The Impact of the Construction of Self and Other on Knowledge Transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African Engineers

by

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Declaration

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I declare that:

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is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

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15 January 2021

SIGNATURE **DATE**

Dedication

For Hilda, who started the journey with me …

Acknowledgements

Embarking on this journey, which at times has felt of epic proportions, has been a selfish endeavour that required the sacrifice and support of many. I wish to express my gratitude to each and every individual who provided me with the support and encouragement to complete this thesis.

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Abstract

This study is concerned with what is happening within a mentorship interaction between engineers aimed at knowledge transfer. The practice of knowledge transfer is contextualised within the knowledge economy that ideologically positions Western economies as knowledge holders and advanced, while positioning developing countries as knowledge deficient and backwards. The prevailing literature regards knowledge transfer as difficult to achieve and is primarily focused on factors that hinder its success, looking to causal relational factors between and within the participants, in particular the qualities of knowledge receivers. Constructing the relationship and the individuals engaged in knowledge transfer as problematic brings about certain types of relations between individuals and between groups. These bring into play the positioning of role players within knowledge transfer that is not neutral, creating asymmetrical power relations and impacting identity construction. Studies in knowledge transfer have examined the factors that inhibit successful knowledge transfer extensively and do not consider its discursive context or considerations of power relations. Based on the assumption that discourse produces social practices and individual identities within social, historical and cultural contexts, this study adopted a social constructionist perspective and suggests that the ways in which identities are constructed in a mentorship interaction affect how participants experience and make sense of their worlds, which has implications for the practice of knowledge transfer. Viewing power as embedded in relations, a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was conducted of discursive constructions generated from 17 interviews of participants engaged in a multinational knowledge transfer project between South African and Saudi Arabian engineers. The analysis showed that the construction of self and other does have an impact on knowledge transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers. The multiple identity constructions of the participants within the knowledge transfer relationship were resourced from dominant discourses that reveal different meanings attributed to the participants' mentorship experience and showed the systematic setting up of self and other within unequal power relations that favour the self. The study suggests that deeper consideration should be given to the effects of othering and power within social interactions between individuals located in divergent contexts such as those that characterise knowledge transfer.

Key terms: knowledge transfer, knowledge sharing, multinational interactions, discourse, social constructionism, constructionism, power relations, power in relations, resistance, identity construction, self construction, other construction, othering, subjectivity, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

DERI	Defence Evaluation and Research Institute
DP	Discursive Psychology
FDA	Foucauldian Discourse Analysis
HCD	Human Capital Development
HR	Human Resources
JTC	Joint Technology Centre
JTCKSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Joint Technology Centre
SAJTC	South Africa Joint Technology Centre

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Within the context of the knowledge economy, knowledge is said to be the greatest source of power (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno, 2000). Knowledge in general, and scientific and technological knowledge in particular, is said to be linked to development and economic well-being (Stiglitz, 1999). The emergence of the knowledge economy was motivated by the promise of global competitiveness, which moved the focus of economic development from the accumulation of capital and commodities to a focus on knowledge acquisition (Stiglitz, 1999). The knowledge economy is based on the premise that there is a direct link between a knowledgeable and trained labour force and economic success (Stiglitz, 1999), with knowledge being associated with the individual bearers of knowledge (Urbancová et al., 2016).

The belief that knowledge provides organisations with a competitive advantage (Argote & Ingram, 2000) resulted in increased interest in how organisations could gain access to knowledge, leading organisations to consider ways to improve their ability to manage knowledge (Urbancová et al., 2016). Within this context, knowledge transfer came to be regarded as the means to address the requirement to gain and sustain a competitive business advantage (Szulanski & Winter, 2002). Knowledge transfer is considered by researchers as a key factor of learning organisations (Goh, 2002), with researchers (Cummings & Teng, 2003) emphasising that the success of organisations depend on such knowledge transfer. However, according to Stiglitz (1999), only a privileged few have access to specifically scientific and technological knowledge and this mainly in societies that are regarded as being advanced.

Within the context of the knowledge economy, knowledge and learning are accepted as defining features of the modern economy (Stiglitz, 1999), whereas poor expertise and a lack of education are associated with non-Western countries which are constructed as being backwards (Lazarus, 2002; Said, 1985). Western economies are ideologically positioned in power relations as possessing knowledge and therefore advanced, while developing countries are positioned as knowledge-deficient and therefore backwards. In ascribing value to the possession of knowledge constructs a view of knowledge as power (Gordon & Grant, 2004), so that within the global economy, developing countries are viewed as if they do not possess the requisite knowledge. Knowledge transfer, as a vehicle to facilitate knowledge flow, is therefore not a neutral process, but imbued in power relations in that it aims to increase the

status and resources of some while marginalising others, where status refers to an increase in standing and regard of one over another. Furthermore, the knowledge economy provides a discursive field where role players are constructed within asymmetrical power relations. This provides a context with the potential to construct and reproduce identities and beliefs in a manner that influences knowledge transfer.

The prevailing research literature suggests that knowledge transfer is problematic. Researchers (Cummings & Teng, 2003) claim that knowledge transfer is a challenging process that is difficult to achieve, with several researchers highlighting that it is a complicated process (Duan et al., 2010; Girdauskienė & Savanevičienė, 2012), and conditional on many factors that require overcoming a multitude of barriers for it to be successful (Cavaliere et al., 2012; Cummings & Teng, 2003; Szulanski, 1996). A number of researchers (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Martinkenaite, 2011; Perrin et al., 2007) have even observed that the prevailing discourse in the knowledge transfer literature is about the factors that block or limit it. The causal factors that have been identified as affecting the success of knowledge transfer and resulting in it being difficult to achieve, are primarily the relationship between the parties participating in the knowledge transfer process (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016; Chen et al., 2010; Szulanski, 1996; Yakhlef, 2007), issues with the knowledge recipients (Szulanski, 1996), and/or issues with the knowledge senders (Mu et al., 2010). Cultural factors and language are said by many researchers to also thwart successful transfer, particularly in knowledge transfer across national boundaries (Al-Thawwad, 2008; Chen et al., 2010; Kuada, 2006a; Perrin et al., 2007; Tey & Idris, 2012).

Constructing the relationship and individuals engaged in knowledge transfer as problematic brings about certain types of relations between individuals and between groups. Additionally, identity is constructed in interaction with others within social, historical and cultural contexts (Scott, 2016), and these interactions affect how individuals experience and make sense of their worlds (Heylighen, 1997). Therefore, within the context of the knowledge economy, problematising knowledge transfer impacts the identity construction of the individuals situated within the various contexts that characterise knowledge transfer. Furthermore, social processes that involve encounters between different groups, such as multinationalism, result in construction of self-identities through reference to others and othering (Johnson et al., 2004; Lamers & Williams, 2015), which sets individuals up in opposition to one another along the lines of superior/inferior dualism (Brons, 2015). These considerations and their effect on those engaged in cross-border knowledge transfer and on the outcome of knowledge transfer provide the motivation for this research study.

1.1 Research Setting

Saudi Arabia, a developing country which has been reliant on its natural resources, has identified the need to transform to a knowledge economy in anticipation of dwindling oil resources. In order for Saudi Arabia to achieve its ambition of economic transformation, it recognises that it is critical to have the ability to learn from, adapt to and import foreign technology (Al-Thawwad, 2008).

For the purpose of creating a knowledge intensive organisation, a Saudi Arabian science and technology institute entered into a partnership with an established South African defence evaluation and research institute (DERI). The DERI has established itself as an internationally respected engineering institute and is sought after for its technological developments. It employs engineers of international standing recognised for their expertise and as indicated by the involvement with other science, engineering and technology organisations across the globe. The purpose of the partnership is to transfer knowledge between the two organisations for Saudi Arabia to establish its own DERI capability. The partnership was realised through the establishment of a joint technology centre (JTC) which is resourced with an equal number of staff from each organisation. Technology projects are established within the JTC that involve engineers from both organisations, providing the platform for knowledge transfer. Mentorship forms part of the contractual deliverables on the projects and entails South African engineers coaching and mentoring Saudi Arabian engineers while working together towards the completion of projects. The engineers are paired for the purposes of mentoring from the start of a project, typically for a period of two to three years for knowledge transfer to take place. During the project execution, the Saudi Arabian engineers spend periods of between two weeks and three months in South Africa working with their mentors.

The overarching knowledge transfer agreement has existed for a number of years, with several pairs of engineers in mentorship relationships; however, there is general unhappiness with the progress of the initiative. The perception from the Saudi Arabian partners who represent the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia component of the joint technology centre (JTCKSA) is that there is a lack of progress regarding the level and speed of knowledge transfer to their engineers, and on the part of the South African engineers who represent the South African component of the joint technology centre (SAJTC), there is dissatisfaction with having to work with and mentor the Saudi Arabians. The experiences of the individuals from the two organisations result in tension, which threatens the success of the partnership.

Mentors and mentees alike have expressed a variety of issues with which they are dissatisfied, which include:

- A lack of proper project planning on the part of both parties, such as a lack of proper planning for interactions, poorly defined project deliverables and expectations that are not being shared;
- Insufficient capability amongst the partners for proper mentorship interactions, including a lack of mentorship skills and a lack of a formal mentorship system;
- Issues with the work on the project, such as poor role definition, the requirement to perform high-risk project work, and working on technology applications that are not going to be used;
- Interpersonal issues, such as feedback on performance being lacking, an unwillingness of parties to take risks, a lack of trust within the relationships; and
- Issues relating to the others' individual attributes, such as the inability to communicate intentions and needs, low competence levels, disengagement and poor or unprofessional work ethic.

The knowledge transfer endeavour has been problematised, which places the business contract at risk and results in conflict within the project teams. The South African DERI aims to establish national DERIs in other developing countries as part of their organisational product offerings and therefore wishes to develop effective knowledge transfer capabilities for such future endeavours.

The issues raised have been blamed on the relationships between the pairs of mentors and mentees being generally poor or lacking, and project-task focused, focusing only on technical outputs and not on the mentorship relationship, amongst others. There is the perception from both parties that each has not met the expectations. It would seem that expectations are based on differing meanings that are attributed to knowledge transfer and on what it is to achieve.

