaching and learning and her relative youth, anything could yet happen:

> I was thinking after all the time and all the energy I've invested into it, you
> know, how I feel about it and actually it's something, German is
> something I really love. It's a shame it's not going to work out for me

professionally but, you know, you don't know, things may change.
(Helen)

Within the space of our interview Rosi fluctuated between stating how much she loved teaching and had come to love the German language – which she had grown up disliking – and, on the other hand, no longer wanting to be a teacher or lecturer but rather a 'facilitator, or let's put it better, an educator' who was now on 'this new path ... which I now much more like than teaching German' (Rosi). The discrepancy is due, I believe, to her attempt to shape her identity, to make the best of the changes that have happened and the choices she has made since losing her teaching hours at MIT. Not having had the right type of capital at the time she left MIT she has been at pains to build up an impressive amount of academic capital ever since. This mirrors a previous reaction – unable to gain permanent employment as a German teacher in a secondary school she went on to author several German textbooks, at least one of which would have been used by secondary school pupils, perhaps even in the school that did not employ her. Finally, taking up a job as a librarian after being forced to give up teaching at MIT exactly replicates her response to a similar event in her past: when living in Germany she had discovered that she was not deemed qualified to teach when she moved to another region, despite having four years' teaching experience – her reaction then was to become a school librarian. It is evident that, while obliged by outside circumstances to be flexible, Rosi's habitus has given her a limited number of choices to which she has returned again and again. In the same way, Richard and Helen have sought creative solutions to deal with constantly changing fields, but always chosen from within a finite number of possible choices, delineated by their habitus.

Within their professional careers these three individuals have passed through the field of MIT and had their trajectories shaped by this experience – ironically, it is the person who spent least time there, Rosi, who has been most emotionally affected by being forced out of the field. Having come from a different cultural background, she did not appear to have had any issues at the outset regarding

MIT's relative lack of status with the Irish higher education field but saw her own position there as proof of having attained more status than she was able to achieve as a part-time teacher at second level. Her later choices reflect the need to continually strive for greater academic status than the field that has rejected her. Helen's choices have been more limited by her personal circumstances but she has shown a strong sense of understanding her own dispositions and, while she naturally resented her rejection from the field of higher education, her later choices and opportunities have served to crystallise her professional habitus as a teacher. Richard had more time to come to terms with the changing field of MIT but also shows an awareness of the forces at work in the national and international fields that were inevitably shaping the outcome of his career in language teaching. All three have moved on professionally because they were left with no other choice but all three narratives retain the shadow of the fields their professional lives and identities have passed through.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present the narratives of thirteen German lecturers who have been affected by change in the field of German language teaching in one Irish higher education institution and to seek to understand the positions they have been obliged to take to remain effective within the field or, as was the case of the former part-timers, the new fields they have entered as a result of being excluded from the overlapping fields of German language teaching and higher education. Using the concepts of habitus, capital and field it has been possible to analyse and explain the choices made by these respondents in a systematic way that takes account of the different outcomes for the sub-groups and individuals. While it was possible to explore all the interviewees' reflexivity towards their sense of changing professional identity, the opportunity to re-interview nine of the ten permanent staff members has also given me the chance to examine their reflexive awareness at

two points in their professional trajectories and draw a link between reflexivity and a willingness to change.

By using a conceptual framework based on Bourdieu's concepts I have been able to develop a sociological analysis of a group of professionals that does not rely on a psychoanalytical interpretation; although it does recognise and value the role of emotions, particularly loss, frustration and embarrassment – mixed with anger and cynicism towards the institution of MIT – that have been a feature of these accounts as my respondents have learned over the last decade to come to terms with change within a changing institution and changing national and international fields.

In the following chapter I would like to draw together points from chapters 4, 5 and 6 that have gone to make up this sociological analysis: my own personal and professional trajectory as a German lecturer; that of my MIT and other IoT colleagues and the fields that have surrounded us and affected our ability and willingness to cope with change in our professional lives; and relate them to the themes that are current within recent literature on changing professional identity. I will then outline some of the limitations of this research project and set out possibilities for further research and for the future development of German language teaching within the Irish higher education field.

7

Looking from the past to the future: a conclusion

I would like to begin this concluding chapter by attempting to interweave the insights I have gained through examining the structural background and professional trajectories of 20 German lecturers (including myself) with the issues that are identified in current literature as important for understanding the construction and reshaping of the professional identity of teachers and academics. The conceptual framework provided by Bourdieu's theory and practice gives insights that add to this understanding and help to support some of the views of modern theorists, academics and researchers, while also disproving several other contentions.

Theorists of identity, such as Hall (1990, 1996), Giddens (1990, 1991) and Castells (1996, 1997), and of professional identity, such as Bernstein (Beck and Young 2005), Pratt et al (2006) and MacLure (1993), offer perspectives that include theories on the instability and fragmentary nature of the self; or the psychological basis of identity; or the cultural, political, geographical or historical forces that can shape identity; or the issue of whether identity has an individual or collective basis. What makes Bourdieu the most satisfactory choice of theorist, for me, is that his concepts provide a sociological explanation for manifestations of identity that encapsulates simultaneously the subjective and the objective, the individual and the group, and allows for the effects of time and space, culture, language and social class on the agent and the structures of power that operate within society and social groups.

