

## **Chapter One – Introduction and Context of the Study**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the purpose, aim and significance of the current study and establishes the context for the development of the Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence. It draws on the extant literature to detail the current environment within the substantive setting of Australian universities, particularly exploring the concepts of ‘massification’ and ‘minimisation’ as applied within this setting, and highlighting the role of, and responses to, the ‘international student’. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the ensuing chapters in the thesis providing an overall structure of the thesis.

The face of Australian universities changed dramatically during the last fifteen years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Government policy changes and reduced government funding led to a rationalisation of the number of institutions, increased bureaucratisation and demands for accountability, greater staff/student ratios, expanded workloads for academics, and increases not only to the number of students but to the overall diversity of the student cohort (Adams, 1998). As a result of these changes universities have developed new ways of operating and of generating revenue leading to a radically different environment for both staff and students.

### **Purpose and Aim of the Research.**

The purpose of this thesis is to discover how lecturers in management subjects respond to the mix of local and international students in their classes. More specifically, the research in this study aims at building a substantive theory based on a conceptual understanding of the main concern of lecturers working within an environment in which changes to the Higher Education system have affected university structures, funding, resources, management practices and student demographics.

The study focuses on lecturers at the ‘coal-face’ in the management discipline, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, and explores the experience of teaching

heterogeneous cohorts of students, specifically a mix of local and international students. It looks at the responses of lecturers to this mix of students, defining response as the proactive development of behaviours and actions designed to address concerns arising from the specific context within which lecturers currently work, and to enable individual lecturers to maintain their own sense of professional competence. The aim of developing theory, rather than providing rich description, has led to the adoption of Grounded Theory methodology, specifically Orthodox Grounded Theory, which is discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

Orthodox Grounded Theory was first established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) then developed further by Glaser (1978, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005) in a series of books in which he elaborates on the principles of Orthodox Grounded Theory. Orthodox Grounded Theory suits the current research study as I had not generated any explicit hypotheses in regard to the area of study, and there is limited literature concerning the responses of lecturers to teaching a mix of local and international students.

In order to meet the research aim the intent was to enter the field, find out what is going on for the participants and then conceptualise the data in order to generate theory. Glaser (2003) states that whilst participants may be aware of their concerns, and able to give descriptive incidents, they will not have conceptualised their concerns. Grounded Theory provides the methods to conceptually generate “the fundamental patterns yielding hypotheses which can explain the behaviour of the participants as they go through the patterns” (Glaser, 2003, p5). Grounded Theory enables the researcher to both discover the problem and generate “a theory accounting for the processing of the problem” (Glaser, 1998, p11). This fits with the purpose and aim of the current study which are to discover the concerns of university lecturers teaching heterogeneous groups of students comprised of both local and international students, explain the processes they use to resolve these concerns, and develop a theory that has fit and relevance for the area of study.

## **Significance of the Study**

The study has academic significance in that it adds to the literature and the understanding of teaching approaches within different environments and contexts in the management disciplines in Higher Education. There is substantial literature addressing teaching approaches (for example, Akerlind, 2003; Kember and Gow, 1994; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Ramsden, 2003) and some literature specifically addressing teaching diverse cohorts of students at university (for example, Biggs, 1999; De Vita, 2001; Northedge, 2002, 2003a, 2003b), with a particular field concentrating on teaching international students (for example, Bodycott and Walker, 2000; De Vita, 2004; Roberson, Kulik and Pepper, 2002; Watkins and Biggs, 2001). This study will add to the literature by conceptualising and theorising, using Grounded Theory methodology, the processes by which university lecturers resolve the issues they encounter in teaching diverse groups of students.

The study also has practical significance. A Grounded Theory can be evaluated on four main aspects. A theory must have fit, that is the categories must fit the data. It must work, that is it should explain what happened, predict what might happen and interpret what is happening. It must have relevance for the practitioners in the substantive area. Finally it must be modifiable as new data is compared with the existing categories (Glaser, 1978). This study is relevant for practitioners in the substantive area, that is, university lecturers teaching management subjects. Theories that assist in the understanding of teaching processes enable lecturers to develop and enhance their own teaching practice.

Understanding teaching processes becomes even more important to the continued quality of teaching within the current Australian context of massification of higher education and minimisation of resources. Massification refers to the increased numbers of students attending universities as well as the increase in the number of institutions operating as universities. Minimisation refers to the real reduction in government funding of universities and the closure and reduction of courses that cannot sustain themselves financially.

## **Background and Context for the Study**

I became interested in what was happening for university lecturers as they worked with diverse groups of students from Australia and overseas because of the issues I was confronted with as a recently appointed lecturer. I found that my own expectations about what constituted effective teaching practices were challenged by my perceptions of different behaviours, and apparently different expectations, amongst many of the international students. I turned to the reading and discovered a wealth of material focusing on the experience of the students but very little on the experience of the lecturers.

Personal interest is a valid reason for research in a Grounded Theory study, which recognises that personal background sensitises the researcher to address certain kinds of broad questions and can be used to “uncover data that otherwise might be overlooked” (Glaser, 1978, p39). I therefore entered the research field aware of my own interest but willing to remain open to the emergent data as the study progressed.

Having originally trained as a Social Worker, training which included a focus on systems perspectives, I tend to adopt this perspective when analysing problems. The interrelationship of all elements of a system requires study of each element and the dynamic relationship between them in order to understand the operation of the system as a “*system is a set of elements that are actively inter-related and operate interdependently as a total entity [original italics]*” (Tyson, 1998, p14). Students are one element of the system, lecturers another element. The emphasis in the literature appeared to be on how international students adapt to Australian education systems. I began to wonder what was happening for the lecturers and how they responded, if at all, to the mix of local and international students within their classes.

Taking a systems perspective of the responses of university lecturers also sensitised me to overall contextual factors. Internationalisation of Australian universities is one response to the impact of massification, that is, the increasing numbers of students, and minimisation of resources. International students have been encouraged to study at Australian universities and, as full-fee paying students, have contributed significantly to the funding of the contemporary university. The focus of this

research is on how university lecturers respond to the mix of local and international students in their classes, a response occurring within the context of substantial changes to the higher education sector.

### **Changes in Higher Education**

Universities have a long tradition that encompasses the concepts of collegiality, academic freedom and academic autonomy - values established in the first medieval guilds that operated as communities of masters and scholars (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998). However, it can be argued that universities as institutions have survived so long because they have changed so much and very few current universities can claim an ancient pedigree (Scott, 1995). Despite rapid changes to universities during the latter years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many universities remain committed to the traditional ideals and methods of teaching, including “personal engagement between teachers and students, and to individualized (even charismatic) styles of scholarship ...” (Scott, 1995, p2). These ideals and methods continue even as universities become large organisations catering for mass numbers of students.

The first Australian universities, established during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, modelled themselves on the newer universities in London, Scotland and the United States, which were more suited to the pragmatic requirements of the new colonies than the elite religious institutions of Oxford and Cambridge. Consequently, Australian universities have traditionally been perceived, by both government and the public, as professional training institutions (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998) rather than purely institutions for academic learning.

Perceptions of the current changes affecting Australian universities differ depending on the views held regarding the role of the public university. Many academics continue to subscribe to the ideals of a ‘community of scholars’. Others, both within academia and outside, believe that universities have to offer services within a global marketplace, as flexibly as possible, in order to survive (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998). What is not in dispute however is that enormous changes are taking place, changes that are affecting the core aspects of university life including teaching and learning. These changes to Australian universities over the past twenty years can be

viewed as affecting a number of different aspects of the university system and the changes seen as structural, economic, quantitative, demographic, bureaucratic and qualitative (Adams, 1998). Each of these aspects contributes to the overall context of massification and minimisation.

### Massification

The massification of higher education, or the increase in the number of students and the number of universities is clearly demonstrated by the changes occurring within the structural, economic, quantitative, demographic, bureaucratic and qualitative aspects of the university system.

Structural changes contributing to massification are evident in the increasing numbers of people studying at universities. Enrolments in Australian universities increased markedly during the 1950s and 1960s, continuing into the 1970s when demographic pressures resulted in much of the growth being channelled into the cheaper options of Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) and technical training. By 1985 there were 18 universities and 47 CAEs. Many of the colleges were relatively small and there was a blurring of the boundaries with staff at CAEs involved in applied research and universities expanding their range of vocational courses (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998).

Structural changes were implemented following the Dawkins' discussion and policy papers of 1987 and 1988. The Dawkins' reforms abolished the existing binary system of universities and colleges and introduced the Unified National System to reduce the overall number of institutions. There were a total of 65 institutions in 1985 and, following the reforms, there were 31 in 1991 and 35 by 1994 (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998). Whilst this decreased the overall number of institutions it dramatically increased the number of institutions calling themselves, and being funded as, universities.

In addition to these amalgamations the government policy on participation and equity of access was designed to move Australia from an elite system to one of mass education, a process of massification. Student numbers increased from 175,000 in 19

universities in 1985 to 650,000 in 36 public universities in 1997 (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998). University enrolments overall almost doubled between 1983 and 2000 (Auditor General Victoria, 2002).

In economic and quantitative terms the increased numbers of students had a direct effect on teaching with staff student ratios rising from 1 to 11.2 in 1982 to 15.3 in 1992 (DEET 1993 cited in Adams, 1998) up to higher than 1 to 18 in 2001 (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee, 2001). The economic imperative has led to enormous changes in student demographics and the qualitative nature of universities. The student population is now far more heterogeneous than twenty years ago with students coming from a broader range of backgrounds within Australia, and with the number of international students increasing dramatically. Over 30,000 international students were enrolled in Victoria in the year 2000 with the number growing by approximately 15% per year (Auditor General Victoria, 2002). 90% of these students came from Asia with the major countries represented including Indonesia (14.6%), Malaysia (11.5%), Hong Kong (9.2%), India (9.0%), China (8.7%), Singapore (7.3%) and Thailand (5.5%) (Auditor General Victoria, 2002).

As a percentage of overall students within Victorian universities in 2000, international students accounted for 33.1% at RMIT University, 24.0% at Monash University, 19.2% at Swinburne University of Technology, 16.2% at Victoria University of Technology, 12.0% at University of Melbourne, 10.8% at Deakin University and 9.8% at La Trobe University (Auditor General Victoria, 2002).

Qualitative changes have also occurred in relation to the range and type of subjects being offered at university. A large proportion of international undergraduate students enrol in Business and Information Technology courses (Auditor General Victoria, 2002) increasing the revenue in these disciplines. For lecturers in business and management there is significant exposure to the effects of massification in terms of the large numbers, and heterogeneous nature, of the student cohort studying in this discipline. That the areas of business and management tend to have a substantial mix of students from Australia and overseas adds to their relevance for the current study.

The traditional model of the university as a 'community of scholars', with professors in charge of their own departments, may no longer be viable in a period of mass education or massification. Bureaucratic changes have resulted from the demand for increasing documentation to demonstrate accountability, efficiency and quality (Adams, 1998). At the same time as the number of students attending university increased, and funding in real terms decreased, the demands for accountability and efficiency grew as a means of controlling the allocation of limited resources to a sector now offering mass education.

Some authors argue that bureaucratic changes have led to a managerial mentality in universities as the changes were "largely internalised by university 'managers' who soon saw that the new frameworks meant a significant increase in their powers and status" (Coady, 2000, pxi). This view perceives the changes to have led to tensions and a "cool war" (Coady, 2000, pxi) between academics and managers as the managerial structure is not seen by academics as conducive to academic culture with its "obsession ... with control, audit and accountability ... stifling their creative capacities by regulating and controlling them" (Cain and Hewitt, 2004, p56).

Others argue strongly that universities, as with other public institutions, have to adapt to changing times and become more accountable. Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) perceive universities as: "large and complex organisations, still very significantly supported by the taxpayer, operating in a complex and rapidly changing environment in which students are paying a steadily increasing share of the costs of their education ... it is important for universities to be able to operate as autonomous bodies in terms of their teaching and research activities, it is equally important they are able to satisfy the community at large that they are operating effectively" (p171).

### Minimisation

The minimisation of funding to higher education and the impact on universities can be demonstrated by again looking at each of the aspects of structural, economic, quantitative, demographic, bureaucratic and qualitative aspects of the university system.

Structural changes included the rationalisation of institutions following the Dawkins papers of 1987 and 1988. These changes were achieved mainly through the amalgamation of universities, institutes of technology and colleges of advanced education and were intended to produce economies of scale and enable institutions to develop their own areas of strength and specialisation (DEET, 1993). Economies of scale and niche markets reduced the amount of government financial support required to maintain the institutions and enabled the minimisation of funding across the university sector.

At the same time there were initial moves towards a 'user pays' system and expectations that universities would seek funding from sources other than government (DEET, 1993). One response by universities to the minimisation of funding and the move to 'user pays' was an increased emphasis on attracting full fee-paying international students.

Minimisation of funding is clearly evidenced in the economic and quantitative changes occurring within the university sector. Government funding of Australian universities, as a percentage of total university revenue, fell from 71% in 1989 to 48% in 1999. The most recent figure places government funding at 40% of total revenue (The Sunday Age, November 6, 2005).

The reduction in government funding has meant that universities have had to generate income from sources such as revenue-generating research supported by industry funding and international and domestic full-fee paying students. (Auditor General Victoria, 2002). This is particularly relevant in respect of full fee-paying international students. In 1999 international students accounted for 9% of Australian universities income "a three-fold increase in 10 years" (Auditor General Victoria, 2002, p3), and universities continue now to rely heavily on the international student dollar to meet budget.

As discussed previously in relation to massification, there has also been an enormous increase in staff student ratios from 1 to 11.2 in 1982 to 1 to 18 in 2001. This has occurred due to the fact that the increase in number of students was not matched by a similar increase in academic staff. Clearly, this has a significant impact on academic

workloads. However, staff student ratios do not paint the full picture. The Senate References Committee Report (2001) on universities comments that student numbers increased by about 70 per cent in the period from 1990 to 1999 with the number of international students quadrupling and the number of higher degree students tripling. The report summarises one submission when stating: “In general, the staff requirements for providing adequate teaching to international students and higher degree students are far greater than for domestic undergraduates, so it is reasonable to conclude that the total teaching load has approximately doubled” (Senate References Committee, 2001, p293).

Economic changes in terms of the real reduction in government funding over the past twenty years has not only affected staff student ratios and academic workload but has altered the range of subjects offered as faculties are reorganised to meet budget constraints. Economic changes and funding reductions have led to the emergence of the ‘entrepreneurial university’, which is primarily commercial in orientation. Commercialisation leads to an emphasis on vocational courses, which are more popular with full-fee paying students, rather than a broad general education, particularly as many universities are “increasingly dependent on international fee-paying students to pay for some of their basic operating costs” (Senate References Committee, 2001, p20).

Demographic and qualitative factors, including student preferences for vocationally oriented subjects, coupled with minimisation of funding has a significant effect on discipline areas. Subject areas that are not attracting large numbers of students, often due to the specialised or niche nature of the subjects they offer, are finding themselves with reduced funding and reduced staffing, and in some cases the subjects are no longer offered. As discussed, lecturers in business and management, which attract significant numbers of both local and international students, tend to have some protection from the effects of minimisation of resources compared to lecturers in less sought after disciplines. However, their staff student ratios remain high due to the limited resources, in spite of large numbers of students.

## Effect of Changes on Universities

The processes of massification and minimisation have affected universities in three major areas: the increased emphasis on accountability and quality control, and the resulting bureaucratisation; the nature of academic life including concepts of academic freedom; and the idea of learning unencumbered by commercial considerations.

Universities have increased their emphasis on accountability, in part to manage the competing demands of massification and minimisation. This emphasis has resulted in processes and procedures to measure effectiveness, including the effectiveness of individual lecturers. These bureaucratic demands for measures of 'lecturer quality' lead to greater managerial control over academic work (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004), and have arisen at the same time as the increasing "demands from students, who as 'customers' in an increasingly 'enterprise' culture (Knights et al, 1994; du Gay, 1996) are ever more aware of their 'rights' to demand greater levels of service" (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004, p1188). Such evaluations and expectations increase the pressure on academics to provide a service that satisfies the requirements of diverse groups of students as well as university management.

Attempts to ensure quality are widely questioned, particularly institutional quality assurance processes that are questionable in their reliability and credibility: a "high approval rating from students ... indicates little about course quality, except that it is popular for a variety of reasons that may have nothing to do with rigour or challenge" (Senate Committee, 2001). Newton (2000) argues that quality enhancement is not effectively achieved through "elaborate accountability measures" (p153), but is best obtained through the energy and initiatives of the teaching academics.

Wells and Claxton (2002) express the view that it is impossible to expect a common outcome from any particular learning goal or method, and ask "how can the situated and variegated nature of teaching-and-learning activities be reconciled with the (understandable) administrative concern for mastery of a standardised, pre-specified curriculum and for common outcomes?" (p9).

Other concerns arising from the more bureaucratic and administrative approach of the current university system include the perceived loss of academic freedom. Robert Manne (2000), writing of the death of the university, states that whilst academics still generally have freedom to determine their research interests or express their views this is not the case when it comes to criticisms of their own university or the “corruption of the university ethos” (p18). Criticism, he argues, is seen as disloyalty as it puts at risk the university’s capacity to compete for government rewards and public esteem. Manne (2000) perceives university administrators as having no understanding of the academic obligation to speak their minds. He states: “Academic freedom was once thought necessary to protect the university from the interference of church, society and state. Today it is necessary again, but this time to protect academics from the requirement of silence coming from within the university’s own walls” (pp18-19).

The qualitative nature of universities has also changed due to the impact of commercialisation coupled with bureaucratisation, both responses to the massification of higher education and the minimisation of funding. Similar to the varying views held by academics regarding the accountability of universities, there are tensions between those academics who embrace the new commercial imperatives and “those who see it as undermining the traditional role and function of public universities and their unique contribution to society” (Senate References Committee, 2001, p17). Some academics have responded positively to the market-like behaviours (Winter, Taylor and Sarros, 2000), but others worry that entrepreneurial initiatives are often exalted at the expense of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake (Marginson, 1999 cited in Winter et al, 2000). There is also confusion between the respective demands of bureaucratisation and commercialisation with demands “for more entrepreneurial, risk-seeking academic behaviour ... stifled by bureaucratic structures that reinforce status differences” (Winter and Sarros, 2002, p254).

The values of the traditional Western model of a liberal university as “concerned with the creation, preservation and transmission of knowledge ... as the critic and conscience of society ...” (Senate References Committee, 2001, p17) appear to be undermined as universities insist that academics ‘toe the line’. Public examples of academics who have been reprimanded or worse by their universities for speaking out

on matters they are concerned about within their universities, have meant that many think twice before commenting publicly, and “the strong, articulate voice of dissent once common on university campuses ... is no longer there” (Cain and Hewitt, 2004, p17).

### Effect of Changes on Academics

The overall impact of all the changes discussed above on the working life of academics is evident in terms of increasing workload. Evident also in the literature is the increasing level of stress and dissatisfaction existing amongst Australian academics many of whom feel they have to do more with less. This is having an impact on teaching and research to the point where the Senate References Committee stated that it “is concerned about the incidence of overwork among academics and their loss of enthusiasm for both their discipline and their teaching” (2001, p296).

McInnes (2000) cited in Winter and Sarros (2002) found that academics are working longer hours and that more of their time is spent on administrative tasks leaving less time to spend on teaching. In addition, the increasing diversity of the student population requires teaching staff to manage these differences at a time when the education process is frequently being forced to fit within a rigid outcomes based framework. The Auditor General Victoria (2002) in his survey of Victorian universities found that academic staff “expressed concern regarding their increased workloads, stress levels, low morale and perceived decline in academic standards ... [but] generally perceive international students as having a positive impact on universities” (p5).

Australia is not the only country undergoing such changes to its higher education system. In many ways it is following the directions taken within the British higher education system, particularly in regard to current developments in research funding models. Research conducted with British academics found that academics worked under constant pressure and that the most common way to manage this pressure was to work more intensively and for longer hours (Berg, Barry and Chandler, 2004). The academics in this study recognised that the government initiatives in relation to

universities were “a strategy to cope with increasing numbers of students and diminishing public revenues” (Berg et al, 2004, p166).

The massification of the university system, as a result of rapidly increasing numbers of students, and the minimisation of government funding have created a context within which universities, and the individual staff within them, are caught in the classic cycle of trying to do more with less. The organisation as a whole responds to this by taking a commercial and entrepreneurial approach. This in turn adds to the pressures on individual academics, many of whom are concerned about the direction the universities are taking and about the increasing workload pressures they face.

Whilst some academics are raising concerns about the direction universities are taking in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are others who argue that universities needed to change in order to adapt to the forces of globalisation, information technology, lifelong learning and the changing relationship between government and public institutions in general (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998). They argue that the traditional view of the university as a ‘community of scholars’, with the shared belief and values regarding pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, academic autonomy and informal management were only workable whilst universities remained small and elite institutions. These beliefs, and the possibility of enacting them, have been “shaken by the massification of higher education, the accordance of differential status within the academic community, expectations of direct rendering of community service, and by the pressure for ‘useful’ and ‘relevant’ education and research” (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998, p147). There appears to be a divide between those taking a pragmatic stance and responding to the calls for entrepreneurial activity and those who are concerned that education “is too valuable as a social commodity to be left to the vagaries of the marketplace” (Cain and Hewitt, 2004, p33)

In the context of increasing workloads and emphasis on generating funding, another area of concern for many academics is the apparent undervaluing of the teaching role in favour of research (Taylor, Gough, Bundrock and Winter, 1998). With the introduction of the Research Quality Framework the emphasis on research is gathering momentum. This causes particular stresses for many of the newer universities, that is, the former Colleges of Advanced Education and Institutes of

Technology, which do not have a strong history of research. Academics in these universities who come from a strong teaching base are being required to develop a research capacity in order to receive government funds through the research quantum (Taylor et al, 1998).

Winter and Sarros (2002), in their study of over 1000 Australian academics, found that there were significant differences in the academic work environment depending on the academic's position in the hierarchy. Those in professorial positions found the work environment motivating due to high levels of participation, clear and manageable role demands and responsibilities and challenging research and administrative tasks. However, for lecturers the academic work environment was found to be demotivating as “teaching role demands are overloaded and/or not recognised or rewarded, and ... [there is] little opportunity to influence university decision making (to make changes to your work role)” (Winter and Sarros, 2002, p254). It may also be that there are significant differences in the work environments of the traditional ‘sandstone’ universities and the newer, amalgamated universities due to their historically different teaching and research cultures.

In the context of all these changes most academics are continuing to teach, albeit in classes with increasing numbers of students and a far greater diversity of students. It is a far cry from the idea of teacher and student sitting in pairs or small groups to discuss ideas and enjoy the pursuit of knowledge without necessarily having to take the economic factors into account. Given the current mass education model and the reduced direct funding, the numbers of students and the diversity of students, the question of how lecturers respond to the mix of local and international students is a relevant and viable research purpose.

### **International Students**

Winter and Sarros (2002) specify significant changes in response to government policies including the marketing of international education, which has added significantly to the demographic diversity on Australian campuses. In 2001 “there were over 95,000 international students in Australian universities, with a little under half that number (46,252) doing business, administration and economics courses”

(Cain and Hewitt, 2004, p117). These significant changes affect both staff and students and their experience of university life.

Internationalisation of universities has been a response to the economic imperative as global markets offer additional sources of funding. What is meant exactly by internationalisation is however not always clear (Yang, 2002). Internationalisation may refer to the introduction of international materials to existing courses and/or the development of specific courses with an international focus, for example, International Business courses. It may also refer to the establishment of campuses off-shore, or the creation of links with universities in other countries, and to the introduction of an international focus into teaching and research.

The purpose of this research is to explore how university lecturers respond to the mix of local and international students in their classes. Ballard and Clanchy (1991) take the view that attitudes to knowledge and styles of teaching vary between different societies and students from overseas may enter university with different “expectations, knowledge and behaviour which have been shaped not merely by their individual personalities and abilities but, more fundamentally, by their previous educational experiences” (p10). Australian academics also have expectations and approaches based on their own experiences or education, which may differ from those held by many of their students.

In any class, given the mix of local and international students and the approach of the particular lecturer, there may be a wide range of expectations and assumptions about what is meant by teaching and learning. Learning styles may also be affected by cultural background and therefore “the presence of international students may accentuate the diversity of learning styles to be found in the classroom” (de Vita, 2004, p168)

The assumption that students from different national backgrounds are likely to have different expectations, knowledge and learning styles is generally based on the view that different cultures create different norms and expectations of behaviour. Such assumptions may also be based on the recognition that whilst local students have been educated within a system that is fairly homogeneous throughout Australia,

“international students come from a diverse range of international systems” (Auditor General Victoria, 2002, p6). This diversity of backgrounds can make it difficult to assess academic standards for entry to university and lead to diversity of expectations, behaviours and learning styles within the classroom.

How different the actual expectations and approaches between local and international students actually are, particularly in relation to Asian students, is a widely debated topic. Chalmers and Volet (1997) suggest there is a tendency in Australian universities to view Asian students as a homogeneous group. Asian students are perceived to have problems and deficiencies in studying in Australia. Misconceptions about Asian students include that Asian students are rote learners and use a surface approach to learning; that they are passive and do not participate in class; and that Asian students do not want to mix with local students (Chalmers and Volet, 1997). Biggs (1997) argues that Westerners often only see part of the picture when interpreting behaviours within a Confucian Heritage Culture such as China.

The role of the international student seems fraught with difficulties. It seems that their role as economic contributors and resources for local students is offset by the perception that they are competitors for scarce resources and beneficiaries of specialised services (Paige, 1990). When the viewpoint taken is that international students are in Australia to learn from Australia’s education system this has the effect of making “us feel superior ... and inhibits the degree to which we feel we can learn from them” (Paige, 1990, p169). When this occurs international students are not perceived as equals but as somehow deficit within the system and not able to meet the required standards without additional assistance. In fact, this deficit and negative picture of Asian students is not supported by the statistics on their performance (Volet and Renshaw, 1996).

Devos (2003) states that “international students were constituted as both the source and solution to the problems of commercialisation” (p156). Certainly international students have been seen as a source of funding for cash-strapped universities. Within the context of a rapidly changing environment, as discussed above, it appears that international students may have also become the scapegoats for some of the problems faced by universities in the current environment of large student numbers and limited

resources. Devos (2003) believes that international students, particularly those from Asia, have been represented in academic discourses that link internationalisation with the alleged “decline in academic standards” (p156).

The assumptions and expectations held by academics and the discourse they engage in will inevitably affect the way they work with diverse groups of students, as both academics and students are inter-related parts of the broader educational system.

All students enter the university system when they commence their course and overseas students enter not only the university system but also the social and cultural system of the country within which they are studying. In a sense they are visitors within a host environment (Reed, Hutton and Bazalgette, 1978), and by being termed ‘international students’ they tend to be perceived as a homogeneous group who in some way are different from the local students.

### **Accommodating Diversity**

A challenge for the universities is to shift from a ‘deficit’ view to one that takes account of multiple discourses. Teaching practices then come under scrutiny as the focus is taken away from the student as the problem and the dynamics of the entire system are explored. A challenge for university lecturers is to teach effectively within the rapidly changing environment in which universities currently operate, including the changes brought about by internationalisation. Individual lecturers are likely to respond differently to these changes and the diversity of students they teach. The purpose of this study is to explore how lecturers respond to the mix of local and international students within the context of massification and minimisation.

As discussed, changes to universities include increased numbers of students, increased diversity of students, increased staff/student ratios, reduced government funding, greater bureaucratisation and increased emphasis on quality assurance, and commercialisation. As previously noted, one of the immediate effects of these changes has been a higher workload for academics and in many cases the requirement to manage not only large numbers of students but to also produce research and meet administrative requirements. Within this context many academics are working hard

to not only achieve what is required but to maintain their competence in all aspects of their work.

The purpose of the current research is to explore what is happening for Australian academics as they operate within the current educational system and, specifically, as they teach a mix of local and international students within their classes. The aim is to develop a substantive theory based on a conceptual understanding of the main concerns that lecturers face and the patterns of behaviour they employ to resolve those concerns. It is hoped that the theory developed for this substantive area will have both fit and relevance for lecturers working within this particular area of study as well as adding to the academic literature concerning university teaching approaches.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis comprises ten chapters. In this first chapter the background and context for the study has been set as well as the overall purpose and aim of the study. The academic and practical significance of the research has also been addressed.

#### Chapter Two: Research Design

Chapter Two presents the epistemological position and the subsequent choice of methodology and methods adopted by the researcher in the current study. This chapter commences with a discussion of the theoretical perspectives that influence choice of methodology and methods. It then locates Orthodox or Glaserian Grounded Theory, the methodology applied in this research, within the context of these perspectives and provides the justification for the choice of this methodology. I selected Grounded Theory as it appeared most appropriate for the generation of a conceptual theory that would explain the social processes involved for university lecturers teaching heterogeneous groups of students.

### Chapter Three: Data Collection and Analysis

This chapter details the researcher's journey as a novice grounded theorist. It demonstrates the difficulties I encountered as I grappled with learning how to use Grounded Theory methodology correctly in order to develop a substantive theory relevant to the concerns of lecturers working with diverse groups of students. It details the process of collecting data, coding and categorising, memoing, site spreading, selective coding and theorising, leading to the main concern and the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence.

### Chapter Four: The Core Category

This chapter presents the emergent Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence. Maintaining Competence is the basic social process that resolves the main concern for lecturers of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population.

The theoretical model of Maintaining Competence is established using a causal-consequence model and a typology model to integrate the data. The causal-consequence model presents internationalisation as the cause, moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment as explaining variation in behaviour, and a typology of approaches demonstrating the patterns of behaviour within the substantive setting of management classrooms. The typology model establishes four strategies employed by lecturers: Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. The consequences explain the effect of the use of different strategies.

### Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight

These four chapters present the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. Each chapter addresses one strategy, defining and conceptualising that strategy and presenting in detail the tactics utilised within each. Each strategy is thus theorised and examples of specific incidents are provided in order to bring the concept alive for the reader.

## Chapter Nine: Literature Comparison

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the emergent Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence. Initially the focus is on literature concerned with professional competence, which is compared with strategies for Maintaining Competence. Secondly, the literature comparison concentrates on approaches to teaching in Higher Education, particularly the concepts of student centred and teacher centred approaches, and compares these models to the typology of approaches developed in this study. As Maintaining Competence is a contingency model, the literature comparison then turns to literature addressing contextual and contingency models that recognise the influence of environmental conditions as well as teacher preference.

## Chapter Ten: Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter Ten discusses the achievement of the research purpose and aim, and implications for lecturers and staff development approaches within universities. It then presents the conclusions of the research including implications for teaching practice in the management discipline in Higher Education and potential areas for further research. Finally, it concludes by addressing the extent to which the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence meets the four criteria for evaluating a Grounded Theory study, namely fit, relevance, workability and modifiability.

The most important contribution made by the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence to the literature on teaching approaches is its recognition of the contingent nature of these approaches with lecturers selecting various strategies depending on the interplay of factors within themselves and within their environment.

## **Chapter Two - Research Design**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the epistemological position and the subsequent choice of methodology and methods adopted by the researcher in the current study. Crotty (1998) suggests that researchers need to consider carefully their choice of research methodology and methods and the justification for their choice. These choices will be determined by the researcher's own view of the world and his or her preferred way of working with data.

Grounded Theory was chosen as the methodology in the current study as it is suitable for the generation of theory. Grounded Theory is a qualitative methodology developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. Their seminal works, "Awareness of Dying" (1965) and "Time for Dying" (1968), demonstrated the use of Grounded Theory methodology as a rigorous method for generating a theory from research data.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) first detailed the Grounded Theory methodology in their book "The Discovery of Grounded Theory". They were concerned that too much focus on the verification of theory prevented researchers from generating theory. Grounded Theory was developed as a means of generating theory that is grounded in data and "provides ... relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications" (1967, p1). Whilst verification through accurate evidence is important, it should not "curb generation" (p28), and, Glaser and Strauss argue, it is not necessary to know everything or have "perfect descriptions" in order to "develop a theory that accounts for much of the relevant behaviour" (p30). Their expressed intent was to improve "social scientists' capacity for generating theory that *will* be relevant to their research" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, pvii).

Grounded Theory is an inductive, non-linear, iterative research methodology that relies on specific processes to ensure the development of a theory rather than a rich description (Glaser, 2001). Grounded Theory is suitable for the current study as the aim is to generate a theory that will explain how university lecturers respond to the

mix of local and international students within the substantive setting of classes in Management subjects.

This chapter locates Grounded Theory within the context of the theoretical perspectives that inform the methodology, then presents the justification for the choice of this methodology. The chapter also outlines the specific methods utilised in Grounded Theory.

### **Selecting a Research Design**

Researchers work from within a particular paradigm, or set of basic beliefs and principles that represent a “*worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the ‘world’, the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts ...” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p107). This paradigm contains the researcher’s ontological, epistemological and methodological premises, which affect the questions the researcher asks and the interpretations she or he brings to those questions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

Crotty (1998) defines Ontology as being “concerned with ‘what is’, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality ...” (p10). The ontological question concerns the nature of ‘reality’: is there an objective ‘reality’ separate to the individual, or is ‘reality’ created by our individual and collective consciousness? Epistemological questions can be understood as concerning the “nature of the relationship between the knower and the would-be knower and what can be known” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p108). Our ontological and epistemological stance affects the nature of the research we choose to undertake.

Social research requires the researcher to locate him or herself within a research paradigm in order to be clear about the assumptions and beliefs he or she brings to the research, the methodologies that work within that paradigm and the implications for research outcomes.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest five phases that define the research process.

1. Locate the researcher within the history and traditions of research, including conceptions of self and other and the politics and ethics of research.
2. Establish the researcher's theoretical paradigm or interpretive framework that then guides the research process.
3. Select the research design which connects the theoretical paradigm to the strategies of inquiry and the methods for data collection.
4. Select the methods for data collection and analysis.
5. Establish the interpretive practice for presenting findings within "the multiple interpretive communities, each with its own criteria for evaluating an interpretation" (p37).

Sarantakos (1998) suggests that the researcher should consider three main aspects in order to avoid the common confusion when a writer is not clear about whether they are referring to a paradigm, methodology or methods. The steps he posits are:

1. Recognise and select an appropriate paradigm, the "set of propositions that explain how the world is perceived" (p31).
2. Select the methodology, the "model that entails theoretical principles ... [and] provides guidelines about how research is done in the context of a particular paradigm" (p32).
3. Select the methods, or tools, to gather evidence and analyse the data.

I am aware that Crotty (1998) provides only one interpretation of the research process and the terminology embedded within that process, but in order to establish a clear framework for explaining the stages in the research process the current study has adopted the model set out by Crotty.

Crotty (1998, p2) suggests that four questions need to be addressed:

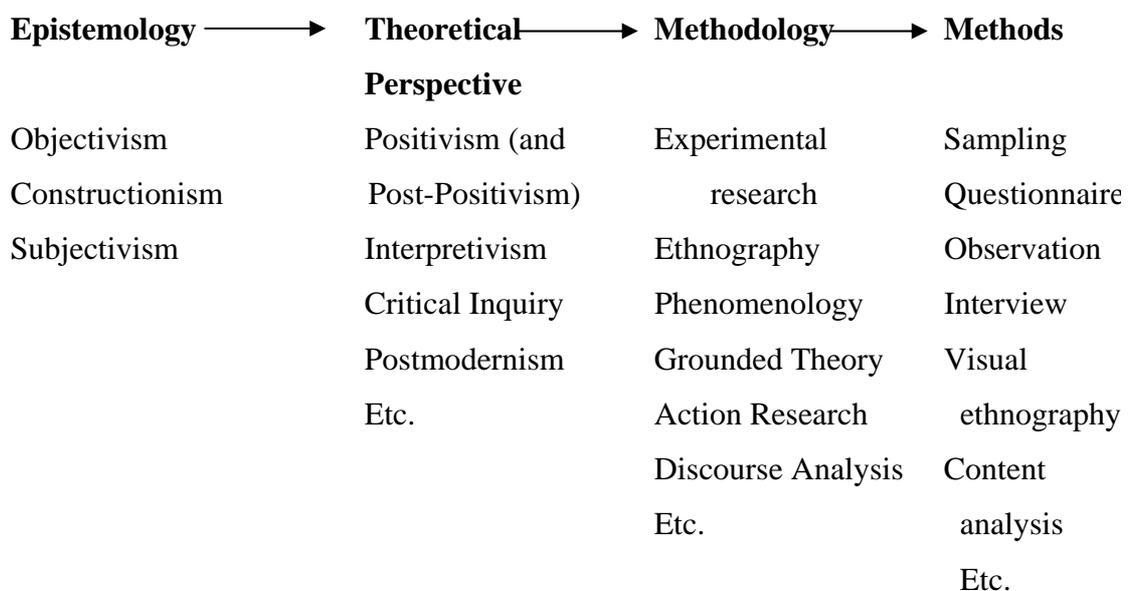
- What *methods* do we propose to use?
- What *methodology* governs our choice and use of methods?
- What *theoretical perspective* lies behind the methodology in question?
- What *epistemology* informs this theoretical perspective?

These four questions enable the researcher to clarify each of the basic elements in the research process. Crotty (1998, p3) defines each of the terms as follows:

- *Methods*: the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis.
- *Methodology*: the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes.
- *Theoretical Perspective*: the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria.
- *Epistemology*: the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology.

Crotty (1998) suggests that ontology sits beside epistemology in influencing the researcher’s theoretical perspective and that “each theoretical perspective embodies a certain way of understanding *what is* (ontology) as well as a certain way of understanding *what it means to know* (epistemology)” (p10).

Figure 2.1: Elements of the Research Process



(Adapted from Crotty, 1998, p5).

The methodological question, which follows from the theoretical perspective, concerns how the researcher sets about finding knowledge based on his or her belief

about what can be known. For example, does the methodology focus on controlled testing of hypotheses about the 'real' world or the first-hand exploration of people in natural settings where elements will unfold, and necessarily be uncontrolled, during the course of the research. Specific methods are chosen to achieve the aims of the research based on the epistemological and theoretical perspectives underlying the choice of methodology.

The choice of Grounded Theory as the methodology for this study locates the research firmly within the qualitative research domain and, as will be discussed later in this chapter, within the interpretivist theoretical perspective which is located within a subjectivist epistemology. The actual data collection methods used included interview and observation.

### **Selection of a Qualitative Approach**

Berg (2001) states that the purpose of research is to discover answers to questions. The approaches researchers use to find the answers will vary, with one of the significant distinctions concerning the choice of either quantitative methods or qualitative approaches.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) distinguish between the two approaches. They define quantitative studies as those that “emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships” (p8), with qualitative studies being those that put the emphasis “on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured ... in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency” (p8). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) offer a generic definition of qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into a series of representations ... This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p3).

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are certainly different, with quantitative focused on the quantification of data and qualitative focused on the lived experience,

however Crotty (1998) argues that the differences between the two approaches lies in the methods utilised rather than in their epistemological or theoretical perspectives. He points out that many forms of qualitative research have been carried out in an empiricist and positivist manner and suggests that research can be both qualitative and quantitative without this being problematic. To be both objectivist and constructionist however is problematic, hence it is important to be epistemologically consistent and clear about the theoretical framework that underpins the research even when a mix of methods is used.

I have chosen a qualitative approach in the current study based on a number of relevant factors. First, there is very little research exploring the experience of lecturers teaching in classes comprised of a diverse group of local and international students. Qualitative research methodologies are particularly appropriate when there is little existing knowledge of the area under study and a process of discovery is relevant. Qualitative research methods are also appropriate if it is not known what you are likely to find, you want to make sense of complex situations, learn the participant's experience, construct a theoretical framework, or understand a phenomenon deeply (Morse and Richards, 2002).

Second, my interest in this thesis is in exploring how lecturers respond to the experience of teaching classes comprised of a mix of local and international students. This cannot be obtained through classical quantitative methods of surveys and/or numerical analyses. Qualitative approaches allow for this exploration as they focus on discovery rather than measurement and enable researchers "to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives" (Berg, 2001, p7). Qualitative research methodologies recognise that people will interpret their 'realities' differently rather than assuming one objective reality. They therefore focus on understanding the perspective of the participants in the research and understanding how they make sense of the activities and processes in their everyday lives.

Third, there is a range of qualitative methodologies that could have been chosen. Many qualitative methodologies, such as case study and ethnography, concentrate on rich description of what is happening for the participants. However, the aim of the current study is not to provide a rich description, although this would have been

interesting, but to generate a substantive theory, which will help to explain behaviour patterns rather than describe them.

The choice of a qualitative approach then requires a further choice of the particular methodology to be used in undertaking research. As already stated, this research has selected to use Grounded Theory and in doing so has quite consciously decided against other possible qualitative methodologies that could also have been used to explore the experience of lecturers within the setting of university classrooms. Grounded Theory was chosen for its capacity to generate a theory regarding patterns of behaviour within a given substantive setting.

A brief look at the history of qualitative research and differing theoretical paradigms demonstrates the changing perspectives that guide the research methodologies and shows how qualitative methods vary depending on their theoretical framework. The following discussion explores the debate about the location of Grounded Theory within historical phases and research paradigms.

### **Historical Moments in Qualitative Research and Related Theoretical Paradigms**

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that any definition of qualitative research must take into account the historical moments, as qualitative research takes a different meaning in each of these moments. They posit at least eight historical moments “that overlap and simultaneously operate in the present” (p3). They define these moments as “the *traditional* (1900-1950); the *modernist*, or golden age (1950-1970); *blurred genres* (1970-1986); the *crisis of representation* (1986-1990); the *postmodern*, a period of experimental and new ethnographies (1990-1995); *postexperimental inquiry* (1995-2000); the *methodologically contested present* (2000-2004); and the *fractured future*, which is now (2005 -)” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p3). Whilst these moments are “somewhat artificial” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p2) they provide a way of locating and understanding the different research paradigms.

Each of the moments covers different epistemological theorising and qualitative research has different meanings in each moment (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) posit four major paradigms influencing qualitative research:

positivist and post-positivist; constructivist-interpretive; critical; and feminist/post-structural.

The concept of a historical moment gives the idea of being fixed in time, whereas a paradigm, once developed, transcends time boundaries and can be considered ubiquitous. Consequently, it is difficult to correlate paradigms and historical moments exactly. Drawing on Denzin and Lincoln (2003, 2005), and their discussion of historical moments and theoretical paradigms, I have attempted to connect the time period and the four major paradigms by connecting each paradigm with the period in which it developed its impetus and influence in regard to research methodologies. This is presented diagrammatically in Figure 2.2. My focus in the following discussion of historical moments and paradigms is primarily on the paradigms that have affected the development of Grounded Theory.

Figure 2.2: Historical Moments and Related Paradigms

<u>Eight Historical Moments</u>	<u>Theoretical Perspectives/Paradigms</u>
Traditional (1900-1950)	Positivism
Modernist (1950-1970)	Post-positivism
Blurred Genres (1970-1986)	Constructivist-Interpretivist and Critical
Crisis of Representation (1986-1990)	Feminist/Post-structural
Post-modern (1990-1995)	
Post-experimental Inquiry (1995-2000)	
Methodologically Contested Present (2000-2004)	
Fractured Future (2005 - )	

(Derived from Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, 2005).

Grounded Theory, established during the 1960s, does not address issues raised by critical and post-structural theorists. The debates concerning Grounded Theory

generally revolve around whether it is influenced by positivist/post-positivist or interpretivist paradigms, with some grounded theorists, for example Charmaz (1991, 2003), developing Grounded Theory within a constructivist paradigm.

### The Traditional Period and Positivism

The traditional period (1900-1950) encompasses a realist ontology and objectivist epistemology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) with qualitative research focused on providing 'objective' accounts of experiences. The ontological question concerns the nature of reality, whether there is an objective 'reality' separate from the individual, or whether 'reality' is created by our individual and collective consciousness. Positivism assumes that the social world has a regular order that can be discovered and that will be agreed upon, with human beings perceived as rational and their behaviour caused by external forces rather than free will (Esterberg, 2002).

*“Positivism asserts that objective accounts of the real world can be given”* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p27). Positivism as a theoretical perspective is based on notions of impartiality and objectivity and assumptions that the researcher can remain separate from, and not influence, the research field. A positivist perspective presents the social world as existing independent of human consciousness and therefore data is not affected by the participants' or the researcher's interpretation. Internal and external validity are sought with the results being presented in the form of scientific report (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p22).

### The Modernist Period and Post-positivism

The assumptions that the world is an ordered and an unchanging place do not connect with our everyday experience. The result of challenges to such assumptions was to modify the claims of positivism and develop an approach that “talks of probability rather than certainty, claims a certain level of objectivity rather than absolute objectivity, and seeks to approximate the truth rather than aspiring to grasp it in its totality or essence” (Crotty, 1998, p29). This approach has come to be known as post-positivism. It accepts the concept of uncertainty rather than assuming that the world is certain and predictable.

The modernist period (1950-1970) built on the rigorous methods of the positivist era but took a more critical perspective by assuming that reality exists but can never be perfectly understood. The aim of research within a post-positivist framework is to gain as thorough an understanding of reality as possible by subjecting it to comprehensive and critical examination (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Grounded Theory, with its emphasis on rigorous qualitative analysis, developed during this period.

In positivism social research is perceived to be value free and objective, based on strict rules and procedures. Positivist research uses deductive methods, which involve the verification of existing theories and hypotheses. Post-positivism differs from positivism in the view that “only partially objective accounts of the world can be produced, for all methods for examining such accounts are flawed” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p27).

#### The Blurred Genres and Constructivist-Interpretivist and Critical Paradigms

The next period was labelled the “blurred genres” (1970-1986) where qualitative researchers had a variety of paradigms, methods and strategies at their disposal (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) connect the modernist and blurred genres periods with post-positivist arguments as well as the emergence of new interpretive perspectives “including hermeneutics, structuralism, semiotics, phenomenology, cultural studies and feminism” (p3).

Developments in the Blurred Genres moment, particularly constructivist and interpretivist paradigms, exerted a significant influence on Grounded Theory, resulting in the emergence of different methods to the original Orthodox Grounded Theory. These divergences in Grounded Theory will be discussed further in the section on Locating Grounded Theory, but an overview of the history of different paradigms establishes a context from which to understand and locate Grounded Theory.

## *Constructivism*

Constructivism moves away from the traditional positivist criteria of internal and external validity and seeks instead trustworthiness and authenticity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). “The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent cocreate understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures)” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p24). Constructivism sees knowledge as pertaining to the world we experience (von Glasersfeld, 1997) and all theory as lacking in certainty.

Crotty (1998) argues that we cannot be both objectivist, that is, take the “view that things exist as *meaningful* entities independently of consciousness and experience, that they have truth and meaning residing in them as objects” (p5), and constructionist or subjectivist. Constructionism posits that: “Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of our world ... Meaning is not discovered, but constructed ... different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon ... subject and object emerge as partners in the generation of meaning” (Crotty, 1998, p8). Therefore meaning or ‘truth’ cannot be described as ‘objective’.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that Geertz, in his works “*The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) and *Local Knowledge* (1983) defined the beginning and the end of this moment” (p17). Geertz (1973) takes the position that “all anthropological writings are interpretations of interpretations” (p15) and argues that the view of culture, established during the Enlightenment, of man as a wholly uniform piece of nature relies on a false line between what is natural, universal and constant and what is conventional, local and variable. He questions whether in fact universals should be the dominant means of defining man and suggests that we “become individual under the guidance of cultural patterns, historically created systems of meaning in terms of which we give form, order, point, and direction to our lives” (Geertz, 1973, p52). Any studies of culture therefore begin with the researchers own interpretations, which are then systematised.

Gergen (1971) writes that a person's life is dominated by concepts and his or her "manner of sorting and classifying events is central in determining the course of his activities" (p23). We rely then on language to communicate about concepts and our language "reflects the agreements of the culture as to how the stimulus world should be differentiated and rendered accountable" (p28). Importantly, due to individual differences "not all individuals will agree as to which behaviours fall into which categories, and ... various concepts may differ in their importance for different individuals" (Gergen, 1971, p29).

Constructivists "desire participants to take an increasingly active role in nominating questions of interest for any inquiry and in designing outlets for findings to be shared more and widely within and outside the community." (Guba and Lincoln, 2000, p175). Constructivism accepts the idea of multiple voices and multiple representations. Constructions of events will be influenced by the socio-cultural and historical environment hence the researcher cannot speak with authority nor assume objective impartiality.

### *Interpretivism*

Interpretivism also arose as a reaction to positivism. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) summarise this as a difference in the view of science as a means of providing causal explanations (positivism) or of developing understanding of human action (interpretivism). The authors state that from an interpretivist perspective "what distinguishes human (social) action from the movement of physical objects is that the former is inherently meaningful" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p191).

Interpretivists take the view that objectivity can be achieved believing that "it is possible to understand the subjective meaning of action ... the interpreter reproduces or reconstructs ... the original meaning of the action" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p193). In order to achieve this level of objectivity interpreters must employ methods that enable them to step outside their own frames of reference and take a theoretical attitude as a neutral observer. This paradigm sees reality as created by people assigning meaning, however patterns of behaviour 'emerge' due to social conventions. Interpretive research aims to explain and understand social life, using

an inductive approach, and presenting reality symbolically. Understanding subjective meaning is important and “value neutrality is neither necessary or possible” (Sarantakos, 1998, p38).

The interpretivist stance requires the use of qualitative research methodologies as these enable researchers to explore how people make sense of their lives (Miles and Huberman, 1994), their experiences and reactions to those experiences. These research methods allow for in depth exploration of the issues as perceived by the participants, to ascertain their view of events and hear their story. An interpretivist approach involves “*the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds [original italics]*” (Neuman, 2000, p71).

The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm is embodied in many theoretical perspectives including symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998), which was particularly influential in the development of Grounded Theory.

### *Symbolic Interactionism*

Symbolic interactionism did not accept the prevailing thinking that human behaviour is the consequence of external forces that impact upon people and that the causes of behaviour are the research domain. Symbolic interactionism focused on the meaning that things and events have for people. Blumer (1969) writes that to “bypass the meaning in favor of factors alleged to produce the behaviour is seen as a grievous neglect of the role of meaning in the formation of behaviour” (p3).

Symbolic interactionism “sees meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (Blumer, 1969, p4). It differs from behaviourist models, based in objectivist epistemologies, in its belief that people act reflectively, consciously construct what they do and are able to modify or alter the meanings and symbols they use in their interactions. It is therefore the patterns of action and interaction that make up groups and societies (Ritzer, 1996), and interactionists “study how people produce their situated versions

of society ...” (Denzin, 1992, p23). The focus is on the generation of meaning and its interpretation.

Symbolic interactionism rests on three main premises: “that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them ...that the meaning for such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows ...that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.” (Blumer, 1969, p2).

Thus individuals learn the meanings of objects through socialisation, both as children and in all other interactions where meanings are developed and refined. Physical objects, (a chair), social objects, (a student), and abstract objects, (including ideas and moral principles), all have learned meanings. (Ritzer, 1996). Some of these will be learnt differently by different groups of people at varying places and times.

The basic principles of symbolic interactionism are set out by Ritzer (1996, p347):

1. Human beings ... are endowed with the capacity for thought.
2. The capacity for thought is shaped by social interaction.
3. In social interaction people learn the meanings and the symbols that allow them to exercise their distinctly human capacity for thought.
4. Meanings and symbols allow people to carry on distinctly human action and interaction.
5. People are able to modify or alter the meanings and symbols that they use in action and interaction on the basis of their interpretation of the situation.
6. People are able to make these modifications and alterations because, in part, of their ability to interact with themselves, which allows them to examine possible causes of action, assess their relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose one.
7. The intertwined patterns of action and interaction make up groups and societies.

Human behaviour then is a response to events and situations and the researcher must either “enter into the defining process or develop a sufficient appreciation for the process so that understanding can become clear” (Berg, 2001, p9). Symbolic

interactionism's "most important methodological premise is that all social inquiry must be grounded in the particular empirical world studied" (Locke, 2001, p24), and from the detailed description gained by observing behaviour researchers can formulate interpretations.

### *Critical Theory*

Critical inquiry, unlike positivism and constructivism-interpretivism, seeks to challenge the status quo. Critical theorists do not share the confidence of interpretivists in people's accounts of experience: "Where most interpretivists today embrace such accounts as descriptions of authentic 'lived experience', critical researchers hear in them the voice of an inherited tradition and prevailing culture" (Crotty, 1998, p159).

Critical research views "claims to truth as always discursively situated and implicated in relations of power" (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005, p327) with each set of meanings supporting particular power structures and resisting change towards greater equity (Crotty, 1998).

Paulo Freire (1972) writes that people can only begin to move and change when the oppressed find the power within themselves to free both themselves and their oppressors from the existing order. In order to do this they "must perceive their state not as fated and unalterable, but merely as limiting – and therefore challenging" (p57). Critical theorists believe that people are capable of change and the role of research is to actively uncover the conditions that affect people's lives. People will then understand the conditions of their oppression and be able to act upon them. The role of the researcher is to study reality to provide data that people can use to understand their condition and to be an activist for change.

Grounded Theory developments have, to date, not been significantly influenced by critical, postmodernist, post-experimental and post-structural thought. Consequently, whilst recognising that there is an extensive literature covering the thoughts and debates regarding these developments, I intend to touch only very briefly on them as

my focus is on locating and understanding Grounded Theory rather than exploring all perspectives.

### The Crisis of Representation and Feminist/Post-structuralist Paradigms

The crisis of representation period (1986-1990) appeared with writings that “called into question the issues of gender, class and race” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p16). Researchers struggled with “how to locate themselves and their subjects in reflective texts” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p3). Writers challenged older models of meaning and truth and moved away from gathering data as something separate from the researcher to including the researcher in the experience and questioning issues such as validity, reliability and objectivity.

This period represents changes in thinking about how knowledge is created, understood and used, leading to the more recent historical periods of post-modern, post-experimental, methodologically contested present and fractured future and the paradigm of post-structuralism.