This study is interested in what is happening within the mentorship relationship, specifically the asymmetrical positioning of role players, and the effect that this has on both the individual participants and the knowledge transfer process. As the participants are from divergent ideological and social contexts, the focus is on how the interaction with the other and the context of the relationship, specifically national cross-cultural aspects and socio-historical contexts which are at play, inform identity construction. Given that divergent historical, social and cultural contexts give rise to differing meaning systems this is particularly relevant for knowledge transfer, which, it has been argued, relies on shared meaning systems for its

success (Thomas et al., 2014). Having regard for the discourse of the knowledge economy that provides for the asymmetrical positioning of role players within relations in knowledge transfer and the issues raised within the research setting, questions arise that point to different meaning systems informed by divergent ideological contexts and associated power dynamics, and their impact on the practice of knowledge transfer and on identity construction. What is the meaning attributed to knowledge transfer within different discourses and how does this effect what is happening within the relationship? How does what is happening within the relationship affect the way that individuals construct and position the self and the other and to what effect? How does power operate within the relationship and how does this affect the encounters between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers? How does what is happening within the relationship relate to the effectiveness of knowledge transfer? These questions relate to the positioning of individuals who are located in divergent ideological and social contexts, and to the role of power in the formation of identity, and lead to the formulation of the research question, which is presented in the following section.

1.2 The Research Question and Objectives

The research question is presented as follows:
Does the construction of self and other impact knowledge transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers?

The research question is concerned with how individuals in a mentorship relationship for the purposes of knowledge transfer construct the self and the other and how this affects the practice of knowledge transfer. In addressing the research question, the study aims to realise the following objectives:

1. Determine how knowledge transfer is constructed in a mentorship relationship.
2. Determine how self and other are constructed in a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer.
3. Identify discourses around the positions, roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge.
4. Identify power in mentorship relationships and how these relate to barriers in knowledge transfer.

Determining how the construction of self and other impacts knowledge transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers will provide greater insight into the topic of knowledge transfer and provide an alternative view to the linear casual determinism approach used to discuss the topic. The study will offer a social constructionist view of what is happening within

the relationship and will show the meanings that are ascribed to the knowledge transfer process and the dominant discourses from which these draw.

The study suggests that the various ways in which the self and other are constructed have implications for the experience of the participants and the social and material practice of the knowledge transfer process. It further suggests that the problematising of knowledge transfer as difficult to achieve and fraught with barriers does not consider the effect of power and functions to maintain power relations and the status quo. The study will therefore also provide insight into broader power dynamics that are involved within knowledge transfer that allow for alternative considerations for effective knowledge transfer endeavours.

The study assumes a social constructionist perspective that will contribute to a deeper understanding of the experience of knowledge transfer and dynamics within the social interaction and is not aimed at discovering the causes of particular behaviour (Jun, 2005). This study is focused on providing insight into how individuals construct their world and what is happening to them in terms of the meanings that they attribute to their experience. The focus is on the individuals within relations and their contexts and not on individuals as separate independent variables in the knowledge transfer process.

This research aims to add to the body of knowledge regarding knowledge transfer and self other construction that occurs through discursive practices within knowledge transfer. Providing a deeper understanding of the topic of knowledge transfer will add to the knowledge transfer discourse and allow for alternative interventions in knowledge transfer endeavours.

1.3 The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

In this section I address key concepts and terminology used in this study.

1.3.1 Social Constructionism and Poststructuralism

The nature of the research is constructionist and qualitative. It takes on a poststructural stance that is concerned with how certain ways of knowing have been established over time. Social constructionism and poststructuralist research approaches focus on power relations and discourses that problematise (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). Constructionism regards the creation of knowledge or what we know to be the truth as purposeful and that claims of truth have implications for the experience of individuals because they govern the actions of individuals (Gergen, 2011). It is interested in how individuals are implicated in creating their social reality and in how social phenomena become accepted as the way things are.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to highlight the difference between the concepts constructionism, or social constructionism as it is also referred to (Talja et al., 2005), and constructivism, as these differ in meaning but are often used interchangeably within the literature. Both constructionism and constructivism share the common view that individuals are actively involved in the process of creating knowledge and their reality (Thomas et al., 2014). However, constructivism views the individual as the creator of their reality as a result of the individual's interactions with the environment and places the individual as the centre of the meaning-making. The epistemological consideration in constructivism is a focus on the individual mind for meaning-making, whereas the focus of constructionism includes the collective generation and transmission of meaning (Thomas et al., 2014). In constructionism the social context is taken to be at the centre of meaning-making (Thomas et al., 2014), where knowledge is constructed through consensus and coherence in ongoing interaction. For constructionists, individuals' worlds are constituted socially through relationships and language and not derived from within the individual mind. Constructionism also emphasises the influence that culture has on individuals and groups, given the view that culture shapes the way people see themselves and their experiences (Thomas et al., 2014). A constructionist view therefore holds important considerations for individuals engaged in social processes, such as knowledge transfer, that involve participants situated in divergent social contexts. The key principles and assumptions of a constructionist position are (i) a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge, (ii) that historical and cultural specificity informs where taken-for-granted knowledge comes from, (iii) that knowledge is sustained by social processes, based on certain assumptions that require certain subject positions, and (iv) that knowledge and social action go together (Thomas et al., 2014).

Social constructionists believe that a dominant social reality impacts the construction of meaning and that social reality emerges from the dominant and marginalised discourses utilised in meaning making. They are therefore concerned with the role that social and cultural context plays in how individuals make sense of their world (Heylighen, 1997). Within the scope of this study, context includes historical and social aspects, such as shared values and practices that inform meaning within a specific time, which could be at the level of the social processes, institution or national and regional frameworks. Context is what creates meaning and informs behaviour, providing a common understanding of the rules that govern what are taken-for-granted practices within shared mental models. Constructionists share a focus on what is occurring between actors with symbolic interactionism; they differ in that symbolic interactionism approaches human interaction at a micro-level, focusing on specific situations and the interpretive processes based on symbols in the individual mind that are at play (Aksan

et al., 2009). Constructionists do not look at individuals or events in isolation from context because they consider that the individual perceptions that people have of one another and how they behave with each other are influenced by their context. From this perspective, individuals exist in the context of relations in which they influence and affect one another's behaviour (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). Becvar and Becvar (2009, p. 10) explain this as "I am with you as you are with me as I am with you".

Poststructuralism regards social relationships and the sense of self to be constructed through discourse (Banister et al., 1995). Discourses are the systems of meaning from which speakers draw their talk and are associated with institutions and practices (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). Reality is constructed when individuals draw from discourse and their shared understanding of the context. According to Jäger and Maier (2009), discourses both reflect reality and shape and enable it, producing both subjects and reality itself. Socially constructed reality is regarded as being constructed by individuals who are acting on their interpretation and their knowledge in an ongoing dynamic process (Thomas et al., 2014).

Discourse is constructed through language so that individual experience is informed linguistically, historically and culturally (Willig, 2013). According to Becvar and Becvar (2009), constructions are expressed through language, with language as the means through which individuals come to know their world. It is through knowing that they construct it. Language is considered to be constructive and not merely referential or reflecting an external or internal reality (Frost, 1987). A constructionist stance views language not as reflecting reality in an individual's mind, but that reality is created or constructed through the use of words. Language therefore constructs the truth and produces meaning through the way things are spoken of and the way things are done. Notions of embodiment and materiality are not rejected but the constructive nature of language is central to knowing a "real world". Language and meaning are intimately related and reflexively inform each other (Becvar & Becvar, 2009).

The poststructuralist view differs from positivistic paradigms which hold that there is only one true reality which is value free and objective. Positivism assumes that an objectively real external world exists that is made up of facts which are accessible to people through their direct perception (Powers, 2001). In a positivistic approach, reality is understood through examining the components thereof. The components of reality are considered to be controllable and phenomena are viewed as causative and therefore predictable events. Unlike positivism, poststructuralism does not desire to discover an absolute truth (Willig, 2013).

1.3.2 Self Construction

For constructionists, the self is regarded as constructed by the self in relation to others and to the environment (Dagnan et al., 2002). The self is not constituted as an invention of the individual as part of an autonomous process, but is the result of knowledge about the self as informed by culture, the social group and generated by experts which is internalised by the self (Hofmeyr, 2006). Identities are therefore social and both conditioned by and situated in social contexts (Jensen, 2011).

Individuals both engage in internal self-reflection and with discursively available social identities to constitute themselves with respect to socially available categories to produce, as active agents, their identities (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012). Identity construction is therefore an active and self-conscious action (Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019). As socially available categories can vary, individuals can discursively co-construct and negotiate multiple identities or constructions through interaction within social context (Dervin, 2012). Identity is thus accomplished within social interaction through talk by negotiating available social identities that are made available in discourse.

Individuals both position themselves and are positioned (Locke, 2004). Discourses produce social positions (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012), and in turn direct action and shape identities through structural constraints (Brown, 2017, as cited in Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019). According to Khawaja and Mørck (2009), by drawing from discourses individuals position themselves, creating a certain reality for themselves. This reality is connected to actions and contextual possibilities so that how the individual is positioned determines the possibility of certain actions over others.

Subjects personify discourse and take on the attributes that are expected of them, given the way that knowledge is constructed (Hall, 1997). “Subjects are the figures who personify the particular form of knowledge which the discourse produces. These subjects have the attributes we would expect as they are defined by the discourse” (Hall, 2001, p. 80). The subject is not identical to what they say. The source of what they say is informed by the prevailing discourse operating within a particular episteme or regime of truth that is not ascribed to the self (Hall, 1997). Subject positions are thus formed within particular relations from the subjects that are producing the positions. Subjects become subjects by subjecting themselves to the meanings of the discourse and to its power and regulation through identifying the self with the position (Hall, 2001). The self is a product of discourses, ideologies, and social practices, as the

individual fits themselves into their context, which requires of them to conduct themselves in certain ways and be certain people (Mansfield, 2000).