Looking at the research into how professional identity is constructed it is clear that personal identity, emotion, reflection and narrative are thought by many (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009, Alsup 2006, Kelchtermans 1993, MacLure

1993, Antonek et al 1997, Beijaard et al 2000, Zembylas 2003, Findlay 2006) to have an important role and this is supported by my research. The habitus of the individuals whose narratives I have presented here, the amount of academic, linguistic, social or economic capital they possessed and their position within the educational field at the time they started their professional lives, reflect the choices they made that led them to adopt the professional identity of German lecturer. Many set out to become language teachers (often at second-level) and happened to find work in their institution at a time of employment growth in the sector: for example, Ingrid, Anna, Rachel, Tony, Erika, Monika, Helen, Rosi, Orla, Siobhán and Karl. Joseph had developed an academic habitus through choosing to undertake postgraduate studies rather than the more traditional teaching route, while younger graduates (Peter, Isabel, Therese, Claire, Paula) completed their primary degrees at a time when postgraduate study had become the norm and the idea of becoming an academic offered a multitude of possibilities. Others (Marlene, Richard) made choices based on other aspects of their lives and found the option to become language lecturers opening up for them because of their position at a time of opportunity – I would include myself in this group.

If the career trajectories of my respondents were not planned by them in any calculated way, their professional identity has taken on some significance in their lives as a result of their time spent in the institutional and higher education fields. The changes in these fields over the last decade have engendered perceptible changes in identity for some. It is ironic that Rachel, Siobhán and Claire, none of whom now teach any German, have expressed a strong sense of their professional identity as German lecturers – reminiscent of stories of amputees who still feel their missing limbs long after they are no more. Although Warin et al (2006) and Vasquez (2007) allude to the complexities of identity in the face of outside forces, most of the literature I have examined for this project can offer no real explanation for this phenomenon but Bourdieu's concept of habitus can: the durable nature of their habitus allows them to cling

to an identity that can no longer be enacted because the dispositions that led them to choose German teaching are still present. Others who still teach some German but fear further loss also exhibit this pattern. On the other hand, two respondents who have suggested that their professional identity has taken up most of their lives, Joseph and Marlene, appear to be at opposite ends of a spectrum – Joseph has been very open to change while Marlene has taken steps to ensure that she can continue as before. This may be explained by how they understand the term 'professional identity'. It seems to me that Joseph sees himself principally as a language teacher (Beijaard et al 2000), admitting that other language choices may have been possible in his career, but Marlene, with the linguistic and cultural capital of a native German speaker, views herself as exclusively a resource for teaching German.

The possibility for reflection and reflexivity brought about by this project has enabled most of the participants to express their emotions about changes to their identity. These have included sentiments of embarrassment, vulnerability and low self-esteem: for example, Joseph was embarrassed to call himself a lecturer, feeling that his job in MIT was actually much lower in status, and Peter expressed a similar feeling; Ingrid was embarrassed by the bureaucratic changes in the institution in which she had spent most of her adult life; Rachel was embarrassed by her changed circumstances and the disappearance of her professional role; Erika felt vulnerable about taking initiatives, Orla and Siobhán about losing their identity as German lecturers. Not surprisingly, two of the former part-timers, Helen and Rosi, felt anger and annoyance at how they had been made redundant while Claire felt a sense of relief and resignation at not following the same path when German hours were reduced in her institution.

Not all the negative emotions are directly attributable to the changes brought about through the loss of German teaching – some have as much to do with changing structural conditions in the institutional field (Malm 2009, Zembylas 2003). Clearly, Ingrid, Joseph and Peter's extreme cynicism towards MIT has

not stopped them from making positive choices as agents within the system – although Peter attempted to resist the changes for as long as he could – and Monika's equally critical view has not prevented her from resisting changes in her teaching while creating a space for personal autonomy (Nixon 1996, Henkel 2005). Her success in this points to the validity of Alsup's (2006) contention that people with 'non-unitary subjectivities' (p. 181), or a range of other equally important identities, are more successful at forming and maintaining a positive professional identity. On the other hand, Anna, who has also expressed a sense of positivity and autonomy in her teaching practice, has been less fortunate – ironically, her greater level of linguistic capital in being able to teach English, German and Russian, has left her open to the shifting demands of the LS but her flexible disposition has not given her the authority to refuse.

Attitudes to change are an important factor in successful transitions. One outcome that the work of Hargreaves (2005) and Day et al (2005) led me to expect, but that was not so clear-cut in my own study, was predictable generational differences in response to reform agendas. In fact, the three oldest respondents (Ingrid, Anna, Joseph) turned out to be among the most willing to initiate or accept change in their teaching function as inevitable – although critical of institutional changes and experiencing difficulties in adapting their institutional habitus to these changes – while the youngest participants (Isabel, Helen, Therese, Claire, Paula) saw the pressures from the institutional field as a normal part of their professional lives (Archer 2008, Kolsaker 2008). Many of the middle group found the confluence of change in their own work and in the field around them hardest to cope with and it was among this age group that resistance to change was most noticeable. However, this resistance generally remained individualised, partly because of the institutional response – observable across all the IoTs examined here – of dealing with lecturers on an individual basis only and expecting an individual solution in each case. On the other side of the coin, there was little evidence among the affected lecturers of the 'collective defence mechanism' identified by Salling Olesen (2007, p. 14) as

an aspect of professional identity that might have attempted to protect the weakest members of the profession, the part-timers (Abbas and McLean 2001, Allen Collinson 2004), and formed a group resistance identity (Castells 1997). This would also have tied in with Bourdieu's concept of habitus as a form of ethical behaviour but was reflected only in the narratives of Anna and Erika.