Post-structuralism, the fourth paradigm presented by Denzin and Lincoln (2003), emerges as clearly different from positivist paradigms and structuralism. Structuralism “looks for decisive shaping factors in structural forms discoverable within society or the unconscious, or both” (Crotty, 1998, p204), whereas post-structuralism “challenges the very idea of structure, including the idea of a centre, a fixed principle, a hierarchy of meaning and a solid foundation (Sarup, 1988:49 cited in Alvesson, 2002, p30). Post-structuralism places a strong focus on the origins of language linking “language, subjectivity, social organization and power ... Language ... produces meaning and creates social reality ... Language is how social organization and power are defined and contested and the place where one’s sense of self – one’s subjectivity – is constructed” (Richardson and St Pierre, 2005, p961).

Richardson and St Pierre (2005) view post-structuralism as a particular kind of postmodernist thinking, a view taken by authors who see post-structuralism as “a more specific form of thought” (Crotty, 1998, p195) and therefore subsumed under postmodernism. An alternate view holds that post-structuralism, which developed in

France, provides the “orientations and ideas that postmodernism, a much broader movement geographically and conceptually, has made its own, enlarged and applied to an extended range of subject areas” (Crotty, 1998, p195). In this view, post-structuralism provided the foundations for post-modernism. Alvesson (2002) suggests that it is almost impossible to establish a clear relationship between post-structuralism and postmodernism as authors use the terms in different ways, but that postmodernism tends to be used more frequently due to the familiarity emanating from “the term’s use in the most varied of contexts” (p31).

### The Post-modern, Post-experimental, the Methodologically Contested Present and the Fractured Future

The post-modern (1990-1995) and post-experimental (1995-2000) demonstrate a concern for narrative and the “refusal to privilege any method of theory” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p3). The post-modern period (1990-1995) struggled to make sense of the crises of the preceding periods and develop ways to represent the ‘other’, with the concept of “aloof observer” abandoned (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p17). Postmodernism has at its core “the doubt that any method or theory, any discourse or genre, or any tradition or novelty has a universal and general claim as the ‘right’ or privileged form of authoritative knowledge” (Richardson and St.Pierre, 2005, p961).

Postmodernist research, in a similar vein to critical theory, seeks to expose the hidden structure of the social world and aims to deconstruct or dissolve all distinctions by breaking down boundaries. Knowledge takes numerous forms and therefore cannot be generalisable (Crotty, 1998; Neuman, 2000). ‘Reality’ is constructed by the discourse of each social and historical context so what is ‘real’ is “what is represented as such” (Locke, 2001, p11). Postmodernists break down boundaries within research seeing research as a form of art in which the presence of the researcher must be evident. The value of research is to stimulate thought in others. It is certainly not to make predictions or reinforce existing power relations (Neuman, 2000).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century qualitative research “confronts the methodological backlash associated with the evidence-based social movement ... [and] asks that the humanities become sites for critical

conversations about democracy, race, gender, class, nation-states, globalisation, freedom, and community” (p3). They argue that what is needed is an interpretive social science that “blurs both boundaries and genres” (p1083) and is committed to social change. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest this requires researchers who are able to navigate between the oppositional forces of the methodological conservatives, neotraditionalist methodologists and the ethical right whom they perceive as threatening the advances in qualitative research. This historical moment is evolving now as the Fractured Future with the outcome yet unknown.

Gergen and Gergen (2003) take the view that overall “qualitative methods sustain a posture of methodological and ideological individualism ... with the influx of postmodern, constructionist, and dialogical formulations, we have become increasingly aware of the limitations – both conceptual and ideological - of the individualist tradition” (p603).

As this brief overview of the historical moments and broadly associated paradigms suggests, the development of new ways of viewing the world leads to new and/or changing qualitative methodologies. Grounded Theory developments have, to date, not been significantly influenced by critical, postmodernist, post-experimental and post-structural thought. Consequently, whilst recognising that there is an extensive literature covering the thoughts and debates regarding these developments, I have touched only very briefly on them as my focus is on locating and understanding Grounded Theory rather than exploring all perspectives.

Grounded Theory methodology is itself the subject of much debate in part due to the different approaches developed by its proponents in response to their own world view and paradigms and the shifting historical and social context within which they operate. Locating Grounded Theory requires an exploration of this debate and a decision in regard to which form of Grounded Theory the researcher intends to use.

### **Locating Grounded Theory**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) locate Grounded Theory within the post-positivist or ‘modernist’ phase, which they describe as “the golden age of rigorous qualitative

analysis” (p14). Annells (1996) suggests that whilst methodologies originate within a particular era they can also be modified over time, and that Grounded Theory is being used in multiple modes. The diversification of Grounded Theory methods will be addressed later in this chapter.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed Grounded Theory methods, in part, as a reaction to their perceptions that sociological research at the time suffered from enormous gaps between theory and research with many researchers concentrating solely on verification of existing ‘grand theory’. Glaser and Strauss were interested in utilising the rigour of quantitative verification methods to develop methods suitable for the discovery of theory, but their focus was on a process of both generation and verification of theory rather than purely the verification of existing theory. They were concerned that verification was given priority in sociological research to the detriment of “discovering what concepts and hypotheses are relevant for the area that one wishes to research” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p2).

Grounded Theory is an inductive methodology, that is, theory is derived from the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that “the adequacy of a theory for sociology today cannot be divorced from the process by which it is generated” (p5), and that an inductive theory is likely to be better able to predict, explain and be relevant. They did not intend for verification of existing theory to stop, but rather for researchers to also become interested in generating theory relevant to a particular substantive area.

Social research authors and grounded theorists do not all agree on the historical moment and paradigm in which Grounded Theory is located. Denzin and Lincoln (2000), writing on qualitative research methods, locate Grounded Theory within the Modernist period based on the formalised and rigorous nature of its methods.

However, Locke (2001), discussing the use of Grounded Theory in management research, argues that the concerns of Grounded Theory with subjective experience position it within the interpretive paradigm. She places Grounded Theory firmly in the ‘blurred genres’ phase of qualitative research, recognising aspects that appear to still belong to the ‘modernist’ phase as evidenced through language “such as ‘emergence’ and ‘discovery’ and theory grounded in ‘reality’ ... strongly suggestive of an objective realist perspective” (Locke, 2001, p12).

Annells (1996) suggests that classic Grounded Theory reflects the “critical realist view concerning the nature of a ‘real’ reality” (p385). Annells (1996) argues that Grounded Theory emerged from the symbolic interaction tradition and perceives critical realism as “prominent in symbolic interactionist ontology in the acceptance that the social and natural worlds have differing realities, but that both forms of reality are probabilistically apprehensible, albeit imperfectly” (p385).

Locke (2001) also argues that Grounded Theory reflects symbolic interactionism’s theoretical suppositions, themselves based within an interpretive framework, by “observing and understanding behaviour from the participants’ point of view, learning about participants’ worlds, learning about their interpretation of self in the context of given interactions, and learning about the dynamic properties of interaction” (p25).

Guthrie (2000), in her own PhD thesis, supports this view arguing that the “idea that the less one knows about the area of study, the greater the likelihood of original thought emerging, flies in the face of positivistic logic” (p11). She continues to position Grounded Theory outside positivist approaches when highlighting that “recourse to the substantive literature is forbidden when using grounded theory ... to guard against contamination by existing thought” (p11). Grounded theory also positions itself outside the traditional positivist hypothetico-deductive approach to research in its emphasis on induction and emergent processes and the focus on naturalistic settings and discovering the meaning that exists for the actors being studied.

### **Diverging Approaches**

Different perspectives on Grounded Theory have emerged in part due to the diverging views of Glaser and Strauss regarding the methodology and the changing historical contexts within which Grounded Theory has been utilised. Following their original publications both authors continued to publish and debate their increasing differences within their respective books (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005).

Grounded Theory as presented by Strauss takes the view that people play a part in constructing their 'reality'. He argues that Grounded Theory enables the researcher to find out about other people's 'realities', recognising that they are constructed realities, because of its emphasis on "the necessity for grasping the actor's viewpoints for understanding interaction, process and social change" (Strauss, 1987). Annells (1996) suggests that Strauss's identification of the researcher as an active part of the research process has moved Straussian Grounded Theory away from symbolic interactionism towards a relativist view that holds "that reality consists of local and specific constructed realities" (p386).

A relativist ontology maintains that "there is no differing social and natural world reality and that there is no 'true state of affairs' to be apprehended ... in the social or natural sciences" (Annells, 1996, p386). This is a different ontological and theoretical perspective to the critical realism that influenced the development of Grounded Theory and that continues to be espoused by Glaser. These differences highlight the issues of theoretical perspective and potential reasons for differing interpretations of the theoretical location of Grounded Theory.

Glaser and Strauss have also diverged in some of the actual methods they employ to conduct Grounded Theory. Strauss and Corbin (1990) set out procedures for coding and categories that establish the properties and dimensions of each category. They advocate axial coding which puts data back together after open coding by "specifying a category (phenomenon) in terms of the *conditions* that give rise to it; the *context* (its specific set of properties) in which it is embedded; the action/interactional *strategies* by which it is handled, managed and carried out; and the *consequences* of those categories" (p97). Hence if the phenomenon is 'pain', the causal condition may be a broken leg, of which the properties might include number of fractures, and the dimensions will include intensity and duration of pain. The conditions under which pain is most intense and the intervening conditions such as skills in care lead to the strategies used and the resultant consequences (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Strauss and Corbin (1990) state: "A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomena it represents ..." (p23). They give an example of a phenomenon as 'pain' and focus their discussion on the management of pain. Glaser

does not focus on the phenomenon itself but on the pattern of behaviour that resolves the main concern of the participants. This leads to a very different outcome as for Glaser “the core category is emergent and the grounded theory analysis conceptual. For Strauss and Corbin, the phenomenon appears to be pre-ordained and the grounded theory analysis primarily descriptive” (Jones, 2004).

Strauss and Corbin (1990) set out a model that establishes a set of relationships between the causal conditions, the phenomena, the context, intervening conditions, action/interaction strategies and the consequences. Glaser (1992) argues that this model forces the data. He states clearly that whilst conditions and dimensions always exist in the data they may not always be relevant to the emerging Grounded Theory and the pre-determined focus on these aspects allows the researcher’s bias and interests to shape the outcome.

Glaser advocates the constant comparison method where incidents and categories are compared to each other, rather than to a pre-ordained phenomenon, thereby allowing the perspective of the people being studied to emerge. Glaser is adamant that meaning will emerge if the researcher uses the methods set out in Orthodox Grounded Theory and that these methods, particularly constant comparison, will prevent the likelihood of the researcher’s own biases and interests shaping the data.

One of the criticisms that Glaser (1992) raises regarding Strauss and Corbin’s work is what he perceives to be an emphasis on full conceptual description as opposed to the generation of theory. This difference is fundamental to their views as to how Grounded Theory represents data.

Glaser (2001) sees the social world as always under social construction and therefore open to differing interpretations. Descriptions are therefore always suspect, but conceptualisation transcends these problems. Glaser (2001) argues that if data is conceptualised then analysed using constant comparison rather than accuracy the categories will fit the data. He is not aiming for accurate description in the positivist sense of accuracy but is recognising the interpretive process and by using particular methods for generating theory is looking for conceptualisation of patterns that fit,

rather than accurate description. In this sense Grounded Theory fits within the interpretivist perspective.

Glaser sees most qualitative data analysis as becoming fixated on the issue of accuracy and of presenting the 'true' meaning of people's worlds, when all of this is open to interpretation. Because Grounded Theory sees 'all as data' it focuses on what is happening whether participants are conscious of the patterns of behaviour or not – and Glaser argues that generally they are not. He stresses that by constantly comparing data the researcher is able to ensure that categories fit the data without debating the accuracy of the data.

Removing the emphasis from 'accurate' description and raising the data to a conceptual level enables people to understand the processes without having to reach agreement regarding whether or not a description of discrete events is perceived as accurate. This is relevant in all instances but I believe is highlighted by research such as Beck's (1993) study of women with post-partum depression. Beck (1993) develops a substantive theory of 'Teetering on the Edge', which consists of four stages: Encountering Terror, Dying of Self, Struggling to Survive and Regaining Control. Her conceptualisation of the data provides an evocative theory that enables women with post-partum depression and others to understand the patterns of behaviour. Description of specific experiences, whilst interesting, would be likely to be perceived quite differently by women suffering post-partum depression and the researcher who is not suffering depression. Therefore description of experience could have led to disputes regarding accuracy whereas conceptualisation raises the data above concerns of accuracy and into the domain of understanding.

Some grounded theorists are locating the methodology within a constructivist framework. Charmaz (2003), a grounded theorist who works from a constructivist perspective, suggests that Glaserian or Orthodox Grounded Theory is close to positivism whereas Strauss and Corbin have moved towards post-positivism in acknowledging their own views within the research. She sees both Glaser and Strauss as assuming "an external reality that researchers can discover and record ..." (Charmaz, 2003, p255). Her position is that Grounded Theory does not have to be objectivist or positivist but that the methods provide a flexible set of strategies, an

emphasis on process and action, and a focus on the usefulness of the research outcomes, and that the focus on meaning develops interpretivist understanding.

Charmaz (2003) takes a new step in looking for a subject's "unstated assumptions and implicit meanings" (p265) rather than concentrating solely on overt actions and statements. She argues that, unlike Glaser who assumes data can be collected without bias, a constructivist approach takes the view that each step reflects "what and how the researcher thinks and does about shaping and collecting data" (Charmaz, 2003, p271). Charmaz (2005), in line with Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) view that researchers should be involved in social changes, suggests that Grounded Theory tools for analysing processes "hold much potential for studying social justice issues" (Charmaz, 2005, p508). She argues that in order to achieve this Grounded Theory must build upon its "constructionist elements rather than objectivist leanings" (Charmaz, 2005, p508). She views a constructivist approach as emphasizing "the studied phenomenon rather than the methods of studying it" (Charmaz, 2005, p509)

These different views of Grounded Theory based on differing underlying perspectives and involving variation in the methods used make it important that grounded theorists specify the particular Grounded Theory methodology they are utilising in an attempt to avoid confusion in relation to the actual premises and steps encompassed in their research.

### **Orthodox Grounded Theory**

The current research adopts the Glaserian or Orthodox Grounded Theory approach as opposed to either the Straussian or the constructivist approaches.

I consider that Orthodox Grounded Theory is strongly influenced by both the post-positivist and the interpretive approach paradigms. The methodology holds interpretivist concerns in the desire to discover what is happening for people within their everyday lives, to listen and report on their accounts. In this way it recognises that different people will interpret events differently and develop their own meanings to make sense of their everyday world. The methods used to uncover this reality are strongly rooted within post-positivist and modernist thought with the concepts of

rigour, verification and particularly the objectivity of the researcher. I believe however that they are applied within an interpretivist framework.

Within the interpretive paradigm, the philosophy and social theory from which Grounded Theory developed is American pragmatism and symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998; Denzin, 1992; Locke, 2001; Morse and Richards, 2002). Pragmatism, located within the modernist paradigm, does not view knowledge as representing independent reality but as an experiential process involving interaction between social actors with each other and their world. Its concern is with subjective experience and it recognises that “knowledge generated by social researchers can never be complete or confident, but when grounded in particular experiences, it can possess a limited authenticity” (Locke, 2001, p21).

Grounded Theory ascribes to the methodological assumptions of symbolic interactionism in its beliefs that the “kinds of issues appropriate for study are those that are relevant and problematic in the social situation studied. The researcher should enter the research process with as few advance assumptions as possible. The conceptual categories and the broad interpretive frameworks developed should result from the researcher’s interaction with and closely conform to the situation studied” (Locke, 2001, p25-26).

I have specifically chosen to follow the Glaserian methods set out in Orthodox Grounded Theory for a number of reasons. First, I was interested in developing a substantive theory relevant to the area of study rather than rich description. I considered that a substantive theory would provide a way of understanding what is happening for lecturers in relation to diversity in their classes. Description would be interesting but would not necessarily identify the main issues facing lecturers nor add understanding beyond their existing capacity to describe incidents within their work.

Orthodox Grounded Theory enables me as the researcher to understand and interpret the patterns of behaviour that emerge from the data generated through the use of Grounded Theory methods, and to conceptualise the meaningful actions and interactions of the subjects being studied. It produces theory that is relevant to practitioners in the substantive area. The development of a theory that takes into

account the participants main concern and the basic social process used to address the main concern, allows for greater understanding of the issues and possible ways of addressing those issues within the substantive context.

Second, Grounded Theory is an inductive approach, which clearly distinguishes it from positivist schools of thought, and as I had no set hypotheses regarding the area of study this approach enabled me to enter the research to discover what was happening within the substantive setting. The aim was to let the relevant phenomena emerge during the research process rather than enter the study with pre-conceived phenomena in mind.

Grounded Theory is very suitable when there is little known about the social phenomena being investigated. Whilst there is a wealth of material regarding teaching practices (including Akerlind, 2004; Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle and Orr, 2000; Kember and Gow, 1994; Prosser, Ramsden, Trigwell and Martin, 2003; Samuelowicz and Bain, 2001), and some literature addressing the teaching of diverse groups of students (Biggs, 1996, 1997; De Vita, 2001; Northedge, 2003a, 2003b) there is little on how lecturers themselves respond to the mix of local and international students in their classes.

Third, as I am employed as a lecturer within the substantive area of Higher Education I was also concerned to use a methodology that would ensure my own preconceived ideas and biases did not significantly influence the research. Orthodox Grounded Theory puts in place methods and processes that reduce the effect of the researcher on the research outcome.

Glaser (1978, 1998) recognises that interest in a substantive area may arise from the researcher's own experience of that area, which is the case in the current research as I work as a lecturer within the management discipline. He stresses the importance of remaining open to the emergent data without imposing one's own preconceived ideas or biases on the data and argues that if the methods are followed then the patterns that emerge will ensure that the researcher's own individual experience will not influence the developing theory, although it may sensitise the researcher to issues within the data. Thus, the researcher is not co-creating the data as in a constructivist approach,

but is working with the data to discover the meanings and interpretations that the participants themselves give to their experiences.

Fourth, Locke (2001) talks of the value of Grounded Theory in management research. I am undertaking the research within the Management Discipline in Australian universities and looking at the management practices of lecturers in regard to their students, and Grounded Theory is both appropriate and relevant to lecturers in this discipline. Grounded Theory is well placed to capture the “complexities of the context in which action unfolds, enabling researchers to better understand all that may be involved in a particular substantive area” (Locke, 2001, p95).

Finally, having worked with other qualitative methods, particularly case studies, I was interested myself in learning about Grounded Theory methods and wanted to apply these as rigorously as possible in order to fully understand and appreciate the method. Initially I commenced with Strauss and Corbin’s approach but found it difficult to apply their coding methods to my data so moved to Orthodox Grounded Theory, which has ensured that the aim of developing full conceptual theory rather than rich conceptual description has been met. Orthodox Grounded Theory methods and processes ensure that the researcher conceptualises at each step of the research and moves beyond describing the data to theorising about the data.

### **Doing Orthodox Grounded Theory**

Glaser (1998) explains Orthodox Grounded Theory as “an inductive approach that call [sic] for emphasis on the experience of the participants. The goal of grounded theory is to generate a theory that accounts for the patterns of behaviour which are relevant and problematic for the participants. The core category is that pattern of behaviour which is most related to all the other categories and their properties in the theory which explains how the participants resolve their main concern” (p117).

Grounded theory relies on an emergent rather than preconceived framework so, whilst the methods and steps to be followed are clearly in place, the actual work with the data cannot be planned in advance.

Glaser (2001) cites Yee (2000) in describing the Grounded Theory process: “In a grounded theory study ... our questions are constantly changing, our sample (at least at the start) is unpredictable, and our analysis is constant throughout. We do not know what we are looking for when we start. We start with one problem and often end with something totally different ... Everything emerges ... We do not preconceive anything. The research problem emerges, our sample emerges, concepts emerge, the relevant literature emerges and finally the theory emerges. We simply cannot say prior to the collection and analysis of data what our study will look like” (pp176-177).

It is this emergence that can make doing Grounded Theory an exciting process but also at times confusing and uncertain. Grounded theorists therefore need a tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. Glaser (1998), in closing his book “Doing Grounded Theory”, admonishes the reader to “trust grounded theory, it works! Just do it, use it and publish!” (p254).

One of the difficulties in ‘just doing it’ however lies in understanding all the necessary steps within the methodology. As a novice grounded theorist I found the literature difficult to follow and the lack of examples of procedures left me trying my own approaches until beginning work with a supervisor who was able to mentor and guide me through the process. It is with this in mind that I now attempt to set out clearly, and explain, each of the important steps and stages that must be followed in order to ensure the rigorous application of Orthodox Grounded Theory necessary for the development of a theory that has both fit and relevance.

Grounded Theory commences from a framework of the inductive generation of knowledge, so it is important to begin with an open mind and no pre-conceived ideas or hypotheses concerning the area under study. This means that contrary to the traditional approach of starting with a literature review, the grounded theorist instead begins with an area of interest and immediately plunges into collecting data from the relevant area.

Upon selection of a substantive area, that is a setting for the study, interviews and observation are frequently used methods for gathering data, but Glaser (1998) stresses

that “all is data” (p8), so it is incumbent on the researcher to remain open to looking for any data that might be relevant.

As data is collected it must then be coded, using the techniques of open coding, selective coding and theoretical coding depending on the stage of the research. From the very beginning incidents are compared to each other to determine concepts and categories, and the process of constant comparison of incidents, concepts and categories with each other continues until the establishment of a core category that accounts for all the patterns of behaviour within the substantive area.

Memos are written and kept for later sorting throughout the process of collecting and analysing data. Memos, which can be written in any format preferred by the researcher, enable the researcher to conceptualise the data as it is collected and coded. Additionally they provide a forum for the researcher to keep track of his or her own biases and the possibility of these biases or pre-conceived ideas influencing the analysis of the data. Memos assist the researcher to separate his or her own views and biases from the research data.

Following the establishment of a core category, researchers may choose to spread to other settings or sites to confirm the fit and relevance of their theory to more than one substantive area. At this stage data is being collected selectively with a view to densifying the theory by building up the properties within the core category until a point of saturation is reached, that is, the point where no new categories or properties are emerging.

It is at this point that the researcher also turns to the literature to continue the process of constant comparison by looking for similarities and differences between the developing theory and the existing literature. Having completed all these steps the theory can be written, keeping in mind the importance of always writing conceptually rather than describing data as is the case in many other qualitative methodologies.

## **The Principles of Orthodox Grounded Theory**

### Inductive generation of theory

Deductive reasoning starts with a theory then deduces hypotheses, or logical extensions of the theory, that can be tested in order to verify the theory. Inductive reasoning begins by examining the social world then develops a theory “consistent with what you are seeing” (Esterberg, 2002, p7). Induction allows a general law to be “established by accumulating particular instances” (Crotty, 1998, p31).

In ‘The Discovery of Grounded Theory’ (1967) Glaser and Strauss stress the inductive nature of Grounded Theory. They believed there was too much emphasis on verification of existing theories rather than generation of new theories. Grounded Theory, that is theory derived from the data, would enable researchers to develop theory “suited to its supposed uses” (p3).

Glaser and Strauss (1965) set out the requirements for the development of substantive theory: “the theory must closely *fit* the substantive area in which it will be used ... It must be readily *understandable* by laymen concerned with this area ... it must be sufficiently *general* to be applicable to a multitude of diverse, daily situations within the substantive area ... it must allow the user partial *control* over the structure and process of the substantive area as it changes through time” (p259).

### Remaining Open

Glaser (1998) argues strongly for the importance of remaining open to emergent data rather than forcing one’s own preconceived ideas or biases onto the data although he recognises that it “is a fantasy for the researcher to think he/she is not a part of the data ...” (p49). The important issue is that the researcher keeps track of how they are a part of the data. He suggests that the researcher’s own problem will become embedded in the patterns that emerge and therefore will be removed from being particularised but will still be useful in helping him or her understand the area of interest.

In order to ensure that the researcher is able to approach the data with an open mind Glaser and Strauss (1967) advise the researcher to initially ignore the literature “in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated by concepts more suited to different areas ...” (p37). Researchers can compare the emergent theory to the literature after the core category has emerged.

### Memoing

Glaser stresses the absolute importance of writing memos throughout the process of doing Grounded Theory (1978, 1998). Glaser defines memos as “*the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding [original italics]*” (1978, p83). Memos can additionally be used as a tool for the researcher to keep track of their own part in the research to ensure their biases and preconceived ideas are being recognised and bracketed.

Memos must be undertaken in order to ensure that the researcher captures all thoughts as they arise and to enable these thoughts to be raised to a higher conceptual level. “The four basic goals in memoing are to theoretically develop *ideas* (codes), with complete *freedom* into a memo *fund*, that is highly *sortable*” (Glaser, 1978, p83).

Memos can be written in any form depending on the researcher’s preference, they may be in paragraphs, sentences, dot points – the important point is that they are written, as it is through these memos that ideas are generated. Memos assist in generating theory as they raise the data to a conceptual level, develop the properties of each category and begin to define the properties conceptually, present hypotheses about connections between categories and their properties, integrate these connections with clusters of other categories to generate the theory, and begin to locate the emerging theory with other theories (Glaser, 1978).

Sorting of memos is “an essential step” (Glaser, 1992, p108) because it enables the researcher to put back together the fractured data and the related memos and begin to conceptualise and theorise the data. The importance of sorting is that it involves the sorting of ideas rather than data and consequently ensures the focus is on conceptualising rather than describing.

## Interviewing and Observation

Interviewing is a common method in qualitative research and there are various forms of interviewing. Structured interviews involve the interviewer asking the same questions, in the same order, of all respondents, with the interviewer playing a neutral role (Fontana and Frey, 2000). Unstructured interviews in contrast have general topics that the researcher wants to know about. Unstructured interviews use open-ended questions that enable the interviewee to open up their responses and take the discussion in directions relevant to their issues and concerns rather than those that have been predetermined by the researcher.

A Grounded Theory approach requires the use of unstructured interviews with questions designed to enable interviewees to open up and discuss issues of concern to them. The role of the researcher is to listen because the main concern and the manner by which subjects process it will emerge in the process of gathering data whether through interview or observation.

## Substantive Coding

Glaser (1978) puts forward two types of codes: substantive codes, which include open and selective coding, and theoretical codes. “Substantive codes conceptualise the empirical substance of the area of research” (p55). Substantive coding consists of open coding, which occurs prior to the development of a core variable, and selective coding which commences when the researcher has established a core variable and is limiting coding only to those variables that relate to the core variable.

Open coding is the necessary first stage in analysing the data where the aim is to code for as many categories as might fit, and code different incidents into as many categories as possible (Glaser 1978). Glaser (1978, p57) recommends that a set of questions be kept in mind during coding:

- What is this data a study of?

This question alerts the researcher to the possibility that what he or she thought they were going to study just might not be the issue.

- What category does this incident indicate?

This question helps the researcher focus on generating codes and relating codes to other codes rather than becoming caught up in the description.

- What is actually happening in the data?

This question turns the researcher's attention to the main concern faced by the participants and the means they use to process the concern. It leads to the generation of a core category.

Open coding involves breaking the data into incidents, whether that is indicated by a word, phrase or paragraph, which can then be examined for similarities and differences. Codes can be in-vivo codes or theoretical codes. In vivo codes use the language of the subjects and explain how the basic problem is resolved. Theoretical codes are formulated by the researcher, based on his or her knowledge of the substantive area, and are then applied as he or she asks the above questions and analyses the meaning of the incident.

Selective coding does not commence until the core variable or category has been established and all future incidents can then be compared to the core category. Selective coding changes the focus from coding everything in the data to only coding data that relates to the core category and its related categories and properties.

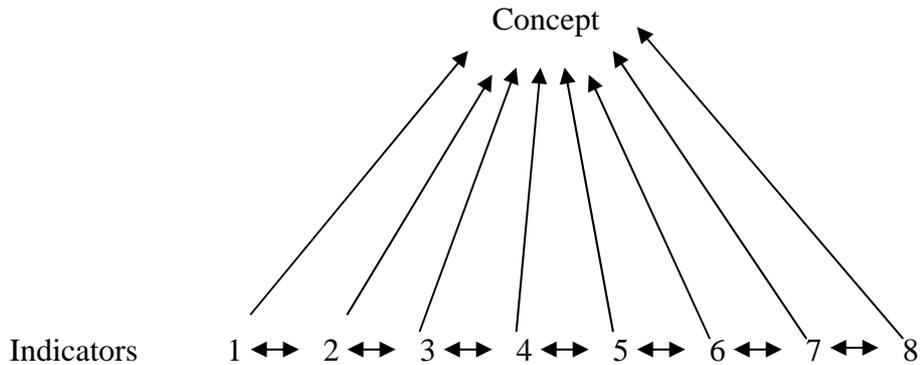
### Constant Comparison

The purpose of constant comparison is “to generate concepts, as opposed to descriptions ... [it] changes the comparing of the highly preconceived and pre-formed produced data of science, whether qualitative or quantitative, to comparing ‘all data’ that emerges” (Glaser, 2001, p186). Constant comparison is the process of comparing incident to incident, then incident to concept. It facilitates the identification of patterns, which can then be compared. It is the process of constant comparison that verifies and ensures the fit and relevance of emergent categories and theories.

Glaser (1978) explains that Grounded Theory is based on a concept-indicator model which entails the “constant comparing of (1) indicator to indicator, and then, when a

conceptual code is generated (2) also comparing indicators to the emerging concept” (p62). His diagrammatic representation is presented in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Comparison of Indicators to Other Indicators and to Concept



Adapted from Glaser (1978, p62).

Constant comparison requires line by line analysis of the data, however tedious, to ensure that each comparison is conceptualised. It is important to commence the process of constant comparison right from the start of data collection to avoid the risk of gathering too much descriptive data that has not been conceptualised (Glaser, 2001). Glaser (2001) argues that “constant comparisons of incidents delimits both data collection and concept proliferation ... With constant comparison a dense theory is generated with parsimony and scope” (p193).

In the process of comparing incidents the researcher needs to be asking the following questions:

- What category does this incident indicate?
- What property of what category does this incident indicate?
- What is the participant’s main concern?

(Glaser, 1998, p140)

Constant comparison, undertaken whilst collecting data, will ultimately lead to saturation of the data, and it is at this point that the researcher can confidently begin to establish the core category. Saturation is not seeing the same pattern again and again in different incidents, but “the conceptualisation of comparisons of these

incidents which yield different properties of the pattern, until no new properties of the pattern emerge” (Glaser, 2001, p191).

### Core Category

The process of constant comparison will, however long it takes, lead to the emergence of a core category. A Grounded Theory is a theory that accounts for the way that subjects resolve their main concern or problem within the setting being researched. The “continual resolving is designated by a category called the core category” (Glaser, 2001, p199).

In order to judge whether or not a category is a core category Glaser (1978, pp95-96) sets out a number of aspects that must be covered:

- it must be central and account “for a large portion of the variation in the pattern of behaviour” (p95)
- it must reoccur frequently in the data
- it will take time to saturate because it is related to many categories and occurs frequently
- it must relate meaningfully and easily to other categories
- it will have clear and grabbing implications for formal theory
- it has considerable carry through
- it is completely variable, that is “highly dependently variable in degree, dimension and type. Conditions vary it easily. It is readily modifiable through these dependent variations” (p96)
- it accounts for variation in the problematic behaviour and is also a dimension of the problem so it explains itself and its own variation
- it does not arise from sociological interest or deductive, logical elaboration
- it can be any kind of theoretical code: process, condition, dimensions, etc.

Choosing a core category can feel like a huge commitment with the fear that choice of the wrong core category will undermine the entire research process. However, failure to choose a core category leaves the researcher with purely descriptive material and hence no possibility of developing theory. A safety net is built in to the process because choice of a core category that is not really a core category will quickly

become evident when the steps for judging the core are applied. Continuing to code and undertake constant comparisons will demonstrate the limits of a false core category and patience and perseverance on the part of the researcher will enable the true core category to emerge.

### Theoretical Sampling

Generation of a Grounded Theory is always guided by the emerging theory. As data is collected, coded, compared and analysed the emerging concepts and categories will provide the guidance as to what and where to research next. This is the deductive element in Grounded Theory where “the focus ... is on comparisons for discovery ...” (Glaser, 1978, p38) and deductive techniques are used to aid the inductive process.

Theoretical sampling enables the grounded theorist to collect less data than in other qualitative methodologies because data collection “is controlled and directed to relevance and workability by theoretically sampling for the emerging theory” (Glaser, 1978, p47).

Glaser (1978) warns that, particularly for novice grounded theorists, it is safer to “sample exclusively within the substantive area until focus on a basic social psychological problem and the process by which it is resolved *both* have been discovered and stabilised in an emerging theoretical framework” (p50).

Theoretical sampling involves the processes of site spreading and varied interviewing. Data is initially obtained from one site but after the establishment of the core category the research can spread to other sites to confirm whether or not the core category is relevant in other similar settings.

### Theoretical Coding

Glaser (1978) explains that “theoretical codes conceptualise how the substantive codes may relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into a theory” (p72). An example of this is given where two substantive codes are ‘social loss’ and ‘attention’

and the theoretical code is the hypothesis that 'higher social loss leads to more attention'.

Glaser (1978) lists eighteen coding families and suggests that most studies fit a causal-consequence or condition model. He introduces a further four theoretical codes in 2001 as well as writing an entire book, "Theoretical Coding", in 2005. Typical coding families include process, degree, dimension and type families. One area where Glaser is adamant about the difference between Orthodox Grounded Theory and the Strauss and Corbin (1990) model is in relation to coding families. Glaser argues that Strauss is forcing the data by looking for dimensions in all instances whereas he takes the view that dimensions will not be relevant in all cases and therefore it forces the data to try to make dimensions fit.

It is possible to use more than one coding family and in the theory of Maintaining Competence both the causal-consequence model and the typology model fit the data and best explain what is happening in the data.

### Writing Up

Sorting of all the memos written up to this point should provide the researcher with the ideas ready to write up. Writing must sum up the preceding work and demonstrate "the conceptual work and its integration into a theoretical explanation" (Glaser, 1978, p129).

Grounded Theory writing begins with funnelling down to demonstrate the logic implicit in the theory. The core category and core relevance need to be stated clearly to ensure they are not lost or confused in a wandering theory (Glaser, 1998).

Writing must always remain at a conceptual level rather than falling into description. Glaser (1998) sets out two conceptualisation rules:

- 1) "think theoretical codes, write substantive codes" (p197) which will keep track of the conceptual integration of the substantive theory.

- 2) “always relate concept to concept instead of concept to people” (p197) to retain the generalisability of the theory rather than returning it to a particular setting. Relating to people also involves the risk of returning to description and focusing on incidents rather than conceptualisation.

In order to write conceptually and theoretically the researcher needs to integrate the theoretical codes into the writing. Glaser (1998) suggests a format in the following example where he says the researcher should “say high social loss of a patient ensures against nursing neglect. Instead of saying this mother was considered a high social loss, so the nurses made sure she was never neglected” (p198). The example demonstrates quite clearly the theoretical codes, social loss, and the relation of concepts to each other rather than people. This enables conceptualisation that moves the analysis beyond the description of individual events.

Glaser (1978) acknowledges that descriptive writing comes naturally and that first drafts may contain a mix of both conceptual and descriptive writing which can then be re-worked to become conceptual. Illustrations can be utilised, not as proof of the theory, but “only to establish imagery and understanding as vividly as possible ...” (Glaser, 1978, p135). The theory is presented as an integrated set of hypotheses rather than descriptive findings, so proof is not required.

In order to write theoretically, items can be presented in hypotheses form to ensure that the conceptual aspects come to the fore for the reader and there is no risk of describing individual incidents or subjects. Glaser (1978) points out that writers, particularly novice grounded theorists, will commence with the description and work up to the concepts and hypotheses later in the paragraph. He says they should “flip-flop” the paragraph “by starting with the concept and then illustrating it ... Then the concept is imaged, ‘out front’, emphasised and usable in carry-forwards. The description is trimmed to fit the need of illustrating” (p136).

## Theoretical Pacing in Writing

Glaser (1978) warns against reading in the substantive area until after the first draft has been written at which time the researcher can begin to compare his or her work with others and integrate the relevant theoretical and substantive literature. He argues that this scholarly aspect of Grounded Theory must be included as, whilst the theory has emerged, it should “not be left in isolation or only for the consumption of laymen interested in the area” (p139).

Literature can be compared to related parts of the theory and woven in, not by describing what other researchers have said but by comparing to show more properties and give a broader view of both similarities and differences.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided an overview of the various theoretical perspectives that influence the choice of a research methodology and methods. It has presented and discussed some of the different historical moments and paradigms that have influenced qualitative research and has located Orthodox Grounded Theory within the Postpositivist and Interpretivist Frameworks.

As this has been my first foray into working with the Grounded Theory methodology I have attempted to make very explicit the steps and procedures within the method that were not always clear to me as a novice grounded theorist. I have been fortunate to have worked with a supervisor who himself is a well-practiced Grounded Theory researcher and so have been guided by his expertise. I have also learnt from my own reading, and more importantly from my own experience of undertaking this research.

The next chapter provides the story of my research journey and demonstrates the difficulties, as well as the successes, that affected the research and the ultimate outcome of the development of a substantive theory of Maintaining Competence.

## **Chapter Three – Data Analysis**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the steps taken in using Grounded Theory methods to establish the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence. It details the process of collecting data, coding and categorising, memoing, site spreading, selective coding and theorising, leading to the emergence of the core category and basic social process of Maintaining Competence.

The chapter also follows the path my own learning took as a novice grounded theorist and demonstrates the development of my understanding and knowledge of Grounded Theory methods.

The challenge of learning Grounded Theory methods has added to both my excitement and my anxiety about the research as I have grappled with the emergent theory and the application of Grounded Theory methods. There have been times of acute frustration and anxiety that have transformed into phases of excitement and anticipation as another breakthrough in the emerging theory and my understanding of the methodology has occurred. Glaser (1998) states that in order to learn Grounded Theory you just need to do it and learn from the experience.

### **Choosing research topic and methodology**

When I commenced this research I had recently taken a full-time position within the business and management faculty of an Australian university. Prior to obtaining full time employment I had worked as a sessional or contract tutor teaching Organisation Behaviour subjects.

My experience of teaching undergraduate classes stimulated my interest in the experience of international students, especially those from Asian countries. I was struck by the diversity of backgrounds of the students and noted my own perceptions of this diversity. My concerns about how to communicate effectively with such a

wide range of students led me to start reading some of the literature about international students. The focus of most of this literature was on the experience of international students (for example, Ballard and Clanchy, 1991), or at times on the interactions between local and international students (for example, Volet and Ang, 1998). I started to wonder how university lecturers might affect the students' experience, and how lecturers themselves perceive and experience this student diversity. My focus turned to exploring the teaching experience of the university lecturers, to discover what issues, if any, they encountered when teaching a mix of local and international students.

As I had a general area of interest to explore, with no predetermined hypotheses, my PhD supervisor suggested I use Grounded Theory as a methodology. Grounded Theory, as discussed in Chapter Two, can be taken up in a number of different ways – Glaserian, Straussian and Constructivist. Researchers professing to use Grounded Theory methods must decide on the model they intend to use and then apply this model rigorously. After much discussion and deliberation I adopted the Glaserian model, and have attempted to remain true to the dictates and methods of this approach. For the remainder of this chapter, when I refer to Grounded Theory I am referring to the Glaserian model of Grounded Theory or Orthodox Grounded Theory.

Grounded Theory recognises that research will often flow from an area specific to the researcher's involvement and interest (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) as has been the case in my research. The important elements are that initial decisions regarding data are not based on "a preconceived theoretical framework" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p45) but on a general problem area, and that even with this problem area in mind the researcher remains open to emergent data (Glaser, 1978).

### **Role of Researcher**

Consideration of the role of the researcher is important in any qualitative research where the researcher is directly involved in the study of people's experience and therefore has the potential to affect that experience and/or interpret it according to his or her own biases. "The qualitative researcher must describe and explain his or her social, philosophical, and physical location in the study ... [and] must honestly probe

his or her own biases at the onset of the study, during the study, and at the end of the study by clearly describing and explaining the precise role of the researcher in the study” (Janesick, 2000, 389).

Grounded Theory researchers take up the role of neutral observer as closely as possible, allowing themselves to act as a conduit for the data without attempting to shape that data. The role of the researcher is to present the lived experience and perspective of the participants, to report as closely as possible the participants’ own view of their reality and the meanings they attach to that reality. The researcher must remain open-minded and not approach the data with a preconceived view or particular agenda.

Remaining open to emergent data rather than imposing one’s own perceptions and expectations on the data is fundamental to Grounded Theory. Glaser (1998) acknowledges this when he states: “It is a fantasy for the researcher to think he/she is not a part of the data. The idea is to use the motivation that comes from being part of the data while at the same time keeping track of how one is part of it ... [the] job is to find out what is going on by looking at the patterns that emerge from many people ... [the researcher’s] own particular problem embedded in an interest gets transcended to a grounded theory, which can then be brought back to help him understand the area of interest and his particular problem” (p49).

In order to achieve this level of objectivity researchers need to be aware of themselves within the research process. It is important that researchers be constantly aware of their own thoughts, reactions, feelings, when working with the data, as well as their own underlying values, assumptions, and hopes or expectations. If researchers can be very honest and direct with themselves they can see where biases emerge and ‘bracket’ these from the data to ensure they are developing theory relevant to the participants rather than theory to meet their own views.

The use of memos, reflection, reading, and discussions with supervisors and others have enabled me to clarify my experiences, values, attitudes and biases that could influence this work.

## **Addressing Potential Bias**

In order to remain aware of some of my own experiences and the beliefs and assumptions I may bring to the research process and to the interpretation of data, and to provide the reader with an insight into my biases, I have attempted to make explicit the values that I believe could affect my interpretation of data. The following points attempt to locate myself as a researcher, whilst recognising that, however open and reflective I am, there may still be biases I have overlooked or that have remained hidden from my probing.

First, I come from a family background that values learning, communication and holds strong beliefs regarding social justice. This has led me to value education and believe in the importance of looking after the interests of all participants in the education process, hence my initial interest in the experiences of international students.

Second, my Social Work training developed my understanding of systems theory, which has been instrumental in leading me to focus on university lecturers and their role within the system. Social Work also taught me the importance of focusing on the clients' needs and to being open to what was important to them rather than imposing my own values. This has merged well with Grounded Theory methods and enabled me to be quite comfortable from the beginning with the methodology.

Additionally, Social Work provided me with skills applicable to interviewing and observation, both important when gathering qualitative data, particularly in establishing trust and being aware of data at all levels. Lipson (1991) writes that "good interviewing and careful listening; astute observation and interpretation on several levels simultaneously (eg verbal and non-verbal behaviour, meaning and context); and the intentional use of self ... will yield better data" (p77).

Third, I thoroughly enjoy both learning and teaching and try to create a classroom culture that encourages all students to also enjoy the learning process. I feel it is in large part my responsibility to create that environment because I work from the assumption that students will learn most effectively when they feel safe and supported

and therefore able to concentrate on learning. In this sense I believe that the lecturer is as responsible for the learning process as is the student. These values, that is valuing communication, social justice, focusing on others' needs and learning, have probably led me to value certain teaching approaches more highly than others.

My own views have at times made it harder for me to immediately recognise the value of different approaches but, the more I engaged with the data, always acknowledging my own responses, the more I have come to understand and value the different models of teaching particularly as the emergent theory has demonstrated when and why these approaches are utilised.

Finally, I believe in the power of being open and reflective about myself and my actions, as I consider that it is this process that enables me to continue learning and developing as a person. I therefore value this in other people, and found the interviews where people opened up and reflected on their own practice, reactions, values and biases to be the most personally interesting. I had to work harder to ensure that I remained engaged with those interviewees who did not demonstrate these qualities. I think that this openness, and my experience of reflecting on my own practice in other roles, has meant that I have been able to use Grounded Theory methods, in particular memoing, to full advantage.

### **Memoing**

Glaser (1978) states that if the researcher is not writing memos then they are not doing Grounded Theory. I can understand why. It took me some time to settle into the discipline of writing memos, mainly because I was not sure what to write. Once I began I realised the enormous value and importance of the process. I discovered that the memos, which I wrote as a stream of consciousness, and quite deliberately never edited, provided me with an opportunity to deepen my thinking, reflect on my biases, and begin conceptualising the data. They made me realise how many thoughts I constantly had going through my head as I was reading, writing, or coding

Memos provided the chance for thoughts to emerge without constraint, thoughts which could be worked into the data later. As the research progressed I also found

the memos provided the story of what was happening, a chronological account of my thinking and musings as I worked with the data.

Glaser (1978) explains: “*Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding [original italics]*” (p83). He states that there are four basic goals in memo writing; firstly to capture the idea which assists in raising the data to a conceptual level; secondly to write as freely as you wish; thirdly to create a memo fund; and finally to ensure that memos can be easily sorted. Glaser (1978) also lays down a number of rules for writing memos. The one that I found was important was that of always interrupting coding or theorising to write a memo – if I did not write it when I thought of it I would lose it, sometimes never to regain it or occasionally to remember only after much agonising.

### **Scope of Research**

As mentioned, I was interested in exploring the experiences of lecturers in regard to teaching a mix of local and international students. Having established interest in this general area of research I decided to limit the scope to management subjects being taught in undergraduate university courses. I defined management subjects as those subjects to do with the people and processes within organisations such as Organisation Theory, Organisation Behaviour, Human Resource Management, International Management, Industrial Relations and General Management.

There were a number of reasons for limiting the scope of the research to management subjects. First, I teach within the management discipline, so my own interest rested particularly in that context, and my participation in the area of research could be valuable for theoretical sensitivity and conceptualisation. Glaser (1992) states that: “Professional experience, personal experience, and in depth knowledge of the data in the area under study truly help in the substantive sensitivity necessary to generate categories and properties, provided the researcher has conceptual ability” (p28).

Second, I considered that the content of management courses raises particular issues about diversity. In teaching about processes that affect people, I believe we are also confronted with how we manage the class, with the appropriateness of the material

we deliver to a diverse group of students, and with the need to learn ourselves from the process of working with such groups. Finally, management subjects generally require substantial verbal participation from students and a significant amount of written material in assessment, predicated on an expectation of a fair command of the English language. I believed these expectations could highlight cross-cultural differences and influence teaching and learning methods.

### **Research Question**

This research has arisen from an area of my own professional interest and explores lecturers' responses to cultural diversity, specifically the mix of local and international students within the setting of the Australian university classroom. It seeks to develop a substantive theory, theory that is relevant to the substantive area of inquiry (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) which, in this case, is the university classroom. Substantive theory requires a focus on the general problem without conceptual hypotheses prior to commencing the research, and involves comparisons between and among groups within the same substantive area (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Glaser (1978) writes that any theory "must have fit and relevance ... it must work ... [and] be readily modifiable ..." (p4).

**The research question in the current study can be stated thus:**

**In a context of 'massification' and 'minimisation' and the ensuing internationalisation of universities, how do university lecturers teaching management subjects respond to diversity created by the mix of local and international students?**

### **First Round Interviews**

Having decided on my research question and on Grounded Theory as the methodology I began my interviews with staff at the university where I teach. A loosely structured interview consisting of a series of prompt questions was designed. The intent was to elicit information by allowing the participants to talk about their

own experience of, and responses to, working in what I termed for these interviews “culturally diverse classrooms”.

The thoughts behind interviewing colleagues was that they all knew me well enough for me to hope that they would open up quite honestly and not simply provide politically correct answers. In order to protect the identity of participants I gave them an interview number, which could then also be used as a numerical reference for coded data and continued this system for all interviews. Whilst the identity of individual participants is not identified, a brief overview of participant demographics is presented in order to provide some of the contextual factors taken into consideration in the data analysis.

The participants, 13 females and 11 males in total, had all taught for a minimum of two years, with some staff having taught for close on 20 years. Figure 3.1 presents a summary of the participant demographics. It includes ethnicity or nationality, the number of universities taught in including the number of years teaching in Australia for participants who had moved from overseas, their professional background, their primary subject area, and the duration of observations for those participants who were observed. Interviews were conducted at work in the participant’s office, or on occasion in my office if this was more convenient, with the duration of each interview being between 45 and 60 minutes.

Figure 3.1: Summary of Participant Demographics

	Ethnicity/ Nationality	Teaching Experience	Professional Background	Subject area	Observation
1.	Anglo/Aus	2 unis (Aus)	HR	OB and Mgt	
2.	Anglo/English	2 unis (Aus)	Public Service	OB	2 hour class
3.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni (Aus)	Welfare	OB	
4.	Anglo/Aus	1 unis (Aus)	Admin/	OB Consulting	2 hour class
5.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni (Aus)	Teaching/HR	HR and Mgt	
6.	Asian	3 unis (2 Aus/1 Malaysia) 1 yr teaching Aus	HR	HR and Mgt	
7.	Anglo/Aus	3 unis (Aus)	Law/IR	HR, IR , Mgt	1 hr tutorial
8.	African	2 unis (Aus) 3 yr teaching Aus	Public Service	OB and Mgt	
9.	Greek/Aus	2 unis (Aus)	Welfare/ Consulting	OB and Mgt	
10.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni	Teaching	OB and Mgt	
11.	Chinese	2 unis (Aus) 3 yr teaching Aus	Teaching	Management	
12.	Anglo/English	2 unis	Academia	Management	1 hour lecture
13.	Anglo/American	4 unis (2 Aus, 1 NZ, 1 USA)	Academia	Management	
14.	Anglo/Aus	2 unis (Aus)	Consulting	Management	
15.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni	Psychology	OB and Mgt	
16.	Anglo/Aus	3 unis (2 Aus, 1 USA)	Psychology	OB and Mgt	1 hour lecture
17.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni	Law/Science	OB and Mgt	2 hour class
18.	Greek/Aus	1 uni	HR/IR	HR and IR	
19.	Indian	2 unis (Aus)	Public Service	HR and Mgt	
20.	Anglo/British	2 unis (Aus)	Arts Mgt	OB and Mgt	
21.	Indian	2 unis (Aus)	Public Service	OB and Mgt	2 hour class
22.	Anglo/Aus	1 uni (Aus)	Academia	Management	
23.	Anglo/Aus	3 unis (Aus)	HR/IR	HR/IR	2 hour class
24.	Anglo/British	2 unis (Aus)	Industrial/ Consulting	Management	

Participants who know they are being observed or interviewed are likely, albeit unconsciously, to alter their behaviour or comments in subtle ways, or feel differently about themselves due to someone taking an interest in their experience. The very presence of the researcher may affect how participants construct meaning for the events in which they and the researcher are involved. Later in my readings I realised that “properlining”, giving material “suitable for public consumption” (Glaser, 1998, p88) is likely to occur in most interviews. Covert observation, or at least interviews in which the area of interest is not spelt out, was not feasible given the current university requirements for ethics clearance including disclosure of the research topic to potential participants.

In spite of the formalities required by ethics committees I think some of the later interviews with people I had never met before were as open as those held with colleagues. I now wonder whether properlining was more pronounced with colleagues than with strangers, as colleagues are likely to be more concerned with their ongoing relationship with the researcher.

It is interesting to note that, whilst I did not specifically ask any questions in the first interviews about political correctness, most of the interviewees mentioned it in their discussions and it emerged as an initial category. I was hoping in the interviews to elicit participant’s deeper thoughts and feelings about their experiences of teaching in culturally diverse classes, rather than simply the overt and acknowledged strategies they may or may not use. The emergence of this category of ‘political correctness’ focused my attention on actively trying to find ways to minimise the likelihood of participants giving such ‘correct’ answers in future interviews. These techniques are discussed in the section on second round interviews.

### **Taping and Transcribing**

The initial interviews were all taped and transcribed and the transcripts then broadly analysed for emerging themes. Glaser (1998) is strongly opposed to taping interviews arguing that it “neutralizes and undermines the power of grounded theory methodology to delimit the research as quickly as possible” (p108), as it prevents the selectivity that can be achieved in note taking. One of Glaser’s main concerns is that

too much descriptive data will prevent the researcher from conceptualising and will lead to description rather than theory generation.

I agree that taping is time consuming and potentially leads to too much data and the risk of too much description, however I think the transcription itself is not the real issue here, but how the researcher then works with the data. Having the complete transcript has enabled me on many occasions to re-contextualise incidents to understand them more fully. Transcripts certainly provide the opportunity to include quotes if required but the choice as to how to work with the data remains with the researcher. In accordance with Grounded Theory methods of raising the data beyond the descriptive level (Glaser, 2001), I have chosen to minimise the use of quotes and only use them as examples to bring a concept alive to the reader.

I found the transcript an invaluable tool in other ways as it forced me to attend to how I was asking questions and to realise that, even though a trained interviewer, I was sometimes letting my own views and values enter the interview. In the early interviews particularly I phrased questions and responded in ways that provided participants with an impression of what I valued, which may then have affected their responses. I was conscious of some of these questions and non-verbal cues when listening to the tapes of the interviews afterwards and subsequently attempted to watch myself far more closely to avoid such leading questions and cues, to be more diligent in noticing my own preconceptions. I doubt I would have noticed these biases if not for listening to tapes after the interview.

As a novice grounded theorist the tape recordings were also extremely valuable as my first attempts at coding were too general. When at a later point I returned to coding the original interviews, I was able to listen again to the tapes and read the transcripts to acquaint myself with the data.

### **Coding and Categorising**

In parallel with thinking about myself as a researcher I was grappling with how to actually analyse the first interviews using Grounded Theory methods. This was due primarily to a lack of understanding of the methodology. I had read Glaser and

Strauss “Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research” (1967) and Strauss and Corbin’s “Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques” (1990) but I had very little idea of the intricacies of the Grounded Theory approach. I was skimming across the data in my early coding attempts, extracting phrases that I thought were meaningful so the coding I undertook only established the broadest possible themes and did not properly fracture the data to allow for full analysis. I also had not settled on the Glaserian approach at this stage and was tending to pick and choose amongst the methods.