Foucault (1969) was interested in discursive practices that both objectify and subjugate the individual, which is referred to as objectification. According to Graham (2005), objectification makes visible how a group is seen in a particular manner; that once constituted in that manner they become subject to particular practices that also subjugate them. Individuals come to know their place in the social context and through continued subjugation accept this place.

1.3.3 Constructing the Other

Constructionism views the construction of the self and the other as mutually constructed in interaction and within context (Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019). Whereas the self is constructed in relation to others, the opposite of self is constructed as “other” or otherness (Jensen, 2011; Jones, 1997; Jun, 2005). The self constructs the other based on what the self regards as different from taken-for-granted norms and categories within a social context (Johnson et al., 2004; Khawaja & Mørck, 2009).

Othering refers to the process of differentiation which objectifies individuals (Johnson et al., 2004) and is implicit in all social processes between groups that differ (Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019). The self takes up the position of the knowing, intervening subject to whom the other is construed as subordinate and an object of knowledge and intervention (Park, 2005). According to Holliday (2012), the imaging of self and other is a universal process of any social group where the self is idealised and established in an image that is better and more superior than the other group. Identities that are constructed through these practices are always constructed unequally in a manner that legitimises one at the cost of the other (Park, 2005). The constructions of the other are symbolic representations and do not necessarily correspond to an objective reality (Jensen, 2011). These representations have an ideological component that reflects the exercise of power (Dervin, 2012).

The notion of identity is based on the assumption of difference and similarity (Wodak, 2012). The self is differentiated from the other when an individual names, classifies or categorises an other. This is regarded as an act of power that demarcates an “us” and a “them”, a “normal” self from a deviant inferior “other” (Park, 2005). These differences are used to justify that some individuals acquire more or less prestige and power than others (Wodak, 2012). According to Park (2005), the notion of culture differentiates minorities from the rest of society in such a way that culture becomes a signifier of identity and this is regarded as true only for the minority

identified. The cultural identity is used to classify minorities as different from self and therefore as other. Othering is not neutral and has the consequence of influencing the interactions between individuals in a manner that keeps them apart, creating social conditions and practices that limit possibilities for action for the other that is justified by the self (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009).

1.3.4 Defining Knowledge

The conceptualisation of knowledge is important in this study because of consequences of the differing meanings it holds. The main epistemological approaches to defining knowledge are positivist and constructionist. In positivism knowledge is regarded as a reflection of an objective external reality which can be exchanged and transmitted, while constructionism regards knowledge as actively constructed and socially produced by cognising individuals, social practices and relationships (Heylighen, 1997; Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008).

Knowledge is defined within the knowledge transfer literature by Alavi and Leidner (2001) as information that is personalised and held in the mind of individuals. This personalised information is related to objective facts, perceptions, views and concepts regardless of its usefulness or accuracy. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995, p. 58), however, define knowledge as a "dynamic human process of justifying personal belief towards the truth". Both definitions view knowledge as personalised and individually contextualised. Similar to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), social constructionism regards knowledge as dynamic and emerging, collaborative constructive processes that occur between social participants and their context (Thomas et al., 2014). Knowledge therefore cannot be separated from the culture and the social construction of processes (Pardo et al., 2001). Additionally, a social constructionist view regards knowledge as dependent on shared meaning within a community as assessed according to specific rules and procedures (Gergen, 2011). This provides for shared meaning-making and that moves beyond what is happening within the individual. A constructionist view of knowledge as socially produced and reliant on shared meaning has implications for the role players involved in knowledge transfer.

The organisational literature classifies knowledge as either explicit or tacit. This literature review relied on what was defined as tacit knowledge within the organisational knowledge transfer literature due to the limited research literature available from a social constructionist perspective. Tacit knowledge is defined as the personalised accumulation of practical skills and experiences that allow someone to do something efficiently. It is ingrained in the individual's cognitive processes and in the routine and non-routine practices of an

organisation's distinctive culture and values (Chen et al., 2010). This definition considers the importance of social and historical context and it follows that tacit knowledge is seen to be developed from experience, mainly by practising skills, and that it is regarded to be difficult to communicate, whereas explicit knowledge is defined as knowledge that consists of words and numbers that are shared in the form of data, formulas and specifications. Explicit knowledge is regarded as being able to stand independently outside of the individual and can be captured and articulated in documents. This aligns with a positivist view that regards knowledge as being able to be shared with others, requiring little or no interpretation, and can be readily acquired through instruction. From a positivist perspective, the comprehension of knowledge is unproblematic and both text and technology act as conduits for its transmission (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008).

1.3.5 Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer is a developing topic (Bigabwa et al., 2015) and, as such, there is still not a uniform set of terminologies or framework. Knowledge transfer is therefore not consistently defined in the literature and researchers interchangeably define knowledge transfer at the level of the organisation or at the interpersonal level. There is, however, a shared meaning of the notion of knowledge transfer as a process that entails passing knowledge from one entity to another. This is articulated by Major and Cordey-Hayes (2000), who define knowledge transfer as a conveyance of knowledge from one place, person or owner to another. This definition considers the various entities involved in knowledge transfer as seemingly separate yet interactive. It also holds that knowledge can be owned or possessed. Argote and Ingram (2000) provide a definition of knowledge transfer as a process through which the experience of one group affects that of another group, changing the recipients' knowledge or performance. They specifically highlight that it is a difficult process and their definition shows that the focus of knowledge transfer changes the behaviour and experience of only the recipients, suggesting that it is not a reciprocal process. Parent et al. (2007, p. 84) offer another definition, which is "the dynamic by-product of interactions occurring between actors who are trying to understand, name and act on reality". This definition suggests the interactive nature of knowledge transfer, regarding it as an outcome of the interaction between individuals. It appears to refer to the interaction being focused on a process of joint consensus-seeking of a shared reality. The various definitions indicate differing ontological positions regarding knowledge. Despite these differences, the definitions offer commonalities in terms of it being an interactive and social process that involves changed behaviour.

The research literature highlights that the ability to transfer knowledge is mostly dependent on the social relations and what is happening in the relationship, with successful transfer requiring close and deep interaction between the parties involved (Gertler, 2003). Interpersonal contact in knowledge transfer is regarded as a key factor by authors, who also regard it as an active process and because they regard passive dissemination as ineffective in increasing knowledge and influencing behaviour (Thompson et al., 2006). Knowledge transfer can therefore be conceptualised as an interactive social process that induces changed behaviour in those engaged in knowledge transfer.

Although the literature indicates that knowledge transfer involves transfer at the individual level, group, department and other higher levels of analysis (Argote & Ingram, 2000), this study is concerned with knowledge transfer at the individual level.

1.4 The Need for Further Research

The review of knowledge transfer research literature points to the need for more research. As an emerging field, several authors contributing to the knowledge transfer literature highlight the need for further research, for example Martinkenaite (2011) called for more research to be conducted on the dynamics and complexity of knowledge transfer. Argote and Ingram (2000) provide an extensive overview of the need for further knowledge transfer research and indicate a number of areas that require further research, including cultural factors, identity construction and the dynamic of power.

The need for qualitative research has been indicated, and Perrin et al. (2007) argue for more qualitative research to be conducted in order to provide greater understanding of the knowledge owner and receiver. Brown (2019, as cited in Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019) also highlights that studies regarding social identity construction tend to downplay identification processes in interaction because of an over-reliance on experimental and survey techniques. In addition, the literature review showed that most of the knowledge transfer research is quantitative, with a reliance on self-report surveys or questionnaires which present certain limitations.

The limited social constructionist research on the topic of knowledge transfer entails social processes, which in turn have implications for individuals, as evidenced from the literature review, which points to the need for research that focuses on the impact of discourse construction and materialisation of individual and relational factors relating to successful

knowledge transfer. No research was found that describes the impact of self other identity construction within knowledge transfer.

Context and culture are highlighted as important areas for future research, and given that knowledge transfer initiatives entail multinational engagements, more research is required that considers the factors that characterise cross-border and the influence of culture on knowledge transfer. Researchers have identified the need for more research regarding differing contextual matters, such as the impact of national culture that are affected by differing ideological positions (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016). Argote and Ingram (2000) argue for more research that considers the importance of context, entailing differing meaning systems. This view is shared by Zaidman and Brock (2009), who highlight that there is limited research into the impact of context and culture on knowledge transfer. Perrin et al. (2007) indicate that there is a need for greater understanding regarding knowledge transfer in different cultural contexts. Contextual issues include the national level, as indicated by Chen et al. (2010), who found that there were few research studies regarding knowledge transfer processes that have been done in cross-culture business context concerning national culture. Several researchers (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Syed-Ikhsan & Rowland, 2004; Tey & Idris, 2012) indicate that the knowledge transfer literature is lacking regarding knowledge transfer practices in developing countries. Al-Thawwad (2008) found that all the literature on technology transfer was specific to non-Arabic countries. No research was found on knowledge transfer between South Africans and Saudi Arabians.

Having regard for the relational nature of knowledge transfer, there are calls for more research to be conducted into this aspect. Lucas (2005) highlights the importance of research understanding the ways in which relationships affect knowledge transfer, calling for additional research on the impact of the relational aspects of knowledge transfer. Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar (2016) identify the need for future research into matters relating to individuals within relationships, including the quality of communication and the subjectivity, attitudes, behaviours and characteristics of the participants to knowledge transfer.

The social nature of knowledge transfer gives rise to researchers arguing for more research into aspects of social and group identity. Argote and Fahrenkopf (2016) propose that more research is needed to identify conditions that facilitate knowledge transfer across social and organisational units. The impact of group identification and social networks that leads to in-group favouritism is also considered as requiring further research (Argote & Ingram, 2000). It has been proposed that strong work group identification results in difficulty transferring

knowledge across groups, which calls for an understanding of the factors and the consequences of group identification (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

The considerations of minority groups within knowledge transfer have been raised as needing further research. Argote and Ingram (2000) identify that those moving into new organisational sites as recipients of knowledge can be regarded as minorities within the context of the majority and call for greater understanding regarding how this dynamic influences knowledge transfer. According to Verkuyten (2003), researchers have noted that the dominant discourse on cultural differences of minorities has emerged from past biological theories of inferiority. Although this speaks to the potential of othering, no research was found on the effects of othering within the context of knowledge transfer.