In fact, there is little proof of the existence of a group habitus among my respondents as a whole. While lecturers in the IoT field have grouped together under the IoT Languages Strategy Network to support each other and strengthen their position in the field of language policy, not everyone I interviewed at a number of IoTs was involved in the Network, and within MIT participation was particularly limited. In the MIT field itself no German lecturer group habitus appears to exist as, undoubtedly, the unique history and the geographical spread of the institution have prevented a sense of unity. Smaller site-specific groups continue to exist at locations which previously operated as discrete colleges – over the time-span since the foundation of MIT, and without a unified social space, a group identity for language lecturers has proved hard to achieve. The decision not to structure the LS into language-specific departments (i.e. a French department, a German department etc.) at a time when the threats were focused almost exclusively on German has weakened these individuals' ability to form a group response – disengagement and disenchantment have been the result. In one respect, however, I have observed the possible evolution of a new subject-based identity which is related to what I have called those EAP-lecturers-who-used-to-be-German-lecturers who, not coincidentally, are mostly based in satellite sites of the LS. Their desire to create an intellectual space for their new discipline may be seen as a form of project identity (Castells 1997) and also confirms the views of Välimaa (1998) on the European propensity to identify with a given discipline rather than the institutional field.

A point I was anxious to clarify in my research was to what extent my respondents would view themselves as teachers or academics. This issue is

somewhat blurred by the terminology. The term 'lecturer', the official designation of the posts in which they are employed, implies an academic position but the day-to-day function of language lecturers involves teaching, mostly to quite small groups – so that, often, my respondents have described their work as 'teaching' and themselves as 'lecturers' rather than the more lowly 'teachers' (MacLure 1993, Nixon 1996). This confusion suggests that how a person describes him- or herself is less meaningful than how the person acts out a role, thus negating Day and Kington's (2008) contention that role is less important than self-image, and again points to the usefulness of Bourdieu's concepts in offering an explanation: claiming a certain identity does not make it so; it is how one behaves, embodying a certain habitus, that makes the identity real. In this context it becomes possible to identify an academic habitus by means of academic behaviour, so that an individual who is involved in teaching and research, attending conferences or undertaking advanced study exhibits an academic habitus, especially if this behaviour continues over time – examples are Monika, Joseph, Peter, Isabel, Rosi and Paula. Conversely, individuals who conducted postgraduate study at a time when they were attempting to make themselves more eligible for permanent posts, but who have not continued with this behaviour more recently, could be seen as players in the institutional game who were trying to achieve a more equitable position for themselves but are no longer prepared to play as the rules of the game continue to change.

Clegg's (2008) perception of changing academic identity is that non-traditional higher education institutions offer fruitful sites to investigate the development of hybrid identities among academics – her study suggests that many people in such environments have achieved a balance in their identity and have been able to create space for autonomy and agency. My research does not allow for such optimistic results across the board. While I have shown evidence that managers have attempted to provide a supportive atmosphere for individuals to proceed with personal projects, as in Clegg's successful transitions, nonetheless the distrust among respondents, in MIT in particular, for management systems and

structural supports – such as PMDS, which clearly does not meet the needs of the participants in this study (Clegg and Bradley 2006) – points to the continuing struggles in the departmental and institutional field for, if not dominance, at least a level playing surface for German lecturers. The sense of being fish out of water, evident in many of the narratives presented here, shows the continuing inability of 'language people' (Evans 1990) to gain the support of colleagues from other disciplines in institutional settings with a long technological history (Becher and Trowler 2001). A lack of intellectual leadership may also have a role to play in the institution's ability to guide change in a direction that remains democratic (Harris 2005), is supportive of all the people affected and helps to maintain the strengths of the institution while meeting the needs of the society outside its doors (Kogan 2000).

The fact that foreign language education policies, supported strongly by the discourse at European level, can gain no traction in the Irish national field and in higher education institutions is frustrating. While institutions and the HEA support one European initiative, the Erasmus programme, which is funded directly by the EU, all other European language policies involving higher education, and requiring funds at national level to be put into practice, are continually ignored or at best paid lip service. There would have been no basis for the crisis of identity and the structural changes to language teaching described in this thesis if the European policy field had considerably more influence or power in the Irish national arena. On another level, there is clearly a role for an institution such as MIT in influencing the development of a national language policy – a point identified by the review panel (MIT doc 7) as a strategic function of the LS for the future. What may yet influence developments is the realisation, brought about by the current recession and the shortage of employment prospects in the business and technology sectors, that students' career choices are being limited by the philosophy that English alone is sufficient and that this can no longer remain the case. My research has shown that higher education institutions have acted swiftly in response to economic

and social pressures to remove German and, presumably, they can act equally quickly in the future to reverse the changes made and reinstate language teaching if the demand returns.