In spite of the problems mentioned above I was determined to code each interview and start the process of looking for emerging themes. Whilst I found that certain themes were clearly noticeable the links between them were difficult to ascertain. I could only develop tentative concepts, and there was insufficient depth to allow a robust core category to emerge. This was due mainly to my search for apparent themes rather than using the Grounded Theory methods of constant comparison, involving the comparing of incident to incident or incident to concept and finding patterns comprised of many similar incidents (Glaser, 1992).

In retrospect this initial attempt at coding, whilst not as thorough as needed to really analyse that data, still provided a good beginning framework by allowing me to focus on some of the main themes that stood out from the data and that were then vital in preparing for the next few interviews. However, I was at real risk of coming up with a core category based more on my own intuitive responses to the data rather than one based on a rigorous analysis.

The grouping of emerging themes developed from coding the first round interviews were:

Emotions

Background Experience and sense of Own Diversity

Knowledge and Learning

Own Perceptions and Views

Values and Beliefs

Approaches and Teaching Methods

Students’ Views

Group Dynamics  
 Systemic Issues  
 Political Correctness and Avoidance  
 Visitor Status

At the conclusion of this period of interviews I grouped the themes into my first attempt at categories as follows:

Experience of Difference	Own background/sense of diversity
Self Awareness	Emotions and emotional responses Ability to work with self Recognition of assumptions
Openness to Learning	Seeking knowledge/active learning
Own World View	Assumptions Perceptions Values and beliefs Classifying and labelling
Teaching Approaches/Strategies	Context of subject Role of teacher Engaging with difference
Power and Authority	Within teaching role Within student group Host and visitor status Deficit model Othering
Systemic Issues	University Australian culture and racism Political correctness

The five staff interviewed in this first round all taught primarily in the field of General Management and Organisation Behaviour. They tended to have a style of teaching that focused on group process, the development of relationships with and between students, and placed less emphasis on the specific content aspects of the material taught. This bias is reflected in my very first categorisations of the data, which led to the idea of 'Engaging with Difference' as a possible core concept in response to a main concern of accommodating diversity. In retrospect I believe that this also reflected my own bias concerning my view that lecturers 'should' be

engaging with students by developing relationships with them and trying to understand their differing needs and approaches. I was at risk of addressing my own issues rather than remaining open to what was emerging from the data.

My still very limited understanding of Grounded Theory meant I now considered it time to interview lecturers from other areas – from other universities and other facets of management such as Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations. In retrospect this was premature, however I was forging ahead feeling excited by the possibility that my theory was developing!

### **Second Round Interviews**

Prior to commencing the second round of interviews I developed a series of questions designed to open up discussion with participants and further explore the general themes that had emerged from the first five interviews. As I considered that the topic covered a potentially sensitive area, confirmed by the early category of ‘political correctness’, I structured the interviews in a way that would put participants at their ease and allow some time for them to develop a trust in me as the interviewer. I began with some general questions that would be easy for them to answer, for example, “tell me about the subjects you currently teach in” to put them at ease before asking about their more personal thoughts and behaviours, for example “have you ever felt ‘different’ and how has this experience influenced your teaching?”

A turning point came for me in one of the first interviews of the second round. I interviewed a lecturer who was of Asian origin and who had taught overseas prior to moving to Australia. In listening to his responses during the interview I was struck by how many assumptions I was making based on my own Anglo-Australian view of teaching and learning. His expectations and assumptions about student and staff behaviour were quite different in some respects to my own and to those of the other Anglo-Australian lecturers I had already interviewed. This led to one of my early hypotheses: that differences in the background of the lecturer would affect their approach. I had been collecting some demographic data from all interviewees but this interview sensitised me further to the possible effect of background and underlying values and I began to deliberately explore these themes in the interviews.

It is not possible to know in advance what to sample for in Grounded Theory. The process of coding and analysing data as one obtains it enables the use of codes “to direct further data collection, from which the codes are further theoretically developed with respect to their various properties and their connections with other codes until saturated” (Glaser, 1978, p36). The groups I now wanted to interview included the group I had started with, lecturers in management, but with extra sub-groups including those from overseas and those who were from Australia but had taught extensively overseas. I deliberately ensured that three of the six participants interviewed during this phase of the research came from Asian backgrounds.

The themes that emerged from the next six interviews, which again I was coding in a fairly general and intuitive way, by simply coding any words or phrases that stood out for me as I read through the transcripts, were as follows:

- Personal experience
- Engaging with difference
- Expectations
- Self awareness
- Strategies
- Teaching role
- Power and authority
- System
- Emotions and values
- Openness to learning
- Students
- World view
- Group dynamics
- Context of subject

On completion of these six interviews I no longer believed that Engaging with Difference was the core category as not all of the behaviours could be explained by a category of Engaging with Difference. In fact, this was more likely to be a sub-category. I became quite anxious about the possibility of a core category ever emerging, as I felt I had a significant amount of data but the patterns were not clear.

I decided to undertake a course in the use of the Computer Software program In-Vivo in hopes that this would resolve my concerns about the coding and categorising of the data. Whilst I enjoyed the course immensely and could see potential benefits from the use of the program, particularly with extremely large studies, I found that the more I worked with the program the less involved I felt with the data. It was the process, archaic as it may be, of underlining and highlighting by hand on the written page that allowed me to get in touch with the data, to remember it, to keep it in my immediate conscious mind. So I stayed with the apparently more laborious, but for me more immersing, system of typing, printing, highlighting and writing. The computer software could not answer my concerns nor address my anxiety about where I was going with the research.

The anxiety that had now set in led to a period where I was not moving ahead with the research. In fact I avoided it for quite a period of time and convinced myself I was too busy at work to focus on the PhD. As my anxiety grew so did my fear that after all these interviews I did not really understand what I was doing. I was at risk of never finishing the work, or of coming up with a theory that did not represent what was going on for the participants and would not meet the criteria for evaluating a Grounded Theory study.

### **Becoming a Grounded Theory Researcher**

I had read a number of PhD theses that gave Grounded Theory as their methodology, and had spoken to a few people about their understanding of Grounded Theory, but I was still uncertain as to the actual step by step implementation of the method. My sense was that the books I had read, and indeed the theses, gave only cursory attention to the actual doing of Grounded Theory and certainly none of them provided me with a clear structure to follow. I was attempting to follow Strauss and Corbin (1990) and adopt the process of Axial Coding but was finding it extremely difficult to apply, which added to my anxiety and general sense of inadequacy.

Glaser sees the future of Grounded Theory lying with PhD students who are looking for methodologies that will provide data and theories relevant to what is happening in

their area of research interest (Glaser, 2003). However, one of the current dilemmas, particularly for novice Grounded Theory researchers, lies in the fact that many researchers who say they are using Grounded Theory are only using aspects of the methodology (Jones, 2004). As a novice grounded theorist, I was finding it difficult to ascertain exactly what steps I should be following and particularly how to analyse the emerging data. I was worried that I was not following the methodology rigorously and that this would obviously undermine the trustworthiness of any theory I developed.

Glaser (2003) states that the novice grounded theorist “need only have an ability to conceptualise, to organize, to tolerate confusion with some incident depression, to make abstract connections, to remain open, to be a bit visual, to thinking [sic] multivariately and most of all to trust to preconscious processing and to emergence” (p62). Whilst this may be so, I still found that without a sense as to how each of these abilities should be applied there was a perception of enormous risk of doing it badly!

It was following the second round of interviews and in the midst of this period of anxiety that, due to a number of circumstances, I changed supervisors. This was an enormous step at the time, as I had already been involved in the research for a substantial period, had enjoyed working with my supervisor and was apprehensive about changing. However, I felt that it was the correct move for me if I was to move ahead with my research. Perhaps I was looking for someone to provide me with answers – although that has obviously not been forthcoming in the literal sense – but what I did find was that I moved from a minus-mentoring situation (Glaser, 1998), as my first supervisor was not a Grounded Theory researcher, to a situation where my new supervisor was well versed in the methodology.

Having already undertaken some data gathering, and having agonised over how to code and categorise, the material my new supervisor directed me to fitted like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. A breakthrough in my understanding occurred on reading the brief article entitled “Teetering on the Edge: A Substantive Theory of Postpartum Depression” by Beck (1993). The article sets out clearly and succinctly, with attendant diagrams, exactly how the researcher obtained her core category, and for the first time I could actually see and understand the steps in the process and discuss

these with my supervisor. This was for me a very exciting moment because I began to feel more confident about my own ability to actually work with this model and achieve some result.

I moved on to read a number of theses all recommended by my supervisor as examples of Grounded Theory PhDs and, with the framework in mind, was able to appreciate what they had done and how they had gone about doing it. As I read these theses plus further articles and books, I returned to the process of coding the data I had obtained from the original eleven interviews. The next six months were spent re-reading and re-coding the transcripts, and writing memos, and at each step the jigsaw pieces began to fit and the overall picture began to take shape. I was still anxious as to whether a core category would emerge – but I was feeling clear about what I needed to do in order to allow it to emerge without me forcing or imposing my own interpretations.

I was beginning to follow the requirements of Glaserian Grounded Theory, that is the collection of data; coding – open, selective and theoretical; constant comparison and categorising; memoing; and conceptualisation. As data is collected it is coded and analysed so that this analysis can inform the next round of data collection. At each stage in the process the researcher aims to raise the data to a higher conceptual level, to take it out of the purely descriptive and to begin to work with it theoretically. This was another challenge for me as, whilst I was certainly competent at description, I was uncertain about my ability to fully conceptualise and theorise the data. Glaser (2001) is very strong on this point stressing that “Grounded Theory comes from data, but does not describe the data from which it emerges ... it generates hypotheses ... [it] is conceptually abstract from time, place and people. It is not descriptive and unit bound” (pp4-5).

### **Returning to Coding**

Returning to coding the data from the first eleven interviews was an interesting process. I put aside all the original codes and returned afresh to the interview transcripts to apply a thorough open-coding analysis. Coding is the process by which “data are broken down, conceptualised, and put back together in new ways” (Strauss

and Corbin, 1990, p57). Glaser (1998) explains that open coding requires the researcher to code all data for as many categories as might fit, whilst keeping the following questions in mind:

- What is this data a study of?
- What category does this incident relate to?
- What is actually happening in the data?

Starting again with fresh copies of the transcripts, each and every word and phrase was assessed and open coding was conducted on a line by line basis which is one way of analysing the data (Glaser, 1992). I was not confident enough of my own skills to use the less structured approach of analysing whole sentences or paragraphs. The important step in open-coding is to break the data into incidents which can then be “closely examined and compared for similarities and differences, while constantly asking of the data the neutral question ‘What category or property of a category does this incident indicate?’[original underlining]” (Glaser, 1992, p39).

The process of open-coding generates numerous codes and pages of data. I found that at times the amount of material was overwhelming and initially it was difficult to see any patterns in the data. Due to the amount of data I also realised that it was important to have a system to keep track of the codes. I numbered the pages of each transcript and then each paragraph within the transcript so that I could at any point return from a numbered code to the transcript and check the context from which that code had emerged. Ma Rhea (1996) discusses this method of numbering when describing the steps she took in a Grounded Theory thesis, and it proved invaluable in this research. At times in-vivo codes were used, that is, codes that use the respondent’s own words, and at other times I tried to conceptualise the main idea within the phrase and established my own code for the incident.

The following provides examples of phrases and the references I gave to each in order to know the source for each code. The number 8 represents Interview 8, the number 2 is the page number and 13 the number of the relevant paragraph.

8/2/13 “I think for me the thing that, even though I think I’m sensitive to such issues” = Noticing sensitivity

8/2/13 “I was still able to make these assumptions” = Making Assumptions

8/2/13 “assuming that because they looked different they were going to have issues around language and assertiveness” = Making Assumptions

Over a period of six months I coded each interview using the open coding technique and began to tentatively establish some concepts and categories. These categories were never directly compared to the themes I had discovered in my first coding process, but it is interesting to check them against each other for the purposes of discussion. There are clear overlaps in the concepts concerning Experience of Difference, Assumptions, Strategies, and Systemic Issues.

The concepts that emerged from the first eleven interviews following extensive open coding were grouped into possible categories with a view to working towards finding a core category. One of my initial attempts at categorisation is set out as follows:

Perceiving Difference	Seeing Different Norms
	Seeing Different Expectations
	Making Assumptions
	Recognising Behaviours
	Stereotyping
Identifying	Professional Experience
	Personal Background
	Experiencing Difference
Establishing Boundaries	Managing Classroom Dynamics
	Establishing Boundaries
	Establishing Relationships
	Establishing Hierarchies

Creating Strategies	Differing Approaches Responding Professionally Responding Personally
Recognising Impacting Systems	Relating to Colleagues Recognising Subject Context Seeing Policies and Practices Seeing Society

I was also ensuring that I now interrupted coding every time I had an idea to memo the idea before it was lost.

### **Emerging the Core Category**

Whilst coding data I was searching for a Core Category that “sums up in a pattern of behaviour the substance of the what [sic] is going on in the data...” (Glaser, 1978, p94). The core category must be central, must appear frequently in the data, take more time to saturate because it is related to all other categories and occurs frequently, must connect with all other categories, have grab and explanatory power, be completely variable and also be a dimension of the problem. It can be any kind of theoretical code (Glaser, 1978).

A Basic Social Process is a way of responding to the main concern. Glaser (1978) states that basic social processes are “fundamental, patterned processes in the organisation of social behaviours which occur over time and go on irrespective of the conditional variation of place” (p100). I was looking for the patterns and the different conditions that cause changes in these patterns, that is, the process of addressing the main concern. The basic social process is contextualised – it aims to explain sources such as conditions and properties in a particular context, and multivariate, that is, it aims to discover all relevant variables that lead to certain behaviours (Glaser, 1978).

The basic social process is also the core category, but not all core categories are basic social processes.

I explored briefly the possibility that each of the categories represented a part of a core category and basic social process of Rising to the Challenge, whereby lecturers initially Perceive Difference, then Identify in some way, Establish Boundaries to respond to the difference, Create Strategies, and Recognise the effect of the system they operate within.

The following is an example of a memo from that time:

*Just popped into my head ... if the basic issue that lecturers grapple with is something like meeting the challenge then the core category will be something about how to do this, and so far there's a lot of strategies emerging and the different strategies that the different people use could be linked to how those people perceive the international and local students.*

*Is there something here about the concern being the challenge of teaching within the context of a changing and demanding system that requires individuals to attempt numerous strategies in order to manage? (Memo, 23/12/03).*

This memo indicates one of my first realisations that the variety of strategies used by lecturers is not only a response to differential student needs and varying conditions but is also a response to managing the challenges of their own work environments.

On re-reading the transcripts, the coding and the associated memos, I noticed that not all lecturers were using strategies designed to meet challenges. Some strategies were designed to protect the lecturer from extra challenges, and in some cases lecturers were quite aware that they were making choices not to engage with the diversity in the class and the international students. For example, one lecturer commented that “it’s really easy to get to a point where you don’t think about the international students because it’s too hard”. Another that he was “uncomfortably aware” of what he perceived as his shortcomings in terms of engaging with international students stating: “don’t think I haven’t tried, put a fair bit of effort in, but not as much as I should have for my own self-respect and for improving my teaching”.

The idea of self-respect and improving teaching was emerging as a clear theme throughout the interviews demonstrating that whilst lecturers were concerned about addressing the requirements of diverse cohorts of students they were also concerned

with their own professional capabilities and self-esteem. The following extract from my memos provides further evidence of how I was conceptualising the data:

*Just thinking as I'm going through all the categories that most of the elements under strategies are just good teaching, so I wonder whether part of what happens when you have so much diversity (nationality or otherwise) is that it keeps the lecturers on their toes so to speak. If all classes were homogeneous year after year, how easy then to slip into routines that are never questioned. So is this a time of significant questioning – the consumerist attitude of the students (local and overseas) coupled with the diversity of the student cohort and the increasing demands on lecturers in relation to the range of tasks they are expected to perform (ie teaching, research and bringing in money) – and the roles of both lecturers and students are changing. Many of the academics I've spoken to went through uni when the situation was far more stable, and there were few students at uni and those who were there really wanted the learning, so are the lecturers hanging on to that ideal (standard?) of the traditional university, whereas the students are buying in the marketplace (perhaps particularly relevant to business students), and a global market place at that (Memo, 5/8/04).*

Building on the emergent data regarding issues of self-respect and looking for clarity in regard to the main concern I asked the following question:

How do lecturers balance their desire to be professionally capable with the requirement of addressing the needs of a heterogeneous student population?

Patterns of behaviour were emerging clearly from the data following the process of open coding and categorising and I began attempting to categorise the different responses. It seemed there existed a continuum of responses from those that focused on accommodating differences amongst students to those that did not accommodate. I discovered that responses varied according to whether the lecturer's primary focus was on the students themselves or on the transmission of ideas.

Questions were forming in my mind such as “under what conditions are lecturers more or less likely to accommodate difference?” and “what factors in the lecturer might lead them to perceive diversity as more or less of a challenge?”

## **Site Spreading and Observations**

In discussions with my supervisor we decided that now was the time for site spreading to establish whether lecturers in a significantly different context would share the same concerns. Site spreading is based on the emergent theory and the search for places that can be used for comparison with the original site (Glaser, 2001). The main concern emerging from the interviews to date was lecturers dealing with challenges in their work, in particular the challenge of responding to the student diversity resulting from the internationalisation of universities, whilst at the same time feeling capable in their professional role.

The first eleven interviews were conducted with participants in the newer universities, that is, those institutions that had amalgamated and formed into universities under the Dawkins' reforms of higher education in the late 1980s as discussed in Chapter One. The newer universities come from a vocational teaching base and in order to maintain funding have not only chased the overseas student dollar, but have also had to create and develop a research culture, and learn to market themselves in a highly competitive market. Changes to government funding for universities have created a work environment with higher staff/student ratios, increased numbers of international students, demands for higher research output, and increased administrative load. Such changes may have created the context within which lecturers feel they are juggling demands.

I hypothesised that lecturers who worked within older and established universities may not be under the same pressures to develop research and market their services as their research culture was already well established and so was their position within the education market. I also hypothesised that due to the significant differences in the required university entrance scores, to be accepted into the established universities both local and international students would be a highly intellectually able group, and that the lecturers would therefore be teaching at a more sophisticated conceptual level. If these hypotheses were true then it would be possible that the lecturers would have a different main concern. I was looking for a different context and subsequently

decided to approach older established universities to interview staff and observe lectures and tutorials.

At the same time as this site spreading I started observing classes of the lecturers whom I had already interviewed, to see if additional data would emerge and to counteract the possible effect of ‘properlining’ during interviews. I observed specifically both lecturers who identify as Anglo-Australian and those who identify as non-Anglo and perceive themselves as ‘different’ within the Australian context. This was a deliberate decision to follow up on my earlier discoveries of the different expectations, assumptions and approaches that emerged from interviews with some of the non-Anglo and Anglo lecturers. I was interested to observe explicit strategies and also to attempt to gain a sense of how they interacted with students

Observations were conducted in lectures, tutorials and classes and ranged from one hour in length for the lectures and tutorials to two hours for the classes. I ensured I was in attendance for the duration in order to observe behaviours both at the commencement and conclusion of the teaching period. In all cases I adopted an observer role and took copious notes regarding the lecturer’s behaviour, comments, teaching techniques, and interactions with students.

I now had a number of questions in my mind that would inform future interviews and observations:

When lecturers perceive themselves as ‘different’, do they deal differently with students?

What differences exist between lecturers who see difficulties as the students’ problem and those who see it as their responsibility to assist the students?

Does the university system within which the lecturers work affect their main concern?

Moving to another site, the established university, I was still asking open ended questions and listening with a “big ear” (Glaser, 2001) for any data that emerged. The categories developed to date were constantly being expanded and re-worked as

the coded data from each new interview was added to the existing categories. Constant comparisons were being made between each new incident and existing examples to ascertain whether that category should be expanded, divided or re-named.

Observations, as with interviews, were conducted across a number of sites (4 universities) and included large lectures in traditional lecture theatres and classes and tutorials of approximately 25 students. Process notes were kept for each observation focusing primarily on the lecturer's behaviour and noting student behaviour only when it provided some insight into the lecturer's style and strategies.

### **Establishing the Core Category**

It was following site spreading that the first tentative moves towards the core category began to emerge. The development of the core category built on all the previous categories but the site spreading highlighted some areas and led to the discarding of others, an important process to ensure that the theory development is not limited to only one setting.

Clear patterns were emerging that demonstrated that lecturers use a variety of strategies when teaching, ranging from those that focus on the students as people to those that focus on transmitting knowledge. It was also emerging that lecturers tend to display a preference for certain types of strategies and that certain environmental conditions are more conducive to some approaches than others. It was clear that lecturers frequently made choices about the strategies they would use and that these choices were not necessarily based on an assessment of student needs but were also affected by the lecturer's personal preferences and the conditions within which they were teaching.

Once the focus was taken away from the idea that the use of different strategies was a response to differing student needs the main concern emerged very clearly. The focus shifted to recognise that utilising different strategies enables lecturers to choose to teach according to their own preferences and in ways that demonstrate their

individual strengths. Teaching according to one's own strengths and preferences allows lecturers to work at what they feel to be their most competent level.

I had memoed the idea of competence earlier but not developed it at the time:

*I wonder if having a diverse class, and perceiving that as more challenge is then more threatening to our sense of ourselves as competent professionals and that therefore people choose not to perceive/address the issues so they don't have to confront their own feelings of inadequacy (Memo, 20/1/04).*

I find it very interesting that the idea of competence was first presented during the second interview in which the lecturer discussed feelings of incompetence in relation to working with diverse groups of students. Other lecturers, whilst not actually using the word competence, provided significant hints, which at the time I did not pick up. For example, one lecturer commented: "you've sort of made me aware that I haven't got many strategies up my sleeve ... for trying to assist and working with overseas students so I'd be interested in the results of your research, what other useful strategies you can come up with. So in a sense I've become aware of my own inadequacies doing this interview".

The core category that accounts for the variation in the patterns of behaviour is Maintaining Competence. Maintaining Competence resolves the main concern of how to balance professional capability with the requirements of a heterogeneous student population. Maintaining Competence demonstrates how lecturers utilise strategies that meet student needs whilst, at the same time, enabling the lecturers to teach according to their own strengths.

Maintaining Competence does not mean staying with the status quo or standing still. It implicitly recognises that in order to maintain competence, particularly in times of change, people need to improve and develop their skills to continue performing their work effectively. Thus Maintaining Competence as a core category and basic social process acknowledges the changes occurring within the university sector and the subsequent challenge to lecturers to improve their skills in teaching diverse groups of students.

Glaser (1978) warns that it is not until the basic social process has been firmly established that the researcher can go outside the substantive area to other data sources, such as the literature, for comparisons. I turned to some of the Grounded Theory theses and was interested to note that a number of studies were demonstrating the means by which professionals look after their own needs and interests whilst appearing to be focused on the needs and interests of their clients.

Guthrie (2000) discusses this in relation to veterinary surgeons with the Grounded Theory of “Keeping Clients in Line”. She states that the core variable of keeping clients in line allows vets to “process daily interactions with clients in accordance with their own agendas” (Guthrie, 2000, p50). Hutchinson (1983) raises the process of “covering” behaviours, “a self-protective process which anticipates consequences” (p34) in her study entitled “Survival Practices of Rescue Workers”. Covering is the basic social psychological process and core variable that addresses the problem encountered by rescue workers. Hutchinson (1979) defines the problem as: “in the presence of such a wide variety of audiences, and in an atmosphere of chronic uncertainty, how do rescue workers protect themselves legally and personally” (p26).

University lecturers perform the task of teaching on stage, directly before the students or audience and as such convey an impression and play a part “for the benefit of other people” (Goffman, 1959, p17). Goffman suggests that performers use “front”, comprised of setting, appearance and manner, to define the situation and that “when an actor takes on an established social role, usually he finds that a particular front has already been established for it” (p27).

Lecturers are taking up a role when they stand up in front of a class, a role that is open to immediate judgement by the audience or students. It is role that has become more complex in recent years due to the changing environment including diverse student cohorts, focus on students as customers, student evaluations of lecturers, and competing work demands regarding teaching, research and administration.

In this context the basic social process used by lecturers is that of Maintaining Competence through the employment of various strategies that enable them to accommodate heterogeneous groups of students and at the same time maintain their

own position, in particular Maintaining Competence in order to perform the role effectively and maintain their social 'front'. This is both a personal concern for competence and a response to teaching assessments by student customers that, if negative, mean the individual lecturer is perceived as not competent within the system.

The basic social process therefore is established as Maintaining Competence, a process that can occur in different ways for different people under different conditions. Maintaining Competence is also the core category that accounts for the variation in the patterns of behaviour.

### **Developing the Theory**

At this point, having started to look seriously at the core category and the basic social process, I settled on a number of steps to undertake before returning to data collection with the aim of selective coding and densifying the categories.

I began by writing a précis of each participant as my interest was turning to the moderating variables that would deepen my understanding of when and why certain approaches to Maintaining Competence would occur. The strategies that had simply been listed in my notes to this point were compared and conceptualised further so that they could be more thoroughly categorised, which led to the following sub-categories.

Empowering

Adapting

Managing time

Creating space

Challenging Assumptions

Connecting

Raising Awareness

Establishing boundaries

Finding support

Avoiding

Using different mediums and methods

Highlighting expectations  
Assessing and rewarding  
Emphasising learning

The sub-categories or strategies were then further conceptualised, initially along a continuum of accommodation from Enhancement strategies to Avoidance strategies. I worked with the strategies, reading and re-reading them to look for patterns and emergent theory and to theorise about what was actually happening in the data. I found the process of writing memos becoming ever more important to my ability to explore what was happening and raise my thinking above the descriptive to the conceptual, as well as forcing me to face my own biases. For example:

*“I think I need to look again at this whole category to see if my own interpretations are skewing it in terms of what I see as engagement that somehow discounts what lecturers from other backgrounds may be doing ... [I] have to question whether I’ve sufficiently ‘bracketed’ my own views in relation to this. Very difficult, because inevitably we will interpret the data and see it in different ways, and because I come from a process background myself then it’s those processes that I perceive as engagement, whereas it could be argued that establishing clear expectations is actually meeting the students needs far more thoroughly ... than the use of humour and support. What use are they after all if the student does not know what is expected of them?” (Memo, 15/8/04).*

I moved slowly through a number of iterations, from the list of sub-categories or strategies presented above to a model of four main categories (strategies) that accounted for all the others:

Distancing, which incorporated Avoiding and Forcing.

Adapting, which incorporated Adapting, Using Different Mediums, Making Connections and Resourcing.

Clarifying, which incorporated Establishing Boundaries, Establishing Expectations, and Assessing.

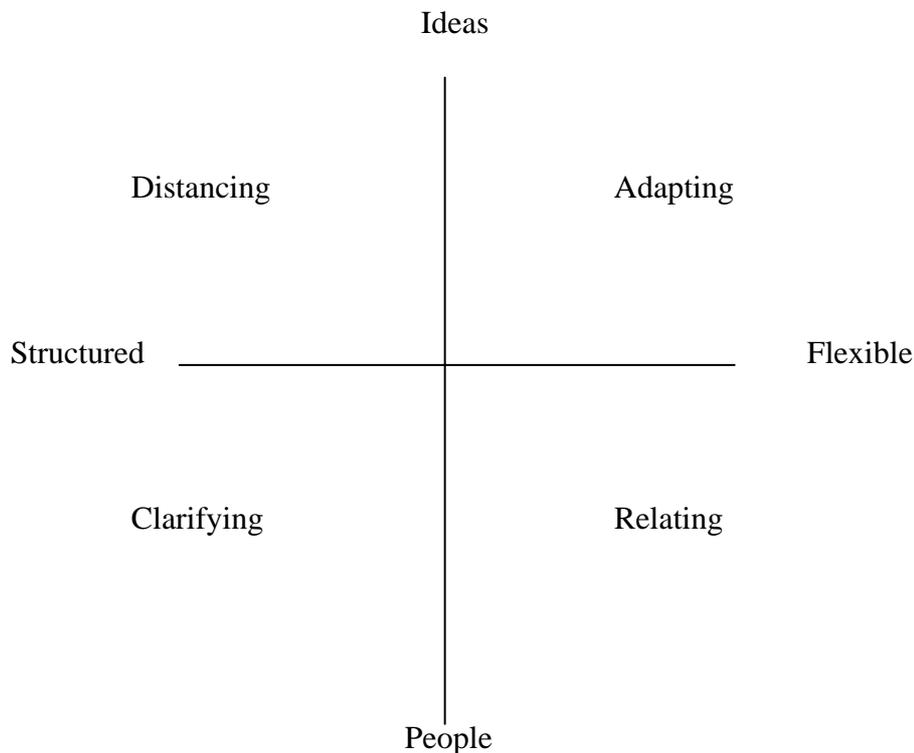
Relating, which incorporated Engaging, Challenging Assumptions, Raising Awareness and Creating Space.

One of the interesting points that emerged is that nearly all lecturers used a range of these strategies, though clearly some had a preference for one approach over another. For example, lecturers who showed a preference for Relating certainly used fewer Distancing strategies and often used Adapting and Clarifying strategies. It was clear from the concepts within each category that Distancing and Adapting strategies focused primarily on the transmission of ideas and that Clarifying and Relating focused significantly on the people, both student and staff. I searched for a visual model to try to represent and clarify what I was beginning to explore and started to work with the idea of overlapping systems (circles) and that the area of greatest interest may in fact be the point of overlap where lecturers are able to respond appropriately to the context rather than simply apply their preferred style.

The overlap model did not clearly demonstrate what was happening and after a few weeks of various drawings, not particularly one of my strengths, I found that the model that best showed what was occurring in the data was a typology model. The typology model is comprised of two specific continua. The first is of ideas or people where focus on ideas means a high emphasis on presenting conceptual ideas with a lower emphasis on student responses to those ideas, and focus on people means a high emphasis on student understanding rather than the transmission of ideas. The second continuum relates to flexible or structured approaches where an emphasis on structure means the lecturer retains control of the content and methods of teaching with a low emphasis on adapting to suit different cohorts of students, and focus on flexibility means an emphasis on adapting content and processes to suit different cohorts. These two continua demarcate the four strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating.

Figure 3.2 presents the typology model and demonstrates the two continua of ideas or people and structured or flexible approaches with the four strategies located within the relevant quadrant.

Figure 3.2: Typology Model of Strategies



This typology suggests that lecturers will use a whole range of strategies depending on the context. So the two independent variables are Ideas/People and Structured/Flexible, with the moderating variables being such issues as class size, subject content, workload demands, and personal values. Moderating variables were then grouped as either Forces in the Lecturer or Forces in the Environment. I then turned to look at moderating variables in relation to Forces in the Lecturer that would lead him/her to prefer and/or adopt particular strategies and Forces in the Environment that would affect the lecturer's use of particular strategies.

### **Selective Coding and Densifying**

Having established the core category of Maintaining Competence and the main sub-categories – Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating - it was important to continue to densify the data and develop the moderating variables. I began to focus on the underlying values and assumptions of the lecturers. These had emerged very clearly in the initial interviews and it appeared that such factors played a significant part in the way that lecturers operate within the class. Of particular interest were the

expectations that lecturers had of their own role, their expectations of students and their understanding of the meaning of a university, as these views would demonstrate their underlying values.

The research was entering a phase of selective coding. Glaser (1978) writes that selective coding means “that the analyst delimits his coding to only those variables that relate to the core variable in sufficiently significant ways to be used in a parsimonious theory” (p61). With the basic social process and main category established I was now looking for data that would densify the sub-categories and ensure the fit of the theory I was developing.

I began to feel excited and reinvigorated, after months of labouring over 200+ pages of open codes, to commence Selective Coding. The research was taking shape and, rather than simply having a long list of strategies to discuss, there were clear categories with their own moderating variables. New data was quickly slotted into existing categories and intensified the patterns emerging in those categories. Strategies were easily placed within one of the four quadrants of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating.

The lecturer’s preference for Ideas or People, Flexibility or Structure determines which strategies they are most likely to use. This choice of strategy is also a result of other moderating variables including :

- nature of subject content and the possible ways of teaching this (eg Organisation Behaviour can be taught experientially with focus on feelings as much as ideas so more likely to use a Relating strategy)
- size of class
- nature of class (lecture, tutorial, experiential classroom vs didactic/theoretical)
- time demands
- subject content
- subject context
- student cohort (eg are they ideas focused or utilitarian – focused on achieving a ‘piece of paper’)

The clarification of moderating variables allowed for hypotheses about the strategies. For example, it was hypothesised that those with a tendency to see ideas as the most important and to work within a traditional lecture structure will be more likely to use Distancing strategies. This will be heightened if their values and beliefs include perceiving university as a place of intellectual learning and that it is the student's responsibility to listen and learn from the lecturer.

As well as analysing all new interviews and observations in the above way it was also important to return to all the original interviews to read between the lines again and establish values wherever possible. In most cases they were clearly already there and had frequently been categorised under categories such as Professional Experience, Identifying Background and Experiencing Difference.

Upon completion of 24 interviews and 8 observations it was felt that saturation point had been reached with no new data emerging and all data from the interviews and observations being easily placed within existing categories. The moderating variables of Forces in Lecturer and Forces in Environment were also clearly evident in all interviews.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to tell the story of my journey from a beginning researcher to a more knowledgeable and confident grounded theorist. I recognise there is still much I can learn about this methodology but believe I have established a solid foundation during this research on which I can build in the future.

The process of following the Grounded Theory methodology, albeit with some mistakes and re-workings along the way, has led to the development of the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence. This theory is presented in Chapter Four.

Each of the sub-categories of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating are presented in detail in Chapters Five to Eight with examples taken from interviews and observations used to illustrate the theory.

## **Chapter Four - Maintaining Competence**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the emergent Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence.

It demonstrates how the basic social process and core category of Maintaining Competence resolves university lecturers' main concern of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population.

Professional capability can be defined as the ability to perform one's work competently and in accordance with the implicit and explicit expectations of one's profession. A sense of one's professional capability can be affected by changes to the context or nature of the work. As universities continue to undergo a period of change, expectations regarding a lecturer's role and accountability, as well as diverse student cohorts, have the potential to create considerable challenges to a lecturer's sense of professional capability.

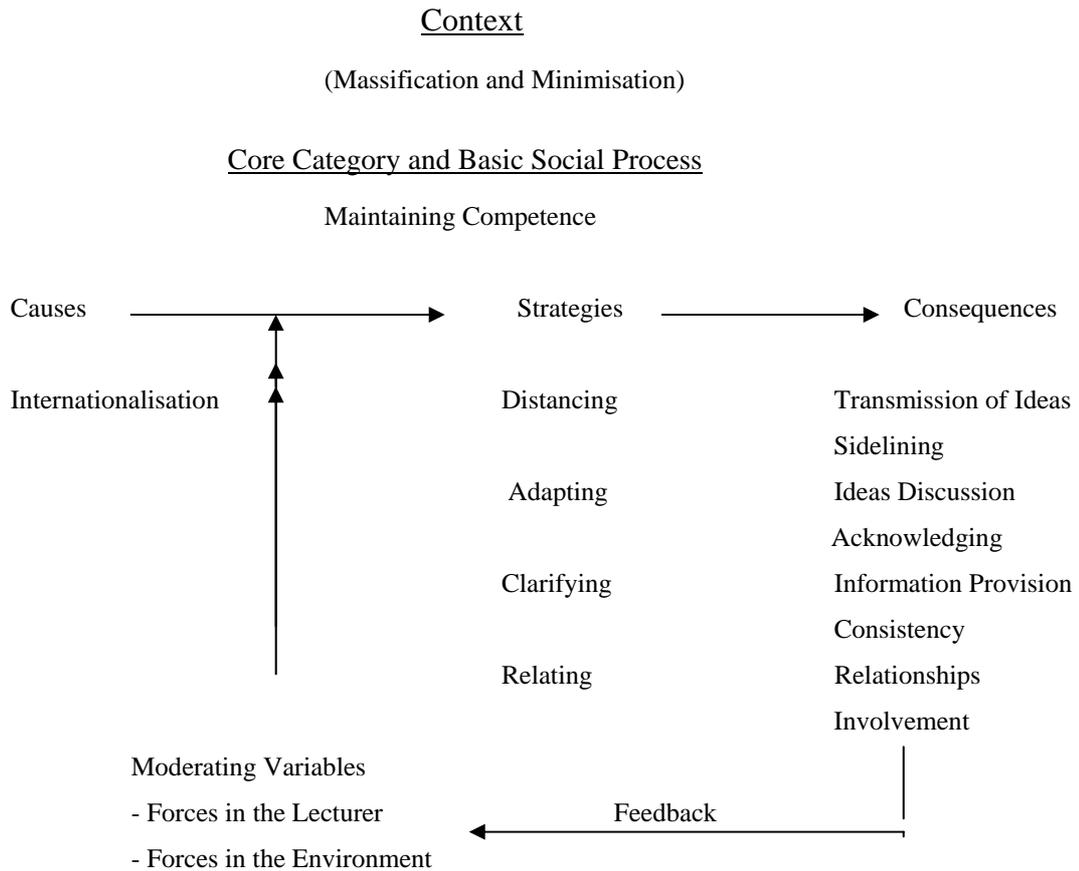
Lecturers tend to perceive themselves, and be perceived by others, as professionally capable. The basic social process and core category of Maintaining Competence demonstrates how lecturers utilise their own strengths and take environmental conditions into account in order to achieve that sense of professional capability.

Maintaining Competence is a causal-consequence model or independent-dependent variable model comprising the cause of 'internationalisation' within a context of 'massification' and 'minimisation'. It is temporally ordered and includes "connected variables without forcing the idea of cause" (Glaser, 1978, p74).

Maintaining Competence is also a Typology model in which patterns of behaviours are located according to their focus on ideas or people, and whether they are structured or flexible approaches. The typology model consists of four strategies – Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. The use of these strategies by individual lecturers is influenced by the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

A diagrammatic model depicting the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence is presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: The Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence



This chapter details aspects of the causal-consequence model and the typology model to explain the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence. The context within which the core category of Maintaining Competence is located and the causes of the patterns of behaviour are briefly highlighted. The chapter also examines the typology of strategies that account for the variations in behaviour and the moderating variables that influence these variations.

The strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating and the consequences of these strategies are defined and developed in Chapters Five to Eight.

## **Context**

The overall context for universities in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was discussed in Chapter One, highlighting the many changes that have occurred within the higher education sector, particularly over the past 20 years. These changes include a large increase in the number of students attending university, increasing staff/student ratios, reduced government funding and the requirement for universities to attract funding from other sources, and increased accountability for individual lecturers as well as for the university as a whole.

As a result of these changes the current climate within universities can be portrayed as one of ‘massification’ and ‘minimisation’. As discussed in Chapter One, massification refers to the increased numbers of students attending universities as well as the increase in the number of institutions operating as universities. Minimisation refers to the real reduction in government funding of universities and the closure and reduction of courses that cannot sustain themselves financially.

One of the responses to the reduction in government funding has been the marketing of Australian education to international students leading to a rapid increase in international students studying in Australian universities. Full fee-paying international students provide universities with alternative sources of funding.

The internationalisation process has increased the diversity of the student population in terms of increasing the range of backgrounds - cultural, linguistic and educational – from which students come.

In addition to such tangible changes, there is debate and concern amongst some academics regarding perceived changes to the nature of the university, particularly in regard to issues such as bureaucratisation and a managerial ethos, a perceived reduction in academic freedom, and concerns about the loss of the ethos of a ‘community of scholars’.

Lecturers have different individual responses to the changes occurring within universities, and their differing perceptions will affect their overall view of the working environment. In particular, within this environment of massification,

minimisation and increased bureaucratisation, lecturers will respond differently to the diversity of the student population.

Maintaining Competence accounts for the patterns of behaviours adopted by lecturers who are cognizant of the diversity resulting from internationalisation and their own need to be perceived as professionally competent both by themselves and the students.

### **Maintaining Competence**

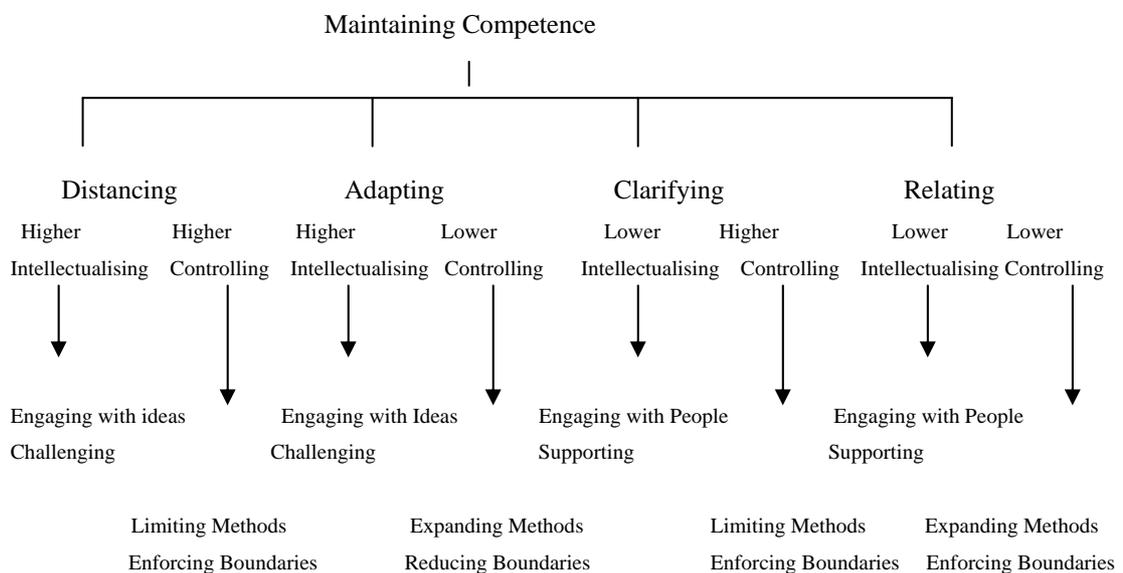
Maintaining Competence accounts for the patterns of behaviour used by individual lecturers to achieve their desire to perform competently in their teaching and to be perceived as capable. Lecturers are aware that they are ‘on stage’ when teaching and therefore their capabilities are on display for students. They are also aware that, particularly given diverse groups of students, there may be different expectations among the students as to what constitutes a ‘good’ teacher, leaving the evaluation of capability open to differing interpretations. In order to ensure that they perform to the best of their ability, lecturers tend to choose between a variety of approaches. They select strategies that enable them to be comfortable and that allow them to work to their strengths within the context of the given subject.

Each of the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating contains the properties of Intellectualising and Controlling. Intellectualising represents the dimension of Ideas, and Controlling represents the dimension of Structure. The strategies of Distancing and Adapting have the properties of Higher Intellectualising; Clarifying and Relating have properties of Lower Intellectualising; Distancing and Clarifying have properties of Higher Controlling; and Adapting and Relating have properties of Lower Controlling.

Higher Intellectualising is the process by which lecturers maintain the focus on the presentation and discussion of ideas. Lower Intellectualising is the process by which lecturers place the primary emphasis on people, specifically the students in the class or lecture. Higher Controlling is the process by which lecturers ensure that there are clear methods and boundaries in relation to their teaching role and their expectations

of students. Lower Controlling demonstrates a flexible approach to the process of teaching taking into account the differences in knowledge and ideas amongst the students themselves. The strategies (Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating), their properties (Higher or Lower Intellectualising or Controlling) and the sub-strategies (Engaging with Ideas or People, Challenging or Supporting, Limiting or Expanding Methods and Enforcing or Reducing Boundaries) within each strategy are set out in Table 4.2.

Figure 4.2 : Strategies, Properties and Sub-Strategies of Maintaining Competence



### Interplay between Properties

Each strategy has unique sub-strategies depending on the combination of the properties of Intellectualising and Controlling. For example, Engaging with Ideas is a sub-strategy in both Distancing and Adapting, however the tactics employed within this sub-strategy vary due to the interplay between the property of higher intellectualising with the property of higher controlling in Distancing and lower controlling in Adapting. In the same fashion, Engaging with People emerges as a sub-category of both Clarifying and Relating, however the behaviours exhibited within this sub-category vary depending on whether the property of higher or lower controlling is influencing the sub-strategy.

## **Typology**

The strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating form a typology of strategies.

Distancing is ideas focused and structured. Distancing involves low accommodation as adopting these strategies means the lecturer is not adapting to the diverse needs but is keeping the focus on ideas in a structured, non-flexible approach.

Adapting is ideas focused and flexible. Adapting involves moderate accommodation as the lecturer is changing some of his or her methods and strategies in order to be inclusive of diverse needs.

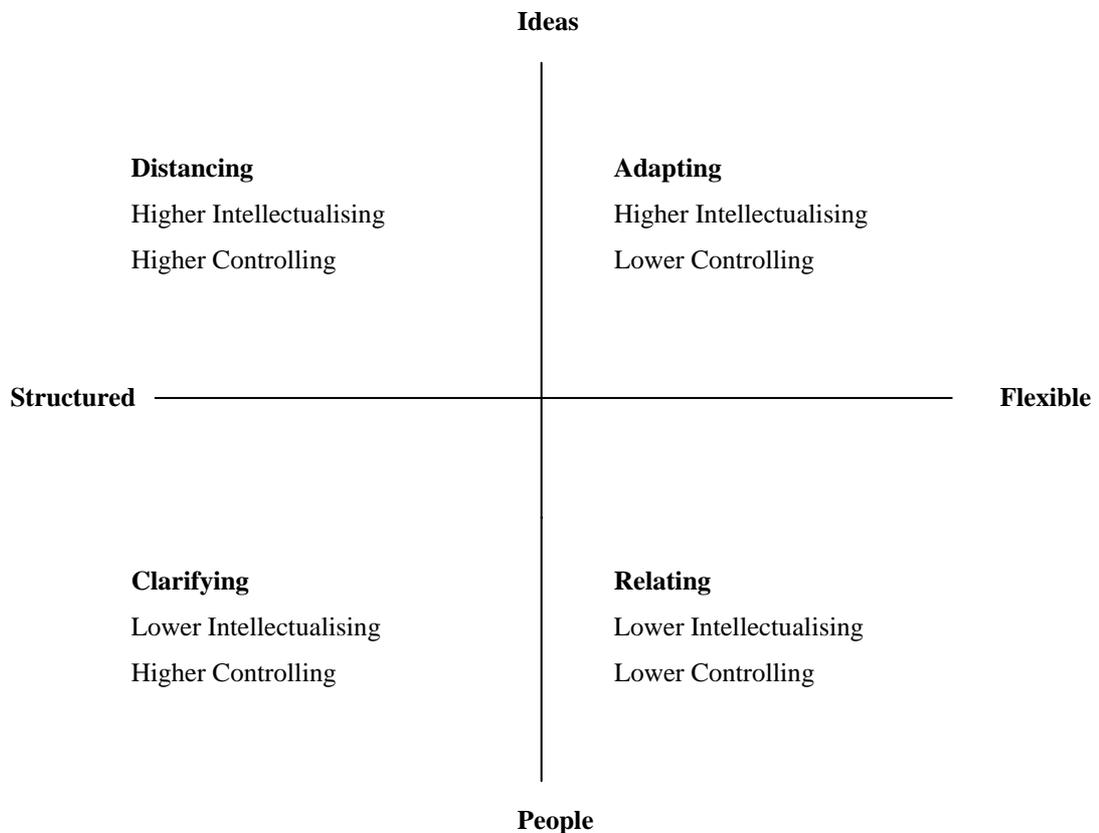
Clarifying is structured and people focused. Clarifying involves moderate accommodation as the lecturer is making the expectations and demands of the subject very explicit so that students with diverse expectations and needs are fully aware of what is required of them.

Relating is flexible and people focused. Relating involves high accommodation as the differing needs of individuals and groups are taken into account and the focus is on the development of relationships amongst students and between students and lecturer.

Each of the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating allow the lecturer to maintain competence. If lecturers utilise a strategy that suits their personal preference and ability and is effective within the specific environment, they are more likely to perceive themselves, and be perceived by others, as professionally capable.

Figure 4.3 presents the strategies and their properties along the continuums of ideas or people focus and structured or flexible approaches.

Figure 4.3: Typology of Strategies for Maintaining Competence



### Moderating Variables

The strategies adopted in response to internationalisation are affected by the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

Lecturers may have strong preferences, values and beliefs that influence their approach to teaching or they may use a variety of strategies depending on different environmental conditions. If a lecturer has a strong preference for particular strategies they are likely to implement these except when environmental conditions make it too difficult.

#### Forces in the Lecturer

Values and beliefs affect overall perceptions, expectations and reactions and therefore influence the type of strategies a lecturer is likely to employ. If a lecturer has strong values and beliefs regarding teaching approaches he or she is more likely to use

strategies that accommodate his or her values and beliefs. If environmental conditions prevent the lecturer from using his or her preferred strategies this can be uncomfortable for the lecturer and may affect his or her perceptions of his or her ability to perform competently.

Developments in cognitive behaviour therapies, in particular Albert Ellis's rational-emotive therapy, which is based in the belief that our thoughts "invariably lie behind and motivate ... emotions" (Ellis, 1975, p21), have led to increasing acceptance of the idea that thoughts, feelings and behaviours are inextricably linked.

Clawson (2003) builds on the Rational Emotive Behaviour model by proposing an additional step in the sequence. He argues that VABEs (Values, Assumptions, Beliefs and Expectations) are immediately activated in response to an event. Thoughts, feelings and subsequent behaviours will be dependent on whether or not the event and our VABEs are compatible. Clawson (2003) argues that when we perceive "a gap between what we observe and what we expect, we have a problem. If there is no gap, things are as they should be ... we carry on without concern" (p76).

Clawson (2003) represents the model, including the variable of VABE's as a clear sequence:

Event + VABE → Conclusion → Emotions → Behaviour

The model highlights the emotionally laden nature of a person's assessment of events and behaviours. Whilst the model does not include feedback mechanisms, it is possible to see that the result of any given behaviour will create another event, that in turn will be assessed against a person's VABEs, leading to another conclusion and the subsequent emotions and behaviours. The process of feedback is necessary if people are to learn from the effect of their behaviours, effects that over time may lead to subtle changes in their VABEs and therefore their entire way of reacting to a given event.

This study of lecturers' responses to the mix of local and international students in their classes uncovered differences in the lecturers' Values, Assumptions, Beliefs and

Expectations (VABEs). Lecturers vary in their views regarding their role as teachers, the university system and the changes occurring within it, and in their perceptions of students. These VABEs are the moderating variables, or Forces in the Lecturer, that lead to different responses to diversity within the class and different responses to students.

The Forces in the Lecturer, or moderating variables that represent different VABEs, include Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity, Valuing Teaching, and Valuing Diversity. Each of these values (VABEs) establishes a tendency within the lecturer to behave in certain ways, making him or her more likely to adopt one of the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying or Relating.

The moderating variables included in Forces in the Lecturer were held by all lecturers interviewed but to varying degrees, and consequently they affected behaviour in different ways. If a value is held very strongly it is more likely to influence behaviour, even in situations where Forces in the Environment would be expected to lead to a different outcome. Examples of this are evident in traditional lecture theatres where lecturers who hold very strong values concerning engaging students tend to use Adapting and Relating strategies in an environment where many lecturers use predominantly Distancing strategies. Examples of these incidents, demonstrating the differential use of strategies, will be presented in the chapters detailing each of the four strategies.

#### *Valuing High Academic Standards*

Lecturers in general value high academic standards in students. However, the emphasis given to academic standards varies depending on other moderating variables such as Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, Teaching Delivery Method and Subject Content.

Lecturers who have strong values regarding high academic standards tend to compare students to their own experience of university, and seek to instil the behaviours and attitudes they value from their own education. These behaviours and attitudes include

an interest in learning and willingness to explore ideas as well as a capacity for critical thinking. Lecturers vary in their views regarding these abilities.

Those lecturers who value high academic standards and believe university students should be capable of independent study and the critical exploration of ideas are more inclined to use Distancing strategies. Distancing strategies maintain the focus on ideas and tend to involve a more traditional model where the ‘expert’, in the role of ‘lecturer’ rather than ‘teacher’, imparts knowledge to students. Students are then expected to prove their worth as scholars by independently studying the material, analysing it, and presenting their own views and arguments. Students are required to master the work without being ‘spoon fed’ by academic staff.

When lecturers value teaching as well as high academic standards they will tend to perceive teaching as part of their role and be more inclined to assist students in acquiring the ability to work independently and develop critical thinking skills. In these instances lecturers are more likely to use Adapting strategies, which, whilst focused on Ideas, are also flexible, enabling the lecturer to draw on the students knowledge and experience. If a lecturer values the achievement of high academic standards and believes that this can best be attained through discussion and sharing of different knowledge and ideas, then he or she will use Adapting strategies to explore ideas in a flexible manner.

Interestingly, if a lecturer values high academic standards strongly he or she is also more inclined to use Clarifying strategies because, whilst focused on people, these strategies frequently focus on ensuring that all students know exactly what is expected of them in the class and in the assessment.

### *Valuing Active Participation*

Active verbal participation in class discussions tends to be highly valued by many lecturers who believe that spontaneous contributions demonstrate students’ interest and engagement. Some lecturers acknowledge that they found it difficult to contribute themselves as students, but still perceive it to be important to encourage students to contribute.

If a lecturer has very strong preferences for active participation he or she may use Distancing strategies with those students whom they do not perceive to be actively participating. For example, lecturers who are more gratified in teaching when there is significant interaction with students and who resent the passive students, local or international, are more likely to ignore those students they perceive to be passive.

When lecturers themselves come from an Asian background and/or teach in a didactic manner their expectations of active participation may be reduced. If a lecturer is from an Anglo-Western background and values experiential learning, that is, learning processes in which the students actively engage in experiences in class, they are likely to value active participation very highly.

Lecturers who value active participation are more likely to use Adapting and Relating strategies as these strategies are flexible and therefore encourage interaction.

