

Lecturer Identity: Online International Conference, English sessions

University of Pécs, June 16, 2022

Oktatói Identitás a Felsőoktatásban: Online Nemzetközi Konferencia, angol nyelvű szekciók

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Self-reflection is a must for the social professional and a key requirement in qualitative studies. Still, lecturers rarely reflect on their academic roles and identities in a systematic manner.

Parallel to recent changes in the domestic system of higher education – strengthening internationalization tendencies and the introduction of new key performance indicators – lecturers in tertiary education have encountered unusual questions and challenges. Who is responsible for a lecturer's professional development? Should lecturers have a qualification in education? Should they be up to date not only research but in the related areas of professional practice as well? How to balance between competition and cooperation in this new academic context? How to establish workable transdisciplinary collaborations? How to use the available resources more effectively?

Amidst these transformations and dilemmas, we should find some time for reflection and evaluation. Where do we come from and what are our visions on the future of higher education? What are our existing strengths?

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (University of Pécs) has provided an online forum for our international conference assisted by experienced and committed scholars and renowned organizations. The event was hosted by the *Social Innovation Research Centre* (Institute

of Social Relations), with the professional support of *Social and Health Evaluation Unit International*, *Identity Exploration Limited*, and the *Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Social Work Subcommittee of the Sociological Committee*.

Allen Erskine, Managing Director of *Identity Exploration Limited* greeted the presenters and the participants and briefly introduced the theme in his presentation on Identity Structure Analysis, and its linked software framework, Ipseus – a unique method that has been used in more than 50 research projects so far.

Prof. Roger Ellis, OBE, the first keynote speaker at the conference is Professor Emeritus in Psychology at both Ulster University and the University of Chester, UK, and a researcher currently affiliated to Identity Exploration Ltd. He is editor of *Quality Assurance for University Teaching* published in 1993 and of *Handbook of Quality Assurance for University Teaching* published in 2019. In his opening lecture, *Meaning, Measurement and Mastery*, he discussed a framework, Curriculum for Professional Identity Development (CuPID) that he and Prof. Elaine Hogard have introduced in their recent book on higher education. CuPID is much more comprehensive than the current Hungarian Learning and Outcome Requirements (Képzési és Kimeneti Követelmények), which nevertheless follows a similar logic with its focus on knowledge, skills, attitudes, and the expected level of professional autonomy.

The next keynote speaker, Dr. Christopher J. Moon FRSA FHEA FEEUK is a Senior Lecturer in Eco-Entrepreneurship at Middlesex University, London. He received the Outstanding Teacher Award at the International Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition in 2019. He is editor of *International Journal Business Technology and Education*. His presentation, *The University of the Future and Lecturer Identity* has been an excellent and illuminating summary on the ongoing transformations in higher education. He has described the main tensions between the traditional universities and today's institutions of higher education; and proposed a dynamic, impact-based model on lecturer identity. He has also warned about the risks of centralized, top-down approaches to initiate changes in the organizational culture of HEIs and connected the mission of today's universities to United Nations' Sustainability Developmental Goals.

These ideas on SDGs and impacts have been further explored in the morning session, in a presentation (*Social-ecological reflections on promoting resilience in post-disaster recovery programs*) by Ronald Woods (University of Technology Sydney, Institute for public Policy and Governance, Australia) who spoke about the impact of environmental problems on his professional identity development as a social worker. Ronald Woods has played a key role in the development of social work in Hungary and has contributed to several Hungarian textbooks and conferences. Gabor Szöllősi (Hungary, University of Pécs) joined the theme with a paper entitled *Origins of Social Work Educator's Identity in Hungary and* discussed core questions of the identity development of a Hungarian lecturer in social work, a profession that had to be reconstructed in the country in the 1980s and 90s, mainly by adapting available and workable international models. Kevin Efrain Tololiu, a young colleague from the Nursing Study Program of the Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia, discussed the difficulties the lecturers could experience during the pandemic in a practice-based study programme and commented on the virtual-space solutions they could rely on. His contribution, entitled *Lecturer Identity – Perspectives from Teaching Regular and Non-regular Nursing Students during Pandemic in Gorontalo, Indonesia* added to the diversity of perspectives in this conference.

Two of the four afternoon sessions were international ones, with presenters from Canada, the United Kingdom, and several Central and Eastern European countries. Zuzana Gredecká, a PhD student from the Department of Psychology, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, shared her experiences on using Identity Structure Analysis/Ipseus in her research. Her presentation, *Professional identity of university teachers in the context of their professional roles* also raised some practical issues that a researcher would encounter when using ISA/Ipseus. Gabriela Povian from the West University of Timișoara, Romania contributed to the conference with a presentation entitled *Counseling: from theory to practice*. She and her co-authors, Patricia Runcan and Remus Runcan explored the major challenges inherent in teaching counselling practices. Marta B. Erdos (University of Pécs) commented on the conflicting performance indicators in the Hungarian academic system and on the Hungarian strategy and action plan (Shifting of Gears in Higher Education (SGHE) Mid-Term Policy Strategy 2016. Action Plan 2016-2020). The next presentation by Barnabás Gulyás (Eötvös Lorand University) *Youth work education in the formal education context: Challenges and possibilities* echoed the main dilemma of a previous presentation by Gabor Szöllösi on the birth and development of a previously non-existing profession. Officially, there are no youth workers in Hungary – but the professional activities are nonetheless present. This is a challenging situation both for the professionals and for the lecturers teaching youth work. Julie Prescott (University of Bolton, United Kingdom) and Graham Passmore (North Ontario School of Medicine, Canada) guided the participants back to the theme of ISA/Ipseus and discussed some details of their work in progress. Their presentation, *A Mobile App, Identity Structure Analysis and Teacher Identity* was about a technical development opening up new possibilities in ISA/Ipseus studies.

Prof. Elaine Hogard, the Director of Assessment and Program Evaluation and a Professor of Program Evaluation at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Canada, editor of Handbook of Quality Assurance for University Teaching (2019) invited the participants for a common conclusion in her keynote presentation entitled *Changing Identities in Higher Education*. She focussed on the recent changes and the connected requirements that today's lecturers are expected to meet, and on the impact these changes might have on lecturer identity.

Sharing ideas and questions during the sessions, and the continuation of the brainstorming during the breaks have inspired the presenters and the participants to explore potential research collaborations, an important goal of the conference.

A book of abstracts is to be published in July, 2022, which will be made available at the official website of the University of Pécs.