It is not so easy for individual academics to make such transitions so speedily and effortlessly. I have shown through an exploration of my own experiences and those of many others the personal and emotional toll that these professional challenges have exacted – but they have also presented opportunities, so that not everyone would want to go back to where they were a decade ago in their professional lives. The passage of time has brought an acceptance for many that they can live with a hybrid professional identity and come to terms, however uncertainly, with the status, autonomy and self-esteem issues that this new identity entails but, in the case of MIT, the absence of a unified social space has presented many of my respondents with an additional hurdle to surmount. For as long as they find themselves separated from each other and separate from their colleagues across the disciplinary spectrum of MIT language lecturers will remain in a dominated position within the institution and a collective identity will be unattainable. Since the formation of the LS the opportunity to create a virtual social space through group communication methods has not resulted in a sense of unity so that the plan to amalgamate the whole institution on one campus is a dream that, for some respondents, is the only remaining solution to their identity problem. For older respondents this solution is already too late, while a cynic might suggest that the recession, which could resuscitate the demand for learning German, could also mean the death-knell for a unified institutional space.

Limitations of this project and some future research possibilities

The most obvious limitation of this research project is that I did not have the opportunity to do full justice to the narratives of my respondents who were outside of MIT: the five lecturers from the IoT sector and one from a

technological university whose stories were briefly analysed in chapter 5. As was outlined in the methodology chapter (chapter 3), the realisation arrived at during the course of my research that I would not be able to employ my chosen conceptual framework to its fullest extent without including a sociological analysis of my own professional experiences meant that the thesis, already longer than anticipated, would be longer still if these accounts were to be included more fully. The difficulty in gaining the same level of access to institutional managers and documentation as was possible at MIT, given my insider status there, also leaves much more of the background structure of these five other institutions to be explored.

The advantages and disadvantages of insider research have already been discussed but the disadvantages obviously have had their effect on limiting the scope of my project. I was particularly engaged throughout the process with the issue of anonymity and, while my insider role undoubtedly helped to give me access to MIT lecturers, managers and documents, my professional acquaintance with so many of these people may have limited their willingness to be open to a colleague about their personal lives and motivations – part of the reason why I felt it necessary to include myself in this study. A researcher unknown to the participants, if she could have persuaded them to participate at all, might well have also persuaded them to delve further back into their personal histories, as evidence of habitus at work in their lives, than I was able to do.

It may also have been possible for a non-acquaintance to find stronger evidence for the existence of a group habitus and a collective identity among the lecturers at MIT. If I had not known my interviewees I would have designed the project to include focus groups which would have allowed my respondents to interact with each other about the issues that concerned me: their perception of their professional identity and how it has changed under the structural pressures of institutional realignment and the fall in demand for German teaching. I did not

feel that they would be open to such a research method with a colleague. However, the opportunity to present my research to interested parties in the future may yet engender discussion and allow for a collective understanding of the processes I have described and analysed here.

With regard to future research possibilities, I feel I have only touched the tip of the iceberg. Within the institutional field of MIT it would be possible to take a longer historical perspective and return to the participants at a later stage to record new developments, perceptions and responses to continuing change. Other aspects could include research into the formation of professional identity across the institution as a whole or a detailed case study of how individual schools relate to the continually changing structure of MIT or the move to unify the institution on one campus. In the IoT field, while I looked at a number of IoTs for this project they represent only one third of the institutions in the sector and much more work would be possible on how the field as a whole is responding to change to the professional identity of sections of its academic workforce. There is also much that could be done to compare and contrast the responses of IoTs and universities across the binary divide and those within the Irish higher education system with institutions across Europe. A global perspective on the role of foreign language teaching in higher education would also present a worthwhile research project.

Where does the future lie for my respondents and their professional identities?

Within MIT several German lecturers have retired in recent years, several others will retire in less than a decade and the last person to have been employed in a lecturer post, in 2002, will shortly be approaching forty years of age. With the stabilisation in the reduction of German teaching, the prospect of increasing student demand on existing programmes and the development of new programmes that will combine languages with other disciplines it would appear that the worst is over for the German lecturers who remain at MIT – although it

is unlikely that those who have begun to teach EAP will regain a full German teaching timetable in the face of continuing and growing demand for English classes across the institute. MIT's drive towards attaining university status means that support is there for funding advanced study, organising conferences and strengthening the research base of academics, although this may now be shaken by the financial restrictions brought about by recent budgetary constraints in the educational field. For the moment, at least, German lecturers continue to be encouraged to build a research profile based on their teaching, so that most of my MIT respondents could continue – or some may yet begin – to develop their academic identity into the future. This contrasts with the experiences of my other IoT respondents who are not supported in their research efforts by time allowances, nor has the situation for German stabilised in their institutions yet as student numbers and class sizes continue to reduce. The younger age profile of these lecturers means that retirement will not act as a pressure valve for younger colleagues, as has been the case in MIT.

On the institutional front change is inevitable, as MIT and the other institutions continue to struggle to position themselves to best advantage in the national higher education field. The effects of the Bologna Process have yet to be seen across the sector. The former MIT senior manager interviewed for this project – with more than forty years experience across the national and international engineering education fields – expects the Bologna changes (the so-called 'three plus two' of primary degree followed by a two-year postgraduate qualification) to involve the possible elimination of postgraduate study from the IoT sector in favour of the universities. This may instigate an expansion of language teaching for engineering students as, without the pressure to conform to the demands of professional engineering bodies that the current four-year degree programmes encounter, the path would be open to combining engineering technology with a host of other disciplines such as music, social studies, business or modern languages.