Adapting strategies include asking questions, moving around the room and speaking to students, and using international examples to enable students from different countries to participate. Relating strategies designed to encourage active participation include using names, drawing out a student's own experience, encouraging and supporting students so they feel comfortable to participate, and taking time to develop relationships with students, again so they are comfortable in participating.

### *Valuing Equity*

Valuing Equity is concerned with the achievement of equal opportunities for students, and with fair and consistent behaviour towards all students. Lecturers who value equity tend to believe that students have varying levels of knowledge and understanding of university expectations and requirements, and are concerned to minimise these differences between students. They tend to see this valuing of equity as emanating from their own experiences, either established in upbringings that stressed equality and/or developed through their own experiences and observations of overt or covert discrimination in educational institutions and other workplaces.

Lecturers who are passionate about equity are more likely to structure their subjects to attain equity within their classes. Methods will tend to focus on equity in relation to the transmission of information, the processes and procedures in places, and the behaviours accepted within the class. Valuing equity tends to influence each of the strategies in different ways.

Distancing strategies can be perceived as equitable, particularly in the context of a lecture where all students receive the same material. However, Distancing does not take into account different expectations and understandings of what is required in the subject.

Clarifying strategies are based on the assumption that students, particularly students who come from educational systems outside Australia, will have differing perceptions and expectations about what is required at university. Clarifying strategies attempt to explain subject requirements clearly to all students to create a 'level playing field', and ensure equity by providing all students with the same information and access to resources. If a lecturer has a strong belief in the importance of fairness and equity they are more likely to use Clarifying strategies.

Adapting strategies take into account different backgrounds and draw on different theories to accommodate different backgrounds, knowledge and experience. Adapting strategies are focused on learning from each other and enabling students to draw on their own knowledge, irrespective of background. In this way Adapting strategies increase equity by reducing the dominance of Western models and theories.

If lecturers have very strong values concerning equity then they are more likely to use opportunities to confront students with their own behaviours and to seek to engage students in exploring equity issues. This approach tends to lead to Adapting strategies that focus the students' thinking on the ideas and issues of equity, or Relating strategies that tend to focus the students on their own values, assumptions, behaviours and expectations.

Valuing equity can also lead to Relating strategies designed to encourage and facilitate learning and involvement in class for students who otherwise might not

understand or have the confidence to speak up. There is however a fine line in this aspect as Relating strategies can be perceived to be inequitable if a lecturer provides a significant degree of support to individual students.

Equity may also relate to minimising power difference between lecturer and student and focusing on shared learning and shared responsibility for what occurs. This tends to occur in Relating strategies and is demonstrated by examples given in Chapter Eight.

### *Valuing Teaching*

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976) defines the term “lecture” as “Discourse before audiences or class on given subject, usually by way of instruction” (p617). It defines “teach” as “Enable or cause (person etc *to do*) by instruction and training ... Give instruction to, educate ... [in a] series of lectures and discussions ...” (pp1186-1187). For the purposes of this research I have defined lecturing as the one-way imparting of knowledge, ideas, theories, etc., where students listen and learn but are not involved in substantial dialogue. I have defined teaching as focused on the development of skills and knowledge primarily through activity and dialogue. In this definition of teaching, the teacher role is less expert and more facilitator and, at times, a fellow learner.

If a lecturer has a strong commitment to the process of teaching, and to engaging students in that process, he or she is more likely to use Relating strategies. Lecturers who strongly value teaching are more likely to focus on the process of engaging with students, both as people and in relation to the exploration of experiences and ideas, not just the imparting of knowledge. They will tend to give priority to this role and perceive spending time with students, getting to know them, assisting them with all aspects of their work, as an important part of the teaching role. When lecturers hold these values it tends to create dilemmas for them in terms of adding a large amount of unrecognised time to their workload. This is clearly an example where Forces in the Environment can alter the preferred way of behaving for some lecturers who would otherwise choose to spend more time with students.

### *Valuing Diversity*

Diversity can be defined as the existence of differences between people. The immediately observable aspects of diversity include gender, age and ethnicity. Many first impressions and stereotypes are based on observations of such tangible differences between people and the behaviours attributed to these aspects.

In the context of this study diversity refers to the mix of local and international students. It recognises that not only do students come from different cultures but frequently from very different educational systems, which can lead to some variations in the norms of behaviour and expectations. When lecturers value this diversity they are more likely to utilise strategies that explore the differing experiences and knowledge of the students in order to enhance learning. These tactics are particularly evident in Adapting and Relating strategies where lecturers take a more flexible approach and consequently increase the likelihood of accommodating differences within and between groups of students.

If lecturers come from an overseas background themselves they tend to value diversity and actively work with the different groups of students. Lecturers who have experienced difference in their own lives, either due to ethnicity or other factors, also tend to be sensitised to issues of diversity and value diversity and the capacity to learn from the differences that exist within a student group. Valuing Diversity is most evident in the strategies of Adapting and Relating as flexibility in approaches is required for diversity to be valued and accommodated.

### Forces in the Environment

In addition to the broad contextual issues discussed in Chapter One, immediate environmental factors affect whether a lecturer is more likely to use a Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying or Relating strategy. The immediate environmental factors include the Teaching Delivery Method, the Subject Content, the Student Cohort, the Workload Demands, the available Support Services, and the University Policies and Processes.

Different lecturers hold different views and have different responses to the broader issues within the university context. Lecturers' perceptions of the overall university context are likely to influence their thoughts, feelings and responses to their own working environment. Consequently, Forces in the Environment will interact with Forces in the Lecturer and the choice of strategy will depend on this interplay and the relative strength of the personal or environmental factors.

If Forces in the Environment are strong they can have a significant effect on the strategies employed by lecturers and can accentuate or mitigate a lecturer's own preferences. If lecturers find it difficult to manage the context within which they work they tend to adopt an approach that minimises the negative impact on their students or an approach designed to reduce their own stress or both. Lecturers either take on additional work themselves or alter their methods in order to accommodate Forces in the Environment and manage their own potential dissonance or dissatisfaction.

Following emergence of the core category of Maintaining Competence, site spreading was undertaken in order to establish if the same concern existed across both the new university sector and the older, established universities. It was hypothesised that there may be different forces in the environments that could alter the main concern and core category, particularly given the stronger research culture and lower teaching contact hours at the traditional universities. It was also hypothesised that, given the generally high intellectual ability of students accepted into the established universities, diversity may not be as noticeable at these institutions compared to the newer universities. It was assumed that high intellectual ability would assist all students, both local and overseas students, to adapt to the educational expectations of the university and that differences would be minimised from the perspective of the lecturer.

Forces in the Environment are relatively consistent across the different university sectors, in both the traditional universities and in the newer universities formed through the amalgamation of colleges and institutes. The area of most obvious difference is the greater number of traditional lectures within the traditional universities compared to the greater number of small classes given within the newer

universities. These differences may be due, in part at least, to the limited availability of lecture theatres in the newer universities. The newer universities, having come from the college model, tend to have more classroom space than lecture theatres.

### *Teaching Delivery Method*

University teaching occurs within a number of different contexts including lectures, tutorials, classes and various on-line approaches. The teaching delivery method may be determined by factors including tradition, appropriateness for subject content, the necessity to reach large numbers of students, and available resources within the university. Environmental factors tend to exert significant influence on the teaching delivery method, however, if lecturers have strong views regarding delivery methods they are more likely to adapt subjects accordingly in spite of environmental constraints and pressures that conflict with their teaching approach.

Lecturers who give large lectures are likely to also be involved in teaching tutorials and classes, a class usually consisting of a mix of didactic presentation, discussion and, on occasion, experiential activities, particularly for later years and for post-graduates. Lecturers who teach in tutorial and classroom mode may not necessarily be involved in teaching in large lectures. One lecturer at a new university commented that whilst management would like more large lectures the building could not accommodate that as most of the rooms were classroom size and so only able to accommodate smaller groups.

When lecturers are presenting material in the context of a traditional lecture or to large groups of students they tend to utilise Distancing strategies. A mix of Clarifying, Adapting and Relating strategies are more likely to be used within the context of tutorials or classes. The strategy used will also depend on the content of the subject, the lecturer's perceptions of the student cohort, and the lecturer's own values and beliefs about teaching.

Lecturers with a strong preference for particular styles of teaching are likely to demonstrate this irrespective of the teaching delivery mode. For example, Relating strategies tend to be used, even in large lectures, by lecturers who place a strong value

on the teaching process. Distancing strategies are more likely to be used, even in tutorial and classroom environments, if a lecturer has a strong preference for focusing on ideas and/or is presenting content or transmitting information. Distancing strategies are also more likely when a lecturer has a strong preference for particular behaviours amongst students, for example verbal participation, so that those students who do not participate verbally are distanced from the lecturer and other students.

### *Subject Content*

Subject content tends to range from the more content focused and theoretical subjects within management, for example, Organisation Theory, to the more process focused subjects, for example, Organisation Behaviour, that explore people's behaviour and have an emphasis on skill development for the students. The strategies used are therefore likely to be selected on the basis of their appropriateness for the subject content.

If a subject is focused on theories regarding people's behaviour, such as Organisation Behaviour, then lecturers are more likely to use Adapting, Clarifying and Relating strategies. Organisation behaviour subjects tend to be taught using more experiential activities to draw links between theory and practice. Additionally, lecturers teaching these subjects tend to come from backgrounds in psychology or related disciplines and tend to value teaching. These preferences and values lead to a preference for using Adapting, Clarifying and Relating strategies as much as possible even within the context of large lectures.

When a subject has an international focus, for example, international management subjects, lecturers are more likely to use Adapting strategies as these strategies enable the different ideas, knowledge and experiences from different countries to be taken into account. But if lecturers are highly engaged with the ideas being presented, irrespective of the actual content, then they will be more likely to utilise Distancing strategies. This is likely to occur at times in any subject, even subjects that are being taught experientially, when specific content or information needs to be presented. Hence, even within the one class the strategies used are likely to vary depending on the specific material being covered.

### *Student Cohort*

Lectures, classes and tutorials tend to be comprised of diverse groups of students with each group varying in its mix and dynamics. Diversity arises from many factors, including a mix of local and international students, students from different disciplines, and students with different learning styles and varying academic abilities. Lecturers who are aware of, and interested in working with, diversity will tend to use strategies that enable them to draw on material relevant to the particular group of students as well as utilising the knowledge and experience from within the group. In these instances lecturers are more likely to use Adapting and Relating strategies that are flexible and allow for adaptation, depending on the particular student cohort.

When there are significant numbers of international students in the group, lecturers tend to use this as an opportunity to expand the presentation and discussion of material to encompass different cultures and different experiences. If there is a more homogeneous group of students the likelihood of significantly different experiences is reduced, and the lecturer is less likely to draw on material from other countries or contexts.

The student cohort may also affect behaviour, particularly within classes and tutorials, where there may be an expectation that students will participate verbally. Several lecturers mentioned that they perceive international students, especially from the Asian region, to be quiet in class. Lecturers who are concerned about such less verbally active students are likely to utilise a range of strategies to foster discussion in classes and to provide opportunities for all students to contribute.

### *Workload Demands*

Lecturers tend to be involved in a variety of tasks including teaching, research and administration, depending on the requirements of the university and their own preferences. At times the various components of the work can compete for priority and potentially create stress for individual lecturers.

Lecturers in the research intensive, traditional university tend to have fewer teaching contact hours than lecturers in the newer universities and are more likely to perceive their teaching workload as manageable. Lecturers in these positions, or who teach classes with fewer students, may find they are able to give additional time to individual students and/or attend additional tutorials in order to get to know students. Lecturers in the newer universities, that are currently attempting to increase their research profile, tend to be under stress because of competing demands on their time, due to university expectations that they increase their research output with little reduction in teaching requirements.

If a lecturer perceives him or herself to have difficulties with competing work demands he or she is more likely to use Distancing strategies as a method of managing their work. For example, lecturers who have a preference for Relating strategies but cannot spend the time with students without negatively affecting other aspects of the work may decide to reduce contact with students in order to maintain competence overall. Reducing time spent with students enables lecturers to maintain competence particularly in relation to research. But lecturers who have a very high preference for relating to students are more likely to place themselves under significant stress in their attempt to continue being available for students and meeting their research and administrative requirements. Additional time spent with students is unlikely to be accounted for in the official workload.

### *Support Services*

Universities generally provide a range of support services for all students and specific services for international students. How much services are used will depend on their availability, perceptions of their effectiveness and how aware both lecturers and students are of what they offer.

If support services are available and perceived to be effective the lecturers may, for example, refer students to services that provide assistance in researching and writing assignments and/or to counselling services on occasion. In general, referring takes the form of advising students of the existence of services, but can include active encouragement and even taking students to services to ensure they take up the option.

Distancing strategies involve telling students of the existence of services and referring them to the services. Clarifying strategies generally explain more about the services offered and encourage students to utilise services, and Relating strategies tend to actively assist students access services.

When universities offer programs, but do not require staff to attend, staff are unlikely to attend unless they are specifically interested in the issues being addressed by the program. Programs tend to be optional, and staff are not always aware of programs offered by their university. Lecturers who undertake courses in working with international students, attending seminars on teaching methods and participating in other programs, tend to speak of the benefit of these programs.

### *University Policies and Processes*

As discussed in Chapter One, the context within which universities operate has changed significantly over the past twenty years. The increased bureaucratisation of universities over these years has led to a rise in administrative functions. Whilst the number of administrative staff has increased significantly, academics are also likely to be required to undertake a substantial administrative load.

In accordance with government requirements for greater accountability of universities, all institutions have quality assurance surveys regarding student perceptions of lecturers and their teaching competence. Few lecturers are negatively affected by these surveys, but many lecturers are conscious of their potential impact even whilst critical of their reliability. If a lecturer feels pressure from the university to meet ‘customer needs’, particularly as a result of student surveys to rank lecturer performance, they may change their own style of teaching. In these instances lecturers are more likely to utilise Adapting and Clarifying strategies in order to both acknowledge all students and clarify expectations as much as possible.

Assessment guidelines regarding expected standards, plagiarism, pass/fail rates and appeal procedures tend to influence lecturers when setting and marking assessments. Lecturers are likely to use Clarifying strategies to minimise misunderstandings or perceptions of injustice in order to prevent questions regarding their competence.

## **Interplay of Moderating Variables**

The moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment directly affect the strategies lecturers use in response to the student diversity caused by internationalisation of universities and the consequent mix of local and international students. These moderating variables will vary in their impact depending on their relative strength. For example, if particular Forces in the Lecturer are very strong this may counteract certain Forces in the Environment, or if Forces in the Environment are especially strong then lecturers may change their own strategies against their personal preferences and values.

In a rapidly changing environment the interplay between the personal variables and the environmental variables becomes increasingly significant. As lecturers adjust to changes and find ways to align their own values and preferences with the new circumstances of increased student diversity they must also find ways to maintain their own sense of competence and meet the university requirements in relation to competence.

## **Consequences**

The basic social process and core category of Maintaining Competence emerges as a response to internationalisation, which creates a mix of local and international students in university classes. The strategies adopted to enable lecturers to resolve their main concern of balancing professional capability whilst addressing the needs of a heterogeneous student population are influenced by the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

The consequences of the four strategies vary, with each consequence potentially feeding back into the causal-consequence loop by affecting the moderating variables. The consequences of Distancing are Ideas Transmission and Sidelining; the consequences of Adapting are Ideas Discussion and Acknowledging; the consequences of Clarifying are Resourcing and Explaining; and the consequences of

Relating are Connecting and Involving. These consequences will be demonstrated in the following chapters as each of the strategies is discussed.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the theoretical model for Maintaining Competence by establishing the causal-consequence model and the typology model that integrates the data.

The model demonstrates the strategies used by lecturers in response to the main concern of balancing professional capability whilst responding to the needs of a heterogeneous group of students. The mix of local and international students results from the internationalisation of universities and the strategies employed in response to this are influenced by the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment. Lecturers will tend to select strategies that suit their own preferences and the existing environmental conditions in order to maintain competence at all times in their role.

The following four chapters present in detail the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating and provide examples to highlight the patterns of behaviour that emerge within each of the strategies.

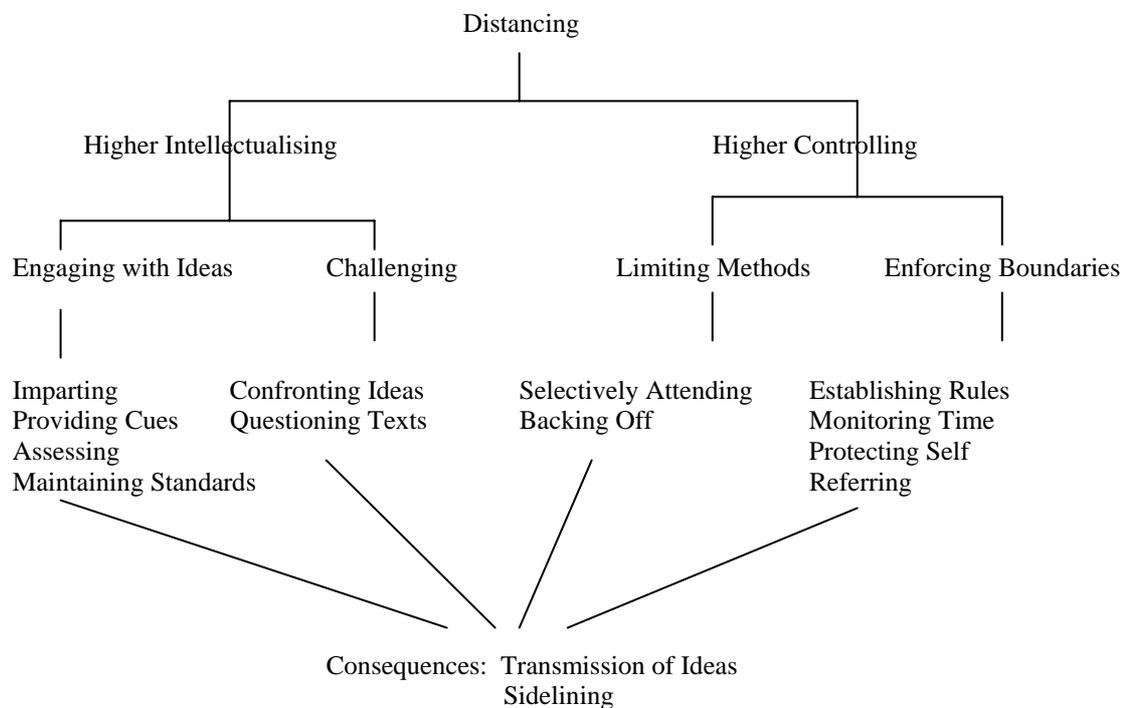
## Chapter Five - Strategy of Distancing

### Introduction

The strategy of Distancing is both ideas focused and structured. Distancing is comprised of the property of Higher Intellectualising, with the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging, and the property of Higher Controlling, with the sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries.

The interplay of Higher Intellectualising and Higher Controlling creates conditions that are focused on ideas rather than people and are structured rather than flexible, resulting in the category of Distancing. The consequences of Distancing approaches are Transmission of Ideas and Sidelineing.

Figure 5.1: Strategy of Distancing



Distancing strategies that are high on both Intellectualising and Controlling enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by minimising their adaptation to different conditions and diverse students. This approach may be the result of particular

contexts such as traditional lecture environments, a lecturer's personal preferences, or a response to workload demands.

Distancing strategies tend to occur most frequently when the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment are both focused on the importance of structure and ideas rather than on responding to individual students or diverse groups of students.

Distancing tends to be the primary strategy in traditional lecture settings where there is no expectation of individual interaction between lecturer and student, where the student listens to the lecturer, and where conveying knowledge is the purpose. Distancing strategies are more likely to occur in tutorials and classes when lecturers have specific knowledge to convey and perceive the transmission of knowledge as the most important aspect of their role.

When a lecturer uses Distancing strategies he or she is not adapting to the diverse needs of the students but is utilising methods designed to transmit knowledge from the lecturer to the students in a structured approach. Distancing strategies do not take into account different learning styles, different cultural expectations, different language skills, and do not involve checking to see if people have understood.

If a lecturer has strong views that the role of an academic is to convey knowledge rather than teach skills he or she is more likely to use Distancing strategies. As one lecturer commented "a lecturer is a person who has subject expertise and is conveying the knowledge and frameworks of that subject or that discipline. A teacher is somebody who is also engaged in teaching people not only content but also how to utilise that content in a way that's different, like how to write an essay".

Distancing strategies maintain positional power and expertise for the lecturer and are focused on continuing the lecturer's preferred teaching methods rather than adapting to students. Distancing strategies tend to utilise didactic methods of teaching, which can demonstrate a lecturer's knowledge and expertise. They ensure a structured environment in which the lecturer is able to maintain control and direct the events of the lecture or class. In this way such strategies enable the lecturer to control both the

content and process of the lecture or class and thereby Maintain Competence in their role as a knowledgeable expert with minimal adaptation to the requirements of a heterogeneous student population.

Lecturers who have very strong preferences for active participation from students tend to use Distancing strategies with students who do not act in this preferred manner. Hence, in classes and tutorials lecturers who are not necessarily utilising a didactic method are more likely to distance themselves and other students from any students whom they do not perceive to be participating or contributing. In these instances Distancing is a selective strategy applied only to a certain type of student.

This chapter will discuss the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas, Challenging, Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries. The consequences of Transmission of Ideas and Sidelining are also discussed. Specific examples are provided to demonstrate and bring to life each sub-strategy.

### **Higher Intellectualising Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging both derive from the property of Higher Intellectualising and, when combined with the Higher Controlling sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries, create the approaches found in the strategy of Distancing.

Higher Intellectualising sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence by focusing on the ideas and knowledge in which they are expert and in transmitting these to students.

#### Engaging with Ideas

Engaging with Ideas, when combined with the Higher Controlling sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries, involves a structured approach with a clear focus on the presentation of ideas by the lecturer. There is no expectation that students will necessarily participate, and if they do it is likely to be at the lecturer's instigation. The intent is to transmit ideas in a way that is clear to the lecturer, but

without taking into account different students' ability to access those ideas or understand them in the form they have been presented.

Engaging with Ideas as a Distancing sub-strategy appears to be based on an underlying assumption that students will understand and, if they do not understand, that it is their responsibility to take the necessary steps themselves to achieve understanding. In this way, one of the consequences of these strategies is that lecturers do not become directly involved in the academic, much less personal, concerns of their students but maintain their focus on the transmission of ideas. Students who do not understand tend to be sidelined.

Engaging with Ideas consists of the tactics of Imparting, Providing Cues, Assessing and Maintaining Standards. Each tactic is affected by the interplay of moderating variables. The moderating variables influencing tactics in Engaging with Ideas are set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Engaging with Ideas within the Strategy of Distancing

<b>Engaging with ideas</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Imparting	Valuing High Academic Standards	Teaching Delivery Method, Subject Content
Providing Cues	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Teaching	Teaching Delivery Method
Assessing	Valuing High Academic Standards	University Policies
Maintaining Standards	Valuing High Academic Standards	Student Cohort

### *Imparting*

Imparting involves the giving of ideas, information and knowledge to students. It is a one-way communication process from the lecturer to the student(s) that does not expect or require immediate feedback.

Imparting is influenced by the interplay of the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment. Lecturers who value high academic standards are more likely to use Imparting tactics as this value keeps the focus on the presenting of expert knowledge and ideas. Imparting is more likely to occur when the environmental context is that of a traditional lecture theatre and/or when the subject content requires that specific knowledge and ideas be presented to students. Thus when lecturers value high academic standards, and the subject context and content are focused on knowledge presentation, Imparting tactics are most likely to occur.

Lecturers who also perceive their primary role as being to expand student's knowledge of ideas and concepts tend to use Imparting tactics. This idea of the academic role, as explained by one lecturer from a newer university, encompasses "two distinct facets ... one is about imparting knowledge and the other is about generating knowledge – generating knowledge is the research bit". If a lecturer holds this perception of the academic role he or she is likely to use Imparting tactics.

Lecturers using Imparting tactics tend to expect that students will read independently and study the ideas presented in class but will not necessarily contribute their own ideas within the class. Based on this expectation lecturers are more likely to assume that students will have a basic understanding of the material with the lecture or class being an opportunity to expand on the ideas. For example, one lecturer commented: "when I walk into a classroom I would expect they've read some of the concepts ... I will reiterate them but we are going beyond them"

In the context of a traditional lecture, where the primary purpose of a lecture is generally accepted as the imparting of expert knowledge, Imparting tactics are expected by both lecturer and students. Lecturers in these contexts tend to present for

the entire session, without asking questions of students or expecting interaction, and proceeding in a structured manner as they see little need to alter their approach.

The traditional lecture is clearly an ‘on-stage’ event for the lecturers who Maintain Competence by ensuring they have relevant knowledge and expertise. Understanding of this role is clearly stated by one lecturer: “It’s very hard ... before you step on the stage you’ve got to know what you’re talking about, and it is a bit of a stage, we have our cubby holes or dressing rooms and then we walk out on stage.”

Within the context of a traditional lecture, where a lecturer is imparting knowledge, there is less of a requirement for them to adapt their own style or material to suit a heterogeneous population. Lecturers observed in these contexts have a certain amount of material they intend to cover, proceed through this in a structured manner, and have minimal, if any, direct interaction with students.

If a lecturer wants to impart information in a tutorial he or she is more likely to utilise a didactic method to transmit ideas and to control both the process and content of the session. This can be observed in tutorials and classes when lecturers want to impart particular information, even when on other occasions they would be more likely to facilitate general discussion or even have students control the discussion. One lecturer commented: “I try to have about an hour more or less of a lecture. In the beginning I do more of it because I want to get the students involved, but they don’t have the background and haven’t had time to do things”. Thus Imparting may operate as a precursor to more interactive forms of teaching by establishing a common knowledge base from which to work.

### *Providing Cues*

Providing Cues refers to the process by which lecturers draw attention to particular items. Cues are generally provided when lecturers want students to attend to, and take note of, a specific piece of information or knowledge.

Providing Cues is influenced by the combination of Valuing High Academic Standards and Valuing Teaching, both Forces in the Lecturer, and Teaching Delivery

Methods that are primarily lecture based. The combination of these moderating variables increases the likelihood that lecturers will use the tactic of Providing Cues.

Lecturers who wish to engage students with the ideas being presented and ensure that attention is paid to the most relevant points will tend to Provide Cues. Cues may be verbal or non-verbal, power point slides or overheads, written material, video or audiotape, or other methods that highlight important information. If lecturers are keen to engage students with ideas they are more likely to use a range of cues and particularly provide verbal and non-verbal cues themselves, including gesturing to stress a point, repeating material, or using phrases such as “an important point to remember is ...”. Observation periods of lecturers clearly demonstrate that when a lecturer Provides Cues many students will respond by taking notes of that point or will appear to listen more intently by looking at the lecturer, nodding heads, or leaning forward.

Asking rhetorical questions can also Provide Cues by alerting students to a point worthy of consideration. For example, a lecturer may ask “why was that important?” and then immediately answer themselves, thereby demonstrating the use of Rhetorical Questions. Rhetorical questions do not allow time for students to contribute verbally, but prompt them to think about the issue. Rhetorical questions also maintain distance by preventing students from engaging in a discussion – the lecturer takes all positions within the discussion, both question and answer. In this way the lecturer’s competence is not questioned, as no debate regarding the ideas being presented is allowed and the lecturer is able to demonstrate his or her expertise on the topic.

When lecturers want to emphasise an important point and cue students to attend to this point, rephrasing tends to be another tactic for catching students’ attention. Rephrasing of points, that is presenting them again but in a slightly different way, may be a simple repetition or a statement of the main points. To highlight the main issues to be covered in a lecture, the lecturer may Provide Cues in the way of a summary of what will be covered during the lecture. The following quote from a lecturer demonstrates the thinking behind Providing Cues: “I have a very logical and simple structure for the course content ... one of my philosophies is what they call the three Ts, where I tell them what I’m going to tell them, then I tell them, and then I tell

them what I told them. I do it for every class and then for every module, so it gives them a chance to reflect”.

### *Assessing*

Assessing tactics are designed to test students’ engagement with ideas by employing a structured approach to checking whether students have understood, thought about and learnt the relevant knowledge and ideas. Assessing tactics can vary in their degree of structure from an exam, which is completely structured by the lecturer, to a learning contract, which is negotiated between the lecturer and student.

Assessing tactics are most likely to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing High Academic Standards and University Policies are combined. In these instances the lecturer’s own values and the requirements of the university system ensure that assessment processes are rigorously adopted and followed.

If a lecturer intends to assess content knowledge and ideas then he or she is more likely to use the more structured forms of assessment such as exams. Exams tend to be ideas focused and highly structured, and clearly establish the authority of the lecturer. To make exams clear in regard to ideas and provide a structure that will make sense to students in terms of knowledge, lecturers will tend to develop questions that address these issues. Lecturers may format their exams to “have some objective kinds of answers there ... I’ll test their understanding of the content and where once they get their answers back they’ll have no doubt that they deserved 5 and therefore they got 5 out of 10.” This method reduces the likelihood that the lecturer’s competence regarding the marks they give will be called into question or that students will dispute the marks they receive.

Universities generally have established requirements and expectations regarding assessment that lecturers must abide by, causing them to adapt or choose assessment tasks accordingly. For example, lecturers who may otherwise choose different approaches find themselves adopting Assessing tactics in response to such university demands: “it’s interesting that I’m introducing exams into my subject ... ideally I would like to have no exams, but I’m veering around to the view that ... you just have

to grade them, because that's the way the system is. And if you must give a grade then I do feel the need to have an exam”.

Structured forms of assessment, particularly exams, maintain the lecturer's position of power and expert authority. If a lecturer tends to use a more flexible and interactive approach in classes and tutorials they will generally still use a structured approach to assessment. In this way, lecturers who do not usually utilise Distancing strategies will be likely to use assessing tactics and apply a Distancing approach in this aspect of their role, in part due to the demands of universities that students be assessed through exams and assignments.

### *Maintaining Standards*

Maintaining Standards refers to the desire to ensure high academic standards in relation to both the knowledge and ideas presented to students and the acceptable level of work from students.

Maintaining Standards is a tactic that results from the interplay of the moderating variables of Valuing High Academic Standards and the Student Cohort. These variables increase the likelihood that lecturers will perceive diversity in the student population as requiring additional work in order to maintain standards.

When lecturers value the maintenance of academic standards in terms of knowledge development and rigorous research they tend to have concerns about maintaining these standards in the face of diverse student populations. Lecturers who have strong views concerning what a university degree should entail, for example that it should include “more abstract theory building”, are more likely to take steps to ensure their subject content and assessment methods maintain these standards. Lecturers who value Maintaining Standards are more likely to utilise exams as a method of testing individual students to ensure that all students are achieving the required standard.

As one lecturer commented, exams are perceived to be “one of the most objective ways of [assessing students]”.

Lecturers who themselves studied at university, particularly the traditional universities prior to the massification of education, tend to perceive the maintenance of academic standards as an important aspect of their role. Those lecturers who had a traditional liberal education tend to be concerned about the methods used by students. For example, a lecturer who had studied Arts and now teaches across both Arts and Commerce faculties commented that Arts students are “actually interested in the process of learning. They’re not expecting to be fed answers so they can pass exams ... The idea that by challenging yourself and thinking you will actually equip yourself better to pass exams is an alien concept to a lot of commerce students”.

Maintaining Standards relates to concerns about the level of student ability and their willingness to fully engage in the learning process to not only learn information but to be able to critically assess that information. Lecturers who value maintaining academic standards tend to judge their own competence by their ability to inspire and develop an academic orientation in their students even with diverse groups of students with different learning expectations. The existence in classes of significant numbers of international students who do not have strong English language skills tends to create concerns for lecturers who focus on Maintaining Standards, particularly in relation to written assessment. “I believe that the hurdle should be what it is and everyone should be expected to leap over that hurdle as in award of a degree ... I would have a major problem if you were to lower your hurdle. You may have taken people but you should ruthlessly fail them if they haven’t come up to standard”

If a lecturer perceives that many international students have a strong work ethic then he or she may value their presence highly, sometimes in preference to local students who may not be perceived as working hard. For example, when talking about international students one lecturer commented that “they really have a motivation for education, they really value it highly and that’s why I think, I’m not trying to be the opposite with Australian students, but ultimately I think, my ideal model is more likely to be set up in this kind of environment with the overseas students than with the average Australian student”.

## Challenging

Challenging, in conjunction with the Higher Controlling sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries, is a Distancing sub-strategy. Challenging aims to demonstrate to students different ideas and perspectives, highlight debate about the material being discussed, and stress the importance of critical thinking.

Lecturers who value ideas and critical thinking strongly, and who prefer to maintain control of the discussion, are more likely to use the Challenging tactics of Confronting Ideas and Questioning Texts. These tactics enable them to develop the students' knowledge, ideas and awareness whilst still controlling the direction of the debate. The moderating variables that influence each of the tactics are set out in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Challenging within the Strategy of Distancing

<b>Challenging</b>	<b>Forces in Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in Environment</b>
Confronting Ideas	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Teaching	Nil
Questioning Texts	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Teaching	Nil

### *Confronting Ideas*

Confronting Ideas refers to approaches designed to encourage students to think critically about ideas and information by presenting a range of perspectives and arguments in lectures and classes. It is a structured approach in that the lecturer is controlling what is presented and when and what questions are debated.

Confronting Ideas is primarily influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing High Academic Standards and Valuing Teaching, both Forces in the Lecturer. Forces in the Environment are less likely to exert a significant influence over these tactics as

the tactics can be applied in all class contexts. Confronting Ideas is therefore most likely to be used as a tactic by lecturers who value the exploration of knowledge and ideas and want to foster in students the ability to think critically.

Confronting Ideas enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by demonstrating his or her grasp of the differing perspectives and ways of understanding a particular topic, and his or her ability to present the academic debates and model for students how to engage in such debates from an intellectual base. Lecturers who want to foster critical thinking in students tend to confront the ideas held by students by stating their own opinion strongly in order to force students to take a position. Alternatively the lecturer may present the different sides of an argument for the students to consider. For example, “I don’t try to swamp them, I just have, at different points in the course, I’ll just plug some stuff in that gives them this counterpoint almost of thinking. Because they are very much in this groove of going down this path of not questioning”.

When lecturers are focused on preventing students from simply accepting information without critical analysis, they will attempt to bring in challenging ideas in order to get students to explore the ideas in more depth. As one lecturer commented: “I try and instil that in my teaching that it’s just abstract thinking, they’re just different styles, so when I go into a classroom I talk about management thinking I run through and talk about 19<sup>th</sup> century to 21<sup>st</sup> century management thinking and bring in concepts that are totally challenging to the students and they sort of feel uncomfortable but I say ... this is an academic institution, I’m here to challenge you”

Lecturers, when they want to flag an issue that may be important and direct students to think about it, are likely to utilise Confronting Ideas. This may include telling students of issues they need to be aware of and expecting them to then think about their own ideas in relation to the issue as well as research it further for themselves. If it is a significant issue in the subject area the lecturer tends to present a range of ideas and arguments, but if it is a peripheral issue then lecturers are more likely to simply note the issue and advise the students to think about it. For example, in one observation it was noted that the lecturer commented on the issues of labelling telling students to be careful about labelling and stating “he might be coming from a

different culture and you have to be careful not to use stereotypes”. In this instance stereotyping was a peripheral issue to the main topic, but apparently considered important enough to raise and highlight the importance of thinking critically and confronting one’s own and others’ ideas.

### *Questioning Texts*

Questioning Texts involves the lecturers themselves debating and questioning material presented in the texts, looking critically at what information is given, what assumptions the material is based on and what biases may underlie that material. If lecturers take a critical view of management theories and believe that theories are not necessarily applicable to all times and places they are more likely to critique the theories.

Questioning Texts results from the moderating variable of Valuing High Academic Standards and Valuing Teaching, where lecturers are interested in the ongoing development of knowledge and ideas and the ability to think critically about issues, including the critical analysis of written material in texts and articles.

Lecturers who believe that thinking critically about the material presented is important tend to value students who are able to engage with ideas and challenge those ideas in their exams and assignments. These will be the students who will be rewarded with high marks as they meet the high academic standards sought in Distancing strategies. This can be seen in comments such as: “I’ve had some students who’ve really done the most brilliant job in writing about that and challenging that [text]”.

Confronting Ideas and Questioning Texts tend to assume a high level of academic interest and ability on the part of the students and reward this ability for critical analysis in assessment practices. Lecturers who use these tactics also tend to perceive their own competence as resting with their intellectual abilities and their capacity to present and develop an argument. Thus the focus is strongly on ideas rather than individuals and Maintaining Competence is achieved through the rigorous presentation and exploration of ideas.

If lecturers are critical of certain texts being used in a subject and feel strongly about the limitations of those texts, they are more likely to raise these concerns with the students by pointing out the perceived limitations of the text. Lecturers who are not satisfied with texts are likely to look for alternative books to use with students, but may still encourage the students to look critically at the texts in order to understand the biases and assumptions that may be inherent within the text. For example, highlighting how a text “doesn’t address cultures ... doesn’t address small business ... doesn’t address feminist issues ... if you work in a big conglomerate and you are male and you are young and you are white it’s a great book”.

### **Higher Controlling Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries derive from the property of Higher Controlling. A particular set of tactics results due to the interplay with the property of Higher Intellectualising and the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging.

Higher Controlling sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence by allowing him or her to choose a topic, present the topic and debate it according to the lecturer’s own areas of interest and expertise. Maintaining a rigid structure tends to minimise the likelihood of students taking a topic into an unanticipated, and perhaps unknown, area for discussion.

#### Limiting methods

Limiting Methods is a Distancing sub-strategy which results in the lecturer being less likely to adapt his or her approach to different students or situations.

Limiting Methods is comprised of the tactics of Selectively Attending and Backing Off. These tactics, derived from the property of Higher Controlling, when coupled with the property of Higher Intellectualising, enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by focusing their attention on particular subjects and students. In this way lecturers adhere to their own preferred practices and topics without accounting for variations in student requirements.

Limiting Methods is most likely to be used if the lecturer is intending to impart knowledge or information rather than develop discussion, when the lecturer has strongly preferred modes of teaching or when the lecturer is focused on the verbally active students. When the context is a traditional lecture with an emphasis on didactic methods of teaching then Limiting Methods is likely to be prevalent. Under these conditions lecturers acknowledge that they “tend to follow the same kind of format”.

The moderating variables that influence the tactics in Limiting Methods are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Limiting Methods within the Strategy of Distancing

<b>Limiting Methods</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Selectively Attending	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation	Student Cohort
Backing Off	Valuing Active Participation	Student Cohort

### *Selectively Attending*

Selectively Attending refers to the tendency of lecturers to not notice students, to notice some students more than others, to prefer certain behaviours in students and respond positively to these, and to be selective in the approaches they use to interact with students.

Selectively Attending is more likely to occur when the lecturer values high academic standards and wants students to engage in discussing ideas and knowledge. Given a diverse student cohort, lecturers then attend to those students who are actively participating and overtly demonstrating their academic skills.

Lecturers who are intent on transmitting ideas, and do this in a structured manner that focuses on presentation of content rather than student response, are less likely to notice individual students or different responses within the student group. In these instances lecturers may selectively attend only when it suits them or when they want a response or contribution from students. Lecturers thereby Maintain Competence by ensuring their own presentation is not interrupted or questioned. Selectively Attending also allows lecturers to Maintain Competence by only responding to those students with whom they feel their competence will not be called into question.

Selectively Attending means that students may be seeking attention but do not receive it. During observations students were seen to raise their hands or attempt to gain eye contact with the lecturer, and if such behaviour did not elicit a response from the lecturer they tended to stop trying. For example, in one observation a student was observed to put her hand up and look intently towards the lecturer with a concerned look, as if she had a question. He did not acknowledge her and she made no overt move. A few minutes later she spoke in whispers to the girl next to her then nodded to the other girl and did not attempt to ask questions or get the lecturer's attention again.

Selectively Attending may also be a way of Maintaining Competence in the face of heterogeneous student groups. If a lecturer feels particularly challenged by the diversity of the student group then he or she may respond by ignoring any difference and not noticing cues from the students. If lecturers have commenced their teaching career with more homogeneous groups of students then diversity can be quite challenging, and a sense of competence may be maintained through not paying "enough attention" and being in "denial about the diversity I was experiencing".

Selectively Attending allows a lecturer to continue with their own preferred approach. Not noticing behaviours or student requirements removes the pressure to change behaviour, and enables lecturers to "follow the same kind of format" without being concerned about whether or not all the students are able to understand the material being presented.

If a lecturer has a preference for certain behaviours in students then he or she is likely to attend more selectively to the students who exhibit the preferred behaviours. For instance, if a lecturer has a preference for verbally active students then he or she will “focus on those students who are talking” and they will be the students more likely to be selected to answer questions and give comments.

For lecturers who have a preference for verbally active students, Selectively Attending enables them to Maintain Competence by reducing the likelihood that questions will go unanswered, as waiting for answers and not knowing how much to push for a response can be challenging for lecturers. This issue is elaborated on in the next section on the tactic of Backing Off.

### *Backing Off*

Backing Off refers to a response by lecturers when, after a failed attempt at interaction, they no longer attempt to ask questions of, or engage with, a particular student or group of students in discussion.

Backing Off results from the combination of Valuing Active Participation and Student Cohort. When lecturers value active participation they are likely to withdraw from the students who are not responding or participating and concentrate on those who are engaging in the discussion. This results in Distancing those students who do not fit with the lecturers values and preferences.

On the occasions when a lecturer attempts to approach a student and elicit responses but finds that the desired outcome of a contribution from the student does not eventuate then he or she may back off. Backing Off is a means of Maintaining Competence as continued attempts to engage the student may not be successful and leave the lecturer feeling as if they do not have the requisite skills to obtain the desired outcome. If a student does not respond to questions or prompts, the lecturer may back off immediately and not continue asking for a response or contribution.

Lack of response from a student reduces the likelihood of the lecturer approaching that student again. For example, pointing to, or approaching individual students to ask for comments, does not always work as demonstrated by the events observed in one class. In this instance the lecturer was observed to ask a student a direct question but the student continued looking at his lap until someone else told him he was being asked a question. He then looked up but did not say anything. The lecturer let this pass and moved to another student and did not ask the first student any more questions for the rest of the session.

If a lecturer has a limited range of strategies and tactics or is worried that the strategies they have may not work, and therefore expose their competence, they are more likely to use Backing Off rather than try different approaches. Lecturers who persevere with a limited repertoire of approaches and find they do not work are likely to avoid a similar encounter in future. For example, one lecturer remembered vividly instances where he had pushed students for a response and was left questioning his own competence. He commented that these events “have been quite important experiences because there are two particular female students that are still in my mind. One left the subject the following week ... it tapped into my awkwardness and my bumbling incompetence ... I tried something and it had exactly the opposite effect”. Experiences such as this are likely to cause a lecturer to back off and be selective in their attention in future choosing to approach students who they are confident will respond.

The greater diversity in the student population appears to have aggravated these dilemmas. Strategies that have worked well with one group of students may not necessarily work well with different groups of students, which may then challenge the lecturer’s sense of expertise and competence. Lecturers who have not expanded their repertoire are more likely to acknowledge these limitations in relation to international students as in the following examples: “I haven’t made any conscious efforts to improve ... skills or capabilities in dealing with Asian students” and “my early years were sort of backing off and not engaging with them one to one ...”

When a lecturer has a high preference for “the very articulate, very energetic, very high performers ... whose English is really good ...” they are more likely to avoid

those students who do not fit their preferred style. Backing Off will then distance those students whom the lecturer no longer attends to, and result in them being Sidelined within the class or group: “very often ... they’re simply included physically, they’re just there ... but they’re not included in terms of them contributing anything or us being able to interact with them in an active way ...”

### Enforcing Boundaries

Enforcing Boundaries enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by maintaining distance between lecturers and students thereby retaining the expertise and value of the lecturer as the “font of knowledge”. Boundaries can be established around the content to be covered, the method of delivery, the role of the lecturer and the time availability of the lecturer. All lecturers Enforce Boundaries to some extent as a necessary part of their role to ensure the class or lecture proceeds and covers the relevant material. However, lecturers utilising a Distancing approach will tend to set more rigid boundaries due to the influence of the properties of Higher Controlling and Higher Intellectualising.

The property of Higher Controlling ensures that Boundaries are strongly enforced, which means that differences amongst students are unlikely to be taken into account. When Enforcing Boundaries is coupled with the property of Higher Intellectualising it tends to keep the focus on ideas rather than people, again meaning that differences amongst individual students are not taken into account. Tactics used in Enforcing Boundaries are Establishing Rules, Monitoring Time, Protecting Self and Referring.

Table 5.4 presents the moderating variables that influence the tactics found in Enforcing Boundaries.

Table 5.4: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Enforcing Boundaries within the Strategy of Distancing

<b>Enforcing Boundaries</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Establishing Rules	Valuing High Academic Standards	University Policies
Monitoring Time	Nil	Workload Demands
Protecting Self	Valuing High Academic Standards	Workload Demands, University Policies
Referring	Valuing High Academic Standards	Support Services

### *Establishing Rules*

Establishing Rules is a tactic designed to ensure that the students know what is expected of them in class. It involves telling students what they need to do, what the lecturer will accept and what standards are required. Establishing Rules focuses on ensuring that rules are clearly transmitted and does not check for understanding.

Establishing Rules is most likely to occur when lecturers value high academic standards and are focused on ensuring that students know what standards are expected of them. Clearly establishing rules enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by minimising the likelihood that students will misunderstand or query what is expected of them in the class and in relation to assessment.

Lecturers who believe that academic standards are very important are likely to set rules that are not open to negotiation. Rules will apply generally to assignments and include word limits, plagiarism, referencing and standards and will represent both the lecturer's and the university's requirements.

Rules tend to be established regarding how work will be assessed, for example, in relation to issues such as word limit: “I’m going to read to where I think 2000 is and then stop reading ... the task is to be concise”. Rules are likely to be made clear concerning cheating and plagiarising with lecturers citing examples of students who had failed subjects in the past because of cheating or plagiarising and stressing how they would spot it: “I’ve been doing this for too long, I am expert in my field”.

If a lecturer believes that students should be independent learners then they are less likely to become involved in assisting students directly and will, as a rule, either refer them to other services or tell them to find out for themselves. This can apply across a range of situations including telling students to look up information in the library, or ask a librarian for help, to saying to students involved in a group assignment that “it is your job to sort your group out”.

### *Monitoring Time*

Monitoring time is a tactic for managing competing demands and Maintaining Competence in all aspects of the academic role. If a lecturer feels under pressure to meet the competing demands of their role, particularly teaching, research and administration, then they are more likely to establish stringent time boundaries and monitor their time.

Monitoring Time is most influenced by the moderating variable of Workload Demands as lecturers will become more focused on monitoring their time when they perceive their workload as demanding with conflicting demands on their time and energy. Monitoring Time is used to assist the lecturer in Maintaining Competence as the careful management of time permits him or her to prioritise competing work demands.

In order to monitor and control their time lecturers tend to establish set consultation times. Small classes with manageable student numbers enable lecturers to formally timetable individual meeting times “to deal with any student’s issues”. When lecturers are managing large subjects they are likely to be more rigid with their

time due to the sheer number of students. For example, one lecturer with a large first year subject changed her open door policy because she was “drowning”. When lecturers are managing post-graduate subjects they tend to find the students demanding of time, assistance and feedback and therefore have to be more regimented in how they manage their time.

Some lecturers noted that international students from Asian countries are more likely to want to speak to the teacher after class in order to ask questions or clarify a point. If a lecturer is feeling under time pressure, or believes that discussion should occur within class time, then he or she is more likely to perceive discussions after class as an imposition on their time. One lecturer commented that even whilst he is walking and talking with the students after class he finds himself “at the same time thinking this should be done in the group, not on the way out of the door”.

### *Protecting Self*

Protecting Self refers to behaviours designed to alleviate work pressures so that the lecturer does not become overly stressed by competing demands. Protecting Self appears to be primarily a response to Forces in the Environment of work pressure and limited support for lecturers attempting to work with students.

Protecting Self tends to result from a combination of moderating variables, particularly Valuing High Academic Standards, Workload Demands and University Policies. Lecturers who want to achieve high academic standards in their own teaching and research, as well as transmit these standards to students, and who feel under pressure from workload demands and unsupported by the university are more likely to utilise Protecting Self tactics.

Competing demands in the workload that are difficult to manage increase the likelihood that lecturers will create a greater distance between themselves and student issues. In other words they are choosing not to become engaged with the students. “There’s just some things that you know you should probably ask the question but you think where it’s going to take me I just don’t have the energy or time so you just let it drop”. The tendency for Protecting Self is likely to increase in circumstances

where lecturers perceive that the university offers them limited support and they find it is difficult to perform the job when “no time is given to those roles”.

Workload demands that prevent the lecturer from having time to engage with individual students tend to lead to Distancing strategies irrespective of the lecturer’s personal preference or mode of teaching. If a lecturer adopts a people focus he or she will find Protecting Self harder and struggle with the implications of withdrawing their support for the students: “The reason I’m probably sick at the moment is I’m contemplating on top of what I was doing before [provides long list of activities] ... the only thing we can cut or slash is the things that relate to ... the students and the teaching ... So the students are going to suffer ... I hate to see them flounder.”

Lecturers who adopt an ideas focus are more likely to perceive Protecting Self as a necessary and productive tactic, as it enables them to concentrate on research and therefore generate research as well as impart ideas and knowledge effectively. As one lecturer commented: “You have to be completely ruthless or else we’ll all have nervous breakdowns, or we’ll never finish the research that we need to inform what we’re doing in the longer term.” In this way Protecting Self is a necessary tactic for Maintaining Competence in all aspects of the work.

### *Referring*

Referring involves advising students of other services such as student support services, librarians and on-line material and telling them to access these services.

Referring enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by ensuring he or she does not take on tasks that are perceived to be outside their domain of expertise.

The moderating variables of Valuing High Academic Standards and Support Services influence the tactic of Referring. When lecturers value high standards and support services are available they may refer students to services.

If lecturers perceive their primary role as transmitting knowledge and presenting ideas they are more likely to refer students to other services rather than become involved in assisting them. For example, lecturers refer students to student support services for

assistance in preparing and writing assignments, to librarians for assistance in accessing resources, and to language support centres for assistance in writing in English.

Lecturers who prefer to refer students to other services rather than become involved will tend to enforce these boundaries even when there is feedback from students that they are not satisfied with services. Enforcing such boundaries protects the lecturer from becoming involved in a potentially demanding situation of either supporting students themselves or tackling inadequacies in other services. For example, one lecturer commented that “they often don’t seem to go to learning skills and don’t know and some people who have gone have felt it’s not been adequate, now you can’t please all the people all the time and I don’t know exactly what they meant by inadequate and didn’t really, to tell you the truth, want to buy into it because I’ve got enough”.

### **Consequences**

Distancing strategies can be very powerful in assisting lecturers Maintain Competence as they enable them to work in their areas of expertise and knowledge. In addition they enable the lecturer to control the content and process of the classes they conduct whilst potentially ignoring students or situations they do not wish to encounter. The consequences of the strategy of Distancing include the Transmission of Ideas to students and Sidelining.

#### Transmission of Ideas

Transmission of Ideas is the traditional model for lecturing, a model that consists of the lecturer at the front of a group of students imparting his or her knowledge and ideas whilst the students listen, absorb and learn from the lecturer’s expertise. It is a model that tends to be utilised in most lectures at university and, to varying degrees, within classes and tutorials.

Distancing strategies tend to be most effective when the intent is to transmit ideas, particularly to large groups of students and especially when those students are receptive to, and capable of, absorbing the ideas. Distancing is therefore an important strategy for lecturers to use when their role requires that they impart content.

Whilst many lecturers did not discuss the use of Distancing strategies during interviews, Distancing strategies were noted in each observation to a greater or lesser degree. It appears that lecturers were giving a 'properline' response in interviews based on a belief that they are expected to respond to students rather than distance themselves. In practice it appears lecturers use Distancing strategies as well as other strategies. There is a fine line at times between the various quadrants and, as discussed, Distancing strategies are most appropriate in traditional lectures where individual needs cannot be taken into account without disrupting the imparting of ideas. Distancing strategies are also a response to competing demands amongst students and within the lecturer's own workload.

Distancing strategies may be the expected and preferred model for some students who have an expectation that lecturers will transmit knowledge and ideas. This is particularly likely to be the case when the intellectual engagement with ideas is already part of a student's repertoire and/or when they have been educated this way previously. However, Distancing strategies have a tendency to leave out the students who do not easily take up that role, and it appeared from both interviews and observations that many international students fall into this latter category, whether that be for reasons of language, their own educational background, a sense of being sidelined, or other factors.

### Sidelineing

Sidelineing refers to the conscious or unconscious ignoring of particular students whilst engaging with other students resulting in the sidelined students being on the outer of the group. Sidelineing tends to occur when lecturers have strong preferences for a particular style of student behaviour, in particular a preference for more active students, and it leads to those students who are quieter and apparently passive being paid less attention.

Lecturers who stated an interest in working with all students were also observed to, albeit unconsciously, sideline students who were not participating actively in the group. Sidelineing was not observed in traditional lectures where lecturers were imparting information and knowledge to the whole group, and therefore were not showing any preference for one group of students over another group.

Distancing strategies appear to be more problematic when there is a diverse student cohort with differing expectations regarding academic processes and differing levels of socialisation into the academic culture. When this is the case, students who do not behave according to the lecturer's expectations tend to be Sidelined. For example one lecturer when discussing international students recognised that "they're not included in terms of them contributing anything or us being able to interact with them ... they tend to get sidelined by me and then by the students that I work well with ... they're simply included physically ...".

It is not the purpose of this research to explore the issue from the students' perspective, however it seems that Distancing strategies tend to leave students to "sink or swim". This appears to be even more the case for international students who tend not to pick up the "active" role within the class, a role for which many lecturers express a preference and unconsciously respond to even when they desire to treat everyone equally.