Knowledge transfer involves the modification of individuals; within these contexts the notion of difference between participants brings to the fore unequal power dynamics, calling for research on how this could affect knowledge transfer (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

The research literature points to the operation of power within knowledge transfer that is not sufficiently explored. Mu et al. (2010) argue that the disseminative capacity of mentors is least researched, with most of the focus on the mentees' absorptive capacity. This indicates the assumption that mentors or knowledge owners are less responsible for the success of knowledge transfer than mentees or knowledge recipients and highlights the asymmetrical power relations at play in knowledge transfer. Ringberg and Reihlen (2008) argue that positivist researchers regard problems within the transfer process as being the result of a lack of absorptive capacity of the recipient and do not consider the impact of shared understanding and divergent interpretive frameworks. According to Gordon and Grant (2004), the concept of power that does not view power as an entity, remains unexplored in the knowledge transfer literature and the authors comment that it is important that research on knowledge management, and consequently knowledge transfer, considers the construct of power and its implications.

Research conducted by Perrin et al. (2007) indicates that the existing literature has limitations regarding how barriers or resistance to knowledge transfer are viewed and that "there appears to be a resistance to knowledge transfer as something to be overcome or be defeated" (Perrin et al., 2007, p. 165). In general, the literature focuses on the problems in the knowledge transfer process, which of itself indicates the dominance of certain forms of knowledge on the topic.

The need for further research on knowledge transfer is evident from the literature review, specifically research that addresses the influence of culture and matters relating to different contexts. The literature shows that research into knowledge transfer focuses on the factors that inhibit its success and does not consider the discursive context in which it occurs. A lack of available research that considers the effect on the participants within knowledge transfer as a social practice, particularly where the dominant discourse problematises one group and privileges the other, calls for an alternative approach in addressing the "problem" of knowledge transfer.

1.5 Research Design

The nature of the research question is constructionist and is focused on the ways in which knowledge transfer is constructed and how participants in the knowledge transfer process are discursively named and positioned in relation to knowledge transfer. The research question considers what characterises the discursive worlds of individuals and the implications for their ways of being (Willig, 2013). It differs from positivism, which attempts to provide objective truths and understands reality by examining the components thereof.

Positivism favours research problems that relate to cause and effect and a desire to discover an absolute truth (Willig, 2013). The ontology of this study is that there are multiple realities due to the different individual experiences of their social contexts (Stead, 2004). This study assumes the epistemological viewpoint that the participants' individual experiences are situated within their contexts and that these are reflected as their "truth". It does not assume that these experiences are absolute or objective truths; what is true for an individual is always bound to the individual's context. The research seeks to encompass relevant aspects of the context in which the research question exists in order to provide for a more systemic whole (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). It therefore needs a research approach that considers the multiple nature of the research participants social reality (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). A qualitative research approach is therefore appropriate because it focuses on various constructions of the participants' world and what is happening to them in terms of their meanings while accessing their experience (Rapeley, 2007). Qualitative research allows for participants to share dialogue through which their own experiences emerge from within the context and relations that construct them. This allows phenomena to be described from the individual's perspective. Qualitative research is supported for the purpose of gaining a greater understanding of processes of a social nature, such as knowledge transfer (Perrin et al., 2007).

1.5.1 Research Technique/Method

Discourse analysis is the qualitative research technique that was used. Discourse analysis is concerned with the construction of meaning and the consequences of those meanings. According to Rapeley (2007), discourse analysis focuses on how specific identities, knowledge and meanings are produced by describing something in the manner that it is. This addresses the research question that is concerned with the construction of identities within discourse. Discourses are complex because they both contain the content of what was spoken and traces of how what was spoken was itself a construction (Lyons, 2007). Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2008) argue that discourse analysis is an appropriate method when examining the way that reality is talked about and constructed and how this then contributes to the appearance of that reality. The specific data analysis that this study will use is Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA), which is concerned with the words and phrases that individuals draw on when they talk about or construct their identities (Lyons, 2007). FDA is concerned with the ways in which the representation of reality through discourse feeds into wider power relations (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). It is concerned with the words and phrases that individuals draw on when they talk about or construct their identities (Lyons, 2007). FDA is concerned with the relationship between discourse and how individuals think, how they act, and the material conditions in which these experiences take place (Willig, 2013).

The objectives of this study relate to what is happening within the relationship that constructs the self and other as the effect of the productive power of discourse and that describes the functioning of the practice of knowledge transfer in which subjects are constructed. This is aligned with the focus of FDA, making it an appropriate data analysis method (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008).

1.5.2 Data Generation

FDA supports the use of written text from semi-structured interviews for generating data, where the research question is concerned with the construction of meaning regarding the topic of interest (Willig, 2013). The method of generating data for this study was from semi-structured, face-to-face interviews that provided access to participants' unsolicited discursive experience in a free-flowing manner.

1.5.3 Participants

Discourse analysis, as a social constructionist approach, is concerned with the depth of information as opposed to a wide range of information and does not consider sampling

methods as being wholly representative of a population. The sampling method used was that of convenient sampling, which is acceptable within this methodology (McCombes, 2019).

A total of 17 interviews were conducted from a population of computer and electronic engineers who were engaged in the knowledge transfer project as part of the joint initiative between a DERI and research institute resourced from South Africa and Saudi Arabia. Pairs consisted of Saudi Arabian mentees and South African mentors who were tasked to work on projects aimed at knowledge transfer. The number of interviews is appropriate as a small sample size is preferable for discourse analysis (Jäger & Maier, 2009) due to the detail required in the analysis. The number of participants for data collection is regarded as complete when a level of saturation has been achieved, which is established when there are patterns that repeat within the interviews (Coyle, 2007).

1.5.4 Procedure for Data Analysis

1.5.4.1 Interview Transcription

A denaturalised approach is used for data transcription because its focus is on meanings that construct our reality (Oliver et al., 2005), which is suited to the purpose of the research question of the current study. A denaturalised approach to transcription is based on the assumption that within speech are meanings that construct our reality. The focus is on verbatim depiction of speech that accurately depicts the substance of the interview but not the conversational detail, such as every utterance, including involuntary vocalisation, capturing accents and grammatical errors. These are associated with a naturalised approach which is relevant to research questions that deal with dialogue patterns (Oliver et al., 2005). The purpose of FDA is to understand the meaning of the communications performed and the meanings contained in the speech (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019), and it is concerned with the content of the interview as opposed to the interview mechanics and the speech. According to Riley et al. (2010), FDA uses fewer transcription notations than DP and has a less formalised agreement for transcription than DP, allowing for differing transcription notations across FDA works. Transcription is an iterative process that allows for deep immersion in the data and entails a detailed reading of the transcripts while listening to the audio recordings to check that words and phrases are transcribed correctly. Names of the participants are replaced with pseudonyms along with all other names referenced or specific identifying information in the transcripts that could compromise anonymity.

1.5.4.2 Analytic Stages

The data analysis is done by means of FDA following the six iterative stages described by Willig (2013) for conducting FDA which are informed by the writings of Foucault. The frequency of particular statements is also noted, as they indicate sustained effects which solidify a particular knowledge and identify trends (Jäger & Maier, 2009).

1.6 Limitations of the Research Design

There were several anticipated challenges or limitations with the research design. Qualitative research does not claim to be objective, and it is accepted within constructionist research that the knowledge and experience of the researcher affects the findings (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). As an alternative to objectivity, confirmability is applied to attempt to ensure that the outcomes are grounded in evidence (Pickard & Dixon, 2004) in addition to exploring the inevitable subjectivity of the researcher. FDA does not claim to reveal an absoulte truth (Powers, 2001). It is open to the possibility of alternaive claims of truth being raised. A qualitative approach holds that the data and interpretations are valid only under the unique conditions of a particular study at a particular time and place (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). The impication of this is that outcomes of the analysis cannot been generalised to other situations, contexts or people.

This study relied on text which was communicated in dialogue in English. It was anticipated that as English was not the first language of the participants, which was the case for both Saudi Arabian and South African participants, the possibility exists that this could constrain free flow of talk and that participants.

Although a limitation of discourse analysis is that it does not consider non-verbal information which includes facial expressions and gestures (Coyle, 2007), Walton (2007) explains that for FDA, the micro-textual details of talk are less important because the focus is on the discourses at a macro-textual level.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

From a poststructuralist perspective, research perturbs the status quo and opens participants to consider questions that they previously might not have done (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). The research problem serves a purpose within the system that maintains an established way of doing and being. Within this context, ethical considerations extend beyond the protection of the individual participants' rights to those of the purpose that the research will serve regarding maintaining the situation and the impact of the perturbation (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). The

parties to the JTC placed importance on the successful outcome of the mentorship. The research provides input into the structuring of an improved knowledge transfer programme, which is believed would be beneficial to the relationships between the individual participants and the programme as a whole. For this reason, support for the research was obtained from the head of each of the parties involved. This was granted by both of the lead managers responsible for the initiative during a meeting where the research was discussed and permission sought, which was obtained prior to the initiation of the study.

Ethical considerations apply throughout the research process with a commitment to protecting the participants from harm. Based on Willig (2013), several considerations were considered in this study and included the following:

- Access to the participants was achieved through the approval to initiate the study from both the South African and Saudi Arabian managerial counterparts responsible for the JTC.
- Permission was also obtained from the organisation where the research would be conducted.
- Prior to the commencement of the study, ethics clearance was obtained from the university.
- Potential participants were briefed by their project managers of the research project prior to interviews.
- The voluntary nature of participation in the project was stressed.

Informed consent was obtained prior to each interview; this included an overview of the research, that the management on the project supported the study, that the study was being conducted as part fulfilment of an academic doctoral study, an overview of the research processes including that the interviews would be recorded, who had access to the data, and how anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained, including data storage. Details of the researcher were provided. The right to withdraw from the study and the participants' right to have access to the research on completion was provided. Any questions arising from the consent document were clarified prior to the initiation of the interviews.