The effects of the recession may also trigger a change of thinking and introduce a national language education policy in line with European-wide norms. It is already possible to perceive a small sea-change in the openness towards German that I have not seen since the 1980s and the time of 'Vorsprung durch Technik', the well-known slogan for a German car manufacturer that has again reappeared in radio advertisements. In recent months, two other German companies have begun advertising their products with German-language tag-lines while modern languages are also being used to sell goods and cultural events. The recession appears to be reminding Irish people of the benefits of European solidarity and this can only be good for the development of a more open cultural awareness and an appreciation of the value of our shared European cultural capital.

Finally, what this research project has meant for me is an opportunity to add to my own understanding of the world and of the people with whom I share my professional life. It has allowed me to examine my personal, professional and institutional habitus and to explore my own professional identity and that of many colleagues within the changing fields that affect our working lives. The 'partial and temporary truths' (Bourdieu et al 1999, p. 629) presented in this thesis are an attempt to explain to myself and others the choices of the past that can lead to opportunities for the future.

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Appendix A

Interview methodology matrix

Questions to interviewees	What I want to find out	Concepts
1. Identity: how important is professional identity? Other identities and their relative importance?	Is professional identity a factor affecting personal identity? If professional identity has changed does it destabilize personal identity?	Link between **identity** and **habitus. Reflexivity** of respondents in relation to their **identities.**
2. Attitude to change: where does it come from?	Have they experienced change before? *How have they reacted to it? Does their reaction to change follow a pattern?*	Exploring the continuity of **habitus** at work in dealing with change. The role of **capital** in facilitating change.
3. Professional development: experience of PMDS in planning professional development. Other ways of developing?	Have they used the PMDS structure to plan their own professional development or changes? What is their attitude to it?	This will trace whether **habitus is** following a planned **trajectory.** It will explore how **positions** in the institutional **field** reflect individual **habitus.**
4. Institutional support: does the institution support individual changes? What could it do better?	Do individuals feel supported in their institutions? Does a particular institution support change more than others?	Here I can explore institutional **fields** and the **position** of respondents in those **fields.** Also the **position** of institutions within the **field** of HE.
5. The experience of taking part in this research project: has it affected your outlook towards your professional identity? In what way?	Having had a chance to reflect on their professional identity and changes they have undergone what new insights do they have?	Exploring **reflexivity** since the start of the project.
6. Age group: under 30, 30-40, 40-55, 55-65.	What age group they belong to.	This will help to give some background insight into generational **habitus** and historical **trajectories.**

Appendix B

Sample of recursive analysis of one respondent

Document 1   1st interview synopsis

Document 2   Analysis of 1st interview using Bourdieu's concepts

Document 3   Extracts from transcript of 2nd interview showing
                    responses to questions from matrix (Appendix A)

Document 4   Letter inviting response to final analytical question

Document 5   Extracts from email response to letter

Document 6   Linking respondent to institutional context

Synopsis of 1ˢᵗ interview with 'Anna' – April 2008

A0027/Duration: 37:35

Interviewee studied Russian and Sozialkunde (a mix of social studies, politics and modern history) in Germany with the intention of becoming a secondary school teacher. On coming to Ireland in 1979 she found that she could not find work in these areas but could find part-time teaching hours in German as a native speaker without a qualification in the language. She began as a part-time lecturer in [Location X] in 1980, teaching on service courses, but continued to work in a number of other places until she finally got full hours with the introduction of Russian to the international business and languages degree in [Location X] in 1991. Her contract was made permanent only in 1998. Once she had full hours she taught about 1/3 of her timetable in Russian, the rest in German. She had a sense of a 'troubled identity' as a teacher of German and felt more comfortable teaching Russian, especially at beginner's level. In order to qualify for permanent status she completed a master's in German part-time over 2 years, beginning in 1998.

Over the years she has experienced huge changes at MIT. The role of languages has been reduced and is completely gone from service teaching although in one area they have been 'redefined' as teachers of intercultural studies in a communication module. Since the Celtic tiger, students no longer go to Germany for summer work. Teachers have had to find a new niche for themselves. She has always had a full timetable because of Russian and lately intercultural studies and English to Erasmus students so she actually teaches 4 subjects (and also, this year, master's supervision). Before starting to teach English she did a TEFL course arranged and paid for by MIT, and the master's she undertook in Ethnic Studies she has found to be helpful in teaching intercultural studies and some other areas. What she has enjoyed about teaching English is that the level is much higher than what she was given on the German service courses, although she is happy to take intermediate level English only and would not feel confident teaching advanced level courses as a non-native speaker of English. She has the freedom to teach topics that interest her: current affairs, intercultural issues and history. She has just written a history module for the new elective courses (which would be a 5ᵗʰ subject) and has taught a year of German history on the journalism programme (2 hours per week) although German is about to go from this programme too because of lack of student numbers. She finds herself investing a lot of time in new areas which very quickly disappear. Often, interesting courses have been designed but have not been taken up – perhaps they would be more likely to interest Erasmus students who need to find extra courses to fill up their credit requirement (but these students, too, could yet disappear in the future).