### Maintaining Competence

The focus on Transmission of Ideas and Sidelining of students who do not appear to meet expectations enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence. This is particularly the case for lecturers whose primary focus is on ideas and who prefer a structured approach. Lecturers who take a people focus and are more flexible in their approach also tend to utilise Distancing strategies in certain circumstances and in order to protect themselves from overwhelming workloads.

Distancing strategies which are high on both Intellectualising and Controlling will tend not to accommodate diversity as in this approach the lecturer does not adapt their own style to meet different needs. This may be due in part to the environmental context, such as a traditional lecture or workload demands, or the lecturer's personal preferences, or a combination of the moderating variables.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the strategy of Distancing within the Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence. The strategy of Distancing describes some of the

behaviours used by lecturers as they seek to address their main concern of responding to the needs of a heterogeneous student population whilst also maintaining their own competence.

Distancing is comprised of the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas, Challenging, Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries. It is the interplay of the properties of Higher Intellectualising and Higher Controlling that leads to the specific tactics displayed in Distancing with the consequences of Transmission of Ideas and Sidelining. The tactics evident in the strategy of Distancing have been discussed in this chapter with examples given from data to demonstrate and support the theory.

This chapter has demonstrated how Distancing strategies, with their emphasis on ideas and control, as shown by the properties of Higher Intellectualising and Higher Controlling, enable lecturers to Maintain Competence. They achieve this both by exhibiting expertise and by limiting the content and the process of the class to material and methods within which they are confident of their expertise.

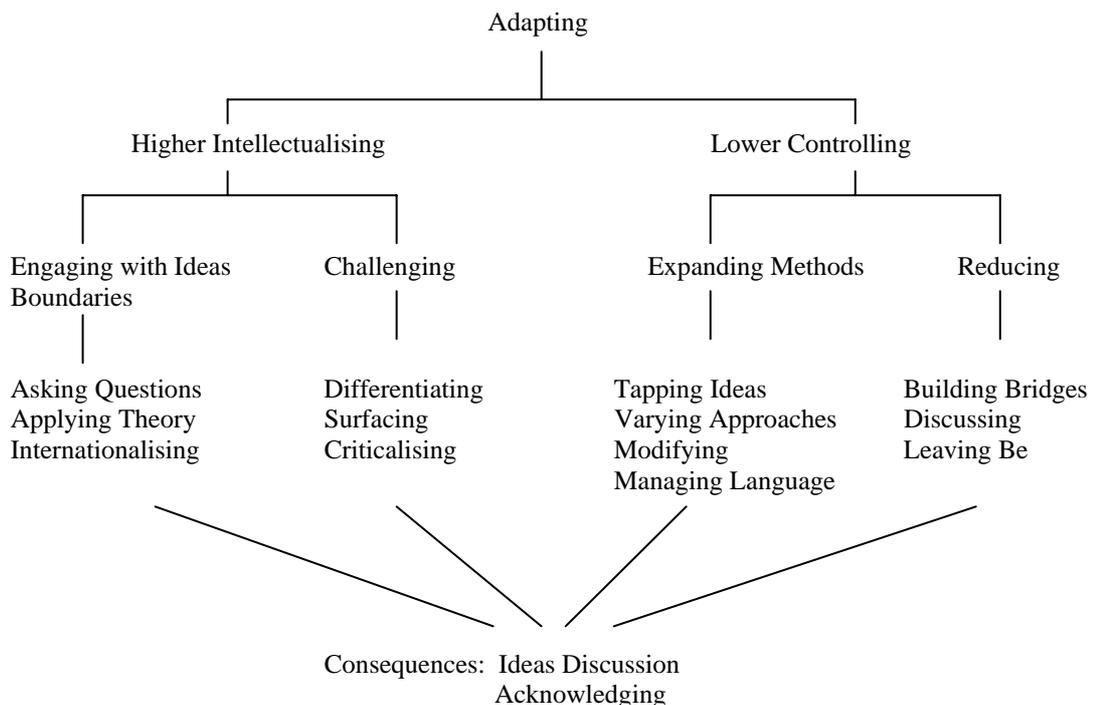
## Chapter Six - Strategy of Adapting

### Introduction

The strategy of Adapting is ideas focused and flexible. Adapting is comprised of the property of Higher Intellectualising with the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging, and the property of Lower Controlling with the sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries.

The combination of Higher Intellectualising and Lower Controlling creates a different dynamic as compared to Higher Intellectualising coupled with Higher Controlling as occurs in Distancing, or when Lower Controlling is coupled with Lower Intellectualising as in Relating strategies. The tactics utilised in Adapting are focused on the combination of ideas and flexibility resulting in the consequences of Ideas Discussion and Acknowledging.

Figure 6.1: Strategy of Adapting



Adapting approaches that are high on intellectualising and low on controlling enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by focusing on ideas and by being flexible in their methods of teaching. Adapting strategies occur most frequently when the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment are conducive to flexible approaches to the development of knowledge and ideas.

The process of Adapting to heterogeneous groups of students can foster a sense of competence in those lecturers who value their ability to respond differentially. If lecturers perceive the discussion and sharing of ideas and knowledge as desirable then they are likely to believe the ability to facilitate this process is indicative of their overall competence.

Adapting approaches are more likely to occur in classes or tutorials than in traditional lectures as Adapting strategies, which require interaction between lecturer and students, work most effectively with smaller groups. If the subject is concerned with content, such as international management or organisation behaviour, Adapting approaches are more likely to occur, as the subject itself focuses on understanding and adapting to diverse environments and people.

Lecturers who themselves come from an overseas background tend to use Adapting strategies as they draw on their own experience to empathise with students and to highlight different perspectives. They are also likely to use their knowledge of differences between countries and cultures to adapt material in the class. For example, one lecturer who had moved to Australia from Asia commented that Australian lecturers and students tend to focus on European and American events and are often ignorant about Asian countries. He found that “bringing any materials into the teaching environment gave, not a culture shock, but they [students] were interested to know more about it”.

If a lecturer has a strong interest in teaching methodology he or she is more likely to use Adapting strategies. The focus on teaching approaches and the desire to find interesting and challenging means of presenting material to students will tend to lead to greater diversity in teaching methods.

Adapting strategies maintain the knowledge expertise of the lecturer but facilitate a more equal distribution of power between lecturer and students. Adapting provides opportunities for students to contribute to the discussion and share their own knowledge and experiences, and is based on the willingness of the lecturer to modify his or her approaches when appropriate. Thus, the lecturer Maintains Competence by continuing in the role of knowledge expert, and by demonstrating intellectual openness and flexibility.

This chapter will present the Higher Intellectualising sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging as represented in the strategy of Adapting, and the Lower Controlling sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries. As mentioned, the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging are enacted differently in Adapting strategies compared to Distancing strategies. The property of Lower Controlling results in lecturers holding more discussion with students and utilising diversity to bring in new ideas and discuss the global applicability of theory.

### **Higher Intellectualising Sub-Strategies**

Engaging with Ideas and Challenging are both sub-strategies that derive from the property of Higher Intellectualising. When combined with the Lower Controlling sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries they create the approaches found in the strategy of Adapting.

The Higher Intellectualising property in both Distancing and Adapting ensures the lecturer Maintains Competence by keeping the focus on ideas. Lecturers using Adapting strategies also Maintain Competence by keeping the focus on ideas, but the Lower Controlling property results in greater flexibility in the presentation and development of ideas and knowledge.

### Engaging with Ideas

Engaging with Ideas, when combined with the Lower Controlling sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries, involves the joint development of ideas by lecturer and students. It enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence

through their knowledge expertise and their willingness and ability to present and discuss ideas in a flexible manner.

Engaging with Ideas sub-strategies tend to assume that students will participate and that the lecturer will employ a variety of methods to facilitate the sharing of ideas and knowledge. The intent is for students to learn from the lecturer as well as from the different knowledge and ideas that exist within the student group. Engaging with Ideas as an Adapting sub-strategy is likely to accommodate diversity by allowing different ideas and perspectives to emerge.

Tactics evident in Engaging with Ideas may overlap in Adapting and Distancing, but generally the tactics employed in the Adapting strategy demonstrate greater flexibility and result in different consequences. Tactics of the sub-strategy of Engaging with Ideas within Adapting are Asking Questions, Applying Theory, and Internationalising. The tactics and the moderating variables that influence them are set out in Table 6.1

Table 6.1: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Engaging with Ideas within the Strategy of Adapting

<b>Engaging with Ideas</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Asking Questions	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation	Student Cohort
Applying Theory	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching	Subject Content, Student Cohort
Internationalising	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity	Student Cohort

### *Asking Questions*

Asking Questions involves the lecturer deliberately asking individuals and/or the group of students for their input. Questions may be asked to elicit responses to specific questions or to open up the discussion and seek contributions. Asking Questions takes the focus away from the lecturer and places it on the students.

Asking Questions results from the combination of the moderating variables of Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation and Student Cohort. These moderating variables tend to increase the likelihood of the lecturer asking questions in order to involve all students, both verbally active and quieter students, in the discussion of ideas.

When lecturers value ideas and want to engage students in discussions they are more likely to Ask Questions with the intent of having students contribute their own thoughts. Lecturers who are ideas focused will be seeking the idea rather than focusing on the individual, so if one student does not answer the lecturer will move to the next student, until someone has either answered the question or started to participate in the discussion. This enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by keeping the focus on eliciting a response from any student rather than concentrating on individual students who may or may not respond.

Questions may be directed to the group as a whole or focused on individual students. Lecturers who are less concerned about people and more interested in developing the discussion will tend to “point to people and say well what do you think”. Asking Questions includes directly pointing to quiet students to seek their opinions and draw them into the discussion. For example, one lecturer commented that he is conscious of including people without too much pressure, and described his approach thus: “I will say well how about you, what do you think, without making them feel like I’m putting them on the spot”

If lecturers want students to draw links between theory and practice they are likely to ask questions to ascertain both understanding and to draw out experience. Questions are designed to draw links between theory and practice, whether the practice is a class

activity, a case study, or the students' own experience. Questions may be specific to the topic such as "why do people stereotype?" or more general such as "what do you mean by that?" Lecturers then allow time for students to respond to these questions and for other students to take part in the discussion by adding their own thoughts. The lecturer's competence is demonstrated by his or her ability to link theory and practice and assist students in understanding these links.

### *Applying Theory*

Applying Theory refers to the process of connecting theory to practice to ensure that students understand how the theory actually works. This tends to be particularly relevant in Management subjects that have a vocational orientation and stress the practical application of theory.

Applying Theory is influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, and Subject Content and Student Cohort. When lecturers want to assist students in understanding theory, and actively apply theory to their own experience or to case studies, they are more likely to use Applying Theory. This tends to occur most frequently when the subject content covers topics that have practical application, especially when practical application may vary for students from different backgrounds. Applying Theory entails presenting theory and finding practical examples to assist the students in fully understanding the application and implications of the theory. Practical examples, which may be drawn from case studies, class discussion, class activities or other resources, are used to enable students to "begin to make sense of the concept".

Lecturers who consider the practical application of theory to be important to understanding will ensure that they have the relevant examples to draw on for each class. For example: "I find that when I walk into a class it's really important that I not only provide a theoretical perspective but use case studies because I find that it's important for most Australian students to make sense of what they are reading from the text books." In this way, lecturers Maintain Competence by demonstrating their understanding of both the theoretical and the practical aspects of their subject.

Applying Theory can also be used as a response to topics that arise during the course of a class. If students raise questions or present their own experience lecturers may take the opportunity to make connections between the students' material and the relevant theory. This tactic aims to assist students in conceptualising information or experience and providing a deeper knowledge and understanding of the practice and theory of a given topic. For example: "I said well look you guys you came into this class already embracing this theory but you didn't realise that it's known as social identity theory and that you were actually contributing to the features of it. So they were very pleased with how they could now talk about social identity theory".

Interest in ideas and interest in teaching approaches combine to enable the lecturer to respond to, and accommodate, different theories, models and approaches.

Lecturers who are ideas focused but also flexible in their approaches tend to value teaching and be very clear about their teaching methods and strategies. This awareness enables them to be explicit about the strategies they choose and how they accommodate diversity within classes. Lecturers Maintain Competence by drawing on both their content expertise and their capacity to facilitate learning through the flexible presentation and discussion of ideas.

Lecturers who are focused on internationalising the curriculum will tend to use Applying Theory to demonstrate differences between different countries. This is encouraged by discussing the application and applicability of theory in different contexts and by asking students for their own understanding. For example, one Anglo-Australian lecturer commented: "the other thing is to reflect upon the applicability of management theories to Asian students and the Asian mentality, so directly confronting the substance of the subject because obviously the management theories are all Western".

### *Internationalising*

Internationalising refers to the use of theories, case studies and examples from other countries. It is more than the presentation of information about different countries as it entails utilising the knowledge and experiences of the students in the class as well as the theory.

Internationalising is more likely to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Diversity are combined with a diverse Student Cohort. Given this combination of moderating variables the focus will be on ensuring that all students have the opportunity to engage with the ideas and knowledge.

If lecturers are ideas focused and flexible, and interested in expanding the global knowledge and understanding of students, they will tend to use Internationalising tactics. They acknowledge diversity in the class and see it as important to adapt their methods to take this into account, for example: “I feel that because we have such a multicultural group of students in our class it’s pretty important to keep abreast of changes, in terms of cultural models as an example, in terms of interesting case studies which we can discuss in class and which everybody can relate to”

Internationalising tactics recognise that many students in the classes are from Asia and so tend towards including case studies from Asia as well as Australia; selecting texts that included material and, as one lecturer stated, examples “that were not just within Australia or New Zealand or not just American”; permitting students to use organisations or companies from other countries as examples for their assignments; and keeping cross-cultural theories in mind when teaching.

Lecturers who themselves come from an international background, particularly from Asia, tend to draw on their own knowledge and experience in order to internationalise the curriculum. In these instances lecturers take up a position of authority having knowledge and experience that they can share with students: “I am capable of explaining to them that in different cultures we do things differently”.

Internationalising tactics enable lecturers from overseas, or lecturers who have knowledge and experience of countries other than Australia, to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of other countries and contexts.

### Challenging

Challenging, when combined with the Lower Controlling sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries, involves encouraging and provoking students to think about different ideas and different points of view. By highlighting these issues

in discussions and encouraging the students to talk about them lecturers challenge students to think more critically.

Challenging sub-strategies are more likely to be used by lecturers who believe that it is important to develop a student's capacity for critical discussion of ideas. For instance, one lecturer spelt out this approach by stating: "I tend to be a bit controversial in some of the statements I make which tend to go against what would be their sort of implicit value system almost, and it takes a couple of weeks but eventually somebody will say something and then you've got them talking and then you'll find they'll really start to open up and throw things around".

Challenging sub-strategies, when combined with Lower Controlling sub-strategies, are focused on the development of discussion and debate within the class and on drawing out the experiences and knowledge within the student group. In this way the lecturer opens him or herself up to being challenged rather than maintaining themselves in the position of expert. If a lecturer enjoys debating issues and exploring new approaches then they are likely to use challenging tactics and Maintain Competence by participating in, and learning from, these exchanges.

Challenging sub-strategies enable lecturers to Maintain Competence, whilst at the same time accommodating diversity, and tend to be used by lecturers who want to "invite them to challenge" and who have a preference for "a vocal student, one who challenges me all the time". In these cases Maintaining Competence is achieved through the discussion and debate of ideas because the Lower Controlling aspects of Adapting strategies demonstrate the lecturer's willingness and ability to be flexible and their preference for interaction.

The Challenging tactics of Differentiating, Surfacing and Criticalising, and the moderating variables that influence them, are presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Challenging within the Strategy of Adapting

<b>Challenging</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Differentiating	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity	Subject Content, Student Cohort
Surfacing	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity	Subject Content, Student Cohort
Criticalising	Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Diversity	Student Cohort

### *Differentiating*

Differentiating refers to the process of recognising differences and drawing distinctions between students, resulting in the acknowledgement of differences and the opportunity for students to learn from these differences. Differentiating is more likely when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Diversity combine with a Subject Content that lends itself to discussion and diversity within the Student Cohort.

When a lecturer is aware of differences amongst students and interested in flexible approaches he or she will tend to use Differentiating tactics to expand the knowledge and ideas being discussed. For example, “I’ll make statements like ‘well we’ve got a very diverse class here, we’ve got people from five or six different countries and there are apparent learning style differences here in the classroom aren’t there’, and just have a bit of a discussion about that”. These tactics are used to highlight the relevance of cultural differences to management theory and practice. For example, one local lecturer explained that he draws attention to differences by statements such

as “we say well from a Western perspective we think like this, but from an Eastern perspective that’s not necessarily so”.

In this way Differentiating can be closely linked to Internationalising, as both tactics highlight similarities and differences between countries and cultures. The intent is to increase understanding and knowledge regarding the application and appropriateness of management theories in different contexts. Differentiating enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their awareness and understanding of difference, and utilising this to facilitate learning.

If lecturers perceive the mix of local and international students as representing cultural diversity they are likely to also recognise other aspects of diversity and acknowledge these when talking about theory and practice. This is particularly the case for the primary dimensions of diversity, such as race, age and gender. For example, “the models ... are from Western cultures ... and when you look at power you need to think about diversity, including age, gender and certainly culture”.

As is the case in Internationalising, Differentiating tactics are more likely to be used if the subject content is focused on international management or organisational behaviour where the focus of the subject lends itself to the discussion of similarities and differences. Diversity is seen as embedded in the content of subjects such as Organisational Behaviour or Organisational Learning: “[in OB classes] we talk about cultural values and differences across cultures, we talk about groups and diversity and processes and issues around communication and expectations.” In International Management classes the content itself focuses on managing within and across different cultures and countries, so Differentiating tactics are more likely to be adopted in these subjects.

As is the case in Internationalising, Differentiating tactics tend to be used by lecturers who come from an international background and who can draw on their own experience and recognise similarities and differences in a way that local Australian lecturers may not. Lecturers from overseas can use “experiences from the Asian environment” and can highlight the subtleties of differences within countries. For example: “there’s so many little sub-cultures and that’s important. I bring a lot of

those factors into the ... class”. In this way Differentiating tactics enable lecturers with experience and/or knowledge of other countries to Maintain Competence by highlighting and discussing similarities and differences.

### *Surfacing*

Surfacing refers to bringing material into the open so that it can be discussed, debated and analysed. It is ideas focused as it attempts to explore underlying thinking and encourage students to analyse topics and behaviours. Surfacing acknowledges and confronts responses to diversity by bringing these issues into the general discussion.

Surfacing results from a combination of moderating variables. When the Subject Content provides the context and the Student Cohort is diverse, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching and Valuing Diversity influence the lecturers who are more likely to surface underlying issues to encourage students to think critically about their ideas and beliefs.

Lecturers who have a strong belief in the importance of working with diversity and value egalitarian models are more likely to Surface behaviours and comments that they believe are contradictory to these beliefs. For example: “if they say things that I think are discriminatory, stereotypes or whatever, I tell them I am going to pick you up on that and I’m going to challenge you”.

The tendency to be alert and sensitive to issues of diversity is likely to be greater for lecturers who themselves have experienced a sense of ‘being different’. These experiences tend to increase the likelihood that lecturers will Surface any issues that arise with the aim of encouraging students to think about and question their own assumptions.

Lecturers with an international background are likely to draw on their own experience to address issues and highlight potential assumptions and bias and may find it easier to confront international students with their beliefs and/or behaviours. For example, one lecturer who came from Asia to study and later teach in Australia commented that “occasionally we discuss racist topics in tutorials because sometimes I’ve found the

international students will label anyone racist immediately they think they're not being treated the same way". She added that she believes it is easier for her to discuss racism than for Anglo-Australian lecturers who she perceives as easily labelled as racist by international students, suggesting that "I can say that to them whereas Australians can't ... [it] doesn't matter whether you are or not [racist] but you're seen as one".

Anglo-Australian lecturers may be reticent to raise issues of racism, as this could lead to misperceptions amongst students and undermine the lecturers' capacity to Maintain Competence. However, both local lecturers and those from overseas tend to confront local students with their comments. For example, "whenever there was a comment about international students I asked them what they meant by international student".

When the subject is appropriate for exploration of underlying attitudes, and lecturers are willing to raise potentially sensitive topics, they are more likely to Surface issues. For example, if the topic is concerned with 'perception' or 'international management' it provides the context for raising issues, as in the following example, where "with one group we got them to break up into different small clumps of Anglo-Australian, and Mediterranean, and Chinese and something else and to actually list out the stereotypes they had of each other".

Surfacing provides the opportunity for lecturers to Maintain Competence by addressing underlying issues they perceive as important and relevant to the overall learning process. It is more likely to be used by lecturers who are confident in their ability to surface appropriately and thereby maintain their own sense of competence when using this tactic. If a lecturer believes there is a likelihood of misunderstanding, or is not confident of his or her ability to surface appropriately and manage the resulting discussion, they are less likely to use Surfacing tactics.

### *Criticalising*

Criticalising refers to the process of challenging students to think critically about theories, textbooks and comments made by the lecturer and other students and to participate in debating these ideas.

Criticalising results from the combination of Valuing High Academic Standards, Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Diversity and Student Cohort. Lecturers who focus on actively engaging students in thinking critically about ideas and taking diverse perspectives into account tend to tap into the different backgrounds of students in the class to encourage discussion.

Lecturers who value ideas and the development of critical thinking abilities are more likely to use Criticalising tactics, particularly if they have been exposed to models of teaching that value the debate of different perspectives and ideas. This may have occurred in their own experience as a student: “I remember two outstanding lecturers that I had ... they were human, they were advocates, and I thought that’s me, that’s what I want to be, an advocate but a person, and I like to challenge”. If lecturers have a background in more adversarial professions such as Law or Industrial Relations, they are likely to use Criticalising tactics, as are lecturers who are interested in critical management theories. Criticalising enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by fostering a critical thinking capacity in students and creating the opportunity for lecturers and students to discuss and debate ideas.

Awareness of the diversity within the student group, and an interest in using this diversity to encourage the development of ideas and critical thinking, will tend to mean that lecturers are more likely to adopt Criticalising tactics when choosing and presenting texts and references. For example, “that [challenging assumptions] also means, and I’ll explicitly flag this too, that also means if you’re reading something in the textbook and you think that’s not the way it happens here ... let’s all talk about that, because maybe these textbooks in themselves are very culturally biased”.

Criticalising keeps the focus on ideas by allowing students to discuss ideas themselves whilst ensuring critical assessment of those ideas. If classes have been conducted with a more experiential focus then the lecturer may use Criticalising to discuss and explore the issues arising from the activities in order to ensure the students are linking theory and critical thinking to the experience. For example: “I see my role quite often as an irritant. When they sit back and say yes we’re making great decisions and we’re getting on with it and have no conflict I’ll throw in the

‘well that’s not a good thing, have you thought about what you’re losing by not discussing issues, have you thought about all the people who are sitting there not contributing’”.

Criticalising prevents students from simply accepting what occurs without exploring the underlying issues.

Criticalising enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their ability to explore and discuss different perspectives and ideas and to question and challenge ideas and existing knowledge.

### **Lower Controlling Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries both derive from the property of Lower Controlling which, when coupled with the property of Higher Intellectualising and the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas and Challenging, creates particular tactics relevant to the Adapting strategy.

Lower Controlling sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence by allowing him or her to engage in the exploration of ideas with students and to guide and develop student understanding in a flexible manner. The more flexible approach involves lecturers in discussing ideas and listening to students, and demonstrates a willingness and ability to learn new ideas from others as well as to transmit existing knowledge. Competence is maintained by demonstrating expertise in the majority of the knowledge and content being covered whilst also demonstrating the ability to explore issues and be open to new ideas and information.

#### Expanding Methods

Expanding Methods involves using different teaching approaches and methods to present and discuss ideas. It enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by selecting from different options according to his or her preferences and the appropriateness for the student group and the context of the subject. Expanding Methods also accommodates diversity by encouraging students to participate in the

development and presentation of ideas by contributing their own experience and understandings.

The tactics used in Expanding Methods within the Lower Controlling strategy of Adapting are Tapping Ideas, Varying Approaches, Modifying and Managing Language. These tactics and the moderating variables that influence them are presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Expanding Methods within the Strategy of Adapting

<b>Expanding Methods</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Tapping Ideas	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity	Student Cohort
Varying Approaches	Valuing Teaching	Student Cohort, University Policies and Processes
Modifying	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity	Student Cohort
Managing Language	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity	Student Cohort

### *Tapping Ideas*

Tapping Ideas involves exploring students' ideas and knowledge about management practices in different work environments and different countries in order to learn from the students' first hand experience of different cultures and contexts.

Tapping Ideas is more likely to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity and Student Cohort combine. Lecturers who want students to participate and perceive diversity as a teaching tool will utilise the diversity that exists within the student cohort to raise and discuss ideas.

Lecturers tend to use Tapping Ideas if they want students to draw connections between theory and their own experiences. In this case the lecturer is likely to ask students to “talk about their experiences ... and their work experiences as well”, and utilise this information to link theory and practice, and highlight the applicability of theory.

Lecturers who believe in the value of exploring knowledge and ideas from different perspectives and are willing to acknowledge the expertise of the students in terms of their specific experiences and knowledge are likely to use Tapping Ideas which can expand the knowledge base for students and the lecturer. As one lecturer commented, he was able “to get to some real good insights from Asian students about whether this is applicable ... would this particular theory or concept or technique work in Hong Kong, or why would it not work in Taiwan, or KL ...”

If lecturers are interested in developing their own knowledge and ideas they will tend to tap ideas from as many sources as possible and draw on these for teaching purposes, with the intent of bringing new material and approaches into their teaching. Lecturers who utilise Distancing and Adapting strategies tend to be interested in the development of new ideas, but lecturers using Adapting strategies may use these ideas to adapt their teaching processes as well as adding to their content. For example, “I certainly kind of read as I go as well so when it comes to new ways of doing things, and I always want to work out new ways of doing things because I think you can get a bit tired doing the same old thing”.

Lecturers Maintain Competence in Tapping Ideas by utilising the available experience and knowledge within the class to assist the students in developing knowledge and understanding, and for increasing their own knowledge and understanding by listening to the students’ experiences and perceptions.

### *Varying Approaches*

Varying Approaches refers to the different methods lecturers use to respond to different groups of students. The use of different methods is designed to increase the accessibility of ideas by utilising different approaches within the class so as to “incorporate different styles” and facilitate the development of knowledge and understanding.

Varying Approaches results from the combination of Valuing Teaching, Student Cohort and University Policies and Practices. Lecturers who value teaching are more likely to adjust and adapt their approach to suit diverse groups of students and will use available resources to assist in varying their approach to accommodate differing needs.

Lecturers who have had experience teaching off-shore, that is taking courses from Australian universities to other countries, will be more likely to use the tactic of Varying Approaches. The experience of teaching off-shore, and discovering that not all assumptions about overseas students are correct, tends to cause lecturers to question their usual methods and look for alternatives. For example, “we had made some wrong assumptions, we had under-estimated their capacity to actually engage in that. They had lots of examples and some pretty strong stuff actually, and they were actually quite forthcoming around it.”

Varying Approaches may be a response to perceived differences within groups of students. If a lecturer perceives that there are differences within the class due to levels of English language proficiency he or she is likely to vary the complexity of the content they present. For example, lecturers who teach predominantly international student groups may reduce the complexity of the subject when the students’ language ability is not high and take the view that “so long as they have the basic concept of the theory ... I just found that their English just wasn’t strong enough for me to then [ask them to] consider this and if you look at this difference ...I could do that occasionally but not as often”.

When a lecturer perceives different interest and/or intellectual levels in the class he or she will tend to vary approaches to try to accommodate these different levels. This is likely to be achieved through the use of additional references and materials for those students who are interested and able to take the ideas to a greater depth. For example, “the other thing I’ve found that works quite well is to have a lot of additional reference material and know that the brighter students who get it really quickly will be able to access that and go off and do it”.

To provide groups of students with as many different methods of learning and mediums for accessing information and knowledge as possible lecturers are more likely to use Varying Approaches. In these instances Varying Approaches includes resourcing by using options such as online announcements, putting lecture notes on line, and providing written booklets that give students additional information. In this way lecturers Maintain Competence by demonstrating their capacity to utilise a range of appropriate resources.

If a lecturer is interested in different learning styles they are likely to use Varying Approaches: “It’s making sure that you’re giving them theory, you’re giving them time to think, you’re giving them hands on, and you’re telling them why you’re actually doing that, and the pragmatic reason is that’s how they learn”. Varying Approaches enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by utilising their different skills and by being responsive to their perceptions of the needs of different groups of students.

### *Modifying*

Modifying refers to the process of making adjustments to expectations and assessment in order to facilitate student learning. It focuses on a modification of the lecturer’s own approach due to the recognition of diversity and the desire to engage students with knowledge and ideas by using different techniques.

Modifying tactics are more likely to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Equity combine with Student Cohort. This combination increases the likelihood that lecturers will be focused on

finding ways to enable all students to participate equally, and will facilitate this by providing additional assistance to students whom they perceive as having difficulty participating and/or meeting requirements. Modifying enables lecturers who Value Teaching, Value Active Participation and Value Diversity to work effectively with diverse groups of students and maintain their own sense of competence by adapting their methods to suit the perceived needs of the students.

Lecturers who believe that incentives are needed in order to motivate students to put in additional effort will tend to use Modifying tactics. In this instance the lecturer is likely to use incentives to encourage students to engage with ideas. Lecturers may attach marks for aspects of student work including participation in class, the number of references cited in assignments, written summaries of chapters or quick tests.

If a lecturer values verbal participation in class he or she is more likely to have a mark for participation as an incentive for students, believing that “it’s not enough to say just I want you all to participate and then ask questions ... there’s got to be a reason, I think there’s got to be an outcome for the students”. These marks are designed to encourage and reward the desired behaviour of verbal participation. However, lecturers who value verbal participation in class, but have concerns that assessing verbal participation does not necessarily reflect learning or commitment, are likely to use Modifying. For example, one lecturer commented that “I have no business to have marks for participation ... I don’t hold it against them if they don’t talk”, and another held the view that “most East Asian students at least tend not to speak, it doesn’t necessarily mean that they’re not listening to me or they’ve not understood”. This is more likely to occur if a lecturer has learnt from experience that it can be a mistake “jumping to the conclusion that if someone is vocal someone is very confident or has necessarily understood something”.

When a lecturer is conscious of the language difficulties for some students and believes this affects their grades they may modify their requirements in order to provide international students with alternative assessment. Examples of such modifications to assessment include the opportunity for students to study organisations from their home country for assignments, or “allowing one student to give a class presentation in his native tongue ... he brought along a translator ...

[because] he had great difficulties with speaking the language although he was quite able to pick up the spoken word from us”.

Modifying tactics tend to take into account different expectations and learning styles within the class. If lecturers believe that it is their responsibility to adapt to the diversity in the class as much as the students’ responsibility to adapt to expectations of the subject then they will tend to use Modifying tactics. This enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their capacity to adapt. Lecturers will make it their business to take into account that people come from different cultures and attempt to adapt and modify approaches accordingly, not to lower standards, but to acknowledge and work with difference. “I will adapt to you because I understand your circumstances in the sense that it’s a different culture, and that can be intimidating, you’re not used to this lifestyle if you like initially”.

### *Managing Language*

Managing Language refers to the tactic used by lecturers to adapt their own spoken and written language to take into account that not all students are fluent in English.

Managing Language will tend to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Equity combine with Student Cohort. Lecturers who want to assist all students in fully understanding topics, and who perceive some students as having difficulty with this due to language, will be more likely to use Managing Language.

If lecturers are aware of different levels of language fluency within the class and are concerned to ensure that all students understand the ideas being presented and discussed they are more likely to use Managing Language. Managing Language tends to be comprised of a range of different behaviours and methods including watching the use of slang and colloquial language, slowing the speed of talking, explaining the meaning of words, providing hand outs, including visual as well as written cues and being “much more careful about leaving things up on the overheads for people to copy down”.

Lecturers who are conscious of Managing Language are also more likely to utilise technology to assist in the process of providing language options to students. For example: “I tape all of my lectures and then download or upload them onto the Web so that the students can listen to them from home, and I make sure that I advertise that and that’s a benefit for everyone, but I also make sure that I say that one of the benefits is that if English is your second language you can listen to it from home and you can stop and start”.

Dilemmas can occur with Managing Language. If a lecturer slows down his or her speaking and leaves visual cues up for extended periods of time students who are capable in the language can become frustrated. This requires lecturers to think about how to balance the needs of both local (first language speakers) and international students who are likely to be less fluent in English. At this point, if lecturers are concerned, they tend to use Modifying tactics and provide additional resources to capable students, or Varying Approaches including breaking students into small groups to work on the topic at their own pace.

The dilemma of balancing different needs in the class in relation to Managing Language also arises when translators are present and lecturers have to take the translation process into account, which slows the class down for everyone and adds to the workload for the lecturer. For example, “you lacked a degree of spontaneity that you might have had, you had to really do a lot more detailed planning and you had to constantly be thinking how do I get this across, and when do I break up the idea to give the translator something reasonable to hold onto”.

Managing Language can be challenging for lecturers however competence is maintained when lecturers are able to utilise approaches and methods that facilitate understanding for all students.

### Reducing Boundaries

Reducing Boundaries involves developing conditions that enable lecturers and students to interact in order to discuss and debate ideas. Lecturers Maintain Competence by retaining authority whilst providing more opportunities for students

to ask questions, challenge, direct the flow of discussion or activity, and manage the learning process. Reducing Boundaries when linked with Higher Intellectualising sub-strategies aims to encourage and challenge students to engage with ideas through discussion and debate.

The Reducing Boundaries tactics of Building Bridges, Discussing and Leaving Be, and the moderating variables that influence them, are presented in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Reducing Boundaries within the Strategy of Adapting

<b>Reducing Boundaries</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Building Bridges	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity	Student Cohort
Discussing	Valuing Active Participation	Student Cohort, Teaching Delivery Method
Leaving Be	Valuing Active Participation	Student Cohort

### *Building Bridges*

The tactic of Building Bridges involves developing ideas and understanding between people by exploring theories, thoughts and issues together, without a clear hierarchical distinction between lecturer and student.

Building Bridges is affected by Forces in the Lecturer, specifically Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Equity, irrespective of Forces in the Environment. Lecturers who want to engage all students and ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate equally will tend to use Building Bridges across different teaching contexts and subject content, and will tend to be less influenced by factors outside the class environment.

Lecturers who value the contributions made by students to the generation of ideas are more likely to Build Bridges in order to foster the capacity for lecturers and students to work together to explore ideas. Building bridges reduces the hierarchical relationship between lecturer and student and facilitates sharing of ideas and knowledge. Lecturers who have a strong desire to work closely with students and to learn together may take building bridges further and actually become involved in joint projects. For example, “I went into a collaboration with my ... students to evaluate the experience for other students doing it online, which is the closest collaboration I’ve ever come to with students, and it was fantastic.” This is most likely to occur with post-graduate students in joint research projects or class activities.

When a lecturer is interested in assisting students to work together as joint learners they are likely to use the tactic of Building Bridges. This reduces the sense of difference and focuses on finding similarities so that these can be built on for productive working relationships: “look at what the similarities are ... that may be the way to go to get the bridges built between the differences ... first of all we’re all human beings”.

If a lecturer comes from overseas he or she is more likely to use Building Bridges to share his or her own experiences with students. For example, one lecturer who had recently moved to Australia stated: “I find that those students who speak another language are very willing to compare and I find they actually ask me about my experience. In one of the classes they’re expected to bring something that symbolises their culture, and I just brought a flag [from my country] because there’s so much history and culture behind that flag”.

Building bridges enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by sharing their own experience to add to the overall understanding of the theory and ideas being discussed as well as encouraging students, and by developing collaborative working relationships with students. Building Bridges is more likely to occur with small classes and with final year or post-graduate students.

### *Discussing*

The tactic of Discussing refers to the process of encouraging students to ask questions and give comments and engage in dialogue between lecturer and students.

Discussing is primarily influenced by the moderating variable of Valuing Active Participation. Lecturers who value active participation are likely to encourage students to discuss issues and utilise this tactic in all contexts.

Discussing tactics tend to be used when a lecturer wants to generate discussion within the class. Discussing may involve answering questions in class or allowing the student to “prompt the issue that we discuss”. It reduces boundaries by enabling students to take an active part in the discussion so that “rather than me instructing them, or directing or demonstrating to them, it would be much more a kind of dialogue between me and the student”.

If students have information, knowledge and/or ideas that the lecturer does not possess, and if they present or discuss these ideas in class, the lecturer can use the tactic of Discussing to facilitate the discussion without being the content expert. In this case the lecturer stays out of the “expert” role, recognising that he or she is “exploring this as much as anybody else”. Lecturers who are interested in ideas and also interested in the learning process, and who do not have a strong need to maintain control and appear “all-knowing” are more likely to utilise the tactic of Discussing.

Discussing can be utilised in any context – class or lecture – if the lecturer is interested in facilitating the process, which he or she can do by suggesting to students that they feel free to ask questions or comment at any time.

Maintaining Competence is achieved by the lecturer demonstrating willingness to engage with the exploration of ideas as part of the learning process. Lecturers who see their role as a “facilitator of discussion” are very likely to use Discussing tactics, however, if a lecturer is in any way threatened by students greater knowledge in a given topic area they will be less likely to use Discussing as this could undermine their sense of competence.

### *Leaving Be*

Leaving Be refers to tactics where lecturers do not monitor and control students but leave it to the students to make their own decisions regarding how they work. Leaving Be assists the lecturer in Maintaining Competence by returning the responsibility to the students for the outcomes they achieve. It differs from Distancing strategies in its emphasis on enabling students to take some control and set the direction of the discussion.

Leaving Be results from the combination of Valuing Active Participation and Student Cohort. It is most likely to be used by lecturers who strongly value active participation and expect students to take responsibility for their own learning. Responses to the lecturer's approach will vary depending on the student cohort so that lecturers will tend either to let the group set its direction and/or pay little attention to students who are not actively participating.

Lecturers who hold the perception that students are adult learners and able to self-direct, and who manage their class on the basis of this model, are more likely to use Leaving Be tactics. Leaving Be involves taking a less directive, and sometimes non-directive role that assumes that "they've chosen to be there and they can select in or out to come to class ... I'm not there to monitor and control".

Leaving Be tactics are more likely to be used when a lecturer believes a group of students are willing and able to take up their role as self-directed learners. Whilst this may not occur in all classes lecturers who value this mode of teaching are positive about the occasions when it does happen: "the best tutorial group I've ever had, they were absolutely wonderful. I'd literally walk into the room and throw out a topic and away they go and I didn't have to do anything, it was the dream tutorial group".

Lecturers who value such active participation and expect it to occur eventually, even if it is not present at the commencement of a semester, are also likely to use Leaving Be tactics and assume that students will become more active and self-directed over time. If lecturers assume students will actively participate they tend to leave the quieter students and not attempt to facilitate their involvement. For example, "my

innate style is to pretty much let the discussion be driven by the active students”. Leaving Be is a more laissez-faire approach that relies on students taking up a more active and self-directed role, and leaves the responsibility for this with the students.

If a lecturer feels there are topics or issues that could be addressed but that there is insufficient time then they are likely to use Leaving Be tactics, as “sometimes forcing them can be too painful and besides it’s only thirteen weeks”. When lecturers are under pressure, either due to time or other work requirements, they are also more likely to use Leaving Be tactics in order to avoid starting something that they cannot finish, which may then undermine their capacity to Maintain Competence.

### **Consequences**

The Consequences of Adapting strategies are Ideas Discussion and Acknowledging. In keeping with the property of Higher Intellectualising the focus is on ideas, but the property of Lower Controlling means that differences in people’s background, knowledge and experience is acknowledged and students are encouraged to take an active role in discussing ideas.

Adapting strategies are most likely to be used when the intent is to explore ideas and different perceptions and understandings. They tend to work most effectively in smaller classes or tutorials, and with lecturers who are willing and able to be flexible in their approaches and less concerned with the role of “expert”. Under these conditions lecturers and students can learn from each other and develop knowledge and ideas through robust discussion.

### **Ideas Discussion**

Ideas Discussion involves the lecturer and students in the sharing and discussion of ideas with the intent of expanding knowledge.

Adapting strategies tend to be based on the assumption that students will participate, and do not necessarily take into account that different cultural and educational

backgrounds and language skills may make it more difficult for some students to participate. It is likely that Adapting strategies will be popular with students who enjoy discussion and are comfortable participating verbally in class, however they may be challenging for students who find it difficult to speak in front of larger groups.

Adapting strategies are likely to be influenced by environmental contexts, particularly the size of class. Discussion and sharing is more likely to occur within classes and tutorials than in large lectures. Adapting strategies tend to be utilised by lecturers who enjoy discussing ideas with students and developing their own, as well as students' knowledge.

### Acknowledging

The consequence of Acknowledging arises from the combination of Engaging with Ideas and Reducing Boundaries, which results in lecturers focusing on encouraging students to share their knowledge and ideas and thereby enabling different ideas and perceptions to be highlighted and acknowledged. Accommodating differences amongst students, by recognising and addressing different backgrounds, experiences and ideas and working with these in order to develop knowledge and understanding increases the likelihood that all students feel acknowledged. In this way Acknowledging is an outcome that is built on the strengths of all students and enables all participants, students and lecturer, to work effectively together in the exploration of ideas.

Adapting strategies appear to generally accommodate differences amongst students whilst also thoroughly addressing theory and content. Adapting strategies acknowledge international students by introducing international material, allowing some flexibility in expectations and assessment and by asking international students about their experiences and knowledge of different countries. However, as mentioned, Adapting strategies tend to encourage and expect verbal participation, which does not acknowledge different norms of behaviour and may not be conducive to the involvement of some international students.

## Maintaining Competence

Adapting strategies and the consequence of Ideas Discussion and Acknowledging are more likely to be chosen by, and effective for, lecturers who enjoy discussion of ideas and who perceive themselves as learners as well as teachers. Maintaining Competence is achieved through the continued role of “expert” for some aspects of the work, and the additional role of “joint learner” in response to new ideas and knowledge and the differing experiences and understandings provided by students.

Adapting strategies enable lecturers to Maintain Competence as the process of acknowledging different ideas and perspectives allows lecturers to increase their own knowledge base and develop their own understandings whilst at the same time demonstrating an intellectual open mind to the students. This is particularly the case for those lecturers who value learning and who are not threatened by sharing expertise and discussing ideas with students.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the strategy of Adapting with the sub-strategies of Engaging with Ideas, Challenging, Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries. Adapting is influenced by the interplay of the properties of Higher Intellectualising and Lower Controlling.

Adapting as a strategy within the theory of Maintaining Competence is concerned with a flexible approach to ideas resulting in the consequences of Ideas Discussion and Acknowledging. The tactics presented in this chapter highlight the behaviours used by lecturers when they adopt Adapting strategies as a method of addressing their main concern of meeting the needs of a heterogeneous student population and maintaining their own competence.

This chapter demonstrates how Adapting strategies, with their emphasis on ideas and flexibility, as shown by the properties of Higher Intellectualising and Lower Controlling, enable the lecturer to Maintain Competence by exhibiting expertise and

ability and willingness to be receptive to new ideas and different perspectives in order to develop knowledge and understanding.

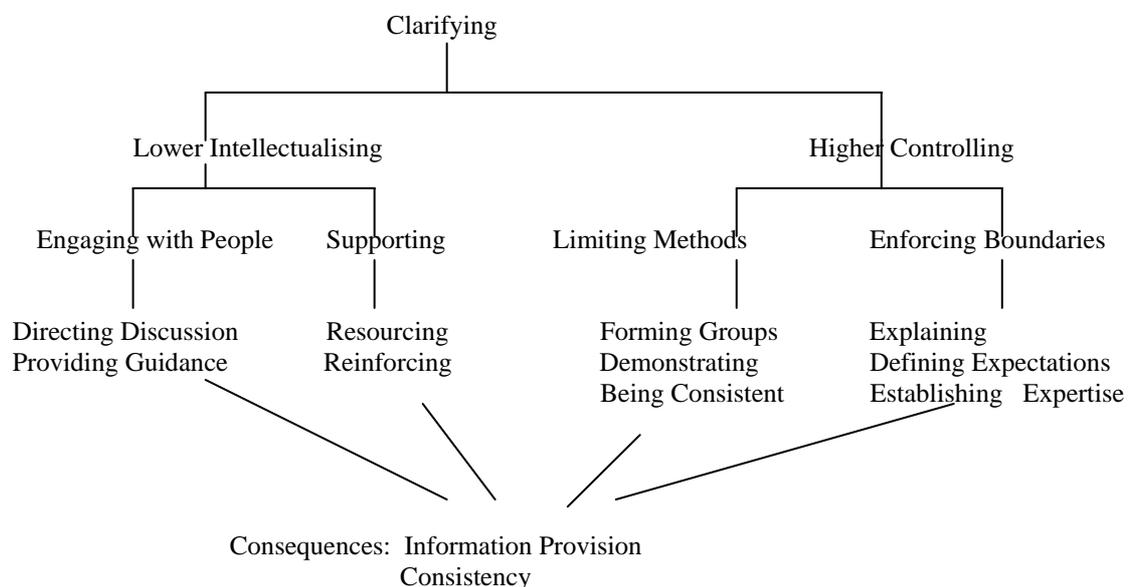
## Chapter Seven - Strategy of Clarifying

### Introduction

The strategy of Clarifying is people focused and structured. It is comprised of the properties of Lower Intellectualising and Higher Controlling with the sub-strategies of Engaging with People, Supporting, Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries. Clarifying strategies are moderate accommodation strategies as they demonstrate a primary focus on ensuring that all students have the same information and are treated equally, with the expectation that students will adapt to the lecturer's requirements.

The focus of Clarifying is on methods designed to meet student needs by providing explanations, information and clarification around expectations and requirements for subjects. The consequences of Clarifying are Information Provision and Consistency.

Figure 7.1: Strategy of Clarifying



Clarifying strategies have the properties of Lower Intellectualising and Higher Controlling. These strategies enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by minimising adaptation and by ensuring that students are provided with information clarifying what is expected in order to complete the course. Clarifying strategies also Maintain

Competence by establishing the lecturer as the expert in the knowledge and procedures required in order to pass the subject.

Clarifying strategies tend to enable the lecturer to retain control of the teaching environment and reduce the likelihood that the lecturer will adapt the content or process to accommodate different needs. Clarifying strategies assume the importance of, and attempt to address, issues of fairness and equity. They focus on clarity of expectations in order to give all students an equal opportunity to achieve understanding by providing students with additional information to assist them in understanding what is expected.

Clarifying strategies are most likely to occur when lecturers believe it is important to ensure that all students, particularly diverse groups of students, have the same information. Clarifying strategies take into account the differing backgrounds and expectations of students by providing and creating an environment in which all students are acknowledged and expected to participate. In this sense Clarifying strategies focus on the needs of the students as they aim to provide assistance to students, however they tend not to accommodate difference in their structured approach to subject content.

Lecturers who have a strong belief in equity are more likely to use Clarifying strategies to facilitate a level playing field for all students. The focus is on providing information to all students in a structured manner to ensure they understand the expectations and requirements of the subject and therefore have the opportunity to effectively meet those requirements. Clarification strategies are more likely to be employed by lecturers who believe that people need “structure and a framework” and are more likely to be used when assessment tasks are being discussed.

If lecturers have experience working with diverse groups of students they are more likely to use Clarifying, as they tend not to assume that all students enter class with the same knowledge, expectations or experience. For example, “in the first session we would set all these procedures to set out what they were expected to do ... you rarely need to set those kind of rules ... except if you have students coming from different cultural backgrounds”.

Clarifying strategies can occur across all subjects and environments including lectures, classes and tutorials. The consequences of Clarifying strategies are Information Provision and Consistency.

### **Lower Intellectualising Sub-Strategies**

The Lower Intellectualising sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting, when combined with the Higher Controlling sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries, result in the tactics displayed in the sub-category of Clarifying.

Lower Intellectualising and Higher Controlling enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their understanding and control of the expectations of the subject and by their willingness and ability to share their understanding for the benefit of the students.

#### Engaging with People

Engaging with People as a sub-strategy within Clarifying exhibits moderate accommodation. The emphasis is on providing clear expectations for all students and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to contribute to discussion. However, the focus tends to be on assisting students to understand and adapt to the lecturer's requirements rather than on the lecturer adapting his or her content or methods to suit the students.

Engaging with People, when operating in conjunction with Higher Controlling sub-strategies, maintains the focus on equity and consistency, ensuring that all students are treated in the same way. Engagement is primarily with the group of students rather than with individual students, which is more likely to occur in Relating.

Lecturers Maintain Competence by demonstrating willingness and ability to provide assistance to students. Assistance tends to focus on the provision of information about what students are required to do in order to perform effectively in the subject, and on providing opportunities for people to participate in class discussions.

Engaging with People as a Clarifying strategy will occur in lectures, classes and tutorials. The focus on imparting information means that the number of students is less relevant as information is provided to the group, and there is less emphasis on developing individual relationships. If a lecturer has a strong belief in the importance of equity he or she will use Engaging with People strategies in ways that ensure that all students receive the same information and assistance.

The tactics used as part of the sub-strategy of Engaging with People in the Clarifying strategy are Directing Discussion and Providing Guidance. These tactics are influenced by moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment as set out in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Engaging with People within the Strategy of Clarifying.

<b>Engaging with People</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Directing Discussion	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity	Teaching Delivery Method
Providing Guidance	Valuing Teaching	Teaching Delivery Method, University Policies and Processes

### *Directing Discussion*

Directing Discussion involves asking questions of specific students, or systematically asking each student, for contributions. The lecturer retains control by deciding who will speak, but also gives all students the opportunity to participate.

Directing Discussion results from the combination of the moderating variables of Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity and Teaching Delivery Method.

Lecturers who want all students to have an equal opportunity to contribute to discussion will tend to use Directing Discussion in classes and tutorials where all students can be given time to participate.

Directing Discussion is likely to be used as a tactic to obtain contributions from each student when a lecturer believes it is important to allow all students the opportunity to speak and contribute in class and takes a structured approach to achieving this. For example, during one class the lecturer was observed asking students to think about a topic for a few moments and telling them he would go around the room to ask for everyone's response. He then asked each person in turn to comment ensuring that all students contributed.

Lecturers who are conscious that some students are less likely to contribute spontaneously to discussion, and who also value giving everyone equal opportunities, are more likely to direct questions to the quieter students. For example, one lecturer commented that "rather than just calling has anybody got a question, sometimes I'll just point to someone". If a lecturer is focused on giving all students the opportunity to speak, and is aware that this is challenging for some students, he or she tends to persevere even when students appear to be unwilling to answer. For example, one lecturer explained that when a student does not answer the first question she talks more about some of the issues in the case and then asks the student again "so what would you do?".

When lecturers are focused on fairness and equity they will also be conscious of limiting the more vocal students so they do not dominate the conversation. In these instances lecturers will direct the conversation by intervening to "wind up" students who are speaking for too long and taking time away from other students. For example, "I'll say to someone look thankyou that was great, um, now let's see if anyone else wants to contribute and I'll allow for some silence".

Directing Discussion enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by retaining control of the discussion and providing students with opportunities to speak.

### *Providing Guidance*

Providing Guidance establishes guidelines regarding how the class operates and how students are expected to work together, both within the class and in assignment groups. It clarifies expected behaviour so that students know what to expect of the lecturer and each other.

Providing Guidance is the result of Valuing Teaching combined with Teaching Delivery Method and University Policies and Processes. Providing Guidance involves the lecturer in actively teaching students skills to manage the work expectations and processes required by the university. It is more likely to occur within smaller classes where lecturers can more easily intervene.

Lecturers who want students to work together in class, and perceive that this requires the students getting to know each other, may provide guidance as to how relationships can be established. For example, “I do have exercises and all my sessionals [contract staff] are told to run some exercises in the first three weeks of class ... I say that by the end of the first class every student should walk out with the name and contact details of at least two or three other students”.

Providing Guidance may be used to facilitate group work if lecturers believe that students require assistance in working effectively in groups. For example, “I do move them around ... it’s amazing how if you give them a group assignment how they’ll just start on it without introducing themselves, so I say the first couple of minutes you spend you should introduce yourselves, exchange contact details and talk a little bit about why you’re here, what you’re studying or what you’re afraid of, and what’s been really great or whatever”.

When group work is utilised as part of assessment, lecturers who are Providing Guidance will tend to clarify the rationale behind group work. For example, “I keep telling them throughout the semester, you will have to learn how to work with people who you don’t like, people who are difficult, people who you don’t know, and you don’t get lots of choices who you’re working with”. The tactic of Providing Guidance is designed to assist the students to work effectively by clarifying what is

expected of them and by structuring activities to make certain that these expectations are addressed. In this way the lecturer controls the direction of the events but achieves the outcome of assisting students to work together.

Providing Guidance is more likely to be used by lecturers who want to ensure that all students are clear about what is expected in assessment tasks. Providing Guidance may involve demonstrating the type of answer expected, answering questions regarding assessment, and clarifying what is required to achieve high grades. This information may be presented in course outlines or may be discussed in class. One lecturer discussed the use of metaphors to assist students in understanding the level of work required in order to achieve higher marks for assessment tasks. She provided the example of the difference between a basic chocolate cake and “something ... much more complex”.

If students are concerned about equity of assessment lecturers may Provide Guidance about options, for example, differential marking for different students in the group according to certain criteria. They tend to also clarify concerns to alleviate tensions in groups. For example one lecturer commented that local students are often concerned that they will have to edit the work of second language speakers “for the project to be successful”, so she advises all students about language assistance resources, and explains marking criteria and her approach to second language marking.

Lecturers who feel strongly that students require guidance to assist them in meeting expectations are more likely to attempt to address this at a more systemic level by suggesting programs or workshops. For example, one lecturer said that she “argued ... that probably about 5 weeks into the semester we should call a halt to teaching and have a week of skills classes that students are required to attend and we do things like talk about expectations and work them through an essay and do all of these things and say well you know at the end this is what you know”. Other students may provide guidance if lecturers establish models such as mentor schemes where students in later years mentor first year students.