Recordings were securely saved on a password-protected computer without reference to any identification and were kept separately from the consent forms or any documentation that contained identifying information. Interviews were captured to text by professionals who were required to enter into confidentiality agreements that highlighted ethical considerations. Pseudonyms were used in all interviews and any other identifying information has been

changed or omitted in the transcripts and was used throughout the study to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

1.8 Quality in Qualitative Research

As this study makes an ontological assumption that there are multiple realities that are socially constructed, the same criteria of rigour applied for quantitative positivist research cannot be applied (Pickard & Dixon, 2004; Sale et al., 2002). The criteria that are applied for establishing the rigour of research studies in a positivist paradigm that are premised on a single truth are internal validity or the truth value of the research, external validity or the generalisability and applicability of the research, reliability, which is the consistency of the research, and objectivity or the neutrality of the researcher (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). The ontological stance of constructionism is that constructed realities cannot be replicated, and epistemologically there is only subjectivity in the research process (Pickard & Dixon, 2004).

The criterion for establishing quality in qualitative research is trustworthiness. The measure of research quality and the criteria that make up trustworthiness are defined as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Healy & Perry, 2000; Mutepa, 2016; Pickard & Dixon, 2004). These were attended to in the research process by ensuring that each criterion was addressed. Research credibility concerns accurate reflection of the views of the respondents (Mutepa, 2016) and the extent to which data are believable (Healy & Perry, 2000). This was achieved through thorough engagement with the research setting and interaction with the participants (Pickard & Dixon, 2004), and familiarising myself with the project scope. Dependability or consistency was established through thorough documentation of the research process and accuracy relating to data analysis and ensuring that a level of data saturation was achieved (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). Interviews were conducted until there was repeatability in the data. Providing for sufficiently detailed descriptions of data addresses transferability of the findings (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). This is also addressed by describing the procedures that were followed regarding capturing data and ensuring sufficient coverage of the population (Mutepa, 2016). Ensuring that the research outcomes are not unduly influenced by researcher bias and can be traced back to the raw data of the research was achieved by referencing excerpts and quotes from the text (Walton, 2007), confirming that they are grounded in evidence. This, together with an awareness of subjectivity maintained in a reflexive account, allows for confirmability.

1.9 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a distinctive feature of qualitative research and central to performing discourse analysis (Walton, 2007). Discourse analytic approaches regard the researcher as playing an active role in constructing and authoring an account of the data (Lyons, 2007). It is therefore important in discourse analytic research that the researcher maintains a reflexive awareness of their own knowledge claims and how these are constructed (Willig, 2013).

Social constructionism views the role of the researcher as that of constructive of the research output, in that they inform what the topic of investigation is, set the research questions and offer their own construction of the research data and not that of discovery of the participants' experiences. From this perspective, the researcher's knowledge and experience are interlinked with the research process. Research is therefore not neutral and objective and the research study itself is a reflexive account. Reflexivity entails introspection, reflection and the consideration of what is being done by the researcher (Oliver et al., 2005), and acknowledges the impact aspects that could influence the research. This was achieved by my having regard for my own reactions and considerations throughout the research process (Lyons, 2007) and maintaining a full account of the research process (Banister et al., 1995).

As researcher I acknowledge my role in the process of constructing the study, from the choice of the topic to the construction of the research process, in the same manner as the participants have constructed their accounts and experiences. The reflexive account is more than an autobiographical type account, but is a responsibility and commitment towards ongoing introspection, reflection and regard for what I am doing.

1.10 Delineations and Assumptions

This research is concerned with knowledge transfer at the interpersonal level of analysis. It is not concerned with technology transfer, or knowledge management. While I concede that there are various ways in which to conduct knowledge transfer, this study is specifically focused on knowledge transfer using mentorship.

A key assumption for the study is that the South African participants regard themselves as belonging to a Western knowledge economy. The assumption is based on the premise that the South Africans internalise Eurocentric values, practices, social standards and Western knowledge practices, particularly with regard to their standing within the international community regarding their research and development of engineering experience. They regard themselves as "world-class" and are sought after by under-developed countries for their

engineering expertise. Western-based concepts and engineering methods have been assimilated. They do not see themselves as Third World individuals, perhaps because they themselves are not from traditionally disadvantaged and marginalised groups, given their education and social and economic standing as engineers engaging as peers with engineers in advanced industrial countries. It was further assumed that the engineering qualifications of both the South African and Saudi Arabian engineers provide for similar skills and knowledge training, as both groups of engineers have similar levels of qualifications, with some of the participants from both the South African and Saudi Arabian groups having studied at the same universities.

1.11 Outline of the Study

In this chapter I provided the background and motivation for the study, introducing the historical context for the research topic as the knowledge economy that gave rise to an interest in knowledge transfer. I showed that knowledge transfer is a problematised topic within the literature because of its focus on barriers to its success. From a constructionist perspective, this informed my interest in what was happening within the interaction of those engaged in knowledge transfer, specifically concerning how individuals were constructed and how this impacted the practice of knowledge transfer. I then provided information regarding the research setting, which is a multinational knowledge transfer project between engineers, that led to the establishment of the research objectives and questions which were presented. The theoretical framework of the study, which is constructionist and qualitative, was presented and I addressed key theoretical terminology, including the topic of knowledge transfer as it is conceptualised within the literature. Next, I provided the motivation for further research on the topic as derived from the literature. The research design and its limitations were then presented briefly. This was followed by the ethical considerations and issues of quality in the research. Matters of delineations and assumptions were also addressed.

The chapters of this study are structured as follows. Chapter 2 is organised in two parts. In the first part I present the conceptual framework, addressing key concepts and terminology that guides the study in more detail. In the second part I contextualise the study in the relevant literature that led to the justification for the study. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and provides the research method that addresses the research question and objectives. It details the issue of quality in research and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 addresses the outcome of the analysis. The outcome and implications are discussed for each of the research objectives. Finally, in Chapter 5, the general outcomes, conclusions and implications arising from this study are presented, along with the research limitations and recommendations for

future research. In the following chapter the detail literature review and theoretical framework are presented.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter contextualises the study in relevant literature and provides the conceptual framework and theoretical base that guide the study. It is structured in two parts; in the first part I present key concepts and terminology for understanding the constructionistic approach to the study and to position the chosen methodology. I explain a constructionistic focus on the role that social and historical context play in informing what is known through dominant discourses. I highlight the performative function of language and discourse in constructing shared meaning and identity creation. The next section addresses the view of power as relations as an alternative to power as entity. Power as relations draws on Foucauldian conceptualisation of power as constituting knowledge that creates desired subjects, governs behaviour, and as such offers the potential for resistance. Power in relations is an important consideration in any interaction between individuals. Finally, I turn to the topic of identity construction, keeping with a social constructionist perspective that views identity construction as occurring not as an autonomous process, but as being produced within social interaction. This and the concepts of other construction and othering are presented. Othering is an important consideration in studies where the notion of difference is a consideration, especially where this creates positions of dominance and inferiority, as this is indicative of the operation of power in relations.

In the second part of the chapter I address the topic of knowledge transfer. In this section I first provide a brief summary of the historical emergence, highlighting the historical emergence and development of knowledge transfer that stems from the notion of a knowledge economy where the dominant Eurocentric or Western view of knowledge is privileged to show the influence of this historical context. This will be followed by the main epistemological views of knowledge and knowledge transfer which provide a deeper understanding of the different meanings that each produces and their differing considerations for practice. Turning to a review of the knowledge transfer literature and to previous research on the topic to position my study in relation to current discussions regarding the topic, I present the key focus areas that arise from the literature as they relate to this study, namely the factors that are barriers to its success which look at the importance of social and relational interaction, shared context, and shared language, culture and the notion of sameness and difference in knowledge transfer, and the focus on the knowledge worker and the participants within the literature. The chapter is concluded with a justification for the study based on the current state of knowledge on the topic of knowledge transfer.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

This section introduces the conceptual framework for the study. I present key concepts and terminology relevant to the study.

2.1.1 Social Constructionism

The theoretical basis of the study is social constructionist. Social constructionism highlights the active role that people play in creating their reality, in that individuals and groups participate by acting on their interpretation of their contextual environment. Knowledge and reality are created through the way it is spoken about between those engaged in ongoing dynamic social processes. For constructionists, all meaning is derived from the historical and social context, so that what is known, or knowledge, is based on shared meaning and consensus of the way things are. This is shared through language and discourse, which have a performative function in that it produces social practices and individual identities. What informs what is known is historical and social. Language and discourse therefore have a key role in what is known. These concepts are presented in the following sub-sections.

2.1.1.1 Social Origins of Truth

The role of social practices and language is important to social constructionists as they relate to their concern with the social origins of knowledge. Constructionism views all interaction as embedded in larger institutional and social contexts through which meaning is found and knowledge is produced (Johnson et al., 2004). This is explained by Becvar and Becvar (2009), who state that meaning is derived from the relation between individuals, their interaction processes, and the relational context as each defines the other.

Social processes are considered to be derived from the historical and social context which, through community agreement, constructs knowledge (Gergen, 2011). Reality, or the truth, is constituted as the way things are done, by what is accepted in a certain context within a certain historical time. Shared meaning and a shared reality are brought about from consensus and coordinated behaviour (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). In this way cultural groups have their own perceptions of truth and reality based on their shared body of knowledge (Foucault, 1982). Shared meaning extends beyond individual relations to the societal context, where the individual's conception of the world is drawn from a fund of knowledge and the sense of how things are known to be is constituted by society (Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). Social processes are contextualised within the cultural norms that are learnt and accepted by those who belong to a shared social, cultural and historical context (Dagnan et al., 2002; Jun, 2005). An example

of knowledge that is regarded as a social process is scientific knowledge which is accepted as the truth for those within a peer community (Nonaka & Von Krogh, 2009).