She took a career break for a year to work overseas and has had a lot of timetable changes year after year. Her favourite class is teaching German to music students which she has been doing for a while. Russian has been reduced to merely an elective (just 2 hours per week). While she was interested to take on the intercultural studies modules she got very little notice and had to cope with 6 new hours on the subject in the first semester after returning from the career break (these hours were to fill a vacancy for maternity leave and she would like to keep them but doesn't know if it will be possible.)

Regarding support from the school for all the changes she has made, she mentions that MIT paid for both the master's degrees she completed even though the second one was purely for her own interest. However, as the subject of her research was international students, she was able to offer MIT suggestions on how best to deal with them – something for which she received no feedback or acknowledgement from the President or Director of International Students at the time. New technology has also meant huge changes, some of which are negative: time-wasting emails; the pressure from students to put classes on-line so that they need no longer attend; lack of audiovisual technical support on certain sites.

Having been a student herself only recently has reminded her of what it is like to attend a boring lecture and she is aware of the need to adapt varied teaching and learning styles. She is most concerned to let students bring their own experiences and ideas into their learning (i.e. in intercultural studies). She has been willing to take on new subjects because they tie in with her own interests. History has always been an interest and she would like to continue developing this area. English and intercultural studies are linked to her commitment to development work abroad. However, as soon as she got a permanent job she almost immediately felt that she was being made responsible for filling her own timetable. At one point she considered becoming a half-time disability officer (for dyslexia) but the logistics made it impossible to take this up.

Regarding her professional identity, she always says she is a teacher and would never limit herself to being just a teacher of German or even Russian. If asked, she would list the subjects she now teaches. The issue of being an academic or teacher does not interest her – the good thing about MIT in the past was that it wasn't too academic. She is not interested in purely academic research that has no connection with her actual teaching work and feels she is actually researching in a different way for all the new areas she takes on.

Another aspect of change is the length of time she spends with students. When Russian was on the international business and languages programme she would have the same groups of students for 4 years and could develop a social rapport with them. Now, with the Erasmus students for example, some are only present for one semester or at best a year.

For the future she sees herself 'scrambling along as usual ... from year to year'. Several colleagues are retiring soon so there will probably be sufficient German hours in the next few years. There is a lot to be done to create a more supportive structure for international students, such as a port of call for English language difficulties (something that was in the recommendations she made to management that have been ignored). She has currently more than a full timetable and feels the stress is manageable, especially with the freedom of long holidays. She welcomes new challenge and feels that her experiences abroad (in Africa and Asia) compensate for some of the negative changes she sees in the Irish education system.

Appendix B   **Document 2**

Analysis of 1ˢᵗ interview using Bourdieu's concepts

A0027/ Anna

Anna is a very positive and flexible person. She spent almost two decades in a part-time capacity, teaching firstly German and later Russian in MIT, and on the side teaching in a wide variety of other institutions. Although she has gained two masters within the last decade (one in German to help give her a suitable qualification for a permanent position, one in the completely unrelated area of Ethnic Studies – out of personal interest and political engagement?), her main professional focus is on teaching rather than the academic side of the job. She was never very interested in being a representative of Germany and seems to have taught German because it was what was in demand. Here, she seems quite typical of her age-group from Germany: students in the 1960s and 70s with little nationalistic sentiment, left-leaning and ready to take up causes.

She was happier to take up teaching Russian but accepts as an irony of fate that the uptake of Russian among students in MIT took place at exactly the wrong time for expansion of the language – as the Soviet system came to an end. Since then she has taken on several new subjects, English, intercultural studies and now history, and although there is a lot of work involved in all this change, she seems happy to have a challenge rather than the boredom of continuous low-level German. She is also prepared to take on challenges in her personal life, opting for a career break to undertake voluntary work overseas and continuing this work during the summer holidays. Her identity is surely less tied up than many others in her profession, which has a sense of the arbitrary about it. Her professional choices were linked to trying to get a permanent job after such a long time as a part-timer. Then, within a very short time of gaining permanent status, the drive was on to reduce German (and Russian) hours and she felt the pressure to change in order to fill her timetable. Because she has never been fully committed to the subject of German and because she had had many years of repetitious service teaching, she has found that many of the changes offered her new opportunities.

Two things she has difficulties with in recent times are the demands of keeping up with new technology and the reduction in social contact with students. She seems to hold great store in having people to her home (she mentions it twice). She also mentions her love of music and how this means that her German class with singing students is her favourite. She talks of her interest in history, current affairs and how she tries to introduce these into her intercultural studies and English classes, and wherever possible. Her love, then, is teaching, communicating, sharing experiences with others.

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While she doesn't find all the changes of recent years to be positive, she is grateful for her lot and does not find the stress overwhelming in her life – there is plenty more there to compensate for it. She does not appear to see herself as powerless or as a victim of change. While she has been obliged to do some things (the MA in German, or the intercultural studies classes), she gets something positive from all these experiences. She does not criticise the 'system' at MIT to any great extent and mentions as a positive support the fact that both her masters' courses were paid for by MIT. She more often talks of what she likes about the changes than the negative effects on her.