Lecturers Maintain Competence by Providing Guidance as these tactics demonstrate their knowledge and ability to clarify requirements, as well as their capacity to establish working procedures that facilitate learning for the students.

### Supporting

Supporting sub-strategies, when combined with sub-strategies that have the property of Higher Controlling, are designed to ensure that students are given the information necessary to enable them to understand the requirements of the subject. Supporting sub-strategies can be utilised in relation to any type of subject content and within any teaching delivery method.

When lecturers value fairness and certainty they are likely to use supporting strategies and Maintain Competence by striving for equitable approaches for students, clarity of expectations, and general assistance for all students. Supporting sub-strategies Maintain Competence by establishing the lecturer in the role of an expert in the content and processes of the subject, and one who is willing to share this expertise with the students. In this way the lecturer remains distant from individual students but provides support to the group as a whole, being careful not to give preferential treatment to any particular student or students.

Lecturers who are concerned about diversity, particularly the difficulties that international students may encounter, will tend to use supporting strategies by providing additional information about expectations, requirements and resources, and by repeating material to be sure that everyone has the opportunity to understand everything. Supporting strategies accommodate diversity by recognising that not all students have the same background knowledge or the same level of understanding and therefore attempting to clarify as much as possible to provide for greater equality.

The tactics used in Supporting sub-strategies, Resourcing and Reinforcing, are presented in Table 7.2 along with the moderating variables that influence the tactics.

Table 7.2: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Supporting within the Strategy of Clarifying.

<b>Supporting</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Resourcing	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity	Support Services, University Policies and Processes, Student Cohort
Reinforcing	Valuing Teaching	Nil

### *Resourcing*

Resourcing involves providing information to the student group regarding services, resources or assistance that are available.

Resourcing is influenced by the moderating variables Valuing Teaching and Valuing Equity, combined with Support Services, University Policies and Processes and Student Cohort. Lecturers who are focused on assisting all students to understand course requirements will tend to access available support services and utilise university systems to meet the needs of the particular group of students.

If a lecturer wants students to know about and understand the options available to them in regard to support services, but does not want to be involved in individual issues, they are likely to use Resourcing. Referral, as used in Distancing, tells students of the existence of services, whereas Resourcing explains what the services offer and encourages students to make use of services. Lecturers may stress the confidential nature of the services, the fact that “it is entirely your private business”; explain the costs, if any, of the services; and advise as to how to access the service. For example, one lecturer says she explains to students that “there’s a table there with a booking sheet ... write your name down and book a session”.

Resourcing tactics tend to be used by lecturers who recognise that students may find it difficult to access services and want to alleviate student difficulties and concerns. For example, “the role of teachers is first of all to identify where students need the help and direct them and make sure, because a lot of students find it difficult to go to these kinds of things”. Lecturers adopt this approach when they perceive their role as including accessing the resources necessary for students to perform effectively in the course, and Maintain Competence by demonstrating their knowledge of available resources.

Resourcing tactics are also more likely to be used when lecturers want to make sure that all students have access to the same information concerning the course requirements. Resources can be provided for students in course information brochures and subject outlines. For example, one lecturer commented that “in my course information document I have a whole section on resources which talks about what the learning skills centre provides and how to find it and contact details, and student counselling which provides things like personal counselling but also does time management skills, I’ve got all that information”.

Lecturers who want to provide additional materials for students to access throughout the course, and be sure that all students have access to the articles or information, are likely to use Resourcing. Resourcing tactics are intended to assist students in accessing additional information and material relevant to the subject, whether this be in the format of a course booklet of readings, online lecture notes, additional readings for students who want to explore the topic in greater depth, or a variety of approaches. One lecturer stated that he uses “ a mixed approach - digital reserve, all the course outline material which has got articles is hot-linked through the URL links so the outlines are alive, so without spoon feeding them they can just jump and right click”.

When lecturers perceive that international students encounter special difficulties in understanding what is required in an Australian university they are likely to use Resourcing tactics. Lecturers tend to provide information with the intent of assisting international students to fully comprehend expectations and requirements. For example, one lecturer stated: “I found some material that talked about the difference between Western and Eastern education and I had some other things so I put together

a little booklet for them and said look this would be useful for you to think about, that you're confronting, you've chosen for whatever reasons to do an Australian degree and it's not going to be the same as whatever you've experienced and therefore I wanted to point out some of the differences".

Resourcing attempts to provide a "level playing field" so that all students have the same information and opportunities. It allows the lecturer to Maintain Competence by focusing on the values of equity and increasing the likelihood that he or she is being consistent and fair with all students.

### *Reinforcing*

Reinforcing is a tactic designed to support students by restating important information to assist students understand and remember.

Reinforcing is primarily influenced by the moderating variable of Valuing Teaching. Lecturers who are focused on teaching processes will tend to use Reinforcing as a method for improving understanding and learning. This can occur within any context and be applied across all groups of students.

Lecturers who want to ensure that students have absorbed significant information are likely to use Reinforcing tactics to stress or summarise important points by using a variety of mediums and approaches. Lecturers may reinforce a point by repeating it, writing it on the board, linking a reference to it, or presenting it on a powerpoint slide or overhead. Lecturers who themselves have a preference for visual thinking will tend to use diagrams to reinforce points. If a lecturer is aware of the difficulties faced by second language speakers then he or she is more likely to use visual and written cues to reinforce a spoken point. Maintaining Competence is therefore achieved by responding to the perceived needs of groups of students to give them greater opportunities for understanding.

To ensure that subject content is as clear as possible so that all students can understand the material lecturers are likely to use Reinforcing tactics. This can be achieved by reiterating material covered in previous classes and advising of material

that will be covered in future, so that students have a clear context for the information and ideas being presented. For example, “I suppose the other way I lend support to them is to, you know, have a very logical and simple structure for the course content. I’ve understood the importance of revision, so whenever I go on to a new topic I definitely spend 5 or 10 minutes tying up the threads of the previous topic and one of my philosophies if what they call the three Ts, where I tell them what I’m going to tell them, then I tell them, and then I tell them what I told them. I do it for every class and then for every module, so it gives them a chance to reflect”.

Reinforcing tactics can be employed to give students feedback on their progress by enabling them to see where they have made mistakes in exams or assignments and to learn from this feedback. If a lecturer believes that students need to understand why they received a certain mark for their work then he or she will use Reinforcing tactics such as “having some objective kinds of answers there. I mean where the student himself or herself will realise I was right or wrong”.

### **Higher Controlling Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries both derive from the property of Higher Controlling. When combined with the Lower Intellectualising sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting the tactics for Clarifying are formed.

Higher Controlling sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence by allowing him or her to establish the information to be covered and present that information without questioning its validity. The focus on people ensures that the information provided is relevant to the requirements of the subject and that it is presented in a fair and equitable manner so that all students have the opportunity to meet the course expectations.

### **Limiting Methods**

Limiting Methods as a Clarifying sub-strategy utilises a range of preferred approaches and does not alter or adapt these to different students or situations. When coupled

with Engaging with People the focus of the approaches used is on meeting overall student requirements for information about course expectations.

Limiting Methods enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by using their own preferred approaches and by demonstrating their knowledge of course requirements and expectations and applying their expertise equally for the benefit of all students.

Limiting Methods tends to be the preferred strategy when a lecturer is imparting information regarding course or subject requirements, expectations regarding behaviour in class and/or group work, and assessment requirements. Limiting Methods can be applied in lectures, classes and tutorials, as this strategy is not affected by the number of students. When utilised in classes and tutorials it tends to require a more didactic method of instruction, as the lecturer is imparting information rather than engaging students in discussion.

The tactics utilised in Limiting Methods are Forming Groups, Demonstrating and Being Consistent, and the moderating variables that influence them are presented in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Limiting Methods within the Strategy of Clarifying.

<b>Limiting Methods</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Forming Groups	Valuing Diversity	Student Cohort
Demonstrating	Valuing Teaching	University Policies and Processes
Being Consistent	Valuing Equity	Nil

### *Forming Groups*

Forming Groups refers to the process of taking a structured and directive approach to the establishment of groups for the purposes of class activities and assignments. Forming Groups involves the lecturer in creating the groups rather than the students self-selecting their groups, and is particularly utilised if lecturers want to mix local and international students in groups.

Forming Groups is most likely to occur when the lecturer Values Diversity and perceives diversity as an opportunity for learning, and when the Student Cohort is diverse and therefore provides the opportunity for mixed groups to be created. It enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by controlling the composition of groups in order to achieve the desired outcome relevant to the task, such as creating conditions to facilitate students learning from each other.

Lecturers who want students to work in groups, and have preferences regarding the composition of groups, are likely to be actively involved in Forming Groups. If a lecturer wants diversity to be an aspect of the group they are likely to use Forming Groups to “deliberately create the group to be as diverse as possible”. Lecturers from both international and Australian backgrounds tend to use this tactic if they think that it will assist the students in breaking down barriers and learning from each other.

When lecturers want to control the composition of groups they tend to employ a variety of methods in Forming Groups including deliberately putting students into “a mixed sort of team, mixed with the Australians” because “there weren’t enough native speakers to go around”. Other methods include deliberately separating groups of international students so that the group is not comprised solely of students from one country: “We look for a mix of Australian and International, and with the International we try not to have all the Indonesians in one group, so that we’ll have an Indonesian, a Malaysian, an Indian, a Chinese whatever”.

Forming Groups can include methods that rely on a random allocation of students to groups with the intention of creating diverse groups, or moving students around once

they have started to form groups. For example, “when there are four Asians sitting together I split them into two and say okay you two go over there” or numbers may be allocated to students in the group: “1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4 ... we actually put them into groups that way”

Lecturers who are interested in creating diverse groups will take into account factors other than national or cultural background, such as age and gender, and use these as a guide for Forming Groups. In attempts to form diverse groups lecturers will work with the mix of students in the class even though there will not always be an equal distribution of the diversity aspects they are seeking: “We try to get a mix of genders as well which can be challenging at times because depending on when the class is sometimes they’re male dominated, sometimes female dominated”.

Forming groups does not address individual preferences, that is individual students are not asked which group they would like to join, but focuses on ensuring a consistent and fair approach and on maximising learning for the group as a whole.

### *Demonstrating*

Demonstrating is a tactic designed to assist students in their understanding of expectations and requirements by providing them with examples and demonstrations of what is required.

Demonstrating is most likely to be used when lecturers are influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and University Policies and Processes.

Demonstrating involves the lecturer in spending time working with students to show them how to meet university expectations and requirements.

Lecturers who are focused on helping students learn and are clear about exactly what they need to learn will tend to use Demonstrating tactics. Demonstrating requires the lecturer to take the time to show exactly what is expected, to go through examples, to ensure students understand expectations by “literally showing them how to read a particular article”, or by “actually going through that kind of analytical process with them”. Demonstrating assumes that students do not necessarily know, or have the

same understanding of, the requirements of academic writing, and it Maintains Competence for the lecturer by demonstrating his or her expertise in academic skills.

If a lecturer is prepared to spend time with the students to explain referencing, plagiarism, analysis and other requirements, then he or she is likely to use Demonstrating. Demonstrating is people focused because it is giving time in class, giving information, giving examples to assist students rather than expecting that they will do all this themselves. It is also structured as it focuses on ensuring that students know the “right way” to perform the task. For example, in relation to referencing lecturers “go right through citation, get them to do some exercises around citations so they have the mechanics of it”. When lecturers are concerned that students are unclear about what is expected they may offer additional classes to cover particular material such as “how to write an essay”. Alternatively they may use Resourcing tactics to encourage students to attend classes on topics such as essay writing offered by student support services.

Demonstrating enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence as he or she is clearly the expert in the skills required by students in order to satisfactorily complete their courses and is willing to make these skills explicit for students.

### *Being Consistent*

Being Consistent refers to the process by which lecturers attempt to ensure that they are providing the same material and information to all students in order to achieve equity and fairness. It attempts to create an environment where all students receive the same information, the same level of assistance, and are treated fairly in all ways.

Being Consistent is primarily influenced by the moderating variable of Valuing Equity. Lecturers who value equity are likely to work hard to ensure their approach is as fair as possible in all contexts and with all students. Being Consistent Maintains Competence by ensuring that a lecturer is providing the same information to all students thereby minimising the risk of misunderstandings or disputes.

Being Consistent tends to be used by lecturers concerned with ensuring equity and fairness for all students. It may include using course manuals to provide information so “it’s as clear as possible and states as clearly as possible in one place, because quite often when things are passed through a few hands it says one thing in one place and another thing in another place”. It may also include documenting consequences of late submissions of assignments, plagiarism, or lack of input into group work so that all students have the same knowledge.

Lecturers who believe that inconsistencies occur easily will tend to document and write down information in order to have “some base” so that everyone receives the same information. When lecturers acknowledge that misunderstandings occur but have not produced written information in regard to these issues they tend to use “blanket statements” in class to raise and clarify the issue.

If lecturers recognise the risk of inconsistency and value the concept of equity then they will attempt to resolve this by using the tactic of Being Consistent. Being Consistent acknowledges that lecturers have power and are “in a position to harm a student if I’m immature enough”. Lecturers who value consistency believe that, whilst it is difficult to achieve, it should be the clear agenda for the lecturer and that mechanisms need to be in place: “you know there’s this procedural issue of being fair to everybody and being honest and open and having your, no favourites if you like, no hidden agenda, you just hope that if you’re transparent in all your deeds students will get it”.

Being Consistent requires that lecturers, who want to achieve equity, be aware of their own tendency to be inconsistent at times and attempt to minimise this tendency. Lecturers who want to be fair to all students will be careful to be consistent in the assistance they give students. This approach is used particularly by those lecturers who recognise that “you might really like one student and want to work with them but you can’t do that as it’s favouring one over the other”. Being Consistent ensures that interactions do not “cross the boundaries where it ... might become unethical” or advantage some students over others. Lecturers Maintain Competence by monitoring their own practices to ensure consistency.

## Enforcing Boundaries

Enforcing boundaries when linked with the property of Lower Intellectualising and the sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting focuses on the lecturer providing a structured and controlled environment.

Enforcing Boundaries is a moderate accommodation sub-strategy as it recognises that not all students have the same background or expectations, and it attempts to provide sufficient information so they all understand what is expected within the context of the subject or course. It enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by retaining control of the content and process of the course, and by demonstrating expertise in the subject and in academic assessment requirements.

Enforcing Boundaries ensures that structure is maintained around the roles and tasks performed by lecturers and students, based primarily on the lecturers' preferences and beliefs. For example, lecturers who value academic rigour in relation to critical analysis, referencing and essay writing, but who recognise that not all students understand what is expected of them, will enforce boundaries. Lecturers who have a people focus will, in the process of Enforcing Boundaries, use tactics that enable students to understand the relevance of those boundaries.

The tactics used in Enforcing Boundaries are Explaining, Defining Expectations, and Establishing Expertise. These tactics and the moderating variables that influence them are set out in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Enforcing Boundaries within the Strategy of Clarifying.

<b>Enforcing Boundaries</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Explaining	Valuing Teaching	Teaching Delivery Method
Defining Expectations	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity	University Policies and Processes, Student Cohort
Establishing Expertise	Valuing High Academic Standards	University Policies and Processes

### *Explaining*

Explaining involves giving reasons and explanations to assist students understand why particular procedures are followed, why certain rules are in place, and why courses are taught in particular ways. These tactics are designed to help students accept and work effectively within the expectations and requirements of the subject.

Explaining is influenced by the interplay of the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching with Teaching Delivery Method. Lecturers who are focused on teaching processes are more likely to use Explaining to clarify the purposes of different teaching methods. Lecturers tend to be more aware of the importance of Explaining when they have also taught in different contexts.

Lecturers who conduct subjects in a manner different from the traditional lecture or class structure, for example experiential subjects, are more likely to take time Explaining the purpose and rationale for the program. For example, one lecturer said: “if you can try and say to them this is challenging because it’s different from other learning but you’re doing it because employers actually want people who can think about what they do and improve it and we’re giving you a formal space for that

reflection on what you do”. Explaining in these contexts enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by establishing the rationale underpinning their teaching approach.

When lecturers are working within the traditional, expected and generally understood methods of lecturing then they tend to feel less need to explain their methods and Maintain Competence by following established and accepted methods.

Lecturers who have adapted subjects for other environments, whether for off-shore teaching or online delivery, are more likely to use Explaining tactics. Off-shore teaching and online delivery require lecturers to be very clear and explicit about what they are doing. For example, “this is what I’ve learnt from teaching online where you become very much more aware of the learning, that you have to be very explicit about what the aims are and try and design activities that teach them the skills along the way so they feel they can maintain their motivation for it”. Different environments and teaching methods enable lecturers to learn more about their own teaching approaches, the assumptions that underlie those approaches, and to develop the capacity to explain their approaches clearly.

If a lecturer wants students to follow the procedures and does not believe simply telling them will achieve the desired behaviours they are more likely to use Explaining tactics. For example, “I always encourage them to write [rather than talk after class], I say write to me for two reasons. It’s more efficient than me slogging in here to make an appointment, also it will be more to the point, and the other thing is you’re much more likely to get a more helpful response from me if I have a chance to actually think about it”.

### *Defining Expectations*

Defining Expectations sets out clearly the work and behavioural expectations within the subject. It does not necessarily include an explanation of the expectations as the focus is on ensuring that all expectations are as explicit as possible rather than on providing a rationale for them.

Defining Expectations results from the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Equity combined with University Policies and Processes and Student Cohort. Lecturers who are focused on assisting all students understand course and assessment expectations so they can meet university requirements are more likely to utilise Defining Expectations. When the student cohort is diverse, lecturers tend to perceive it as very important to define expectations for students who may not be aware of what is required or have different expectations.

Defining Expectations is linked with Being Consistent, as it is the detailing of expectations that provides consistent information for all students. If a lecturer believes that all students, local or international, are concerned with the assessment expectations of a subject then they are likely to take time to define expectations. Lecturers who value this process tend to allocate substantial class time to Defining Expectations. Defining Expectations around assessment involves the lecturer in spending “[in] the first one or two lectures quite a substantial amount of time going through the curriculum, going right to the heart of the matter, let’s look at the assessment together”. Lecturers Maintain Competence by demonstrating their expertise and sharing their knowledge with students.

If lecturers intend to establish clear patterns of working, patterns that both they and the students are fully aware of, they are more likely to spend time Defining Expectations. In this instance the focus is not solely on assessment but on what students want to learn from the subject, what they expect from the lecturer and what the lecturer expects from the students in both their assessment work and in their behaviour in class. One method for Defining Expectations is to develop contracts around expectations, as discussed by one lecturer: “At the start of each of my classes, we do a course contract where we make the students’ expectations of me and what they want from the course clear and I make my expectations of them clear”.

Lecturers who have experienced a sense of loss of control over events in a class are more likely to become explicit about their own expectations and use Defining Expectations early in the subject. This is a response designed to regain control by ensuring that students are clear about what is expected of them. For instance, one lecturer explained that “last year where I had these problems with the students ... has

caused me to behave differently ... [become] more certain about the things I need to establish very early on, what we're getting the class to do, what my role will be ...” Maintaining Competence is therefore re-established through Defining Expectations to ensure that the lecturer remains in control of classroom events.

Defining Expectations is used as a tactic when lecturers believe that international students may not be fully aware of the expectations and requirements of studying in the Australian context. Defining Expectations aims to clarify any misunderstandings and assumptions so that students have all the necessary information to perform effectively in the subject. When lecturers have themselves come from an overseas background and encountered such misunderstandings and assumptions they are more likely to utilise Defining Expectations tactics and be quite clear that “here is the way that, in Australia, we deal with this and here is my expectation of how you will do it”.

Lecturers who assume that international students have limited experience and knowledge of expectations within the Australian educational system tend to utilise Defining Expectations tactics. This is particularly the case if the lecturer has come from an international background and is concerned to assist international students in adapting to Australian procedures. Some lecturers believe that “you rarely need to set those kind of rules to be established ... Except if you have students coming from different cultural backgrounds ... Because the group that I was having had a very wide cultural background ... I said that so that everybody else is aware of the conditions and terms”.

Defining Expectations provides students with the necessary information to understand subject requirements. If a lecturer also wants to challenge students to perform to high standards then he or she will use Defining Expectations by clearly setting out the different expectations for different levels of assessment, so that, “if you're looking at the high distinction level here are the sort of things that would be expected”. The lecturer Maintains Competence by clarifying expectations so that students know what is expected and are more likely to accept the mark they receive.

### *Establishing Expertise*

Establishing Expertise is a tactic that reinforces the lecturer's expertise and authority within the subject.

Establishing Expertise is influenced by the moderating variable of Valuing High Academic Standards combined with University Policies and Processes. Lecturers who value high academic standards for themselves and students will tend to be very clear about expectations and requirements particularly in regard to academic practices and the expected processes within universities.

Establishing Expertise often occurs concurrently with other tactics given its focus is on emphasising the lecturer's credentials to take up the role of teaching and assessing students. Lecturers who have a strong academic background may detail this (for example, having studied at a prestigious university) to establish their expertise. Lecturers can also Establish Expertise by advising students that they have taught in the subject area for an extended period, or by utilising research they have conducted in the area. Each approach ensures that the lecturer's authority and control is not questioned and provides the students with some certainty of the lecturer's ability and therefore assists in Maintaining Competence.

When lecturers consider that their authority in relation to rules, procedures or expectations needs to be clearly established and accepted by students they are likely to Establish Expertise. If a lecturer wants to warn students that they will be caught out if they cheat then the lecturer is likely to establish his or her expertise by invoking experience and knowledge. For example, one lecturer said that they tell students: "I've been doing this for too long, I am expert in my field and of course you all use similar sources. When I read the same thing five times over and it's not referenced I will know that, OK". Lecturers who want to stress the point will invoke not only their own expertise due to "doing this for an awfully long time" but also describe experiences such as failing "two people last year because three people shared". Lecturers Maintain Competence by establishing expertise and demonstrating their knowledge, awareness and confidence in their own abilities.

## **Consequences**

The consequences of Clarifying are Information Provision, including details on the requirements and expectations of the subject, and Consistency, particularly in regard to consistent approaches to information provision to ensure equity and fairness.

Clarifying strategies are most effective when there are rules, procedures and expectations that students need to be aware of and abide by in order to perform effectively in the subject.

Clarifying strategies, which embody the properties of Higher Controlling and Lower Intellectualising, are moderate on Accommodating Diversity. Clarifying strategies acknowledge that differences may exist and provide information in an attempt to reduce the impact of those differences. Clarifying strategies assist students by giving information and explaining what is required but maintain the existing structures and expectations and do not adapt these to different needs among individuals or groups.

### Information Provision

Clarifying strategies are used to provide information regarding expected behaviour in class or group work, explain assessment procedures and requirements, and ensure that all students have the same information and access to resources. They are particularly useful when there is a diverse cohort of students who may have different expectations and approaches and who, by all receiving the same information, are provided with the opportunity to understand what is expected.

Clarifying strategies work on the assumption that if information is clearly provided students will be able to understand and act upon it. This may not always be the case as not everyone will receive information in the way it is intended. Whilst Information Provision may be the outcome of Clarifying strategies for most students, some students are likely to not obtain the required information however well the lecturer provides it. The structured nature of Clarifying strategies means they are not adapted to individual requirements or differences in understanding.

## Consistency

Clarifying strategies are based on the assumption that not all students will know what is expected or required and that, in order to be fair and equitable, it is important for the same information to be provided to everyone. Clarifying tends to be used most by lecturers who hold strong values concerning equity; and/or have themselves come from overseas backgrounds. Lecturers with these values and experiences want to ensure equity and fairness for all students and tend to try to make different methods and expectations explicit for international students to ensure they have the required information and to ensure consistency in the information provided.

Lecturers are frequently very clear about the Clarifying strategies they use and can be clearly observed using them in lectures, classes and tutorials. There tends to be little discrepancy between reported and observed strategies, which is not the case with Distancing strategies. It may be that lecturers perceive Clarifying as an important and legitimate aspect of their work and therefore feel positive about their use of these strategies. Alternatively, it may be that lecturers are conscious of their attempts to be consistent and clear and monitor themselves in regard to these behaviours and actually achieve a level of Consistency between what they espouse and what they enact.

## Maintaining Competence

Clarifying strategies Maintain Competence for the lecturer as they allow the lecturer to remain as the expert and authority, whilst using their experience and understanding of cultural differences to address perceived areas of potential inequity.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has detailed the strategy of Clarifying with the sub-strategies of Engaging with People, Supporting, Limiting Methods and Enforcing Boundaries. The combined influence of the properties of Lower Intellectualising and Higher Controlling result in Clarifying strategies.

The tactics presented in this chapter demonstrate the behaviours used by lecturers when they adopt Clarifying strategies in order to address their main concern of meeting the needs of a heterogeneous student population and maintaining their own competence. Clarifying has a focus on utilising a structured approach that is fair and consistent, in order to inform all students of requirements and expectations.

This chapter shows how Clarifying strategies, with their emphasis on people and structure, enable lecturers to Maintain Competence by providing clear and consistent information to students that assists students in understanding what is expected in the subject and reduces the likelihood of disputes or dissatisfaction arising from misunderstandings.

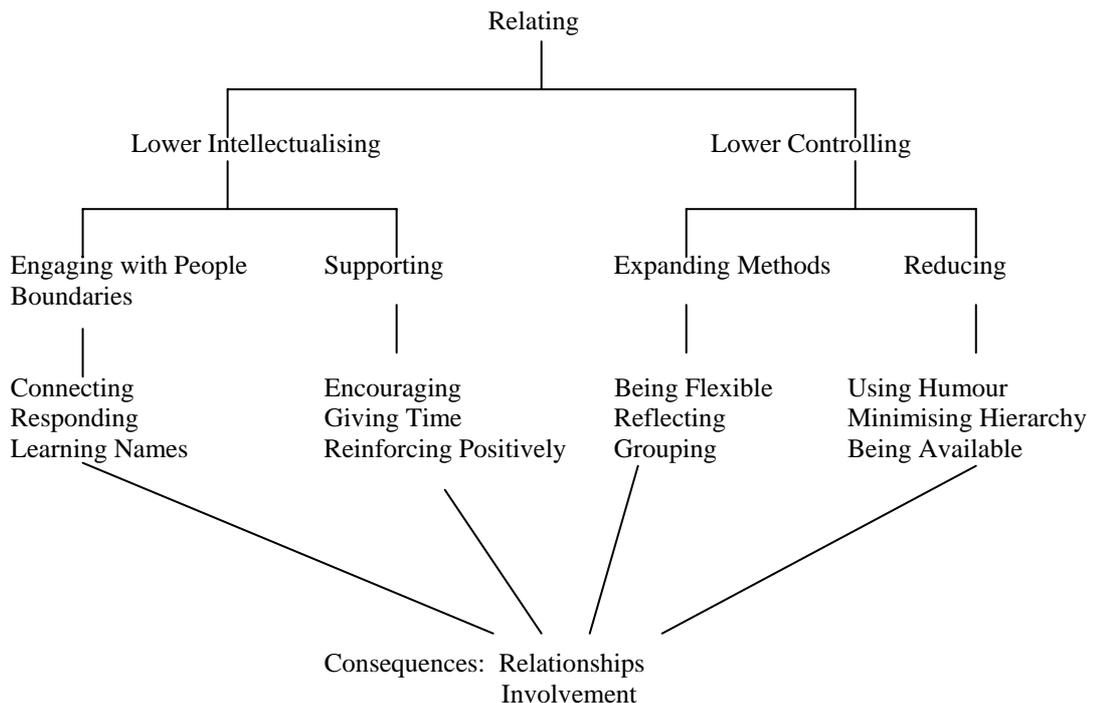
## Chapter Eight - Strategy of Relating

### Introduction

The strategy of Relating is both people focused and flexible. It is comprised of the properties of Lower Controlling and Lower Intellectualising with the sub-strategies of Engaging with People, Supporting, Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries.

The sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting are also evident in the strategy of Clarifying, while the sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries are evident in the strategy of Adapting. The tactics emanating from each of these sub-strategies are subtly different, depending on the combined influence of Higher or Lower Intellectualising with Higher or Lower Controlling properties. Thus in the strategy of Relating, where the properties are Lower Intellectualising and Lower Controlling, all tactics demonstrate a primary focus on the development of relationships both between students themselves and between students and lecturer.

Figure 8.1: Strategy of Relating



Relating strategies that are low on both Intellectualising and Controlling focus on developing relationships with students and encouraging students to learn through their own experiences. Lecturers who are interested in shared learning experience and working closely with students are more likely to use Relating strategies and to Maintain Competence by developing close relationships and sharing the learning experience.

Relating strategies are most likely to be used when Forces in the Lecturer lead to a preference for interactive and experiential teaching and learning, and when Forces in the Environment do not prevent the use of this approach. Relating strategies can occur in lectures, classes and tutorials, but are more likely to occur in classes and tutorials.

When lecturers use Relating strategies they may be attempting to adapt to diversity since these strategies tend to recognise individual difference. Relating strategies assist lecturers to develop relationships with students and accept the idea that students have different learning styles and require differing levels of involvement from the lecturer.

If a lecturer teaches in subjects such as Organisation Behaviour, which has a focus on people's behaviour, he or she is more likely to use Relating strategies. These subjects tend to focus on skills as well as content and therefore utilise a more experiential approach to facilitate skill development. Lecturers are likely to draw on models of adult learning, for example, basing their approach "on a kind of Kolb, or... the cognitive learning, and Honey and Mumford", models which propose learning through experience, reflection and conceptualisation. This increases the likelihood that they will utilise their own reflections, as well as external sources of feedback and theory, as data for developing and improving subjects. When lecturers value this model of learning they will tend to see it as the most effective learning approach. As one lecturer commented: "That model of experiential learning is engagement, that's the philosophy so they're my key influences and everything else is like it's just not engaging". This approach is likely to mean that lecturers are interested in their own experience of learning as well as the experience of the students.

Lecturers who value relating to students tend to minimise their own authority and not take up the position of “distant expert”, but attempt to develop a more collaborative model of working. Lecturers who use this approach are likely to come from backgrounds that include studies in psychology or related fields such as counselling. They frequently take an interest in, and have developed their knowledge and understanding of, behavioural patterns and perceptions, and principles of adult learning, which they use in their teaching approaches.

This chapter discusses the sub-strategies of Engaging with People, Supporting, Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries with subsequent tactics and link these to the theory of Maintaining Competence. Examples to demonstrate each of the tactics will be presented and the consequences of Relationships and Involvement will be discussed.

### **Lower Intellectualising Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting both derive from the property of Lower Intellectualising. The sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries both derive from the property of Lower Controlling. When the Lower Intellectualising and Lower Controlling properties and their sub-strategies combine it results in the tactics displayed in the strategy of Relating.

Lower Intellectualising and Lower Controlling sub-strategies allow the lecturer to Maintain Competence if the lecturer is focused on the development of relationships and involvement with students. If lecturers prefer to focus on ideas and not become personally involved with students then they are less likely to use Relating strategies.

#### Engaging with People

Engaging with People is a High Accommodation strategy as it entails a flexible approach focused on responding to people’s interests and needs. It enables a lecturer to Maintain Competence by developing relationships with students and responding to their individual requirements. It also enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by

continuing their own learning about ideas and people through the experience of interacting closely with students.

Engaging with People tends to occur most frequently in classes and tutorials, with some lecturers commenting that they put all lectures online so as to be able to focus on interactions in classes. Lecturers who have a strong preference for Engaging with People, as well as an interest in the process of teaching and learning will tend to utilise Relating strategies even within traditional lecture settings.

Engaging with People as a strategy does not discount the exploration of ideas but tends to the view that people will engage with ideas more, and learn them more effectively, if they can apply and experience the theory. Lecturers who value teaching highly and have a strong desire to relate to their students will sometimes do this at the expense of other aspects of their work. For example, the time given to research may be reduced as their sense of competence emanates, in part, from the relationships they develop with students. If competing demands become too stressful, lecturers, even those who value relationships highly, will be less likely to utilise Relating strategies in order to protect themselves, but in the process may feel their competence is being affected and their job satisfaction reduced.

Engaging with People is comprised of the tactics of Connecting, Responding, and Learning Names, which are set out in Table 8.1 along with the moderating variables that influence the tactics.

Table 8.1: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Engaging with People within the Strategy of Relating

<b>Engaging with People</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Connecting	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Diversity	Teaching Delivery Method, Subject Content, Workload
Responding	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity	Teaching Delivery Method
Learning Names	Valuing Teaching	Teaching Delivery Method

### *Connecting*

Connecting refers to behaviours designed to develop collaborative learning relationships between lecturer and students, and between students. Connecting facilitates the development of linkages between experience, reflection and concepts.

Connecting is more likely to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Diversity combine with Teaching Delivery Method, Subject Content and Workload. Lecturers who focus on helping students to learn from each other are more likely to use Connecting, particularly when teaching in classes or tutorials and in subjects where the content is primarily focused on people and skill development.

Connecting tactics are more likely to be used by lecturers who believe that students learn most effectively through models of teaching that include experience, reflection and conceptualisation. For example: “you can lecture at them around this sort of stuff with the dot points and the power points until the cows come home, but I think you actually have to engage people in some contact with one another around those

issues ... then it becomes real and then you get some sort of exchange, and it's in the exchange you get the chance of actually building understanding”.

Lecturers are more likely to use Connecting tactics if they believe that students learn more effectively when they know and trust each other and the lecturer. In order to get to know each other and develop trust, lecturers employ methods such as asking students to share personal experiences or to share something meaningful to them such as a favourite poem. Assisting students to get to know each other tends to be perceived as a method of facilitating learning, for example, “when you've got a class that you're able to build that sort of group cohesiveness, they have a lot of fun, they learn enormously”.

Connecting tends to be used when a lecturer is conscious of differences within the group and wants all students to work collaboratively. As one lecturer stated, connecting may be used for “slowly building a relationship with some of the quieter students and getting others in the group to work with each other, so using the dynamics of the group positively for mutual support and encouraging each other”. Connecting will tend to reduce assumptions and stereotypes for both students and lecturers. For example, “I think you do tend to pigeonhole the quietly spoken overseas students with bad English, but even then I've found they're quite different when you actually get closer to them, and especially in class where we have a lot of opportunities where we can interact.”

Lecturers who want students to work collaboratively but perceive international students to often be separate within a class, and who would like interaction between local and international students, are likely to use Connecting tactics. For example, “I'm very conscious of them [international students] feeling as a separate entity and I feel like I'm being proactive and I'm doing my best to make them feel part of the group.” Tactics include asking questions of international students about their experience of other countries, acknowledging differences and similarities, and checking assumptions.

If lecturers value a capacity to reflect on one's own behaviour they are likely to use Connecting tactics to assist students develop awareness and understanding of their

behaviours and how they affect other people. This may be reflection on individual behaviour or active reflection “on their team experiences”. When lecturers consider reflection to be important they tend to see it as part of the overall academic process of learning. One lecturer explained that “to me what real academia is, is really thinking deeply, and it includes reflecting deeply, about yourself as much as anything else”.

Connecting in these instances is focused on the individual experience of reflecting, but if lecturers want to develop conceptual understanding they will also make connections with existing theory. This is addressed by a lecturer who commented: “I think the learning I’m trying to do with them now is more academic because it’s deeper ... I think real rigour is really deep thought. You can be quite clever just having all these books and lectures but unless you really understand them and make the connections with yourself ... I think real academic stuff is really deep thinking and deep curiosity and wanting to play and learn about things”.

Subjects where the focus is on people within organisations, such as Organisation Behaviour, are more likely to have Connecting tactics applied to assist in the development of understanding how individuals work in organisations. One lecturer stated: “We talk about organisational learning and individual styles, but we also talk about what you bring, who you are is important in terms of how you view the world and how you interact with other people”.

Connecting tactics are more likely to be used in smaller classes or tutorials where lecturers can get to know students because “it’s very hard in a large class to have contact” and “in a very large group ... people will fall between the cracks”. They are less likely to be used in large classes and/or when the lecturer has a significant workload that reduces the time they have available to work with individual students.

Lecturers who value interaction, experiential learning and reflection will Maintain Competence by using Connecting tactics that enable them to facilitate the learning process for themselves and students by working closely with students.

## *Responding*

Responding refers to the process of observing and reacting to events that occur within the class and responding to the requirements of individual students.

Responding tends to occur when the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity and Teaching Delivery Method are combined. Lecturers who are teaching in classes or tutorials where they can observe student behaviour, and who wish to encourage students to participate and contribute to the subject content and processes are more likely to use Responding.

Lecturers who use Responding tend to focus on the dynamics within the class and respond in ways that they feel will best enhance the teaching and learning process. Thus the focus is on the group as a whole, however, individuals within the group are also noticed, resulting in quieter students being directly addressed by lecturers and encouraged to speak. This interest in what is happening for students also means the lecturer tends to ask questions regarding students' feelings about issues as well as about their thoughts. The lecturer then tends to respond to the emotional as well as the intellectual content of the discussion. For example, "if you get a response back ... whether it's totally cold silence or agitation or whatever it might be, you sort of say, oh now what's this about ... and start just gathering more data".

When a lecturer is observing behaviours and class dynamics they are more likely to be aware themselves that they are "watching the process", "sitting with it" and "being aware". Lecturers who observe and remain aware of what is happening within the class will tend to use Responding tactics as they attempt to work with the emergent situation.

Responding tactics focus attention on obtaining and acting upon feedback for lecturers who are checking "that the messages are going through". Lecturers may seek verbal or written feedback, for example undertaking in each class a "one minute review and then I can integrate their feedback as a review mechanism for the following week". Feedback may also be obtained through close observation of student behaviour. One lecturer explained that he does this by looking "at the eyes of

the students, and at that point of time if I'm convinced that someone has not understood or someone is hesitating, then I ask them".

Lecturers who themselves came from similar cultural backgrounds to some of the international students are more likely to use Responding tactics with international students. In these cases, lecturers express their confidence in reading the non-verbal cues from students that enable them to know how far to "push" a student for a verbal contribution and when "to drop it".

If a lecturer receives confronting feedback but values the process of obtaining feedback then they are more likely to use Responding tactics rather than perceiving the feedback as a threat to their competence. For example, one lecturer, himself from an Asian background, discussed feedback he had received from an Asian student who was of the opinion that at times he ignored Asian students. He was "taken aback" and assured her he has "a healthy regard for every student", but said he would reflect on her feedback. He commented that "I think it has a lot to do with eye contact and if someone is not making eye contact you tend to go to people who are ... until now I've not been asking people by name ... and this just might be a signal for me to do something like that, to start doing something like that to make them feel more involved".

### *Learning Names*

Learning Names refers to tactics for learning and using names in order to refer to students by name when asking questions or participating in discussions.

Learning Names is influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Teaching Delivery Method. Classes and tutorials with smaller numbers of students are more likely to enable lecturers to learn names. Lecturers who perceive students as being more receptive to learning if they feel valued and respected are likely to learn names.

Lecturers who want to develop relationships with students and perceive knowing a person's name as important will tend to learn and/or use names as much as possible

taking the view that “learning names ... is so enormously important”. Lecturers who value using student names stress that they work hard to learn names and ask students to give their names whenever they speak: “I always make, whoever talks in the first few weeks ... say their name first”.

Even though lecturers recognise that sometimes they appear foolish because they make frequent mistakes with names, they tend not to perceive such mistakes as affecting their capacity to Maintain Competence. Competence is maintained when the names have been learnt, or alternate strategies developed to enable the lecturer to remember names, the lecturer is pleased with his or her achievement and the students are aware of the effort on the part of the lecturer.

Remembering names is likely to be easier for lecturers when the class size is not too large and the lecturer finds learning names relatively easy. If the class size is larger or the lecturer knows they have difficulty remembering names they tend to use other methods, such as nametags for each class, to assist them in using and learning names. These methods enable lecturers to use individual student names even if they have not remembered them. For example: “The other thing I’ve decided to do because it did take me a lot of time to learn the names of everybody and I’m still struggling to get around Asian names, I’ve decided to have those UN type flags, where they write their names so I’ll take it to every class, so I’m planning to do that”.

Learning Names assists lecturers in noticing and remembering students and what they have done, so that students can feel recognised as individuals. For example, during one observation the lecturer was asking questions of students and commented to one student that she would not be able to answer as “you were not here last week so didn’t get the homework”. Quieter students are also more likely to be noticed, and the lecturer able to include them, as one lecturer commented that knowing student names “makes a big difference because then what I find is the students who aren’t putting in as much to the conversation I can actually say ‘and what do you [name] think?’”

## Supporting

Supporting sub-strategies are designed to increase the comfort level of students and tend to be primarily used by lecturers in smaller classes, where the focus of the class is experiential and/or the subject is to do with people, such as Organisation Behaviour. Lecturers who believe that teaching includes supporting students in order to facilitate learning will tend to use Supporting sub-strategies.

Supporting sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence by acting on their belief that teaching includes supporting students to facilitate learning. Supporting sub-strategies are more likely to be used if the lecturer values relationships and interaction with students and is focused on the process of learning as much as the content.

Supporting sub-strategies may be used with all students but if lecturers perceive individual students or particular groups of students as requiring more support then they will focus attention on those students. For example, lecturers who are concerned about international students and their experiences may perceive them “to have a lot of problems but if they can get the support that they need at their peer level, but also from the teachers, they often can do better”.

Supporting sub-strategies are more likely to be used in classes and tutorials as they rely on close interaction between lecturer and students. The Supporting tactics of Encouraging, Giving Time and Reinforcing Positively, and the moderating variables that influence them are presented in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Supporting within the Strategy of Relating

<b>Supporting</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Encouraging	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching, Valuing Diversity	Workload
Giving Time	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Involvement	Student Cohort, Workload
Reinforcing Positively	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation	Nil

### *Encouraging*

Encouraging involves facilitating student participation by actively supporting students and building their confidence.

Encouraging is primarily affected by Forces in the Lecturer as Encouraging tactics can be applied in any context and in relation to either content or processes. The moderating variables that influence Encouraging are Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching and Valuing Diversity combined with Workload. Lecturers with these values will tend to work to enable all students to feel comfortable about participating.

If a lecturer wants students to participate in activities and discussion they tend to use Encouraging tactics with those students who are more reticent. Encouraging tactics may be applied in different ways including providing suggestions, discussing and advising and minimising discomfort. Examples may be given to demonstrate the benefits of involvement and participation or to acknowledge and address possible concerns. For instance, lecturers may encourage students to speak by using statements such as “I’ve seen situations in the past where people withhold their opinions because they think other people are better at doing something than they are, or that their English isn’t good enough”.

Encouraging tactics are more likely to be used by lecturers who want to facilitate the process of students meeting the requirement of presenting material in classes and tutorials. Encouraging can include reducing the stress on students by allowing them to present on a topic of their choice as practice, prior to being assessed, or giving them lots of small practice presentations to enable them to develop confidence.

Students may also be encouraged to utilise university support services if the lecturer believes the student may benefit from contact with these services. Encouraging, as distinct from referring, involves the lecturer actively participating in assisting the student to access and use such services. This may entail giving all the relevant information, contacting the service on the student's behalf if required, and even taking a student to the service if necessary. For example, one lecturer explained that "we had a student who was really struggling and she wasn't coping at all ... The tutor involved and myself spoke to her separately, we went down with her to the [support unit] ... we worked through what was expected of her ... by giving her that extra bit of assistance, showing her she could succeed she ended up getting a credit for the course...". Individual attention such as this is less likely to occur when lecturers are finding it difficult to meet their own competing workload demands.

Lecturers who themselves come from international backgrounds are able to use their own situation and experience as a way of Encouraging international students to speak out about their own experiences or ideas: "I'll say things like 'those of us who've come from an international background, how would you relate your culture to communication?'".

When lecturers want to engage students and encourage them in indirect ways they will draw on other tactics, such as humour, to create a comfortable and accepting environment. For example, "I jolly them along a lot and they really respond to humour, kind of teasing and a bit of encouragement through that and having a bit of fun with it".

Encouraging enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their willingness to assist individual students and their capacity to understand the challenges students may be facing.

### *Giving Time*

Giving Time supports students by ensuring that lecturers are available both during class and at other times to answer questions, discuss issues or address concerns. Giving Time can refer to time given to individual students or groups of students.

Giving Time results from the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Involvement combined with Student Cohort and Workload. Lecturers who are focused on encouraging all students to participate, and are willing to be involved themselves in getting to know students and working closely with them, are more likely to give time. Giving Time is likely to be particularly used in relation to international students who may seek additional time outside of formal class time.

Giving Time enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by ensuring that lecturers who value close involvement with students feel that they are performing their job effectively and by allowing students and lecturers to develop their working relationship.

Lecturers who believe that it is important to interact with students and to assist them by answering questions and/or discussing issues are likely to use the tactic of Giving Time. This will be particularly the case if lecturers perceive themselves to have a role in supporting students with personal or study problems. For example, one lecturer commented that “you just take it on as part of the role if you’re going to teach I think, or I do, because I think that’s what you’re there to do, you’re there to actually facilitate their learning. And if something is getting in the way then you deal with it”. Giving Time then is a Supporting tactic that includes the provision of “emotional support” to students. If lecturers think that students learn best when they are confident and comfortable then they will perceive the giving of emotional support as

a means of facilitating learning, and be prepared to give time to this “pastoral care” role.

Giving Time tactics are more likely to be used to assist groups with any difficulties they encounter when course requirements include working in groups to complete assignments and when lecturers value relationships and interaction. For example, “there was a group which had problems in carrying out an assignment and I intervened ... I could not devote the time during the stipulated time, and so I said let’s have a discussion”.

Lecturers who come from Asia and have experienced educational systems where lecturers develop close relationships with students, including social events outside of class time, are likely to give time to students. International students may also perceive lecturers from cultures similar to their own as approachable and therefore seek their time. For example, one lecturer who himself comes from Asia stated: “I find them walking into my room asking about issues that are non-academic but administrative issues ... I suppose they feel they are not being attended to effectively by the other staff”.

Significant numbers of international students in classes means that it is more likely that lecturers who are interested in working with all students will use Giving Time tactics. In these instances Giving Time refers to time spent with students after class, as this is when many lecturers find that international students want to speak to them. If lecturers prefer discussions to occur in class but find many international students will not participate in discussion they may use Giving Time after class. For example, “I’ve attempted to get to know them [international students] when approached after class”. Lecturers are less inclined to spend time with students after class when their own workload is high and they have little time to spare.

### *Reinforcing Positively*

Reinforcing Positively refers to tactics that support students by providing positive feedback for their comments and behaviours.

Reinforcing Positively is primarily influenced by Forces in the Lecturer, specifically Valuing Teaching and Valuing Active Participation. Lecturers who hold these values will be more likely to attempt to provide positive feedback to students in all contexts. Reinforcing Positively enables lecturers who value teaching to Maintain Competence as it utilises teaching techniques that facilitate learning.

Lecturers who believe that students learn most effectively in environments that are supportive and encouraging are more likely to use Reinforcing Positively. Lecturers use this tactic to assist students feel comfortable in the group and build their self-esteem and confidence. For example, one lecturer stated: “when they do talk, really positively reinforce it. I never ever, even if the student’s got it wrong I would never say that. I’d say, ‘Actually you know what, I hadn’t thought about it from that perspective and that’s a really good idea’ and usually I’ll try and run with it. Or I’ll say ‘You’re on the right track but it’s not specific enough for this theory’. I would never say no that’s wrong does anyone else know the answer”.

Reinforcing Positively can be enacted through verbal statements, however it also includes non-verbal communication such as eye contact, nodding and smiling. When a lecturer values relating and interacting they can be observed to use these non-verbal signals in classes to make contact with, and respond to, both individuals and the group as a whole. These non-verbal behaviours positively reinforce desired behaviours on the part of students such as asking questions or making pertinent comments.

If a lecturer wants students to support and positively reinforce each other he or she may establish an atmosphere and opportunities for this to occur. This can be achieved in class discussions by encouraging students to listen to each other and particularly give feedback on presentations. Feedback can include clapping, asking questions, or giving a verbal or written evaluative comment. For instance, one lecturer explained that “the way we’ve run it this year in the first year course is we’ve got the audience to evaluate the presentation and they’ve been really supportive of the overseas students, and they’ve sort of said we’ve admired the way you’ve been able to do this, with English being your second language ... and that’s given confidence”.

## **Lower Controlling Sub-Strategies**

The sub-strategies of Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries both derive from the property of Lower Controlling. These sub-strategies when combined with the Lower Intellectualising sub-strategies of Engaging with People and Supporting, create the tactics applicable to the strategy of Relating.

Lower Controlling sub-strategies used in conjunction with Lower Intellectualising sub-strategies enable a lecturer to Maintain Competence through close interaction with students and the development of learning through experience, reflection and conceptualisation. These sub-strategies reduce the hierarchical distinctions between lecturer and students, enabling them to work collaboratively to learn about theory as well as about themselves. For lecturers who value such approaches, competence is maintained by demonstrating flexibility, a willingness to relate to students and openness to exploring issues as they arise.

### Expanding Methods

Expanding Methods involves using different teaching approaches and methods to encourage and develop interaction and reflection amongst the students. It enables lecturers to Maintain Competence by demonstrating their ability to work with a range of methods and to work across experiential, reflective and conceptual processes. Expanding Methods accommodates diversity by providing students with opportunities to participate and learn from each other as well as from the lecturer.

The tactics used in Expanding Ideas within the Lower Intellectualising strategy of Relating are Being Flexible, Reflecting and Grouping. They are presented in Table 8.3 along with the moderating variables that influence the tactics.

Table 8.3: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Expanding Methods within the Strategy of Relating

<b>Expanding Ideas</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Being Flexible	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity, Valuing Involvement	Teaching Delivery Method
Reflecting	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Involvement	Teaching Delivery Method, Workload
Grouping	Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Teaching	

### *Being Flexible*

Being Flexible refers to tactics that focus on changing and adapting the subject content and process to accommodate differing student requirements or preferences. It involves the lecturer being willing and able to alter their expectations and methods. Lecturers Maintain Competence by demonstrating their ability to be flexible in covering a wide variety of content and methods with appropriate knowledge and skill.

Being Flexible results from the interplay of the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity and Valuing Involvement with Teaching Delivery Method. Lecturers who are focused on teaching processes and perceive themselves as also involved in the learning process are more likely to conduct classes and tutorials in a flexible and responsive manner.

Lecturers who value engaging students in the activities and processes of the class are likely to be flexible in their approach in order to find ways that best suit the interests and abilities of a given class. This may require the ability to try “whatever seems to work for that class” and adapting to “the needs of all the different students”.

Being Flexible is likely to be a preferred tactic if the lecturer values the process of learning and perceives him or herself as a learner as much as the students. Lecturers

who hold these values and beliefs will respond positively to the challenge of changing to suit the students, viewing their approach as “less of an approach and more of being reactive to what emerges in the group”. Lecturers who adopt this tactic are likely to minimise their expectations and strategies and “take every sort of week as it comes”.

When lecturers are uncertain about what a group will be like, or expectations do not fit the actuality, they are likely to use Being Flexible. Lecturers may choose to be flexible in their approach to the subject, as discussed by one lecturer who said “we kind of thought, oh well, the only way we can find out is to actually try and see what happens, and we made lots of adjustments over each semester”. This is more likely to be the case when a subject is new and being developed, or when it is being taught to a different group of students, for example if a course conducted in Australia is being taught in another country for the first time.

If lecturers are aware that students will have varying perceptions regarding what constitutes Being Flexible, they will establish procedures that meet the “expected” requirements whilst still maintaining their own approach. For example, subject outlines are expected to be comprehensive, but in some cases “it has most of the mandatory content but I try to keep it as loose as possible”. In relation to perceptions of the “tools of the trade” and the expectation of students that these are utilised “you always go in with something, students feel you’re not prepared if you just turn up, so always go in with a box”. In this way the lecturer can Maintain Competence in the eyes of the students whilst at the same time maintaining their own sense of competence by remaining flexible and adaptable.

### *Reflecting*

Reflecting refers to the process of thinking about what has happened, what actions were taken, and what future actions may be appropriate to develop or improve events. It requires both personal insight and a willingness to analyse one’s own behaviours and the reasons behind those behaviours. Reflecting is an internal process and unlikely to be seen by other people, but tends to be a significant aspect of a lecturer’s sense of their own professional competence when it is a practice that is valued by the

lecturer. Lecturers who value Reflecting will practice it themselves in order to Maintain Competence in their perceptions of their own behaviour.

Reflecting tactics are influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Involvement combined with Teaching Delivery Method and Workload. Lecturers who hold these values will tend to perceive their own learning as important and spend time, when available, reflecting in order to improve their teaching. Lecturers are more likely to be able to utilise this approach effectively for themselves and students in classes and tutorials rather than lectures.

Lecturers who value learning from experience will tend to use Reflecting as a core aspect of their approach. They will reflect on their own experiences, including their experience as students, as one lecturer commented: “I certainly reflected when I first started out on my own undergraduate experience, and what I valued and kind of certainly modelled some of those things I thought of at the time”.

Reflecting tactics are likely to be used by a lecturer who wants to establish a process of ongoing learning, based on his or her experience and reflection on that experience. This learning may occur as a general review of subjects in order to continue improving the subject content and approach, so that, as one lecturer described, “every week after I’ve finished a lecture I’ll make a note about what worked and what didn’t in the class so that when I go back to it next year I make the lecture accordingly. So I do try and reflect on the process”. Lecturers will tend to reflect on their own strategies for assessing group dynamics and group progress as well as how individual students are learning. This reflection tends to take into account learning both in terms of relationships and content material.

The learning and reflection may also occur before class when lecturers are preparing their approach, or during class if a lecturer wants everyone to learn from the process of reviewing and reflecting on actions. For example, one lecturer said that “after something’s happened ... if I’m uncomfortable ... I say ‘let’s go through it again ... how could we handle it better?’”.