2.1.1.2 Language and Discourse

Social processes reflect mental practices that embody meaning which is communicated through language (Gergen, 2011). According to Gergen (2011), meaning is communicated through language, and all that is known and taken for granted is derived through language. For constructionists, language constructs the truth through the meanings that are produced within particular social contexts. Foucault (1982) argues that while language transfers meaning, it does not construct meaning; he believed that meaning is constructed within discourse and comes from prevailing knowledge. According to Dlodlo (2018), discourses are patterned ways of speaking that are available through social consensus for use in language by means of social practices. The way that things are spoken of and the way things are done make up discourses (Frost, 1987). As such, discourses offer systems of meaning from which speakers draw their talk (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). Discourse, however, does not merely define knowledge; it both conveys and produces knowledge (Barad, 2003).

Constructionists are of the view that some discourses are more dominant or pervasive in their use, such that they define what is taken for granted as common sense and therefore discourses do not have equal status (Dlodlo, 2018). Foucault was particularly concerned with prevailing practices that are taken for granted because of prevailing and unquestioned knowledge (Lyons, 2007) and their associated power relations (Coyle, 2007). According to Stainton-Rogers and Willig (2008), Foucault regarded the reality that is constructed through the way in which it is spoken about to be influenced by wider power relations and feed into them. Gergen (2011) says that Foucault saw discourse as sustaining relations of power and privilege. Ladkin and Probert (2019) highlight that Foucault did not view language to be representative of an external reality; he viewed it as a social entity that creates what is known and, as such, he saw discourse as a key way in which power is exercised. In this view power is principally maintained and reproduced through discourse as the structured social practices that inform different systems of meaning (Mumby & Stohl, 1991). What is taken for granted in terms of ideas and practices therefore reveal the operation of power through the discourses that individuals draw upon (Hall, 1997).

Dominant discourses get their influence and authority from particular ways of talk and worldviews in which certain knowledge is privileged over other. The source of what is known is ascribed to prevailing discourses (Hall, 1997), with discursive practices being regarded as

producing knowledge practices (Barad, 2003). According to Stainton-Rogers and Willig (2008), Foucault saw discourses as performative and not just expressions of reality of the individual's mind or translation of what the person knows into language (Ladkin & Probert, 2019). The performative function achieved through discourse extends beyond meaning and truth/knowledge production to social norms, institutions, and practices and how individuals can understand themselves, others and their behaviour. Discourse acts by influencing practices that regulate the conduct of the self and of others through defining the rules that govern how something can be spoken of or acted on (Hall, 1997).

Through defining and conditioning what individuals can do and think, discourses also shape individual identities (Hall, 1997; Sharp & Richardson, 2001). Discourses create social positions that induce individuals to conduct themselves and adhere to certain practices, creating the possibilities regarding how individuals can understand themselves (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012). Subjects personify the discourse and take on the attributes that are expected of them, given the way that knowledge is constructed (Hall, 1997). Human beings therefore come to understand themselves through discourse within their context and the production of knowledge. Therefore, what we know as our self and as our reality is informed by dominant discourses that are communicated within social interaction and determine shared meanings, norms and practices.

In this section I have presented key premises of social constructionism, which are that reality is a social construct in that individuals construct their reality based on shared meanings in context, language does not represent an external reality but produces knowledge through creating shared meanings, and the performance function of discourse that produces norms and social practices that construct identities and regulate our subjectivity. I briefly introduced the concept of power in the construction of reality. In the following section the concept of power, and particularly power in relations which provides an alternative view to the traditional view of power as an entity, will be presented.

2.1.2 Power in Relations

In this section I present the concept of power in relations which differs from the notion of power as something that can be possessed by individuals or groups to be exerted over others.

Constructionists view power as embedded in the relations between individuals and groups and that it is maintained and reproduced through social practices and discourse. Power in relations holds that power produces organisational practices and constructs identities that

systematically privilege and marginalise certain experiences over others in order to maintain power. Gordon and Grant (2004) argue that the construct of power and its implications are important in the study of knowledge transfer because it provides for greater understanding of the relational dynamic of knowledge transfer by exposing the dominant truths and the effects of these for those who are subjected by it.

2.1.2.1 An Alternative View to Power as Entity

According to Gordon and Grant (2004), power as entity refers to power as something that is possessed by one party at the expense of another which can induce an action or stop an action based on a decision to exercise power or not. According to Ladkin and Probert (2019), Foucault posits an alternative view; he sees power as a relational phenomenon that exists in relations moving through networks and alliances. He spoke of power relations and described power as that which "brings into play relations between individuals and also between groups" (Foucault, 1982, p. 786), as opposed to what can be exerted over things. Foucault (1982) argues that power acts on actions and not on individuals and it exists only when it is put into action. For him power is not a static entity that can be owned or accumulated, but is "a structure of actions, bearing on the actions of those who are free" (Foucault, 1980, p. 220, as cited in Butin, 2001). Foucault (1982, p. 791) describes the exercise of power as "a way in which certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions". He believes that power can only govern the behaviour of individuals or groups who are free subjects, and by free subjects he means that they are not in a relationship of domination where they are being coerced but can exercise a choice of possible behaviours (Foucault, 1982). He holds that in order for there to be a relationship of power, there must be an other who can act and who does so based on free choice of what they can act upon (Foucault, 1982). Mumby and Stohl (1991) express this as power being the process through which consensual relations are articulated. In other words, power is about directing another within relations and not enforcing or inflicting power that belongs to one individual on to another.

Hartmann (2003) similarly explains that power is not an abstract relation of forces but functions by structuring a number of possible actions in which a subject can act and guide the actions of free subjects. Power is said to operate as the modification of action by action (Hartmann, 2003). Foucault (1982) says that the exercise of power determines that certain actions modify others. Foucault explains this further in the following quote:

> A power relationship can only be articulated on the basis of two elements which are each indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that the 'other' the one over whom power is exercised be thoroughly recognized and

> maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of response, reactions, results and possible inventions may open up (Foucault, 1982, p. 789).

Power in relations is therefore an important consideration in any interaction between individuals, specifically where the modification of behaviour is a desired outcome and where the desired outcome is influenced by dominant discourse.

Foucault (1982) believes that what is regarded as the truth and what constitutes knowledge is produced and sustained through systems of power and the struggle for power. For him, knowledge is constituted by the outcome of power struggles and is embedded in the context that is formed by the history of these struggles. In other words, dominant or pervasive power relations support certain representations of what is constituted as knowledge and these representations then create what is regarded as the "truth" or what is believed to be reality. Butin (2001) explains that power is the competition between differing systems of meaning which take on various forms within the relationship. Dominant groups are those who are able to privilege their meaning systems above others in a struggle between different interest groups who each wish to create meaning systems that serve their interests (Ladkin & Probert, 2019). Power is therefore always attempting to reproduce or produce effective social alignments (Rouse, 2005). By determining what is held as the truth, the dominant group maintains their power (Gordon & Grant, 2004). An example would be the dominance of a Western perspective of what constitutes science and what is accepted as scientific knowledge, produced by scientific practice and supported by institutions constituted as scientific bodies.

Hall (1997, p. 76) explains that "knowledge linked to power not only assumes the authority of the truth but has the power to make itself true". Knowledge is never context free and is supported by a particular meaning system which guides truth production (Foucault, 1982). Gordon and Grant (2004) speak of "power as strategy" when they refer to how the dominant meaning systems or rules and codes of a society, which are based on historical context, influence the manner in which knowledge is constructed. The implications of power in relations and the ideology of truth production inherent in the notion of the knowledge economy and in the transfer of knowledge are therefore significant, considering its role in maintaining knowledge and dominant discourses.

2.1.2.2 The Role of the Institution

Foucault (1980) claims that the formation of institutions functions to create asymmetrical relations of power in order to advantage certain people to profit to the detriment of others. The institution is the context in which knowledge is created and shared through practices and processes (Duan et al., 2010). As individuals interact within organisations, there is an acceptance of shared meaning systems which is constituted in discourse. This makes institutions and professional bodies sites for the formation of discourse practices (Phillips et al., 2004). In other words, the institution develops a language and certain social practices that become part of the organisation's culture, norms and ways of doing things. Shared norms, values and practices within institutions that are derived from their shared meaning systems, have been found to be key to the ability of individuals to share knowledge (Yakhlef, 2007).

Institutional influences are both subtle and pervasive in that they influence the behaviour and practices of individuals in such a manner that they themselves might not be aware of (Yakhlef, 2007). This occurs through the taken-for-granted knowledge within the organisation that naturalises practices which are reinforced through interaction with "like minded economic actors" (Yakhlef, 2007, p. 93). Yakhlef (2007) explores the concept of the institution in his analysis of the role of social context in tacit knowledge transfer and argues that the influence of the taken-for-granted knowledge is particularly highlighted when there is a requirement to share knowledge across institutional boundaries.

According to Hartmann (2003), power works through organisational practices and in the relation between free subjects where the relation is unbalanced. Foucault (1977), however, holds that power works within all relations but where there is an imbalance of power in relations, this would prejudice one over the other, especially where institutional actions offer practices that dominate or control behaviour. Within specific institutional settings, power works through discursive practices by regulating the behaviour of individuals so that they are constructed in certain ways. Furthermore, institutionalised bodies of knowledge provide categorisation of individuals by which individuals are recognised and recognise themselves. For Foucault (1977), in the exercise of power, the rank or position that an individual occupies in relation to others and not their position on an organisational structure is important. By this he means that certain individuals are afforded legitimate authority over others so that they can induce them to behave in certain ways within social interaction through the meaning attributed to the context, and not by virtue of their place in the organisation. Organisational practices and measures drive compliance and provide sanction for non-compliance through the taken-for-granted knowledge. The operation of power and the dominant discourses that inform

knowledge transfer, as a social practice within institutional settings, therefore have implications for the behaviour and experiences of those participating in knowledge transfer.