Bourdieu's concepts at work in Anna's 1ˢᵗ interview

Habitus: Anna exhibits a highly flexible habitus. Since coming to Ireland she has been obliged to take whatever opportunities arose in her professional life. Despite feeling uncommitted to being a representative of 'German' and only having got in to teaching German because being a native speaker was the only thing on demand from her skill set at the time, she has gone on to teach German for almost 3 decades *(Does she still teach German hours as such at all or if not, since when?)* Her original choice was to be a teacher of civics, social studies, etc. at secondary level and it was only her arrival in Ireland that propelled her into becoming a teacher of German. She does not, therefore, seem to have had any difficulties in losing her German hours (apart from the pressure to fill her timetable) and she has found the newer subjects of English and intercultural studies much more engaging of her interest. Her original study choices are now coming to the fore in the subjects she has agreed to take on (history etc.)

She has continued her commitment to social and political causes throughout her career and has been able to gain further skills for this aspect through the changes that have taken place at MIT – undertaking a TEFL course paid for by MIT has now given her skills she can find useful in her volunteer work. She sees teaching as a social experience and a chance to connect across cultures. While she has undertaken academic studies she has not gone on to embody an academic habitus. She was able to use her 2ⁿᵈ master's to help highlight the difficulties undergone by international students in MIT and has been disappointed that her suggestions to improve these students' experiences have not been acknowledged or acted on by MIT management.

Field: Anna operates in several fields and believes that her professional life gives her the free time to do so. Her professional field is definitely as a teacher – the subject is less important than the process. Within the academic field as either student or lecturer she does not appear to have engaged in the game to a great extent. She is not interested in positioning herself within the field, other than in how it can relate to her as a teacher or to her caring role towards students.

Capital: Her cultural capital as a German is not something she values. She is highly committed to building social capital through her professional life and in her political and social causes. Her linguistic capital is high, being able to teach English, German and Russian equally well.

Reflexivity: She does not question her role deeply. She is committed to a particular standpoint (professionally, as a teacher, and politically) and seems sure of the truth of this for her.

Appendix B   **Document 3**

Extracts from transcript of 2nd interview showing responses to questions from matrix (Appendix A)

Name	Length of time In IoT	Age group	Qualifications
Anna	28 years	55-65	MA x 2

Professional identity:

'Ohh, I would say half...' [of her time taken up with professional identity].

(...) first of all you know I was a part-timer in a lot of different places and then I became solely employed by [MIT], [laughs]. I often wonder whether it was an advantage or disadvantage and, em, I'd different subjects and so on (...).

(...) it's just a bit, yeah, to focus yourself and, you know, think what is your professional identity and I, you know, regard myself as a teacher, not tied to a specific subject.

(...) it would be actually interesting, the difference between part-timers and full-timers because I feel very strongly about that, you know *(yes)*, that they are treated so badly. (...) Because I've been there, that way so long myself, you know, and I think it's really bad, you know, that they are treated so badly but that's a union issue.

Change:

I think it comes from the outside. There's this example where I suddenly have to go, actually this is a backward change, I think, go back to teaching Russian, this comes from the outside, certainly I didn't initiate that, you know, and I suppose becoming a full-timer I would have fought for that so, though that was partly the process, you know, the union's support and all that, but it's basically something from the outside except, hold on, as I think of it, the choice of, for example, studying again, that was my own.

'I definitely chose. I don't know whether I could have refused, actually though, some people did refuse.' (to do EAP)

'I think I like change, basically, so [laughs]... No, it's, it keeps you on your toes, it's like, you know, mental gymnastics (...).'

Interviewer: Yeah, and you've recently, since our last interview, had to change again (yeah). *Can you describe how that felt like?*

A: Yeah, that felt terrible, to be honest. You know, because there I was, you know, just sorting out my EAP stuff and I had all plans to do this semester. I wanted to do human rights because it is the sixtieth anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration and I had all materials gathered, you know, and then suddenly I had to give up the EAP lessons and, to be honest, well, I won't talk about professional things I've done now [inaudible] but, anyway, I won't talk about that. But, anyway, it felt like being back, suddenly *(yes)* I had to get out my dusty materials from the Russian again and I feel now I have, of course, I have to go and brush up my Russian and I have to go to Russia again and all that. I kind of had to tick that off, *(yes, as something you had finished with)* yeah.

I presume now when the em, [named colleague] and [other named colleague] retire I will have to do again more German but I kind of resent that, I mean it's again starting something...

I: Yeah, you'll feel the same way as you did with Russian.

A: Yeah, I don't want to go back to teaching adjective endings and all that [laughs].

Professional development:

(...) it's like those, we did yesterday, those, this exercise about, the SWOT, you know, and I was looking at the thing we did ten years ago or so, you know, and nothing has changed so what's the point, you know. It's a pointless exercise.

(...) everybody complains about nothing happens about that, so I think it's a useless waste of time.

Institutional support:

'I find this whole thing is so much, my practical way of work, the, the MIT is a disparative thing. There is no unity at all, for example if I want the masters I supervise, in [named School] which is a different faculty, I never got any allowance for that because you can't supervise the masters from a different school or different faculty. I mean that's just one example.'