When lecturers value the process of learning through reflection they are likely to use Reflecting tactics in their design of activities and assessment for students. This may include allowing time in class for students “to fill out their journals”, and allowing time for students to reflect amongst themselves. For example, a lecturer who conducts experiential classes stated: “in classes where they’re reflecting quite positively themselves I basically sit back and let them go”. If lecturers want to ensure that students focus on reflection and develop skills in reflecting on their own work they are likely to build reflection into aspects of the assignments. For example, “getting them to do a project where the only thing they do is focus on their group process and they have to do it as a group”.

### *Grouping*

Grouping within the Lower Controlling sub-strategies enables the lecturer to choose different ways of creating groups of students for activities or assessment.

Grouping is influenced by the moderating variables of Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Teaching. Lecturers who believe that students learn most effectively when actively involved, and perceive groups as a method of enhancing learning, will tend to use Grouping.

Lecturers who believe that students work most effectively when they have responsibility for the way they work will tend to use Grouping tactics. Grouping may involve letting students self-select the groups they work in or offering alternatives regarding the selection of groups. For example, one lecturer said she would “always ask them how would they like to set up the group, would they like me to do it, would they like to do it themselves. Almost universally they choose to do it themselves”. In these instances the lecturer hands over control of the decision making to the students and responds accordingly.

If lecturers recognise that self-selecting groups sometimes results in particular difficulties for the students they are likely to address these issues as they arise rather than alter the groupings. For example, a lecturer commented that he “would much rather let them self-select their groups, and then if that meant there was a group that

was largely international students or a group that was struggling with the fact that it had international members then I'd work with that".

Grouping as a lower controlling strategy tends not to allocate students to groups according to whether they are international or local Australian students. If lecturers believe in allowing students to self-select they will use Grouping tactics and only place students in groups according to background if they think that is useful "as part of the exercise". For example, "if I have to divide the group up to work in sub-groups I won't divide it up so that there's an even distribution of international students ... unless the task calls for such, I won't divide it up so that there's a separate group of international students".

When a group is formed for assessment purposes then lecturers who believe students work best when they have chosen their own groups will use Grouping tactics and allow the students to control the process of group selection. Lecturers who are focused on the group taking responsibility for their own learning will tend to use Grouping tactics and be willing to assess students according to the students' preferences. One lecturer commented that she would "consider differential marking in the group if it's presented to me in a reasonable way ... based on the students' perceptions of input".

Grouping enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by providing them with a tactic that demonstrates flexibility to students and increases the likelihood of finding a form of establishing and managing groups most suited to the learning task.

### Reducing Boundaries

Reducing Boundaries, when linked with Lower Intellectualising, aims to encourage and support students by reducing the hierarchical distinction between lecturer and students and by developing relationships to assist interaction and personal learning. Lecturers Maintain Competence by developing relationships with students and demonstrating their willingness to share aspects of themselves as people as well as their content knowledge.

Reducing Boundaries is more likely to occur in classes and tutorials but can be achieved in traditional lecture theatres if the lecturer has a strong preference for presenting him or herself as an approachable person interested in working closely with students.

The tactics of Reducing Boundaries are Using Humour, Minimising Hierarchy and Being Available. These tactics and the moderating variables that influence them are set out in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4: Moderating Variables influencing the Sub-Strategy of Reducing Boundaries within the Strategy of Relating

<b>Reducing Boundaries</b>	<b>Forces in the Lecturer</b>	<b>Forces in the Environment</b>
Using Humour	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Equity, Valuing Diversity	
Minimising Hierarchy	Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation, Valuing Equity	Teaching Delivery Method
Being Available	Valuing Teaching,	Workload

### *Using Humour*

Using Humour is a tactic for Reducing Boundaries. It is used in both lectures and classes as a means of putting people at their ease.

Using Humour is primarily influenced by Forces in the Lecturer, specifically the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Valuing Equity and can be applied in any context with all students. Lecturers who use humour focus on establishing an atmosphere that enables students to feel comfortable and open to learning. The establishment of such an atmosphere enables the lecturer to Maintain Competence by creating the type of environment he or she believes is conducive to learning.

Self-deprecating humour in particular is more likely when a lecturer wants students to perceive him or her as approachable. One lecturer explained: “most of my humour is taking the mickey out of myself so probably that’s why they’re a bit shocked at the start that I’m belittling myself or you know kind of diminishing a theory or whatever”.

Lecturers who want to create an atmosphere that enables people to relax and enjoy a moment are likely to use humour. Using Humour can be utilised to highlight an idea and establish some fun, for example, one lecturer was observed to use humour during a lecture, making comments such as “the day after Christmas is not a good day to ask Turkeys their attitude to Christmas”. It may also be used to capture students’ attention by adding an unexpected element to the discussion. For example, “I say okay we’re going to look at what you bring to a conflict situation ... what I want you to do is give me a list of “F” words, and they all snigger, in fact they laugh out loud, and I say, ‘what do you think I’m talking about?’”.

If a lecturer wants to reduce boundaries in relation to issues such as diversity they are likely to use humour to assist students in learning about potentially sensitive topics. For example, “we encouraged them to have a bit of fun with it [stereotyping] and this was in part so that people were less reticent about it, less worried about being politically correct ... we talked about what that meant, and how it felt ... and so on”.

### *Minimising Hierarchy*

Minimising Hierarchy is a tactic for reducing the power differential between lecturer and students.

Minimising Hierarchy is primarily a result of Forces in the Lecturer, particularly the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching, Valuing Active Participation and Valuing Equity. The combination of these variables, coupled with teaching environments of either classes or tutorials, enables lecturers and students to collaborate. Lecturers who hold these values are more likely to perceive themselves as sharing the learning

process with students and tend to establish practices to enable students to work as equals.

Minimising Hierarchy tends to be used by lecturers who view their role as that of teacher working with students in order to create learning. One lecturer commented: “with the change of teachers role from when people just filled people up with facts it’s actually made teaching more important with the social construction of knowledge. The teacher’s role is to co-collaborate in learning, and that’s actually more intensive”. Lecturers who hold this view tend to value teaching highly and value the process of working closely with students so that both students and lecturer can learn from the exchange. Given these beliefs lecturers Maintain Competence by Minimising Hierarchy and presenting themselves as involved in learning as well as teaching.

If lecturers want to facilitate the equal exchange of ideas, thoughts, feelings and experience they tend to use Minimising Hierarchy. Lecturers will create an atmosphere that enables students to participate freely in class by tactics such as introducing themselves on a first name basis; setting up chairs and tables in rooms so that students can see each other and the lecturer; using experiential activities and participating in these at times; breaking the class into small groups to enable them to talk together; and walking around to speak to students individually or in small groups, even in lectures.

Lecturers may give students an opportunity to direct the content covered in class, for example, “If they say ‘Oh this is a bit boring’ ... I can say ‘Yeah, it is. What do you want to do?’”. Lecturers who take the view that learning is “student driven” are likely to use Minimising Hierarchy and let classes evolve “rather than have this fixed thing”. In these instances lecturers are not asserting authority but enabling students to choose: “I don’t see a problem because that’s what suits them”.

Minimising Hierarchy tends to be used to encourage students to challenge the lecturer’s ideas, opinions and assumptions by lecturers who want students to feel free to relate as relative equals within the class. This approach demonstrates to the students that the lecturer can be questioned in relation to their knowledge, ideas or position. For example, “my style is that I don’t make statements that can’t be

challenged, I deliberately couch it in a language where I'm asking them for their response and then I invite others to comment on it. So basically I generate discussion amongst themselves". Lecturers who take this approach tend to be willing to acknowledge their own limitations and admit mistakes.

When a lecturer perceives learning as a shared exercise and takes the view that both teacher and student learn from the experience they are likely to use Minimising Hierarchy and be willing to admit mistakes they may make. Lecturers may admit mistakes when they misjudge a situation, discover they have made assumptions, have not remembered names correctly, or have given wrong information due to limited knowledge of a given topic.

### *Being Available*

Being Available entails the lecturer being willing to spend time with students for both academic and personal concerns.

Being Available is influenced primarily by the moderating variables of Valuing Teaching and Workload. Lecturers who believe that by Being Available they can assist students and facilitate learning are likely to use this tactic unless their own workload is too onerous.

Being Available tends to be used as a tactic by lecturers who believe it is important that students can contact them to discuss issues. They therefore make themselves available both during class and at other times and are likely to advise students of set contact hours but may also tell students to "feel free to contact me". If a lecturer believes it is important to maintain contact with students they will make themselves available by replying to phone calls or emails within a short space of time. For example, one lecturer stated: "I encourage them and tell them ... don't hesitate to email me and I make it a point to answer all my emails within the first 24 hours". Encouraging students to contact them to discuss issues, ask questions or raise concerns demonstrates the lecturer's willingness to work with students without strict boundaries in place.

Lecturers who want to have contact with students may alter environmental conditions, particularly teaching delivery method, in order to facilitate this. For example, lecturers may visit tutorials where students are “definitely not used to seeing a lecturer in the tutorial”, in order to demonstrate their approachability. Lecturers may also find other ways to deliver subject content, for example “putting lectures on line” in order to allow more time for working closely with students.

Being Available may add to the demands of their own work, but lecturers who believe strongly in the importance of Being Available will continue to make time. For example, “I’m a teacher who puts too much of myself and cares too much and I think some of them pick up on that and they begin to trust me and so I often get to know a few of them”. Lecturers who take this approach tend to find it hard to make themselves unavailable if they are aware of students requiring assistance. One lecturer discussed this dilemma thus: “I guess sometimes I would like to say I don’t want to spend the time with you. I’ve found that once they start talking to me about how hard it is ... it’s hard to let them go and struggle on their own”. Lecturers who would prefer to be available but find this difficult due to workload and are conscious of protecting their own stress levels tend to find themselves utilising more Distancing strategies in order to meet competing demands.

Being Available at the expense of other aspects of the work or one’s own stress levels, or minimising availability to cope with other demands even when being available is preferred, adds stress for the lecturer but tends to be used by lecturers who Maintain Competence through their close involvement with students.

### **Consequences**

The consequences of Relating are Relationships and Involvement. The combination of Lower Intellectualising and Lower Controlling creates the flexibility to alter aspects of the program to suit individuals or groups of students and ensures that the lecturer is available to students for consultation and assistance.

Relating strategies tend to facilitate interaction between lecturer and students even if that interaction occurs outside class for students who are quiet in class groups. This

enables those international students who find it difficult to speak in class to find time to talk to lecturers and to feel accepted. This is particularly the case when lecturers make it clear they are willing to give time to assist with concerns or questions, and when lecturers have learnt students' names.

Relating strategies are similar to Adapting strategies in that they tend to expect verbal participation from students and can therefore be difficult for quieter students and particularly international students who are not accustomed to speaking in class or taking part in experiential activities in class. Relating strategies differ from Adapting strategies however in the time given by the lecturer to developing relationships and assisting individual students to gain the confidence to become involved.

Relating strategies accommodate diversity by taking into account individual differences and attempting to facilitate the learning for all students through the development of relationships and involvement on the part of the lecturer.

Relating strategies are dependent on Forces in the Lecturer but Forces in the Environment can reduce the likelihood of lecturers utilising these strategies in order to manage their own work demands.

Relating strategies, whilst not focused on ideas, are however focused on the achievement of high standards judged from the perspective of learning process and understanding self and others rather than the development of content knowledge. In these situations lecturers perceive that students, including international students, learn more than they would if other approaches, particularly Distancing, were the primary approach: "It also meant that her learning ... was far deeper and more perceptive and her understanding of the classroom was more sophisticated than the average Australian student because she'd really had to go through what is this, and how is this way of learning, applied it to herself with the support of me and someone particular in her group, and as I said her learning as a result was higher".

## Relationships

The development of relationships between lecturer and students, and between students themselves, is a consequence of Relating strategies that focus on getting to know each other as people and experiencing the learning process together.

Relating strategies are most effective when the intent is to develop relationships and enable students to explore ideas and experiences together in an environment that is conducive to the sharing of feelings as well as thoughts. It is assumed that students will learn more effectively in conditions where they feel the subject content is connected to their interests and experiences; where they are encouraged and supported; where they feel known and understood as an individual; and where the atmosphere is relaxed and the lecturer approachable.

## Involvement

Relating strategies assume that students will learn most effectively if they are actively involved in the learning process through experiential activities as well as discussion. Relating strategies tend to adopt adult learning models that integrate experience, reflection and conceptualisation and require students to be involved at each point.

Relating strategies focus on the integration of theory and practice, often with an emphasis on skill development and personal awareness as well as knowledge gain.

In order to achieve this both students and lecturers have to be involved in the experience of learning and be willing to learn from each other.

Relating strategies are more likely to be preferred by students who enjoy working closely with other people, and who value and enjoy the process of learning through experience and reflection. Students who prefer to work on their own or who prefer to explore ideas without a focus on reflection and personal awareness may not want to develop collaborative working relationships with lecturers and/or other students.

## Maintaining Competence

Relating strategies that are low on intellectualising and low on controlling are very focused on responding to students. They enable the lecturer to Maintain Competence by developing close relationships with students, becoming involved with students both academically and personally, and continuing their own learning. Working closely with students, experiencing the dynamics of different groups of students and allowing them to set some direction, and reflecting on one's own as well as the students' behaviour, allow lecturers to develop their own knowledge and skill.

Lecturers who use Relating strategies as their primary approach are more likely to be teaching in people oriented subjects such as Organisation Behaviour and tend to value teaching highly. Lecturers who use Relating tend to come from a variety of backgrounds but at some point are likely to have studied or developed an interest in human behaviour, psychology and reflective practice.

Relating strategies are strongly influenced by Forces in the Environment, particularly the workload demands for individual lecturers. If lecturers find they are having difficulty in meeting all their work requirements then they are less likely to use Relating strategies even if this is their preferred approach. Whilst it is more difficult to use Relating strategies in large lectures, lecturers who are strongly committed to these strategies, and whose sense of professional competence is linked to Relating, will tend to find ways to use Relating strategies as much as possible even when conditions are not conducive.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the strategy of Relating. The sub-strategies of Engaging with People, Supporting, Expanding Methods and Reducing Boundaries, which result from the combination of the properties of Lower Intellectualising and Lower Controlling are also discussed in this chapter. The consequences of Relating are Relationships and Involvement.

Within the overall theory of Maintaining Competence, Relating demonstrates lecturers' concerns with developing flexible approaches that take individual needs into account. The tactics discussed in this chapter demonstrate the behaviours utilised by lecturers when they use Relating strategies to address their main concern of addressing the needs of a heterogeneous student population whilst also maintaining their own professional competence.

Relating strategies enable the lecturer to Maintain Competence and accommodate diversity by exhibiting an ability to respond flexibly to differing needs and a willingness to work closely with students in a non-hierarchical and supportive manner.

## **Chapter Nine – Literature Comparison and Discussion**

### **Introduction**

Orthodox Grounded Theory research concentrates on theory development prior to comparing and contrasting the emergent theory with relevant literature. This has the advantage of preventing the researcher from forcing data into pre-conceived categories (Glaser, 1992) and of ‘delimiting’ the literature to enable a more focused comparison (Glaser 1998). In contrast to literature reviews that establish the context for the research, the emergent theory itself establishes the relevance of the literature, by guiding the researcher to literature that can be directly compared with the emergent theory.

The current chapter presents a comparative literature review designed to situate the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence within the extant literature. Similarities and differences to existing works are addressed, with “selectivity according to perceived areas of relevance” (Guthrie, 2000, p101) as the guiding logic. The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence is multi-disciplinary and as such draws on literature from areas including education, sociology, and psychology. Given the extensive literature in these disciplines, this literature comparison does not attempt to be exhaustive but concentrates on exploring the main areas of perceived relevance and direct comparison to the emergent theory. I have selected literature that I believe adds density to the theory of Maintaining Competence through a comparison of the similarities and/or differences in the research findings.

The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence demonstrates how lecturers resolve their main concern of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population. The Basic Social Process and Core Category of Maintaining Competence shows that lecturers utilise their own strengths and take environmental conditions into account in order to maintain competence. The theory consists of a causal-consequence model including a context of ‘massification’ and ‘minimisation’ and a cause of ‘internationalisation’, with moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment. These

factors result in a variety of strategies that are presented as a typology of teaching approaches.

In Grounded Theory research the literature comparison is not intended to verify the findings of a study but to locate the study within the existing literature. My research fills a gap within the existing literature by exploring lecturers' responses to the mix of local and international students within the contemporary university classroom and developing a theory that explains how these responses are contingent upon the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment. Maintaining Competence is thus a contingency theory in which no approach to teaching is necessarily better or worse, but is understood as a response to the interplay of both personal and environmental factors.

The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence adds to the knowledge base concerning teaching in higher education particularly in its emphasis on the influence of moderating variables and the recognition that teaching approaches are contingent upon variables both within the lecturer and within the environment. In this way it differs from approaches that suggest that one method of teaching is 'best' or 'highest' and from approaches that focus on context but place less emphasis on the interplay between personal and environmental factors.

The areas that have earned their way into this literature comparison have been selected on the basis of my perceptions of their relevance to the emergent theory. I have identified the areas of :

- Professional Competence;
- Teaching International Students;
- Teacher Centred and Student Centred Teaching Approaches; and
- Contextual and Contingency Approaches.

Each of these areas has earned its way into the literature comparison through its relevance to the emergent theory.

### Professional Competence

I consider the literature on professional competence to be highly relevant to the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence given my perception of university lecturers as 'professionals' and the requirements of 'acting' within professional roles. Consequently I turn to literature discussing the meaning of 'profession' and the ideals of service to the community. I contrast this with literature that demonstrates the importance of maintaining perceptions of competence in order to manage one's work. Of particular relevance are other Grounded Theory studies (Guthrie, 2000; Hutchinson, 1979) that demonstrate the processes used by professionals to maintain an impression of professional care and competence. I also discuss Goffman's (1959, 1967) theories of front and back stage behaviours, face saving and image management and compare his writings with the circumstances in which university lecturers work, including differing expectations of the academic role.

### Teaching International Students

As my study focuses on the responses of lecturers to the mix of local and international students I consider it enlightening to look at some of the existing literature relating to teaching international students (including Ballard and Clanchy, 1997; Sinclair and Britton Wilson, 1999; Volet and Renshaw, 1996). I have limited this exploration to literature addressing the Australian experience as I want literature that is directly comparable to the experiences being discussed by lecturers in my study. The issues raised by lecturers in this research have guided my selection of literature and established a focus on the issues of stereotyping, techniques for working with international students and issues concerning internationalisation. Stereotyping and different value systems are recognised as Forces in the Lecturer. Suggestions and techniques for working with international students are compared to the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating.

### Teacher Centred /Student Centred Approaches

I have decided not to venture into the vast literature on teaching approaches in primary and secondary school but to limit my focus to literature concerned with

teaching in higher education, as this is directly comparable with my study. My study found that lecturers utilise a variety of teaching approaches in order to address their main concern of balancing the needs of a heterogeneous student population with their own need for professional competence. The typology of strategies developed demonstrates that teaching approaches are either ideas or people focused and structured or flexible. This led to the establishment of four categories of strategy: Distancing (high on ideas and structured); Adapting (high on ideas and flexible); Clarifying (high people focus and structured); and Relating (high people focus and flexible).

The extant literature on conceptions of teaching and teaching approaches in higher education is compared and contrasted with the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence. These approaches can be broadly defined as teacher centred/student centred approaches (Akerlind, 2003, 2004; Kember and Gow, 1994; Kember and Kwan, 2000; Martin, 1999; Samuelowicz and Bain, 2001; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell, Prosser and Waterhouse, 1999).

### Contextual and Contingency Models

Contextual models take into account the context within which teaching occurs and particularly address the issue of teaching students from differing backgrounds (Biggs, 1996, 1999; Northedge, 2003). I include discussion of the cultural bias of models and literature that demonstrates a different model for teaching in Confucian Heritage Cultures (Biggs, 1996; Gao and Watkins, 2001; Ho, 2001; Mok, Chik, Ko, Lo, Marton, Ng, Pang, Runesson, and Szeto, 2001; Watkins and Biggs, 2001). This literature adds a further dimension to our understanding of strategies, the contexts in which they may be most effective, and the issues that may be relevant when teaching a mix of local and international students

Moderating variables that affect the application and use of different teaching approaches (Kember and Kwan, 2000; and Trigwell and Prosser, 1996a; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999) are discussed and compared with the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment established in the current study. One important aspect of the contextual and contingency models is their emphasis on the

changing responses of the lecturers, which recognises the complexity of teaching within current university environments.

The remainder of this chapter provides a detailed discussion of the extant literature in these four areas, and contrasts and compares this literature and the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence.

### **Professional Competence**

The concept of ‘profession’ permeates higher education culminating in the idea of a Professor as the highest academic position within a university. One of the hallmarks of any profession is the requirement that potential members study at university prior to being admitted to the professional body. The traditional learned professions of theology, law and medicine have long required a university degree with other disciplines, including teaching, establishing university requirements during the 20th century. Interestingly, there is currently no requirement that a university lecturer hold any form of teaching qualification, the focus is on the attainment of qualifications in the professional discipline within which they teach.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976) defines profession as “Vocation or calling, esp. one that involves some branch of advanced learning or science ...” (p885), with a professional therefore being someone who belongs to or is connected with a profession.

Garvin and Tropman (1998) suggest seven common themes or criteria that distinguish a profession. First, a common body of knowledge accessible through review of the literature and honed through practice; second, a theoretical basis for the body of knowledge; third, university training which promotes the integration of theory and practice; fourth, income protection through practice of the profession; fifth, control of practitioners by the profession supported by legislation limiting who may use the title of the profession; sixth, internal moral and ethical controls established by the profession; and seven, measurable and observable results that can be publicly verified or observed.

The traditional idea of a professional as someone who acts in the service of others tends to create an idealistic view of the work performed - it is perceived to be altruistic rather than self-serving. Historically professionals have been imbued with the idea of great expertise and knowledge and consequently been accorded power and authority over their clients. Whilst some of these ideals and expectations may have been diminished in recent years there is still a general expectation, both on the part of the public and the professionals themselves, that a professional person has certain knowledge and behaves in certain ways in accordance with their professional position.

Drawing on the above framework university lecturers can be seen to share a common body of knowledge and theoretical underpinnings that they add to through their own research. They are clearly university educated, usually to the higher degree level and are awarded titles, such as Doctor, accordingly. Whilst there is no specific code of conduct governing university teaching there is an implicit expectation that lecturers will act both morally and ethically. In the research domain there are clear rules concerning ethical behaviour, for example the strict adherence to methods of citation and the non-tolerance of plagiarism. The results of research are publicly observable and verifiable. The practice of teaching is also publicly observable and verifiable as the student audience is always present and, in the present day university, invited to evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers.

O'Connor, Wilson and Setterlund (1995) present two alternative ways of viewing the professions. Firstly, the functional approach, as discussed above, with its focus on specialised knowledge that is practically applied from a service orientation and adheres to ethical standards. The functional perspective sees the purpose of the profession as providing a benefit to the community as a whole.

An alternate view proposes that professions can be seen as “occupational collectives with a shared system of meaning ... [and] tacit understanding of a particular aspect of the world” (O'Connor et al, 1995, p178). In this view each profession seeks “hegemony for its discourses” (p179) to ensure control of the attribution of meaning and response to that meaning, the regulation of one’s own work, and the dominance of the professional discourse.

It is not my intent to enter a debate as to whether or not university lecturers constitute a profession. What is clear is that university lecturers are immediately involved in preparing potential members for entry into the professions by introducing them to the knowledge, the theoretical bases, the practical applications and the discourse of the relevant profession. In this role lecturers adopt many of the practices and preferences of both the functional and discourse views of professions and have a personal interest and investment in maintaining their professional competence.

The idea of professionals as providing a service for the benefit of the community has been questioned in a number of Grounded Theory studies (Guthrie, 2000; Hutchinson, 1979) that have uncovered behaviours designed to maintain the professionals' position and power at least as much, if not more, as to provide a service. The results of these studies support the concept of a profession as a discourse community with a shared knowledge base and a desire to maintain its own autonomy. Of particular relevance here is the link between professionalism and the market. Larson (1977) cited in O'Connor et al (1995) argues that "professions seek to translate specialised knowledge into a marketable commodity, thus enabling income to be earned on the basis of transacted services" (p178).

It appears from this research that, in spite of the ideal of service to the community, professionals work hard to maintain their position as knowledgeable and trustworthy experts, not purely for the benefit of their clients but to ensure their clients continue to seek their services and are satisfied with the service provided. These practices maintain the perceived competence of the professional and the autonomy of the profession through shared discourses and practices. The result of these practices is the maintenance of the professions' capacity to continue to trade in their relevant area of expertise.

Guthrie (2000) in her Grounded Theory study of veterinary practices raises this issue to prominence with her core variable of Keeping Clients in Line. She presents a theory demonstrating that whilst clients think of vets as professional experts, vets themselves are more focused on ensuring a continuing relationship with clients in order to sustain their business. Guthrie, taking a marketing perspective, writes: "the

closed awareness of clients to the marketing processes of professional experts is where the power lies” (Guthrie, 2000, p120). She states that by “manipulating clients’ awareness through mystification, information gaining, coaching into clienthood and cultivating through psuedo-friending ... [veterinarians] are able to process daily interactions with clients in accordance with their own agendas” (Guthrie, 2000, p50). Clients are still receiving a professional service but vets are also benefiting from the relationship, and therefore aspects of the vets’ behaviour are designed to continue this relationship to ensure future benefits to themselves rather than purely for the well-being of the clients.

The idea of professionals working together to meet their own agendas is clearly discussed by Hutchinson (1979, 1983) in her Grounded Theory study of rescue workers. She discovers a core variable and basic social psychological process of Covering, “a self-protective process which anticipates consequences” (p51). Hutchinson (1979) demonstrates how uncertainty regarding both events and outcomes coupled with visibility, that is, performing in front of others, leads to the process of covering to avoid problems and satisfy the different perspectives of different audiences.

Hutchinson (1983) states that covering “is a human process and present in all people and in all work environments but it takes on different characteristics in each ... it is more generally a method of anticipating consequences and doing all within one’s power to prevent negative consequences from occurring” (p35). These behaviours do not necessarily have a negative effect for the client, but the potential for negative effects is clearly there. This potential, implicitly understood, is addressed by the codes of conduct that govern professional behaviour and act to prevent, at least in most cases, abuse of the power that is accorded to the professional person by virtue of his or her position.

My study can be compared with Hutchinson’s theory of Covering, as university lecturers are attempting to ensure that they balance the needs of the students, particularly heterogeneous groups of students, with their own needs for professional competence. There are some similarities and differences between my theory of Maintaining Competence and Guthrie’s theory of Keeping Clients in Line.

University lecturers are not necessarily cultivating a long-term relationship with students, however they do benefit from a positive short-term relationship with students who are then more likely to give them higher ratings on evaluations. The results of these studies suggest that the ongoing development of professional competence and the ability to manage perceptions of that competence are of primary concern to many professional groups.

The current university environment may be accentuating the importance of Maintaining Competence. McWilliam (2004) argues that universities are engaging in practices of risk minimisation that require all staff to be risk-conscious and to guard against perceived risks such as wastage of resources, fail rates of students or declining standards. McWilliam (2004) suggests that some student groups are seen as riskier than others, giving the example of a double risk to universities when fee-paying overseas students are perceived to signify high risk in relation to academic standards and are also high risk in terms of the potential loss of revenue if this market is threatened.

In this context, the main concern of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population becomes even more pronounced, as lecturers are expected to conform to processes designed to ensure greater accountability and minimisation of risk at an organisational level. As McWilliam (2004) notes, it is interesting that at a time when student centred teaching practices, discussed later in this chapter, are generally unquestioned as the most effective teaching practices, risk minimisation processes make this a very difficult attainment. He states: “There is no requirement that an individual academic forego close personal relationships with students, however, such relationships must be carefully time managed in order not to distract from the real work of demonstrating accountability by way of minimizing risk and maximizing quality in ways that are organizationally sanctioned and approved” (2004, p159).

In my study, lecturers who tended to prefer Relating strategies struggled with finding time to spend with students and were quite conscious of the dissonance between expectations of ‘good’ teaching and the tendency of administrative requirements to eat into teaching time. Maintaining Competence under these conditions becomes a

serious juggling act for lecturers who want to spend time with students, but also have to be seen to be competent in meeting organisational demands which, as argued above, may have more to do with risk minimisation than pedagogical concerns.

The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence is a substantive theory discovered within a context of a rapidly changing higher education environment. The organisations within which academics work and the student groups they teach both have expectations of the academic role, expectations that are sometimes in conflict and subject to change. In order to Maintain Competence within this context of differing expectations lecturers apply different strategies depending on the interplay of personal and environmental factors. These strategies are designed to maintain their competence as professionals.

The question of how professionals address their own needs and the needs of their profession, as opposed to taking a purely service approach, can be understood in terms of the concepts developed by Goffman (1959, 1967) in regard to front and back stage behaviours, face saving and impression management. Goffman (1967) suggests that encounters between people involve patterns of verbal and non-verbal acts or *lines*. Most encounters are conventional by nature and therefore provide only a small choice of lines and with the choice of line go expectations of a particular *face*. Goffman defines the term face “as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes ...” (1967, p5).

People will generally act in a manner that enables themselves and others to maintain face in any encounter. They will not question the line or role that each person has chosen for him or herself, which means that once a person builds a particular line they tend to have to continue it – it becomes expected of them. Generally, the line that people take, their actions in the pursuit of objectives and tasks will be “consistent with the maintenance of face” (Goffman, 1967, p12).

If an event occurs that is incompatible with judgements of social worth and threatens face then people will use a corrective process “to reinstate ritual order” (Goffman,

1967, p26). The corrective process is part of the tacit agreement by people to abide by the ground rules of social interaction. If the corrective process occurs after the event and generally people prefer not to have a disruptive event occur then an anticipatory process is required. Goffman (1959) names this process “impression management”, a process comprised of the defensive and protective practices “employed to safeguard the impression fostered by an individual during his presence before others” (p14).

Goffman (1959) explains that people put on a show and play a part when interacting with others and the techniques of impression management are designed to avoid disruption to the performance. This requires significant discipline on the part of the performer who must show involvement in the activity he is presenting “but must keep himself from actually being carried away by his own show lest this destroy his involvement in the task of putting on a successful performance” (Goffman, 1959, p216).

Audiences are also motivated to act in ways that enable the performers to perform and may warn the performer that his show is unacceptable through hints that the performer must be ready to take on (Goffman, 1959). This is evident in my research when lecturers who accepted feedback tended to then use Adapting strategies and alter some of their behaviours in response to comments or evaluations from students. Colleagues also offer support irrespective of whether or not a person is successful in maintaining his or her front before an audience. Audience and colleague behaviours assist the performer in maintaining his or her performance and concealing their actual affective response whilst ensuring an appropriate affective response is displayed.

Within the context of higher education classrooms Goffman’s ideas can be applied to the performance of academics as they address their main concern of balancing the needs of heterogeneous groups of students with their own need for professional capability. Lecturers are very obviously on stage, in front of student audiences when they conduct a class or lecture. The social setting is governed by certain lines of behaviour and expected roles for both lecturer and student. However, as the changes within higher education have developed apace, the expected lines of behaviour and roles of both academics and students become less certain. The expected role of the

academic is shifting from 'expert scholar' whose task is to transmit knowledge to students within a collegial atmosphere to, at its extreme, a business person concerned with 'customer satisfaction' and the 'bottom line' of economic survival and risk management.

Traditional teaching approaches, that may have been appropriate with small classes of students who had already been socialised into the academic milieu, are being questioned and critiqued. The internationalisation of universities, as discussed in Chapter One, is a causal condition for the development of different strategies as lecturers work to maintain their competence with increasingly diverse groups of students. How individual lecturers perceive diversity, that is, the moderating variable of Forces in the Lecturer, will affect how they respond and the strategies they utilise.

Impression management results from the desire to "maximise expected rewards and minimise expected punishments" (Leary and Kowalski, 1990, p37) and is more likely to occur in relation to public behaviours. As teaching occurs in the public domain, and student evaluations can affect a lecturer's position and career the capacity to manage impressions with a diverse group of students becomes a potentially significant issue for lecturers. Roberts (2005) reports on research demonstrating that observers play a very active role in shaping a person's behaviours as people may act in ways to confirm the observer's expectations. This assumes some awareness of the observer's expectations, which, with a heterogeneous group of students may be difficult to ascertain. Impression management therefore becomes a more complex task than would be the case with a homogeneous group of students.

Roberts (2005) suggests a distinction between a desired or ideal professional image and a perceived or current professional image, which refers to how one thinks other people view him or her. When there is a gap between the desired and the perceived image, impression management is "the process people use to shape the image others have of them" (p689). Roberts (2005) asserts that "professional image construction is a critical element of navigating interactions with key constituents in diverse organizations ... [defining] image construction as the process of assessing and shaping perceptions of one's own competence and character" (p685). Leary and Kowalski (1990) place image construction as one element of impression management,

defining impression management as “the process by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them” (p34). According to Leary and Kowalski (1990) impression management involves two discrete processes:

- impression motivation, consisting of goal-relevance of impressions, value of desired goals, and discrepancy between desired and current image.
- impression construction, consisting of self-concept, desired and undesired identity images, role constraints, target’s values, and current or potential social image.

To manage impressions lecturers are likely to engage in some image construction in which people usually “attempt to put the best parts of oneself into public view” (Leary and Kowalski, 1990, p40). Lecturers choose between, and utilise, varying strategies as part of impression construction, selecting those that display their strengths in presenting ideas (Distancing), being flexible (Adapting), providing information (Clarifying) or connecting with people (Relating). They also utilise different strategies under different conditions, which may demonstrate an implicit recognition that approaches are more likely to work and be valued when they are appropriate to the environmental conditions. These different strategies can be compared and contrasted with the literature on teaching approaches within higher education.

### **Teaching International Students**

Barrington (2004) argues that higher education has been slow to adapt to diversity, preferring to maintain the normative assumption that “knowledge acquisition is the main function and that transmission through lectures is the main mode” (p425). This approach is based on the assumption that students have “well-developed verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligence” (p425). This is the traditional teacher centred approach, discussed in detail in the next section. The argument is that the teacher centred approach best suited an era when a relatively homogeneous group of students, already socialised into the academic milieu, attended university. The current context of mass education and significant diversity within the student population requires a different approach.

It is within this current context that I commenced my research by asking lecturers about their responses to the mix of local and international students in their classes, thus introducing the idea of differences within the student cohort. At no time has this idea of difference been questioned or challenged by participants in my study, nor have I been asked why local and international students were being differentiated within the study. This in itself provides an insight into the assumptions and perceptions held by participants that differences do exist between local and international students. In talking about international students lecturers tend to be referring to students from Asia.

Volet and Renshaw (1996) suggest there are three main stereotypes of Asian Students: “(a) they tend to be rote learners rather than deep learners; (b) they are highly achievement oriented; and (c) they do not participate in tutorial discussion” (p207). The third stereotype in particular is generally accepted and commented on by lecturers who, whichever strategy they use, tend to perceive this behaviour as common and either seek ways to change it or resign themselves to a perceived lack of participation.

One of the dilemmas with such widely held stereotypes is their tendency to be incorrect but to still affect perception. Lecturers may be aware of stereotyping and attempt to minimise it, but are still affected, particularly when the stereotypes are strongly contrary to their preferred way of teaching. For example, if a lecturer has a strong preference for students to participate actively, then he or she will find quiet students problematic and be more likely to actively accept and confirm stereotypes. Some of this is of course self-fulfilling as Volet and Renshaw (1996) demonstrate in their observational and self-report data on participation, which found “the Singaporean students were not highly interactive but neither were the locals” (p218). In spite of findings such as these, it is the international students who are most likely to be stereotyped.

The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence developed from a study of lecturers’ responses to the mix of local and international students in classes. Maintaining Competence demonstrates that lecturers utilise four main strategies: Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating as methods of, to varying degrees,

balancing the needs of a heterogeneous student population with the lecturers' need to maintain their own sense of competence. Lecturers would frequently discuss the actual strategies and tactics they utilise in working with international students, with a few expressing an interest in learning more tactics, as they felt they did not always know what to do. In these instances lecturers are clearly feeling their competence is compromised and are seeking assistance.

The strategies adopted by lecturers in the current study are influenced by their personal preferences as well as environmental conditions, represented in the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment. Personal preferences stem from one's values and beliefs that influence the behaviours one adopts (Clawson, 2002). Values and beliefs are developed in part due to the influence of the culture that one grows up in (Hall, 1997; Hofstede, 1997) hence it is likely that lecturers will perceive student behaviours in terms of their own cultural expectations and preferences and develop strategies accordingly.

Strategies suggested within the literature for effectively teaching international students (Ballard and Clanchy, 1997; De Vita, 2001, 2004; Jones, 1994; Sinclair and Britton Wilson, 1999; Watson, 1999) are based on perceptions of difference between the behaviours and learning styles of local and international students. They appear to be, in part at least, a response to the felt need by lecturers for more tactics and methods to enable them to feel competent when working with international students.

Ballard and Clanchy (1997) suggest that both staff and students develop frustration and resentment as they attempt to cope with confusion regarding effective communication within a context of limited time. They work from the idea that international students can be assisted in adapting to the Australian environment through "minor modifications of normal teaching practice ... [that] will improve the learning of all the students in the class and not just the struggling international students" (p28). Strategies suggested include taping lectures, providing visual outlines, making connections to the text book, clarifying availability outside class times, demonstrating the critical thinking process by showing how you would tackle a problem, and showing students how to reference and question a source (Ballard and

Clanchy, 1997). Many of these tactics were utilised by lecturers in the current study and have been included within the Adapting and Clarifying strategies.

Sinclair and Britton Wilson (1999) also suggest methods of improving communication by avoiding jargon and 'local' jokes, asking about knowledge of other countries, clarifying the points that will be covered in the class and being precise about assessment expectations. These tactics are again similar to Adapting and Clarifying strategies. Sinclair and Britton Wilson (1999) also focus on tactics that could be compared to Relating strategies including helping students to participate by demonstrating the benefits, and creating an environment conducive to participation by listening and encouraging through positive reinforcement.

Jones (1994) establishes a model for increasing student participation in which ground rules are made explicit at the start of classes, non-threatening ice-breaker sessions are used frequently, and activities are designed to demonstrate that different cultural backgrounds will enhance the class. In addition the lecturer allows time for students to prepare activities, informs groups when they are expected to participate, and introduces activities along a continuum from non-threatening to more challenging. This model encompasses elements from Adapting, Clarifying and Relating strategies.

The above examples of approaches for working with international students, and classes with a mix of local and international students, appear to fit with the strategies developed in the current study of Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. None of the suggestions or models fit with the strategy of Distancing that also emerged in this study. This may be due to an implicit acceptance, on the part of authors writing about approaches for teaching international students, of the idea that student focused approaches are more effective for all students. The idea of student centred and teacher centred approaches is discussed in the following section.

### **Teacher Centred/Student Centred Teaching Approaches**

A substantial body of literature on teaching in higher education focuses on different approaches to teaching, and categorises teaching approaches according to whether they are teacher centred and content oriented or student centred and learning oriented

(Kember and Kwan, 2000). Distinctions have been established between “teaching as teacher-centred and content-oriented (presenting syllabus content to be remembered), and teaching as student-centred and learning-oriented (stimulating students to think about the subject)” (Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, and Orr, 2000, p6). Discussions of teacher centred and student centred approaches to teaching dominate the literature on teaching in higher education. This literature can be compared to the typology established in my study where the focus is on ideas or people and a structured or flexible approach, resulting in the strategies of Distancing, Clarifying, Adapting or Relating.

The categorisation of teacher centred and student centred approaches developed from research conducted into the different learning styles of students. This research demonstrates a hierarchy of conceptions of learning resulting in qualitatively different approaches to learning. “A deep approach [to learning] is characterised by students directing their attention to the underlying meaning of the task, whereas for a surface approach the attention is directed to the text itself leading to a reproductive orientation” (Kember and Kwan, 2000, p470).

Martin (1999) sets out the relationship between the conceptions of learning, surface or deep, and actual approaches to learning:

#### Surface approach

- Learning as a quantitative increase in knowledge
- Learning as memorising and reproducing
- Learning as applying facts, skills and methods

#### Deep approach

- Learning as understanding
- Learning as seeing something in a different way
- Learning as changing as a person

The recognition of different approaches to learning raises questions about the different ways lecturers might approach teaching and leads to research that “focuses on the ways in which university teachers make sense of the act of teaching and the ways they consequently approach the teaching task” (Martin, 1999, p41). The focus on teaching approaches has increased in importance with the recognition that different

teaching approaches can lead to different learning outcomes for students. Studies link student centred teaching approaches with deeper and higher quality learning outcomes for students (Kember and Gow, 1994; Kember and Kwan, 2000; Martin, 1999; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell, Prosser and Waterhouse, 1999).

Prosser and Trigwell (1999) cite a research study conducted by Prosser, Trigwell and Taylor (1994) identifying five qualitatively different approaches to teaching that have parallels with the different conceptions of learning as surface or deep learning:

**Approach A:** A teacher-focused strategy with the intention of transmitting information to students.

This approach focuses on facts but not relations between them and prior knowledge of students is not taken into account. It is assumed students do not need to be active.

**Approach B:** A teacher-focused strategy with the intention that students acquire the concepts of the discipline.

This approach focuses on helping students acquire concepts and relationships between them by telling them about the concepts and relationships. It does not assume students need to be active for the process to be successful.

**Approach C:** A teacher/student interaction strategy with the intention that students acquire the concepts of the discipline.

This approach aims to help students acquire concepts and relationships between them by having students actively engage in the teaching-learning process, but without expecting them to construct their own knowledge.

**Approach D:** A student-focused strategy aimed at students developing their conceptions.

This approach aims to help students develop the world view or conception they already hold and assumes students have to construct their knowledge in order to change their conceptions.

Approach E: A student-focused strategy aimed at students changing their conceptions.

This approach aims to help students change their world view or conceptions of the phenomena they are studying. It assumes students construct their own knowledge which would have to be reconstructed to produce new conceptions and cannot be transmitted via the teacher.

At one end of this dimension of approaches the focus is on the teacher, their role and the transmission of knowledge – a teacher centred approach, and at the other end the focus is on the students and changing students' understanding – a student centred approach. These qualitative differences in teaching approach have been established by a range of studies, with overall agreement concerning the teacher centred or student centred nature of the approach but with some variation in terminology and categorisation. Without attempting to cover all the studies a representative sample is presented and compared to the strategies developed within the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence.

Figure 9.1 contrasts the studies presented with the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating in order to provide an overview of similarities and differences between the literature and the results of my research.

Figure 9.1: Comparison of Teaching Strategies in the theory of Maintaining Competence, and Relevant Literature on Approaches to Teaching.

Teacher Centred/Student Centred Approaches: Strategies within Maintaining Competence:

	Distancing	Adapting	Clarifying	Relating
Trigwell Prosser and Taylor (1994)				
- Teacher focussed, transmitting	x			
- Teacher focussed, acquiring concepts	x		x	
- Teacher student interaction, acq. concepts		x	x	
- Student focussed, developing conceptions		x		x
- Student focussed, changing conceptions		x		x
Kember and Gow (1994)				
Knowledge Transmission				
- Training for specific jobs	x			
- Use of media	x	x		
- Imparting information	x			
- Knowledge of subject	x		x	
Learning Facilitation				
- Problem solving		x		x
- Interactive teaching		x		x
- Facilitative teaching		x		x
- Pastoral interest				x
- Motivator				x
Kember and Kwan (2000)				
Teaching as transmission of knowledge				
- Teaching as passing information	x			
- Teaching as making it easier to learn			x	
Teaching as learning facilitation				
- Teaching as meeting students' learning needs		x		
- Teaching as facilitating students			x	
Samuelowicz and Bain (2001)				
Teacher Centred				
- Imparting information	x		x	
- Transmitting structured knowledge	x		x	
- Providing and facilitating understanding	x		x	
Student Centred				
- Helping students develop expertise		x		x
- Preventing misunderstanding		x		x
- Negotiating meaning		x		x
- Encouraging knowledge creation		x		x
Ramsden (2003)				
- Teaching as telling or transmission	x			
- Teaching as organising student activity		x	x	
- Teaching as making learning possible		x		x
Akerlind (2003)				
- Teacher transmission and teacher comfort	x			
- Teacher/student relations and teacher comfort/experience			x	
- Student engagement and teacher comfort/experience		x		
- Student learning and teaching practice				x

Kember and Gow (1994) propose two orientations to lecturers' teaching: knowledge transmission and learning facilitation. "The learning facilitation orientation is made up of five subscales with labels: problem solving, more interactive teaching, facilitative teaching, pastoral interest, and motivator of students. The knowledge transmission orientation has four subscales: training for specific jobs, use of media, imparting information, and knowledge of subject" (p59).

The two orientations and the subscales can be compared to the typology of strategies in the theory of Maintaining Competence. Problem solving, under which Kember and Gow (1994) include critical thinking and independent learning, and interactive and facilitative teaching can be compared with the strategies of Adapting and Relating which, whilst focusing respectively on ideas or people, are both flexible in their approach. The development of critical and independent thinking, and facilitative or interactive approaches, are flexible approaches to learning as they provide students with some autonomy regarding how and what they learn and are therefore also similar to Adapting and Relating. Pastoral care and motivation are most closely linked to Relating strategies where lecturers spend time assisting, encouraging and supporting students.

Knowledge transmission subscales are more structured and therefore are most comparable to Distancing and Clarifying strategies. Training for specific jobs and imparting information are similar to Distancing strategies where a lecturer is transmitting knowledge and is focused on imparting content in a structured way with little emphasis on either people or alternative content. Use of media may have elements of Adapting as different media can be used to suit different learning styles. Knowledge of subject is most likely to be displayed through Distancing strategies but may also be utilised in Clarifying strategies, which focus on exactly what is required and expected in the learning process.

Kember and Kwan (2000) in their study of lecturers' approaches to teaching and their conceptions of good teaching categorised teaching into two broad approaches – content centred and learning centred which represent opposite ends of a continuum rather than discrete categories. Their analysis of teaching conceptions established two major categories – teaching as transmission of knowledge and teaching as

learning facilitation – and allocated individual lecturers to a category (Kember and Kwan, 2000). Research on the links between conceptions of teaching and the approaches used by teachers demonstrates a match between intention and strategies (Trigwell and Prosser, 1996b; Trigwell, Prosser and Waterhouse, 1999). In this way, individual teachers are perceived to hold to one approach or another.

A conception of teaching as transmission of knowledge sees teaching as a teacher centred activity. Two sub-categories exist within this category. Teaching as passing information has its emphasis on covering the content or meeting assessment requirements without too much concern about student understanding. Teaching as making it easier for students to understand is still about transmitting knowledge but knowledge is organised and structured to make it easier for students to understand or remember knowledge and skills.

A conception of teaching as learning facilitation places the emphasis on meeting the needs of students and assisting them in becoming independent learners. Two sub-categories exist within this category. Teaching as meeting students' learning needs recognises that students have different needs and it is the lecturer's responsibility to assist students in realising those needs. Teaching as facilitating students to become independent learners maintains that "teaching should be a process of facilitating students to develop intellectually and become independent learners. The focus is on the growth of the student as an individual, rather than on specific knowledge or skills" (Kember and Kwan, 2000, p484).

Teaching as passing information is comparable to Distancing in its emphasis on the structured presentation of content with little regard for individual student needs or differences. Teaching as making it easier for students to learn can be compared with Clarifying in its emphasis on establishing clear structure and guidelines to assist students in knowing what they need to do and know in order to achieve within the subject. Teaching as meeting students' learning needs is comparable to Adapting as it recognises different needs and takes responsibility for ensuring these are addressed. Teaching as facilitating students is similar to Relating where the emphasis is on the individual and the focus is on their learning process rather than particular content outcomes. Thus, there are similarities between the categorisations developed by

Kember and Kwan (2000) and the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating.

Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) established seven orientations to teaching based on beliefs about teaching. Orientations were ordered according to the emphasis placed on 'student centred' beliefs so that "beliefs centred on teaching, or on the teacher, or on the primacy of established discipline knowledge were construed as teaching-centred, whereas beliefs focused upon learning, or on the students' role, or on the students' knowledge construction were construed as learning-centred" (p305). Orientations are grouped according to whether they are perceived to be teacher centred or student centred.

#### Orientations to Teaching and Learning:

Imparting information

Transmitting structured knowledge                      Teacher Centred

Providing and facilitating understanding

Helping students develop expertise

Preventing misunderstanding                      Student Centred

Negotiating meaning

Encouraging knowledge creation

(Adapted from Samuelowicz and Bain, 2001).

In contrast to earlier research conducted by Samuelowicz and Bain (1992, cited in 2001) there is no intermediate category but two distinct clusters with significant differences even between the orientations positioned either side of the divide. Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) demonstrate these differences by example, showing that providing and facilitating understanding focuses on "finding better ways of explaining and transmitting ... understanding" (p314) and is therefore teacher centred, whereas helping students develop expertise takes the position that it is through "interaction that students become involved in their learning and this is how they develop ... understanding, knowledge, attitudes and skills ..." (p316).

As with other studies of student centred and teacher centred approaches, the strategies developed within the theory of Maintaining Competence can be compared with the model proposed by Samuelowicz and Bain (2001). Distancing, the structured/ideas focused strategy, is perceived to be more teacher oriented. Adapting is also Ideas focused within the emergent theory however its flexibility may lead it to fit within the student centred category established by Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) who argue that there is a strong distinction between teacher centred and student centred approaches, not so much in terms of interaction per se but in regard to the “*purpose and nature of the interaction*” (p321). Teacher focused interactions concentrate on maintaining students’ attention, checking their understanding and finding ways to better explain and transmit information. Student focused interactions are designed to involve students in the process of learning in order to construct their own understandings (Samuelowicz and Bain, 2001). Adapting strategies draw on students’ knowledge and experience as well as utilising different teaching methods to engage students, hence can be positioned as more student centred.

In the typology developed in my study, Clarifying is located as a people oriented strategy, as its intent is to assist students in understanding what is required rather than assuming they already know. In some instances this approach could be seen as student centred as the focus is on their understanding, however Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) are quite clear that strategies designed to increase understanding by having the lecturer explain and transmit information are definitely teacher centred, hence Clarifying would remain in the teacher centred category. Relating, which is both people focused and flexible, can be identified with student centred approaches using the Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) model.

Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) contend that the boundary between teaching centred and student centred is relatively hard and requires conceptual change to cross. Using this definition Adapting and Relating strategies would be compared to student centred approaches as they are flexible strategies based on an intent to enable students to participate by bringing their own knowledge into the learning process. Distancing and Clarifying strategies would be seen as teacher centred due to their structured approach.

The strategies developed in my study can be compared with Samuelowicz and Bain's (2001) teaching orientations, however, there is a significant difference between the models as Maintaining Competence is a contingency model taking both individual and environment into account. Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) focus on individual teachers and their personal beliefs and orientations whereas my model highlights the interplay between the moderating variables, taking both Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment into account.

Alternative conceptualisations and categorisations of the teaching process are established by studies that perceive teaching approaches to be comprised of a number of possible approaches along a continuum from teacher centred to student centred. For example, Ramsden (2003) brings together research into teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning, and the research into learning, and describes three generic ways of understanding the role of the teacher in higher education. These three approaches are set out in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: Theories of University Teaching

	Theory 1 Teaching as telling or transmission	Theory 2 Teaching as organising student activity	Theory 3 Teaching as making learning possible
Focus	Teacher and content	Teaching techniques that will result in learning	Relation between students & subject matter
Strategy	Transmit information	Manage teaching process; transmit concepts	Engage; challenge; imagine oneself as the student
Actions	Chiefly presentation	'Active learning'; organising activity	Systematically adapted to suit student understanding
Reflection	Unreflective; taken for granted	Apply skills to improve teaching	Teaching as research, scholarly process

(Adapted from Ramsden, 2003, p115)

Ramsden (2003) explains the focus of each of the three different approaches:

Theory 1: Teaching as telling or transmission.

This approach focuses on transmitting information and content to students and is clearly evidenced in the didactic lecture approach to teaching which assumes that the teacher is the source of undistorted information.

Theory 2: Teaching as organising student activity.

This approach shifts the focus to supervising student learning and is based on the assumption that students will learn through reacting and doing, so the role of the teacher is to use procedures to facilitate the learning of students.

Theory 3: Teaching as making learning possible.

This approach looks at teaching and learning “as two sides of the same coin ... Teaching is comprehended as a process of working cooperatively with learners to help them change their understanding” (p110). It recognises that knowledge of content is constituted by the learner and that learning involves applying and modifying one’s own ideas – it is done by the learner rather than to the learner.

Similarities exist between this model and the models that focus on student centred or teacher centred approaches, however the model proposed by Ramsden (2003) includes an intermediate step of ‘teaching as organising student activity’. The strategies developed within the current study can be compared to the Ramsden (2003) model with Distancing having similarities to ‘teaching as telling’, Relating being similar to ‘teaching as making learning possible’, and Adapting and Clarifying both containing elements of ‘teaching as organising student activity’. This model appears to provide a better fit for the categories established in the current study than the divide between teacher centred and student centred. For example, Adapting and Clarifying can be compared to the intermediate approach in their capacity to organise information, material and people in order to achieve desired outcomes.

Ramsden (2003) argues that Theory 3 “exemplifies the qualities of effective university teaching ... [and] is associated with better-quality learning” (p113). The qualities within Theory 3 are set out by Ramsden as six key principles of effective teaching:

1. Interest and explanation
2. Concern and respect for students and student learning
3. Appropriate assessment and feedback
4. Clear goals and intellectual challenge
5. Independence, control and engagement
6. Learning from students

These qualities and the perception of Theory 3 as indicating effective teaching confirms the view of student centred approaches and change oriented conceptions as higher level teaching. Additionally, in keeping with the view that conceptions of teaching will influence the approach, Ramsden (2003) suggests that the general theory that the lecturer subscribes to will influence how he or she goes about teaching. Again, this was not clearly demonstrated in the current study where lecturers were found to utilise different strategies depending on Forces in the Environment as well as Forces in the Lecturer. It is certainly recognised in the theory of Maintaining Competence that lecturers tend to have a preference for particular approaches that could be generally defined as student centred (Relating strategies) or teacher centred (Distancing, Adapting and Clarifying), however environmental factors may cause them to modify their preferred approach.