2.1.2.3 Subjectivity - Forming Desired Subjects

Foucault, according to Pickett (1996), sees individuals as the product of modern power; by this he means that their behaviours, gestures and thoughts are expressions of power. Every individual is subjected to the expectations and norms derived from social, historical and cultural contexts, and to the institutional practices in which they operate which make them subjects (Ladkin & Probert, 2019). Subjectivity is the self as a product of discourses, ideologies and intuitional practices that influence behaviour in certain ways and influence individuals to be certain people (Mansfield, 2000). Butin (2001) explains that Foucault argued that the "good" subject, such as the good mentor, is not just made, nor is a mentor given status as being knowledgeable; they are accorded these positions in power relations that determine what constitutes good for the particular subject.

Discourses construct both objects and subjects and produce subjects that personify particular characteristics and attributes (Weedon, 1987, as cited in Hanson & Cheng, 2018). These are called subject positions and are the social locations or the particular ways of being that are afforded to the subject (Frost, 1987). When a subject position is taken up, it both opens up and closes down particular ways of being to the individual. Each subject position carries certain rights and duties which are reinforced by institutional practices, which in turn reinforce the subject positions.

Subjectivity arises from power that operates in terms of the conduct or the modification of action by action (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 2014). The subject is produced within the discourse and the working of power is evident when the subject behaves in the expected ways that are determined by subjectivities that inform the possible actions and capabilities that the individual can perform (Foucault, 1972). Discourse has structuring effects by connecting institutional power relations with talk, whereby people are placed in power relations by the production of self-knowledge as an effect of their objectification (Parker et al., 1997). Discourse informs how the self regulates their behaviour through the internalisation of how the self may act to make particular kinds of being (Rose, 1992). The self regulates and normalises their actions so that when an object is socialised in particular ways that are embedded in norms and structures, it becomes a subject of power (Alexander, 2018). Institutions organise power through various means that affect how people are viewed and how they regulate behaviour. These include hierarchical observation, the use of classification systems such as manager and subordinate,

and using comparison with the norm to determine what behaviour is appropriate and acceptable (Hall, 1997). Subjectivity therefore entails a web of power relations through which the individual both constructs and is constructed as self (Butin, 2001).

2.1.2.4 Self-regulation and Disciplinary Power

Power creates new subjects by constructing new subjectivity, capacities, skills and organisations and transforming individuals by taking hold of their behaviour, thoughts and identity. Through disciplinary power, individuals are shaped and normalised, and through social practices, deviation from the norm maintains individual identity. Desired subjects are formed by self-regulation of their behaviour in terms of the dominant discourse's regime of truth (Hall, 1997). Individuals govern themselves and others by constituting the truth and organising what norms and practices are deemed correct and not. Through internalisation of meaning, the individual is subjectified and is expected to behave in certain ways through the acceptance of discursive practices, beliefs and behaviours as normal; the individual regulates their conduct accordingly, which is, according to Alexander (2018), what Foucault calls the domination of the self. What are expectations of individuals that occupy certain positions within discourse reflect norms that determine their required conduct and what is regarded as deviations. Deviation from expected conduct is regarded as deviant behaviour and in need of punishment. The exercise of self-discipline by self-monitoring against what is normal or expected was referred to as disciplinary power by Foucault (1977). Individuals therefore regulate their thoughts and their behaviour through disciplinary power which causes them to take hold of their own conduct (Hall, 2001).

2.1.2.5 Normalisation

Foucault, according to Alexander (2018), believes that power both makes individuals and controls their conduct through the normalisation of concepts. This is influenced by policies, myths and other influences that form disciplinary power which shapes beliefs and practices (Alexander, 2018). The normalisation of concepts is referred to as normative power which shapes what is considered to be "normal" and therefore influences what is regarded as appropriate behaviour (Diez, 2005). What is regarded as appropriate and acceptable behaviour within a certain society or context creates rules that govern behaviour and impacts how individuals are constructed (Foucault, 1984). Normative power operates through controlling what people think and do and informs their beliefs, behaviours and practices through which their actions are governed. Foucault (1984) argues that power relations guide the conduct of others and that social norms inform the actions of individuals according to the expectations of the subject positions that are taken up. In other words, social norms inform

the actions of subject positions that are taken up, and when a concept or behaviour comes to be expected or normalised within a particular context, it conditions what is perceived to be correct or normal. Certain normative behaviours are then expected from subjects, along with corresponding qualities and attributes. Normative power is so pervasive that individuals act and speak in ways that are expected within particular situations without thought (Wodak, 2012). Walkerdine (1992) states that Foucault calls this an invisible power because of the way that behavioural practices are regarded as taken for granted and how it operates to normalise concepts that shape the beliefs and practices that govern behaviour (Alexander, 2018). The self is therefore bound to prevailing knowledge and is constructed as a result of the internalisation of this knowledge. Accordingly, the construction of self is not an autonomous process but is dependent on external determinants produced by power (Hofmeyr, 2006), making the self a product of power.

2.1.2.6 Resistance

Foucault (1978b) states that action can only be understood through the potential for resistance. He regards resistance as based on the ability to act and inherent to relations of power. By this he means that power is not something done to an individual but is done with an individual who is an acting agent, and as an acting agent there is always the ability to resist. For him relations of power are clear when individuals and groups engage with each other. Because power operates through guiding the action of free subjects and being free, the subject always has the possibility to behave differently (Butin, 2001). Individuals can therefore either accept or reject the normative constraints that govern them (Butin, 2001). Disciplinary power therefore offers the potential for resistance through refusal to participate in or challenging normative practices.

According to UKEssays (2018), action and opposition are core to resistance where resistance implies an oppositional action. Power is resisted through various means, such as individual acts of refusal, critique and testing the limits of subjection (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 2014). Opportunity for resistance is also possible through opposition to disciplinary processes, negotiation discursive norms or changing the meaning of the dominant discourses (Lilja & Vinthagen, 2014). Refusal to be devalued is, for example, a means to resist, which indicates a distancing from a particular category or subject positioning or refusing to occupy a subject position of that of the other (Jensen, 2011). According to Lilja and Vinthagen (2014), accepting norms, values and behaviours of a dominant group, which they refer to as mimicry, but with some difference, is also a form of resistance. Within relations of power, resistance offers opportunity to see the operation of power of both the dominant and the subjugated.

In this section I introduced the concept of power in relations as an alternative to the notion of power as entity with the aim to highlight its importance in constructing and maintaining subjects and social processes that regulate behaviour (Mumby & Stohl, 1991). This is an important consideration in knowledge transfer that entails practices aimed at modification of individuals by making certain subject positions available within power relations that once taken up, change their existing subjectivities and take hold of their conduct. Power is evident in the presence of dominant discourses that inform desired subjects, norms and practices and reflect the interests of a certain status quo. Power operates in training and other practices that involve the modification of individuals and that inform norms and practices implicit in knowledge transfer. Subject positioning influences identity construction of self and other which, along with the notion of othering, is discussed in the following section.

2.1.3 Construction of Self and Other

The social and dynamic nature of self and identity construction is the premise of this study. In this section I present the view that self-identity is not an autonomous process, but that identity is produced within social contextual interaction for strategic purposes.

2.1.3.1 Self Construction

Social constructionists regard identity as discursively constructed within socially dynamic, reciprocal interaction with others and interaction within social, historical and cultural contexts (Scott, 2016). They do not view identity as created within an individual's mind. Gergen (2011, p. 111) refers to the self as a "social accomplishment", by which he means that the self both produces and is a product of social interaction. The self is then constructed by individuals in relation to others and to their environment (Dagnan et al., 2002) and created and co-constructed in interactive relationships situated within specific contexts (Wodak, 2012). Accordingly, social processes both construct the person and are constructed by the person (Scott, 2016).

Identity is about meaning, which develops in context-dependent use; identities are social in nature and situated in social contexts (Wodak, 2012). Individuals come to know who they are through a reflexive process of positioning the self within a specific social context which also conditions it (Jensen, 2011). Jones (1997, p. 467) explains that "we privately account for ourselves in thought, we think in words, and interpret ourselves through meanings derived from our social reality".

The self is not regarded as an isolated being, but as both participant in and contextualised within multiple relationships (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). Foucault, as stated by Hofmeyr (2006), suggests that because the perception of self is socially constituted, there is not a core self or identity (Hofmeyr, 2006). Foucault furthers that the practice of self-constitution is not self-invention, but the result of imposed patterns of culture, society and the social group of belonging (Hofmeyr, 2006). The self is therefore dependent on culturally derived norms and is "produced by society, generated by experts and internalized by the self" (Hofmeyr, 2006, p. 224).

Piazza and Taylor (2017) advance that individuals are social actors who construct themselves and others through talk. The self is constituted through language and discourse, emerging in a form of dialogue (Jun, 2005). Within conversation with others, each individual constructs both the self and the other's identity as they speak (Gergen, 2011). The consequence of identity being contingent on context is that individuals have multiple identities (Noels et al., 2012). The contextual nature of the construction of identity means that identities are not fixed or stable within an individual; they are invoked and constructed dynamically within conversation (Piazza & Taylor, 2017). This suggests that an individual has a number of identities which depend on time and context as they take on meaning in relation to others (Stead, 2004). Identities are also individual and collective and national and transnational (Wodak, 2012).

Social constructionism considers the impact of a dominant social reality on the construction of meaning and the role that the social and cultural context plays in how individuals make sense of their world (Heylighen, 1997). The lived ideology of a given culture is its beliefs, values and practices that determine a particular way of life and what is considered to be normal for people in a particular social context. Here ideology refers to the collection of ideas and views that represent certain interests of a particular group of people in a manner that promotes these interests to the exclusion of others. Ideology, in turn, constructs subjects and how people experience the self and create their identities (Edley, 2001). Drawing from discourses, individuals position themselves, creating a certain reality for themselves, which is connected to actions and contextual possibilities (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). Jun (2005) posits that the self, within social and cultural context, is the most important intervening factor within relations and the individual's own behaviour as they interact with their social reality. Hofmeyr (2006) argues that the self is always bound to what is considered to be the prevailing knowledge, by which he means that the construction of self is not an entirely autonomous process but is dependent on external determinants that are produced by power through what we come to know (Hofmeyr, 2006). Piazza and Taylor (2017) advance that identity construction is not a

neutral exercise but is associated with issues of power and social control. Individuals exercise agency in identity construction, and according to Goodman (2017), speakers construct varying identities in different ways for particular purposes. The role of power is therefore present in identity construction of the social actor and visible in other-representations (Piazza & Taylor, 2017). The self is therefore a product of power constructed as the outcome of the internalisation of prevailing knowledge that is produced in social context.