Reflexivity:

I think with the first interview I certainly got a bit clear, a bit more focused or so, you know, when you start, asked me how to describe myself, I basically describe myself as a teacher and actually it was good to get the transcript back *(yeah)* and thinking, God, did I really say this, you know [laughs].

Appendix B   Document 4

Letter inviting response to final analytical question

Re: Transcript of our second interview on 'changing professional identity'

Dear X,

I enclose a transcript of our interview on the subject of your changing professional identity as a German lecturer, which was conducted last autumn. I'm very sorry about the delay in getting this to you – I'm afraid I was overwhelmed with assignments, assessments and exams at the end of the semester and have only returned to my research topic in the last week or so. I have selected the name 'Anna' as your pseudonym in this study – as you suggested.

I am also enclosing a copy of the interview methodology matrix which I developed in advance of the second round of interviews to help me structure my interview questions (and your possible answers) into a conceptual framework based on the key concepts of Pierre Bourdieu. If you have time to read through the matrix it will give you an idea of where I was hoping your responses would tie into these concepts and why I asked the type of questions I did.

There is one particular angle that has occurred to me on analysing the transcript and I was wondering if you would care to comment on it by email to [email address]: would you agree that you have never had a strong identity as a *German* teacher – that it is the teaching, the social interaction etc. that interests you rather than the subject of German? Why do you think this is so?

I'd like to stress again how grateful I am for your contribution to my research project. If you don't wish to add any more to what you have already said, I quite understand, but any further insights you might want to give into how you personally have dealt with change in your professional life would be very much appreciated.

With very best wishes,

Susan

Appendix B   Document 5

Extracts from Anna's email response to letter

Professional identity:

(…) I would agree with you that my identity is not primarily as a German teacher but as a teacher in general. It probably has to do with my questioned identity as a German. I never thought that German is the one and only language worthwhile learning, it was just as useful as any other language. (Anna)

Reflexivity:

(…) I started thinking about all that initiating change, whether I do it enough or just wait for things to happen – also in my private life. (…) By the way I am just applying as a homework buddy for unaccompanied minors (…), yet another new task. (Anna)

Appendix B   Document 6

Linking respondent to the institutional context

Anna had another degree subject, Russian, which was useful to the LS and so she was able to take up more Russian hours as German was reducing. She was also one of the staff members who took up the opportunity to gain a TEFL qualification which was funded by the School. From the School point of view Anna has been open to consultation and to taking up new opportunities as they were offered. She has taken on intercultural communication at short notice and has been willing to fill the gaps in her timetable with new functions. She has been prepared to travel across the city to other sites – in fact, she has probably taught at all major MIT sites at this stage. This mirrors her peripatetic life as a part-time lecturer in various institutions before she got her permanent job in MIT. Although she is among the oldest age group of the interviewees, she has not been left to see out her working life untouched by change, as the LS manager was willing to do with some colleagues.

She is certainly one of the flexible staff members that the HR manager wishes to see recruited by MIT. She shapes modules to suit her own interests (for EAP she was intending to deal with human rights etc.) Recently she has had to return to teaching Russian, somewhat unwillingly, because of an unanticipated demand for the subject and had to drop EAP at short notice. She may not be happy with such changes but she does it – she has always stepped in to the breach when required. She is also not as critical of the institution as many other respondents – despite having more reason than most: having spent almost 20 years in a part-time position, never knowing if she would have a full timetable or if she would be kept on from year to year, she has also found that her expertise with international students and intercultural issues has not been valued by MIT management. She has had to build and maintain her self-esteem in other aspects of her life to compensate for these institutional failings.

Appendix C

Documents pertaining to MIT

Note: In view of my duty to keep anonymous the participants in this study, many of whom are employed at MIT and who could be identified by the position they hold within the institution, I have felt obliged to use a pseudonym for the institution. This means that documents relating to MIT or obtained directly from MIT cannot be identified fully. Instead, they are numbered and described briefly below and have been numbered accordingly throughout the thesis.

MIT doc 1: Co-authored monograph on the history of MIT, published 2000.

MIT doc 2: MIT Strategic Plan 2009-11.

MIT doc 3: MIT staff handbook, updated yearly.

MIT doc 4: MIT Languages School self-study document, May 2009.

MIT doc 5: Minutes of a meeting of MIT Engineering Faculty managers on 6/11/2000.

MIT doc 6: MIT version of explanatory handbook on implementing PMDS in the IoT sector, 2006.

MIT doc 7: Report of panel reviewing MIT Languages School, September 2009.

MIT doc 8: Report of an academic working group on modularisation in MIT, 2008.

Appendix D

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the thesis

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
DES	Department of Education and Science
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ELP	European Language Portfolio
EPT	Eligible part-time teacher
EU	European Union
HEA	Higher Education Authority
H. Dip. Ed.	Higher Diploma in Education
HR	Human resources
ICT	Information and communications technology
IoT	Institute of Technology
LS	Languages School (a pseudonym)
MA	Master of Arts
M. Ed.	Master of Education
MIT	Metropolitan Institute of Technology (a pseudonym)
NUI	National University of Ireland
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
SMG	Senior Management Group
TEFL	Teaching English as a foreign language
TUI	Teachers' Union of Ireland
UCD	University College Dublin