Akerlind (2003) reports on the results of a study, undertaken from a phenomenographic perspective, of academics' conceptions of their development as a teacher. The results indicate three categories of experiencing growth and development along the one dimension from a self to other focus, with development moving from the teacher's comfort and confidence as a teacher, to the development of knowledge and skills, and ultimately to a focus on learning outcomes for students.

Akerlind (2003) also investigated the conceptions of teaching held by the academics participating in the study and developed four categories: teacher transmission focused category, teacher-student relations focused category, student engagement focused category and student learning focused category. These categories are similar to other conceptions of teaching found in the literature but the distinction made between teacher centred and student centred conceptions of teaching adds to the literature by relating these conceptions to the development of the teacher.

Akerlind (2003) sets out the relationship between each category and its primary focus:

- a teacher transmission understanding of teaching is combined with a teacher comfort focused view of teaching development.
- a teacher-student relations understanding of teaching is combined with a teacher-comfort and teaching practice experience of teaching development.
- a student engagement understanding of teaching is combined with a teacher comfort and teaching practice experience of teaching development.
- a student learning understanding of teaching is combined with a teaching practice and/or student learning view of teaching development.

In the first three categories the focus is at least as much on the teachers' needs as the students, confirming the findings of the current study that many of the actions taken by teachers are designed to Maintain Competence. Akerlind's (2003) research demonstrates that teachers can be focused on maintaining their own comfort and developing their own skills at the same time as focusing on effective teaching. The main concern of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population and the theory of Maintaining Competence can be compared to Akerlind's (2003) model. Akerlind's model demonstrates that as lecturers develop in confidence (sense of competence) they are more able to focus on students rather than their own needs. It is likely that by the fourth level where the focus is on developing the student the lecturer has found ways of teaching that fit best for him/herself in terms of Maintaining Competence whilst at the same time addressing student development in ways that accommodates a mix of local and international students.

There are a number of differences between Akerlind's (2003) model and my model of Maintaining Competence. Akerlind (2003) emphasises the individual and the relationship between their conceptions of teaching and their level of development. Her focus is on the individual and how their conceptions change over time, whereas my model emphasises how individuals will change strategies, although not necessarily conceptions, in response to environmental factors. Akerlind (2003) does not highlight environment, whereas Maintaining Competence demonstrates that

environment is an important moderating variable affecting lecturers' adoption of certain strategies.

In summary, the strong distinction created between student centred and teacher centred conceptions in the literature, establishes a view that perceives teacher's conceptions and approaches as falling clearly into one of the two domains. It is interesting that Martin (1999) makes the point that there are no deep or surface learners, rather "students adopt different approaches in different circumstances" (p30), yet the literature on teaching approaches tends to perceive lecturers/teachers as being located within one or other approach. In contrast, my theory does not allocate lecturers to categories but sees the strategies as options available to, and used by, lecturers, with choices moderated by the variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

Criticisms of the conception of teacher centred and student centred approaches raise concerns about the assumed link with learning outcomes and take the view that these models are culturally bound and do not address the issues of diversity among the student population (Akerlind, 2003, 2004; Biggs, 1999; Meyer and Boulton-Lewis, 1999; Northedge, 2003a, 2003b). The next section discusses contextual and contingency models that attempt to take environmental factors, including student diversity, into account.

### **Contextual and Contingency Models**

A number of authors discuss teaching approaches, and different levels of teaching, specifically in relation to teaching diverse groups of students, whether that diversity relates to students from different cultural, educational or professional backgrounds. These studies are relevant to the theory of Maintaining Competence as they enable comparison with the strategies used to address the main concern of balancing the need for professional competence with the needs of a heterogeneous student group.

In a similar vein to Ramsden (2003) and Akerlind (2003), Biggs (1999) perceived teachers as varying in their levels of thinking about teaching and presents a tiered model of levels of teaching. Of particular interest for comparison with my model is

Biggs' recognition of the importance of varying approaches to teaching according to the context. Biggs (1999) posits three levels of teaching, with the final level representing this capacity to respond to environmental context.

Level 1 sees teaching as transmission of knowledge as in the teacher centred model discussed above. Teaching at this level remains constant and if the student does not understand, that is their problem and the presumed deficit is the students with no responsibility attached to the teacher. Biggs (1999) suggests that this approach of blaming the student is very common in relation to teaching international students.

Level 1 takes the approach that students need to adapt or "assimilate in accordance with our definition of what constitutes a good student" (Biggs, 1999, p124). Distancing strategies would fit most closely within a Level 1 approach.

Level 2 focuses on the teacher and what the teacher does. Consequently, if the student does not learn or understand it is the teacher who is deficit and who needs to develop their skill base. Individual teachers may adopt this model and attempt, through reflective practice, to question and improve their teaching skills and methods. This model also appears to be supported by the use of quality ratings of academics that attempt to determine the students' satisfaction with a given teacher with the teacher being expected to change their approach if their ratings fall below the required standard. Level 2 takes the approach that the lecturer should accommodate diversity but most techniques used are really management techniques, such as taping lectures, speaking carefully, providing visual back ups, modelling desired behaviours, and putting names on labels (Biggs 1999). These management techniques are used because the lecturer does not have the "range of appropriate teaching skills" (p133). Adapting and Clarifying strategies would appear to fit within the Level 2 category.

Biggs (1999) argues that Level 3 focuses on teaching as educating and that cognitive processes used by students to learn are universal even though "activating those processes ... could well differ between cultures" (p134). He suggests that Level 3 is a contextual approach that requires the teacher to make it clear what is needed for the particular context rather than assuming understanding and agreement of a 'right way'. Level 3 recognises that different approaches may be required under different environmental conditions and in this way has similarities with my model that

proposes that lecturers' choice of strategy is influenced by the moderating variables of Forces in the Environment. My study adds to this model by emphasising the importance of the interplay between the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment in affecting which strategy is utilised.

Contextual models take environmental conditions into account when developing understanding of teaching approaches. Any discussion of teaching international students and/or a mix of local Australian and international students therefore needs to take into account the different contexts that have influenced the behaviours and expectations of students and lecturers. The literature focusing on teaching and learning in Confucian Heritage Cultures (Biggs, 1996) provides an interesting insight into the difficulties of simply applying models devised within a Western context to teaching in all environments, and raises questions about how lecturers manage when teaching a mix of local and international students.

The underlying assumptions, values and beliefs inherent in perceptions of effective teaching are highlighted by Biggs (1996). He argues that observing behaviours and assessing them from one's own cultural perspective leads to misunderstandings, as any behaviours need to be understood within the context of the system they belong to. Component parts of a system "interact with each other and reach an equilibrium" (Biggs, 1996, p52), so teaching and learning need to be examined in the context of the system within which they exist. Biggs (1996) suggests that student approaches to learning will represent their "way of adapting to an environment" (p 53). The expectations and behaviours that international students bring to the Australian higher education context are shaped by the environments in which they were educated. Lecturers educated in Australia will have beliefs and attitudes regarding teaching and learning shaped by their own experience of education. The likelihood of different perceptions and behaviours arising from the various different systems is extremely high and requires an understanding of the relevant issues in order to find ways of accommodating these differences.

Salili (2001) links behaviours to the cultural values that shape student interactions. He suggests that more authoritarian child rearing practices means students are taught to respect, obey and listen to teacher. This is in keeping with the power distance

dimension discussed by Hofstede (1997), high in many Asian countries but low in Australia where the expectation is that children, and particularly university students, will challenge ideas and, to varying degrees, authority. Biggs and Watkins (1996) argue that the more authoritarian approach occurs within an environment characterised by “a sense of responsibility and mutual respect ... the model of teaching is not so much one of simple transmission as one based on much interaction, in a complex and mutually accepting (if not warm) social context” (p274).

It is difficult to compare conceptions of teacher centred or Distancing approaches directly to the authoritarian model. This model, described by Biggs as involving both authoritarian approaches and social interaction, actually entails a mix of the Distancing and Relating strategies detailed in my theory. This is in contrast to the teacher centred/student centred approaches described in much of the Western literature where Distancing and Relating strategies would not be expected to combine in any form. My theory demonstrates that lecturers can, and do, use all strategies and that the context and their personal preferences will influence the degree to which any particular strategy is applied.

Biggs (1996) suggests that students coming from different educational environments may not understand what is required of them at an Australian university so “task requirements need to be made absolutely clear. What is tacitly understood by local students may not be so clearly understood by overseas students” (p279). This approach is clearly demonstrated in Clarifying strategies where lecturers are very explicit about expectations for the subject and in particular for assessment tasks. When lecturers use Clarifying strategies they tend to see them as relevant for all students but recognise the particular importance for international students.

Requests for assistance in clarifying are accepted by lecturers who have a preference for Clarifying and Relating strategies although there are limits imposed on the amount of assistance offered as lecturers remain aware of what they see as the possibility of preferential treatment. Biggs (1996) writes that Confucian Heritage Culture students are strong on “cue-seeking”, behaviours designed to gather further information about what is required, so it would appear that Clarifying strategies may be meeting the

student needs as well as providing the lecturer with a sense that they are performing their role competently.

Environmental and personal factors both affect the type of interaction that occurs between lecturers and students as highlighted by lecturers in my study who themselves came from Asia. Lecturers from Asia could contrast the differences in the amount of time spent with students outside of class hours between the Australian and Asian environments. Time spent together is a necessary component in the development of any trusting relationship, but time spent together by students and lecturers outside of class hours does not tend to be expected within the Australian context.

Not all contextual models relate specifically to teaching international students.

Northedge (2003a) perceives the traditional teacher centred, knowledge transmission approach and the student centred approach as having limitations in addressing the challenge of student diversity arising from different cultural, educational or professional backgrounds. His position is of particular relevance for comparison with the current study due to the focus in this research on responses to the diversity created in university classes comprised of a mix of local and international students.

Northedge (2003a) argues that diversity requires a more fluid approach that enables participants to become members of a knowledge community where they “share a discourse that is increasingly specialised and obscure to outsiders” (p19). Northedge (2003a) draws on a sociocultural view of education, explained by Wells and Claxton (2002) as a “process of enculturation and transformation ...” (p2) that inducts learners into a culture’s way of making sense of experience through the discourses that organise and interpret action. Students need to be brought into the specific discourse, therefore there is no one best way of teaching that suits all cultures and contexts and knowledge itself is “a product of participation with others in the construction of communal meaning” (Northedge, 2002, p252). This applies to all students, however may be even more evident for international students who have not been brought into the discourses of education that Australian students may have had some exposure to.

A discourse community can be recognised by certain characteristics. A discourse community has shared and broadly agreed goals, methods of intercommunication between members, mechanisms for the provision of feedback, various genres for the development of its aims, a specific lexis including abbreviations and acronyms, and a “threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursive expertise” (Swales, 1990). Students may not be members of the discourse community immediately but this is the desired outcome and teaching processes are required to assist them in taking up this membership. Discourse is also affected by different cultural backgrounds where words may mean different things to people from different cultures (Long, 1995), hence in teaching it becomes important to clarify the meaning being given to words rather than assuming all words are understood in the same way.

Northedge (2003b) proposes that the teacher has a vital role as a member of the knowledge community and “*speaker of the specialist discourse ... able to ‘lend’ students the capacity to frame meanings they cannot yet produce independently [original italics]*” (p172). Northedge (2003a, 2003b) argues that diverse students need to be brought into the discourse, but this cannot be done through knowledge delivery or student centred approaches. What is required is a model that enables students to become competent in the discourse by developing their capacity through a series of steps that allow them to develop frameworks. The teacher has three key roles. “The first is to ‘lend’ the capacity to frame meanings within the specialist discourse. The second is to plan, organise and lead excursions into the specialist discourse ... the third ... is to ‘coach’ students in speaking the discourse competently, both orally and in writing” (Northedge, 2003b, p178).

In contrast to models of teacher centred or student centred, the Northedge (2003b) model appears to be primarily student centred in that the teacher’s role is to assist the student in gaining understanding and this is seen as a developmental process requiring different strategies or approaches from the teacher at different stages in the process. The second role in particular is a strongly teacher-led sequence along a path that exposes the issues relevant to the discourse, guided by the teacher who has the knowledge and expertise as a speaker of the discourse.

Interestingly, the teacher-led sequence posited by Northedge (2003b) appears to be in line with some of the teaching methods of teachers in Confucian Heritage Cultures, where studies demonstrate that many teachers “manage to engage students to a high degree ... make it possible for them to learn not only from the teacher but also from each other ... within the framework of lessons carefully orchestrated by the teacher” (Mok, Chik, Ko, Kwan, Lo, Marton, Ng, Pang, Runesson and Szeto, 2001, p163). It does not match comfortably with the models of student centred approaches as the intent of the lecturer is to transmit knowledge and lead students through the process.

Comparisons between this model and the strategies developed in my research reveal that a capacity to utilise all four strategies: Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating, may be appropriate provided the use of these strategies occurs with an understanding of what students require at that point in time to engage with the specialist discourse. Thus, Distancing or transmission strategies may be necessary in order to ensure that students are provided with basic information; Adapting strategies enable students to draw on their own experience and knowledge and apply it in class; Clarifying strategies provide a structure for understanding what is expected and required within the particular discourse community; and Relating strategies facilitate the process of students beginning to use the discourse for themselves and change their understandings of the discourse community. The strategies that emerged in my study have a strong teacher-led element in that all lecturers took on a directive or organising role at times.

The Ramsden (2003) and Akerlind (2003) models accept a range of approaches, but they continue to perceive the most student centred approaches as the most effective. Biggs (1999) supports this to some extent in the model of three levels of teaching, but recognises the importance of context stating that there is no “all-purpose best method of teaching ... We have to adjust our teaching decisions to suit our subject matter, available resourcing, our students and our own individual strengths and weaknesses as a teacher” (p2). He suggests this is particularly the case with diverse student cohorts where the academically oriented students spontaneously use higher cognitive level processes but good teaching is required to assist most students in learning to use these processes (Biggs, 1999).

Northedge (2003b) proposes that teacher-led approaches are particularly relevant when working with diverse groups of students who need to be brought into the specialist discourse. Thus Biggs (1999) and Northedge (2003a, 2003b) take the emphasis away from one best way of teaching and introduce the idea that different approaches may be appropriate at different times particularly when dealing with diverse groups of students. Northedge (2003a) strongly argues his view that teaching requires active involvement from the lecturers: “If HE [Higher Education] is to offer genuine opportunities to diverse student audiences, we cannot persist with models of teaching as ‘knowledge transmission’, nor rely on unfocused student-centred approaches that leave the students floundering within everyday discourse” (p31).

Contextual, and even more so, contingency models argue that there is no ‘one best way’, and that the teaching approach used may be entirely dependent on factors within the lecturer, the students and the context. Moderating variables determine the approach, including whether it is student centred, teacher centred, or some other combination. My study adds significantly to the knowledge regarding contingency models by highlighting the importance of the moderating variables.

My research found that there were differences in the approaches adopted by lecturers when the moderating variables of Forces in the Environment were significant.

Whilst Forces in the Lecturer tend to determine the preferred approach for individual lecturers, significant Forces in the Environment will affect and change the choice of strategy. For example, lecturers who have a preference for Relating strategies will still utilise Distancing or Clarifying strategies when imparting specific information to a large group of students. Lecturers with a preference for Distancing strategies will utilise Adapting and Clarifying strategies when working with individuals or small groups of students to address specific questions or concerns. Their approaches may not be radically different as lecturers have preferences for particular strategies, however environmental conditions will have some influence on the choice of strategy.

My theory is supported by literature that recognises that teaching occurs within a context and that acknowledges that the application of student centred or teacher centred approaches will be affected by the environmental conditions, irrespective of the teachers conceptions or beliefs about teaching (Prosser and Trigwell, 1999;

Trigwell and Prosser, 1996a, 1996b). Teachers may have a different conception or intent regarding different groups of students, for example “staff with a conception of post-graduate teaching as being the facilitation of student learning, may decide that at first year level, the intention and the related strategy is to transmit information” (Trigwell and Prosser, 1996b, p86). This is in keeping with the recognition that learners will utilise different learning strategies, either deep or surface, depending on contextual factors.

Prosser and Trigwell (1999) identify five aspects of the teaching context that influence the teaching approach:

- Teachers have some control over how and what they teach
- Class sizes are not too large to prevent interaction
- Students are able to cope with subject matter
- Teaching is valued in their departments
- Academic workload is appropriate

Teachers who “perceive that they have more control over their teaching, that their class sizes are not too large, that their workloads are not too high and that their department values teaching” (Prosser, Ramsden, Trigwell, and Martin, 2003, p39) are more likely to adopt student-focused, change-oriented approaches to teaching.

Not all researchers support the contextual or contingency models. For example, Kember and Kwan (2000) found “no evidence that teachers adopted one approach for a particular class and a quite different approach for another in the way that students have been observed changing their approaches to learning from class to class” (p488). They found that the approach of the lecturers in their study was reasonably stable and concluded that “context dependent aspect was weaker than the predominant effect” (Kember and Kwan, 2000, p488). However, Kember and Kwan (2000) still suggest that lecturers have a “predominant or preferred approach to teaching and are also likely to adopt an alternative approach if teaching and learning environment appears to demand it” (p487). They suggest the factors that may induce a change of teaching approach include:

- an extensive and intensive procedure for course development
- intensive procedures for monitoring and reviewing teaching

- team teaching
- large classes
- teaching rooms which are not conducive to the type of teaching preferred
- heavy teaching loads

The above environmental factors perceived to influence a change in teaching approach fit closely with the moderating variables found in Forces in the Environment. For example, lecturers whose preferred style is Relating, a student centred approach, will tend to utilise Distancing strategies when their workload is so high as to cause stress, and when the numbers of students make it difficult to use Relating strategies. Equally, when the intent is to provide specific information, for example, how to reference correctly, lecturers who tend towards Relating as a preferred strategy are likely to employ Distancing strategies to address the requirements of imparting material. In reverse, lecturers who tend to use Distancing strategies in lectures will tend to utilise Adapting, Clarifying and Relating strategies when meeting with students individually to discuss assessment.

Whilst Forces in the Environment can moderate the choice of strategy, my study also discovered that a lecturer's preferred approach, or Forces in the Lecturer, could moderate environmental factors. For example, large lectures are more conducive to Distancing strategies and transmission approaches, however lecturers who have a strong preference for Relating strategies and student focused approaches find ways to encourage and foster interaction, through the use of questions and small groups for discussions and activities, even with large numbers of students.

The results of my research do not demonstrate a rigid boundary between teaching strategies as lecturers tend to use a variety of strategies at different times, in different contexts and sometimes with different students. However, the boundary between conceptions of beliefs about teaching as teacher centred or student centred can exist even when the actual use of strategies demonstrates variation. The lecturers interviewed and observed certainly demonstrate a preferred approach that highlights their beliefs about teaching, even though they moderate this approach according to environmental factors. My study did not specifically ask about conceptions or beliefs about teaching, nor categorise data accordingly, however the data demonstrates

through both interview and observation that lecturers have preferences for teacher centred or student centred approaches that frequently overrides the environmental conditions within which they teach.

The results of research into the relationship between intent and strategy highlight the importance of addressing the lecturer's values, preferences, and interests as well as their conceptions of teaching when assessing methods of analysing and improving effective teaching methods (Trigwell and Prosser, 1996b). This fits with my study where choice of strategy is moderated by environmental and personal factors, hence one strategy does not fit all conditions and no particular strategy suits all lecturers even within the same conditions.

Research by Trigwell and Prosser (1996a) found a relationship between intention and strategy and raised the idea that teachers need to alter the way they conceive of learning and teaching in order to change their approach to teaching and focus more on their students than their own performance. They argue that the implications of the congruence between teaching intention and strategies requires that more research be undertaken to explore how academics conceive of teaching rather than focusing on the strategies they utilise.

It appears that lecturers who use student centred approaches are also able to utilise other approaches – that is revert to teacher centred approaches – whereas lecturers who use teacher centred approaches are unable to adapt to student centred approaches. Trigwell and Prosser (1996a) suggest that there is a hierarchical nature to the conceptions of teaching ranging from teaching as transmitting concepts to teaching as helping students to change conceptions. They suggest that teachers who work at the most sophisticated level, that of changing conceptions, are able to see all components as a part of their teaching, whereas those who work from a transmission conception may not see beyond that level.

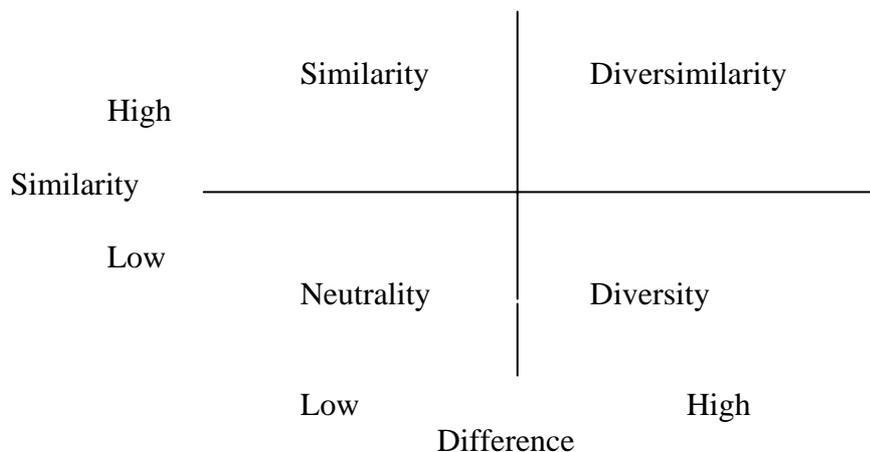
Whilst my study did not set out to assess teachers conceptions of teaching, the strategies that emerged can be compared to the student centred and teacher centred approaches. Observations of teaching certainly demonstrate that lecturers who use Relating strategies tend to use all four strategies, whereas lecturers who use

Distancing, Adapting and Clarifying strategies do not necessarily use Relating strategies. Using the Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) categorisations, Relating was the only strategy to fit within their definition of a student centred approach. This would appear to fit with Trigwell and Prosser’s (1996a) outcome that demonstrates that teachers working at the higher level conceptions of changing conceptions use student centred, or Relating, strategies.

My study emphasises that, whatever the conceptions and intent regarding teaching methods, it is the interplay of the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment that affects the choice of strategy. This is a contingency model where the strategies used are dependent on the mix of moderating variables. A review of the literature did not uncover any typology models of teaching approaches specific to working with a mix of local and international students, however typology models in relation to contingent responses to diversity can be compared with the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence.

Ofori-Dankwa and Lane (2000) propose four approaches to cultural diversity in which the paradigm used by teachers will depend “on whether they place a high or low emphasis on cultural similarities and differences” (p493). Their approaches are set out in Figure 9.3.

Figure 9.3: Four Alternative Cultural Diversity Paradigms for Teachers



(Taken from Ofori-Dankwa and Lane, 2000, p494)

Ofori-Dankwa and Lane (2000) suggest that in the neutrality paradigm teachers pay little attention to similarities or differences, in the similarity paradigm the emphasis will be on how cultures are alike, in the diversity paradigm the emphasis will be on how cultures differ, and in the diversimilarity paradigm both cultural similarities and differences will be stressed. They suggest that the prevailing paradigm will affect the approaches teachers utilise, which has similarities with the research suggesting that conceptions of teaching as imparting knowledge or facilitating change will affect teaching approaches. The cultural diversity paradigms explored here can be compared to Forces in the Lecturer as moderators of their choice of strategy.

Comparing these paradigms to the choice of strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating some connections can be made. For example, Distancing strategies treat everyone as equal with no allowances, exceptions or adjustments made for different learning approaches, hence in this way there is an assumption of similarity. Adapting strategies attempt to draw on differences in knowledge and ideas and adjust teaching approaches to meet different learning situations so in this way could be seen to work with both similarities and differences in a diversimilarity paradigm. Clarifying strategies take a neutrality paradigm in that they work from the basis that whilst the existence of similarities and differences is recognised it is not taken into account as all students are expected to meet the required standards and expectations once they have been given the relevant information. Finally, Relating strategies work from a diversity paradigm as they perceive every individual and group as different and expect that differences will need to be accommodated.

Whilst the Ofori-Dankwa and Lane (2000) model is not specifically a model of teaching approaches in terms of strategies, it demonstrates some of the underlying assumptions about diversity that could affect the choice of strategy and shows how the strategies themselves may perpetuate particular ways of thinking about difference.

## **Discussion**

De Vita and Case (2003) are critical of the way internationalisation of universities is marketed on a “purchaser/provider model” (p384) where attempts at curriculum internationalisation “appear to be based on the idea that more internationally educated

graduates can be produced by means of a mere infusion of some international material in existing course syllabi” (p388). This is the Adapting model where some small changes are made to the curriculum or the classroom process but the overall Western learning philosophy is not questioned.

De Vita and Case (2003) argue that the challenge is for educators to acknowledge and incorporate “diverse pedagogical socialisations and expectations ... by facilitating exchange ... about the cultural values, assumptions, fears and hopes that are being brought to bear on the multicultural learning encounter” (p391). The closest strategy utilised in my study is that of Relating where lecturers are flexible in their approach and focus on the learning needs of the individuals within the class group.

In relation to the strategies employed by lecturers in my research it appears that a mix of strategies at different times in response to different needs would best meet the requirements of a diverse cohort of students. The capacity to utilise all strategies enables lecturers to adopt the most appropriate, however this requires the ability on the part of the lecturer to move between strategies, and environmental conditions that make this possible.

Lecturers appear to be attempting to accommodate the mix of local and international students whilst at the same time maintaining their own professional competence. They achieve this through the use of Adapting, Clarifying and Relating strategies all of which have some student centred aspects to them. However, as mentioned, even lecturers who were strongly focused on Relating which is high student centred approach, will adopt Distancing strategies when environmental factors demand this approach.

One aspect of each of the contextual and contingent models of teaching a mix of local and international students is the emphasis they give to the teaching role rather than to the students themselves. This breaks down the concept of students as ‘deficit’ if they do not fit the prevailing norms of behaviour. De Vita (2001) argues that teachers must use a variety of teaching styles in order to engage all students as “the ‘do-nothing’ option (i.e. leaving the responsibility of the style alignment to students) is

not only inherently at odds with the ‘facilitation of learning’ ethos ... it has also little chance of success ...” (p170).

The focus then becomes on the teaching role, rather than the students’ role, and certainly not on creating some students as having a ‘problem’ and being in need of remedial assistance. This is a vital area if we are to study teaching methods and strategies in the current Higher Education environment and find ways to enable all students to have access to the knowledge discourse of the subjects being taught.

The importance of recognising the complexity of teaching as something more than simply a set of skills that can be applied once taught is raised by Kane, Sandretto and Heath (2004) in their study of excellence in teaching. They argue that skills are “far from being the most important determinant of teaching excellence” (p295). Their research proposes a five-dimensional model of attributes – subject knowledge, skills, interpersonal relationships, research/teaching nexus and personality – integrated through purposeful reflective practice that enables teachers to “understand and improve their own teaching practice” (p292).

Kane et al (2004) argue that these results indicate that staff development needs to attend to more than the development of pedagogical skills and consider a more holistic and supported approach that recognises the individuality of the teacher. They stress that none of their participants approached their teaching in the same way. It was reflection “which enabled them to interrogate their teaching practice and to find the best fit between their subject, teaching skills, relationships built with students, research and personality” (Kane et al, 2004, p306).

There are a number of dilemmas inherent in all the studies that propose methods of improving teacher effectiveness. Firstly, there is the question of what constitutes effective teaching, which has not been agreed upon within the literature (Kane et al, 2004 citing McLean, 2001; Trigwell, 2001). Secondly, there appears to be an assumption that if effective teaching can be defined then teachers only need to follow the established processes and procedures in order to improve their own teaching (Crebbin, 1997).

Crebbin (1997) raises the point that when academics speak themselves of teaching there is a strong theme concerning the idea of teaching as an expression of the person and the impact of their personal experiences on their ideas about teaching and learning. Crebbin (1997) suggests that because teaching is so inextricably bound with the identity of the person, any changes in teaching entail an experience of risk-taking as it requires changes in personal beliefs rather than simply the addition of new skills. This is very much aligned with the results of my study where the theory of Maintaining Competence emerged from interviews with, and observations of, lecturers about their responses to teaching a mix of local and international students. For some lecturers teaching a mix of local and international students is a new experience requiring them to rethink years of teaching approaches. Lecturers who have always taught mixed groups still have their own values and beliefs about teaching and learning and any challenge to these becomes a challenge to their value system.

Teaching, according to these studies is a very personal process. The emergence of the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment highlights both the personal and contextual nature of teaching. Different lecturers use different strategies under different conditions. Thus each lecturer is adopting strategies, and adopting different strategies at different times, depending on their perception of the context within which they are teaching and their own personal preferences.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has compared and contrasted the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence with the extant literature. Having delimited the literature to areas that are directly relevant to the emerging theory, I have focused on professional competence, teacher centred and student centred approaches to teaching, teaching international students, and contextual and contingency models for teaching.

The emergent theory of Maintaining Competence does not fit neatly with the student centred/teacher centred models, but adds to our understanding of contextual and

contingency models that recognise the influence of context and conditions. The theory of Maintaining Competence shows that the choice of strategy is contingent upon the interplay of moderating variables, both Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

## **Chapter Ten –Implications and Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

Chapter Nine compares and contrasts the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence with the extant literature, particularly the literature concerning professional competence, and approaches to teaching within Higher Education.

This final chapter of my thesis reviews whether or not my research has achieved its purpose and aims, and addresses the significance and implications of the research for practitioners and for future research.

Any discussion of Grounded Theory research also needs to include an analysis of whether or not the research meets the four main criteria for evaluating a Grounded Theory study - fit, relevance, work and modifiability. The final section of Chapter Ten evaluates the theory of Maintaining Competence against these criteria, and argues that the theory meets each of the criteria.

### **Achievement of the Research Aims**

As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of my study was to discover the concerns of lecturers working in an environment in which changes to the higher education system have affected, amongst other things, student demographics. The study focus has been on lecturers, in departments of management and business, teaching a mix of local and international students.

My aim has been to develop a substantive theory that would account for the patterns of behavioural responses as lecturers seek to resolve their main concern. The main concern that emerged from data generated through interviews and observations is the need to balance professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population.

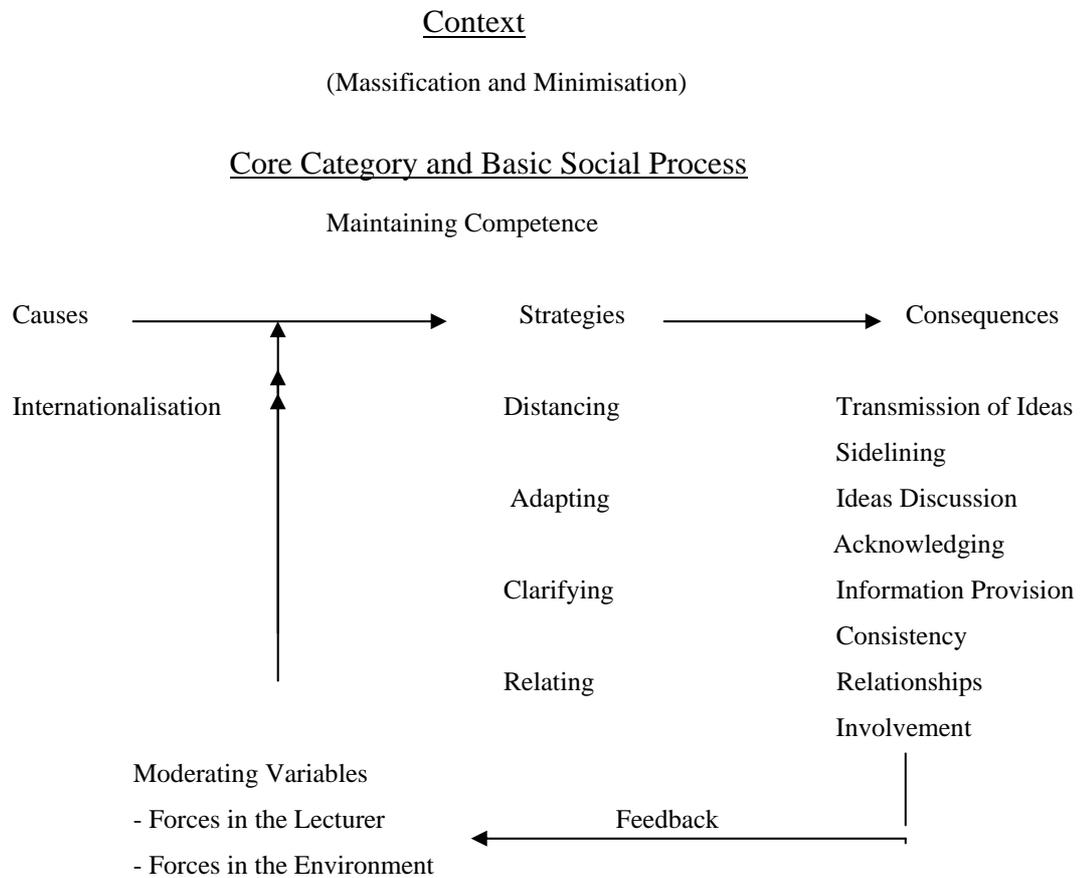
The research purpose and aim of discovering how lecturers respond to the mix of local and international students in university classes and developing a substantive

theory have been achieved, resulting in the theory of Maintaining Competence. This substantive theory has been developed through the rigorous use of Grounded Theory methods, ensuring that the theory is grounded in the data and relevant to the substantive area. The theory has also been located within the extant literature and compared and contrasted with that literature.

Maintaining Competence is the core category and basic social process that accounts for the variation in behaviours as lecturers resolve their main concern of balancing professional capability with the requirement to address the needs of a heterogeneous student population. Maintaining Competence is a causal-consequence model. It demonstrates how, within a context of massification and minimisation, the process of internationalisation results in a heterogeneous student population, consequently requiring lecturers to respond to a mix of local and international students. A typology of approaches accounts for the different strategies adopted by lecturers, specifically Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. These strategies are affected by the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment and each strategy has different consequences.

The overall context, causal conditions and typology of responses is presented in Chapter Four and is set out again in Figure 10.1. A detailed presentation of each of the strategies is covered in Chapters Five to Eight.

Figure 10.1: The Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence



### Significance of the Thesis and its Contribution to the Literature

I believe that my thesis makes a significant contribution to our knowledge about teaching management classes with a mix of local and international students, by developing a substantive grounded theory that explains how university lecturers respond to this mix of students – an issue not widely discussed in the literature.

This theory establishes a contingency model, differentiating it from the dominant literature on teaching approaches, which tends to focus primarily on concepts of teacher centred and student centred approaches. In its emphasis on the interplay of both individual and environmental factors as influencing the choice of teaching strategy, the model has more in common with contextual approaches, and adds to this literature and to the limited literature on contingency approaches in teaching.

A review of the extant literature highlights the significance of Maintaining Competence, particularly for professionals who perform their jobs in public. Lecturers are interested in maintaining face, and in impression management. In particular, they choose teaching strategies that demonstrate their own strengths, which enable them to perceive themselves, and be perceived by others, as competent whilst also addressing the needs of their students. The theory of Maintaining Competence makes a contribution to the literature in the areas of professional competence, teacher/student centred teaching approaches, and contextual or contingency teaching approaches.

The literature on professional competence and image management recognises that professionals, particularly those conducting their work in front of an ‘audience’, attend not only to the task at hand but also to the image they project. Hutchinson (1979) demonstrates that professionals are concerned with ‘covering’ themselves as much as providing a service. Maintaining Competence demonstrates how lecturers balance the requirements of a heterogeneous group of students with their own need for professional capability. It provides a model that shows how lecturers will choose teaching strategies that enable them to work to their personal strengths within a particular environment. The theory of Maintaining Competence brings together both contextual and personal factors to develop a contingency model that explains how competence is maintained. It thus adds to the existing literature by confirming the process of maintaining professional competence and image, and by providing a model that explains how this process is enacted.

The concepts of teacher centred and student centred teaching approaches dominate the literature on teaching in higher education and tend to imply a hierarchy of teaching where student centred approaches, associated with deep learning, are more highly valued. The strategies presented in the theory of Maintaining Competence – Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating – are positioned along the continua of ideas/people focus and structured/flexible approach. Each strategy can be compared to the teacher centred or student centred approaches and in this way they support the extant literature by confirming that approaches tend to be more focused on students (people/flexible approaches) or teachers (ideas/structured approaches).

However, the theory of Maintaining Competence differs from the concepts of teacher/student centred approaches in its demonstration that there is no ‘one best way’ to teach, rather different approaches are appropriate for different people under different conditions. The contingency model developed within the theory of Maintaining Competence emphasises how the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment influence the choice of teaching strategy. Each strategy is understood as a contingent response to prevailing conditions and personal preferences and no strategy is viewed as necessarily better or worse than any other strategy.

In presenting a contingency model, my thesis supports and adds to the extant literature on contextual and contingency models of teaching. The extant literature tends to focus primarily on contextual or environmental factors, and to stress the importance of context, including different cultural conditions, on teaching approaches. My theory adds to this literature by highlighting the importance of the interplay of both personal and environmental conditions on teaching strategies. It demonstrates the importance of recognising both individual and environmental aspects, rather than focusing on one or the other, when developing an understanding of teaching approaches. It adds weight to existing literature stressing the importance of taking the individual into account when developing teaching knowledge and skills.

### **Significance and Implications of the Research for Practitioners**

Grounded Theory aims to develop theory that has relevance for people within the substantive area of inquiry. It aims to have practical application for those people by enabling the person who uses it to “have enough control in everyday situations to make its application worth trying ... The person who applies the theory must be enabled to understand and analyse ongoing situational realities, to produce and predict change in them, and to predict and control consequences both for the object of change and for other parts of the total situation that will be affected” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p245).

Maintaining Competence has implications for practitioners in the substantive area, specifically lecturers in the management discipline. It can also provide information and understanding for others who, whilst not directly involved in the substantive area, have influence over what occurs within the substantive area. This includes university management and staff development units.

The substantive theory of Maintaining Competence has several important implications for university lecturers. Importantly, this theory recognises and values the importance of the lecturer feeling competent in his or her work. This is of particular relevance at a time when lecturers are being evaluated by students and are expected to meet 'customer needs'. The emphasis on customer satisfaction does not take into account the level of satisfaction of the individual lecturer and, as discussed in Chapter One, current conditions in higher education are resulting in some academics reporting reduced enthusiasm for their role and diminishing job satisfaction. Diminishing job satisfaction and the implications for teaching practice should be of concern for university management, as dissatisfied academics are less likely to provide the high quality teaching and research required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century university.

Literature has tended to focus on what lecturers can do to accommodate student needs without paying equivalent attention to what lecturers do to accommodate their own needs. Thus, there is little research support for lecturers who are grappling with the demands of their role and their desire to maintain competence within a changing environment. Understanding the core category and basic social process of Maintaining Competence enables lecturers to better understand the context within which they are working and to recognise and make choices about their own patterns of behaviour. The theory provides lecturers with a model for evaluating their own teaching approaches and for being able to value all teaching strategies rather than assuming one approach is always best.

My study highlights the interplay between individual and contextual factors and shows that environmental conditions can force lecturers to adopt approaches that are not their preferred method in order to manage the prevailing conditions. When this occurs lecturers have to work particularly hard to maintain their personal sense of

competence, which is likely to add to the stress of the role. Recognising and acknowledging the desire to maintain professional competence and the challenges to this within the current university environment enables lecturers to better understand and respond to some of the stresses in their work. Understanding the importance of lecturers having the ability to maintain competence whilst also meeting the needs of heterogeneous student populations, and in particular understanding the effect of Forces in the Environment, could provide university management with greater insight into the stresses on academics and ways to minimise those stresses.

The theory of Maintaining Competence acknowledges the importance of the individual lecturer within the teaching context and provides lecturers and management with a model that demonstrates the impact of personal and environmental factors on teaching strategies. The model recognises the impact of the interplay of personal and environmental factors on teaching, and demonstrates the importance of taking both into account. This is relevant when choosing teaching strategies, assessing teaching performance, and establishing approaches to staff development. The theory highlights the importance of valuing and addressing lecturers' needs, as well as the needs of students, in order to develop teaching skills.

Historically academics have not been required to have professional teaching qualifications, instead they have taught from a basis of expertise within their discipline area. Consequently, many tertiary teachers know theories related to their discipline but are lacking in “well structured theories related to *teaching* their discipline” (Biggs, 1999, p6). As universities change from elite to mass education, as resources become tighter, and as students become paying customers “the way knowledge is delivered has become a focus of attention” (Nicholls and Jarvis, 2002, p1). Research that explores the teaching process can add to the knowledge about effective teaching and provide tools for lecturers, for management and for staff development units.

The theory of Maintaining Competence provides additional material to be taken into account when developing the skill and knowledge base of lecturers, particularly in relation to teaching heterogeneous groups of students. It supports the literature that stresses the importance of addressing academics' beliefs and preferences when

looking for behavioural changes rather than just providing a checklist of strategies. It also demonstrates the importance of addressing environmental factors to enable lecturers to adopt effective strategies rather than forcing them to accommodate to bureaucratic demands that are not focused on student learning outcomes (Nicholls and Jarvis, 2002). My study provides a model that could be used for staff development purposes by addressing the interplay of moderating variables and elucidating methods for managing these variables, particularly when they are in conflict. Such approaches could assist lecturers to maintain competence whilst also developing skills in meeting the needs of heterogeneous student populations.

This has significant implications for staff development practices which, rather than focusing on knowledge and skill development, need to also address conceptual change and the personal needs of lecturers. To attempt to teach skills as a 'one size fits all' method quite clearly is not going to meet the complexity of the teaching process when it involves constant juggling of approaches in accordance with changing circumstances. Staff development practices need to also take conditions into account and look at teaching approaches and strategies from a systems perspective in order to provide tools that can be utilised under different conditions. Universities can utilise some of the aspects of the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence to provide better conditions for effective teaching given the significant numbers and diversity of students now entering university.

Strategies for accommodating diversity are dependent on both the individual lecturer and the environmental conditions. Hence, reflective practice approaches that recognise that no-one teaches in the same way (Kane et al, 2004), and that each teacher draws on his or her own experience, values and understandings, may go part of the way to assisting lecturers develop their effectiveness. Lecturers will tend to teach to their strengths, as that is when they feel most competent, hence reflective practice is likely to be adopted by those lecturers who perceive reflection as one of their strengths. Reflective approaches require recognition of the importance of Maintaining Competence if they are to be adopted by lecturers who do not have a preference for this approach for their own development.

Environmental conditions have been shown in the current study and in the literature to have a significant effect on a lecturer's choice and use of strategies. Environmental conditions include the number of students, the diversity of the students, the nature of the class and the degree of control a lecturer has over their teaching and the extent to which teaching is perceived to be valued. These factors are not within the control of the individual lecturer but must be tackled at a more systemic level, hence are of particular relevance to university management. How the heterogeneous student population is perceived and addressed within the overall university system will clearly affect how individual lecturers approach and respond to the mix of students in their classes.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Argyris and Schon (1974) explain that an espoused theory of action is the “the theory of action to which he gives allegiance, and which, upon request, he communicates to others. However, the theory that actually governs his actions is his theory-in-use, which may or may not be compatible with his espoused theory; furthermore, the individual may or may not be aware of the incompatibility of the two theories” (p7). This distinction raises the question of the validity of relying only on espoused theory or stated views, without taking actions into account. Kane et al (2002) question the legitimacy of studies that have not directly observed teaching practice classifying teachers as having particular orientations to teaching.

Glaser's concern about ‘properlining’, or providing the answer that is considered acceptable to the researcher, also raises the problem of relying solely on stated views. Observations conducted within the current research were designed to reduce the likelihood of properlining. In a number of instances observations demonstrated differences between lecturers' perceptions of their teaching strategies and their actual practice thereby supporting Kane et al's (2002) concerns that interviews or questionnaires tell only ‘half the story’. Hativa, Barak and Simhi (2001) also report on inconsistencies between teachers' thinking and beliefs and their actual practice.

Further research focusing on observations of classroom practices could be beneficial in confirming and developing the current theories regarding conceptions of teaching

and in exploring the strategies that lecturers utilise under different conditions. It is possible that lecturers within a management discipline, with a significant focus on people and their interactions, are more likely to tend towards a student centred approach than lecturers in other disciplines therefore leading to a capacity to move between various approaches. Thus future research could be conducted with lecturers in different substantive settings to ascertain whether the same issues arise in relation to Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment, and result in the same strategies.

### Comebacks

Glaser (1998) defines “come backs” as “categories within a substantive theory that are sub-core or less in relevance for the theory, but provide an interest area on their own” (p200). In this sense, they have an appeal for future research as something a researcher can return to, or come back to for the purposes of studying in further depth. A number of areas arise from the theory of Maintaining Competence that could provide a possible research interest.

First, the emergent theory of Maintaining Competence establishes a causal consequence model with three stages – causes, strategies and consequences. Not all of these have been thoroughly addressed in my research which has focused primarily on densifying the strategies leading to the development of four main strategies, which are influenced by moderating variables and lead to different consequences. The theory of Maintaining Competence demonstrates how lecturers utilise a variety of behaviours in response to a heterogeneous student population, caused in part by the internationalisation of universities.

Second, internationalisation as a cause of changes to teaching strategies within higher education has been discussed. However, other effects of internationalisation have not been addressed and could be fruitfully studied in order to gain a more in depth understanding of the impact of internationalisation on all aspects of the university system.

Third, the concept of moderating variables, Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment, has been discussed and has highlighted the importance of individual values and preferences on teaching approaches. This is an area ripe for further study as the links between values and behaviours in relation to teaching, particularly with heterogeneous groups of students, could increase the understanding of classroom dynamics.

Finally, the typology of approaches addresses the four strategies utilised by lecturers: Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating. Each of these sub-core strategies could be further developed in their own right to further establish the range of tactics utilised and the consequences for both lecturer and students. Of particular interest could be a study of these approaches in other discipline areas in order to ascertain whether the same strategies are used across different disciplines. The question of differences across the discipline areas is a particularly interesting one to pursue as the current study focused only on lecturers in management.

#### Elevation to Formal Theory

The theory of Maintaining Competence has arisen within the substantive area of management departments within Australian universities and as such cannot be generalised to other contexts. However, substantive theories can be used as building blocks for a formal theory.

Substantive theory is theory developed for a substantive area, whereas formal theory is developed for a formal or conceptual area of inquiry and can be generalised to a greater degree (Glaser, 1978). Formal theory condenses substantive codes together as opposed to the multiplication and proliferation of codes that occurs in a substantive theory. In this sense it is extensive rather than intensive and has as its principal sources “the data of diverse systematic research and the substantive theories generated from such data” (Glaser, 1978, p143).

Glaser (1978) suggests that by taking the core variable, or a few sub-core variables, researchers can extend their theory and potentially develop formal theory. The theory of Maintaining Competence could be developed into formal theory by extending the

concept of maintenance of professional competence. The research conducted by Guthrie (2000), *Keeping Clients in Line*, and Hutchinson (1979), *Covering – a Self Protective Process among Rescue Workers*, both demonstrate how professionals look after their own needs. By comparing Maintaining Competence with such research in other substantive areas the concepts could be expanded and built upon to generate a formal theory.

The value, however, of the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence lies in its direct relevance to lecturers within the boundaries of the substantive area demarcated in this thesis, a relevance that could be lost if it was developed into a more general formal theory. At this stage, more value may be obtained by exploring the behaviours of lecturers in other substantive settings, for example in other disciplines such as Engineering or Information Technology, and/or in other tertiary settings such as the TAFE sector. Such studies could maintain the relevance of the research for practitioners and ultimately lead to the generation of a number of substantive theories across diverse settings that could be developed into a formal theory.

### **Criteria for Evaluating the Grounded Theory of Maintaining Competence**

Glaser (2003) states that Grounded Theory is the only methodology that “generates conceptualisations that fit, work and are relevant” (p131). It is the four criteria used to evaluate Grounded Theory – fit, relevance, work and modifiability – that ensure Grounded Theory research can be trusted. The four criteria for evaluation not only provide the sources of trust but ensure that people feel they can use the Grounded Theory meaningfully as it is based “on a rigorous methodology that empowers” (p238).

Fit is another word for validity and means that the categories of the theory must fit the data without being forced or selected to fit pre-conceived categories (Glaser, 1978). As categories can emerge very quickly it is imperative to refit them to the data, to keep modifying them as successive data demands (Glaser, 1978). If this process is followed it ensures fit “by going right to the data and generating concepts from it, while constantly adjusting the best word to denote the pattern as constant comparisons occur as the pattern emerges” (Glaser, 1998, p236).

Fit in a Grounded Theory can be confirmed by checking that the rigorous procedures of the methodology have been followed including open coding, constant comparison, memo writing, theoretical coding and saturation. Chapter Three of my thesis details the steps taken in my Grounded Theory research and demonstrates how each of the procedures was followed in order to achieve the substantive theory of Maintaining Competence. This detailing of my own research also highlights how, even as a novice researcher who did not apply all the steps at the commencement of the research, the Grounded Theory processes were sufficiently robust to ensure the generation of a theory once all the steps were followed.

Relevance emerges with fit and it is automatic that “the emergent concepts will relate to the true issues of the participants in the substantive area” (Glaser, 1998, p236). Grounded Theory generates a theory about how the main concern of participants in a substantive area is being continually resolved by those participants. It focuses on what is really going on and what is immediately relevant to the participants. It allows core problems and processes to emerge keeping it relevant and trustworthy for the people in the substantive area.

In my study relevance was achieved by ensuring that the true issues for the participants were allowed to emerge along with the basic social processes used to resolve the issues. The substantive theory of Maintaining Competence emerged from data that demonstrated how lecturers attempt to find ways to accommodate a mix of local and international students whilst also meeting their own needs for professional competence. This theory has highlighted the importance of recognising lecturers’ needs as well as students’ needs when researching or applying teaching approaches. The basic social process of Maintaining Competence, with the strategies of Distancing, Adapting, Clarifying and Relating, emerged from the data obtained through interviews and observations.

For a theory to work its categories must fit and it must be relevant to the substantive area. Work means that “a theory should be able to explain what happened, predict what will happen and interpret what is happening in an area of substantive or formal inquiry” (Glaser, 1978, p4). The grounded theorist is able to integrate a core category

and sub-core category that accounts for most of the variation of behaviour in the substantive area with concepts that fit and are relevant (Glaser, 1998). The researcher “starts to explain how the main concern of the participants is continually resolved ... [creating] trust that we can understand and apply a theory about a substantive area” (Glaser, 1998, p237).

My initial attempts at developing a Grounded Theory in the substantive area of lecturers in management classes comprised of a mix of local and international students did not work. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, I initially thought that Engaging with Diversity was the core category until a further look at the data demonstrated that not all lecturers were engaging with diversity and when they did they were doing so in different ways. Consequently, Engaging with Diversity became a sub-category, ultimately subsumed under the strategies of Adapting and Relating, as it did not account for the variation in behaviour occurring within the substantive setting. The theory of Maintaining Competence works because it explains all the behaviours occurring within the substantive setting and accounts for variation in those behaviours.

Modifiability is an important criterion as “generation is an ever modifying process and nothing is sacred if the analyst is dedicated to giving priority attention to the data” (Glaser, 1978, p5). A Grounded Theory is constantly modified using the constant comparison method, thus a theory cannot be ‘wrong’ but can be modified by subsequent data (Glaser, 1998). “Modification occurs by conceptual saturation, by theoretical sampling and by conceptual integration – that occurs in memos and theoretical sorting. Constant comparisons and ensuing modification of theory is constant grounding that keeps the theory close to the data, yet abstract of it” (Glaser, 2001, p57).

It is the abstract and conceptual nature of Grounded Theory that enables it to be flexible and accommodate changing circumstances and additional data because it is not focused on descriptive accuracy. Glaser (1978) argues that theories lose their relevancy if they take too long to verify and change whereas Grounded Theory, which is constantly being modified, continues to fit, be relevant and work for people within the substantive area.

In my research the theory was constantly being modified, initially as new terms for categories were developed and later as the core category of Maintaining Competence emerged and site spreading and selective coding commenced. Theoretical sampling of the literature also modified the theory of Maintaining Competence. Literature concerning the context and conditions of universities, including the impact of internationalisation at a time of reduced resources, highlighted the circumstances under which university lecturers were working. This literature, along with the literature on the effect of values on behaviour, assisted in modifying and developing the moderating variables of Forces in the Lecturer and Forces in the Environment.

In spite of a number of false starts and moments of complete confusion, adherence to the procedures set out in the Grounded Theory methodology has led to a theory which I believe has fit and relevance, works for people within the substantive area, and can be modified by future research.

## **Conclusion**

This final chapter has reviewed the purpose and aims of my research and established the significance of the research in providing a contingency model for teaching approaches. In addition it has demonstrated how the study has adhered to the rigorous processes of Grounded Theory methods. It has addressed the significance of my study and its contribution to the literature, the significance to practitioners in the substantive area, possible areas for future research, and has evaluated my research in terms of fit, relevance, work and modifiability.

In conclusion, I believe that the theory of Maintaining Competence makes a contribution to the understanding of teaching within higher education and the understanding of Grounded Theory methods. Personally, I have gained enormously from this research in three main aspects. It has contributed to my capacity to conceptualise my own teaching practice, and my ability to analyse the approaches I utilise. It has enabled me to develop as a researcher and to discover a love of the research process. Finally, and importantly, it has provided me with the opportunity to

learn about Grounded Theory methods, and to fully understand the importance of rigorous application of all the steps in order to allow a Grounded Theory to emerge.

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