2.1.3.2 Other Construction

Other representations, or the construction of the other, is a multidimensional process based on the juxtaposition of the self and other within various social categorisations that are set within prevailing social orders (Jensen, 2011; Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012). The construction of self always occurs in relation to others where the opposite of self is constructed as other or otherness (Jensen, 2011; Jones, 1997; Jun, 2005). This is a recursive process where the construction of the other is done in relation to self-construction, which in turn reinforces the construction of the self. What is regarded by the self as different, within a particular social context of existing taken-for-granted norms and categories, creates the other (Johnson et al., 2004; Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). The other can also refer to anything or anybody that is not considered to be the norm as determined by social context.

In self other identification the other is implicitly and unconsciously modelled against the self (Brons, 2015). What is thought to hold true for the self is regarded as being true for the other, and any perceived difference between the self and the other is regarded as undesirable. What is regarded as true for the self provides justification for the self to expect that the other accepts these principles for themselves (Diez, 2005). According to Jensen (2011), an other self distinction is made when the standards of the self are seen as both superior and of universal validity, so that the other is represented as violating these standards. The undermining of standards of the self based on any perceived deviation in the other makes the other to be regarded as inferior. The other is constructed as the not self so that in the other-self construction the self is constructed in opposition to the other and distinguished from the other (Brons, 2015). Identity construction, the defining of the self and other, therefore implies inclusionary and exclusionary processes (Wodak, 2012). The impact of self other identification is that both individual and group identities are positioned in discourse, and how they are positioned determines how they should be treated (Goodman, 2017).

2.1.3.3 Othering

Othering entails a focus on sameness and difference in the construction of the self and the other (Dervin, 2012). Othering is implicated in all processes that involve encounters between different groups (Lamers & Williams, 2015) and is embedded in the process of constructing self identity through reference to others (Johnson et al., 2004; Lamers & Williams, 2015). According to Abddallah-Pretceille (2003, in Dervin, 2012), non-othering is not possible.

Brons (2015, p. 70) defines othering as:

> ... the simultaneous construction of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the self/in-group has and the other/out-group lacks and/or some undesirable characteristic that the other/out-group has and the self/in-group lacks. Othering thus sets up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group, but this superiority/inferiority is nearly always left implicit" (Brons, 2015, p. 70).

In the following quote, Jensen (2011) explains the functioning of othering:

> Discursive processes by which powerful groups, who may or may not make up a numerical majority, define subordinate groups into existence in a reductionist way which ascribe problematic and/or inferior characteristics to these subordinate groups. Such discursive processes affirm the legitimacy and superiority of the powerful and condition identity formation among the subordinate (Jensen, 2011, p. 65).

Othering focuses on difference with the function to both reinforce and protect the self through the differentiation of the self from the other (Dervin, 2012). Othering practices influence the interactions between people in a manner that keeps them apart (Johnson et al., 2004), and function to create duality (Piazza & Taylor, 2017). It produces and problematises differences and the identities that it constructs (Jensen, 2011), and involves setting up identities in unequal relationship and is concerned with how people relate to social categories. The over-inflation of differences creates a distance between the self and the other, resulting in a radically alien other which justifies subjection and social exclusion (Brons, 2015). It creates a self-other distinction which dehumanises the other, objectifying the other person(s) without consideration for the complexity of the individual (Dervin, 2012), subjugating them to a commonality that does not consider their personal perspectives (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012). Ålund (1999, in Creutz-Kämppi, 2008) states that:

> The less one knows about distinct people the easier one interprets these people through presupposed characteristics, the knowledge and perceptions one gains are stabilised as simplifications and stereotypes that become part of the common stock of knowledge through inter-subjective activity (Ålund, 1999, in Creutz-Kämppi, 2008, p. 297).

The other is constructed as detached from context and a history where their behaviour is explained in generalised terms and not in response circumstances, thus making it seen as being without reason or rationale (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012).

The other becomes a stereotypical constructed collective, where some values, norms and cultural attributes are emphasised and given meaning outside of the immediate context (Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). These collective representations establish shared meanings through communication and social interaction, which form a shared social knowledge (Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). According to Johnson et al. (2004), othering within a cultural context essentialises and creates stereotypes in a way that ignores individualism and diversity and creates problematic representations of “other” cultures (Dervin, 2012). Othering does not only involve the ascribing of unfavourable attributions to the other, but makes these to be irrational beliefs (Jensen, 2011). It produces statements of culture that do not reflect a truth for all. Perceived differences are not mediated equally or neutrally, so power is created and maintained creating a repressed other. The result is that interactions with the other are characterised by preconceptions and judgement (Löytty, 2005, in Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). It produces a shallow understanding of individuals and groups which fuels mistrust (Jun, 2005). Todorov (1984, in Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012) further defines three dimensions in othering:

- Value judgments – the construction of the other as either being good or bad;
- Social distance – other construction as physically or psychologically distant; and
- Limited knowledge – constructing the other as if there is not much known about their history and culture.

Brons (2015) claims that our self-worth is dependent on the lessor worth of others, and while othering does not necessarily explicitly affirm that there is a self superiority and other inferiority, it is usually premised on the implicit. Othering establishes and maintains social distance by creating a superior in-group for the self in opposition to an inferior out-group for the other which serves the interests of the self group (Brons, 2015; Johnson et al., 2004). Othering stresses what keeps separate and divides rather than emphasising what creates a shared community where the distinction made between self and other constitutes and

maintains a social world of difference (Gergen, 2011). From a social constructionist perspective, categorising and drawing distinctions are not regarded as reflective of reality, but as serving the interests of those that create and maintain social categories (Stead, 2004). Othering creates practices that produce positions of domination and subordination which result in marginalisation (Johnson et al., 2004). This creates social conditions and practices that limit possibilities for action for the other but that are justified by the self through reasons that are based on the perceived negative attributes of the other (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). Justification of a certain course of behaviour or position further maintains the larger system (Pardo et al., 2001) and maintains power relations (Hartsock, 1990). According to Dervin (2012), self and other constructions are ideologically driven products of discourses of culture that position certain social and political resources. Othering therefore is not merely about highlighting or describing difference, but it is strategic and performative, and it is the performative nature of othering that gives it its power (Jensen, 2011).

A further consideration in othering is the individual's capacity to act through agency which brings to the fore resistance in response to othering (Jensen, 2011). Resistance in othering occurs through the refusal to be devalued and the appropriation of elements of othering discourses to give it symbolic value or through refusing to occupy the position of other (Jensen, 2011).

In this section I presented that the self is dynamic and changeable and is both produced within and a product of social interaction. I indicated that identity construction is not a neutral exercise as it is associated with power and social control and is constructed in different ways to serve particular functions within interactions. Other construction as the opposite of self and the rhetorical strategy of othering that stresses difference was presented. Given that this study is concerned with knowledge transfer in a multicultural context, these are important constructs which affect the practices made available to interacting individuals located in differing ideological contexts.

2.1.4 Summary

The first half of this chapter dealt with the theoretical concepts that underpin this study. The study is approached from an epistemological position that social reality is not a reflection of an objective truth outside of an individual, but that it is constructed in relation to context and within relations. What is known to be true or reality is constituted as the way things are done, the norms that are accepted in certain contexts and are contingent on meaning systems at certain historical times. This means that groups have their own perceptions of truth and reality

based on their shared body of knowledge, which will differ from one another. This is an important consideration for a study that deals with participants from divergent social realities who come together with the purpose of replicating the knowledge of one of the groups based on a prevailing discourse that purports that this will lead to the improvement of the other. The production of knowledge is constituted in historical and social context that is drawn from the discourses present in society, and is not without ideology. Hence, the concept of power as relation that operates through individuals and social practices is important when considering knowledge transfer that aims to modify individuals and shape their behaviour. The operation of power on individuals who are free agents raises the possibility of resistance in the process of knowledge transfer and is worthy of investigation. The idea that self and other constructions are products of discourses of different meaning systems that are ideologically driven suggests that self other constructions within the knowledge transfer relationship will be resourced by rhetorical strategies that include othering that will have implications for the maintenance of power relations.

In the second half of this chapter I turn to the topic of knowledge transfer within prevailing literature in relation to the research question.

2.2 Literature Review of Knowledge Transfer

This section aims to contextualise the present study both within the historical perspectives of knowledge transfer and current knowledge transfer research literature.

2.2.1 The Origins of Knowledge Transfer

In this sub-section I aim to locate the topic of knowledge transfer, as a social practice, within the historical context of the knowledge economy.

The knowledge transfer literature is shaped by discourse associated with the knowledge-based economy. Motivated by global success and failures, the knowledge economy saw a shift in the focus of economic development, from accumulation of capital and commodities to a focus on knowledge acquisition and its promise of global competitiveness (Stiglitz, 1999). In the 1950s, economic analysts determined that continuing growth rates of Western economies were the result of the development of labour and not because of acquiring land, capital or other traditional economic factors (Cooke & Leydesdorff, 2006). Success in economic development was credited to addressing the knowledge gap, which refers to the difference in knowledge of how to convert knowledge into outputs, that exists between so-called developed and less developed countries (Stiglitz, 1999).

Driven by Western economic ideologies, the knowledge economy is a socially constructed reality that provides for a shared meaning in the discourse of modern economies. The knowledge economy discourse provides a language to construct the way that we speak of knowledge and knowledge transfer and what we know as its truth (Frost, 1987). According to Foucault (1978a), historic social processes determine what we believe regarding a topic and through that what we know of the topic becomes the regime of truth. Regime of truths offers shared meanings in discourses that reinforce what is considered normal, acceptable, or deviant practice. A particular regime of truth in turn creates subject positions which determine who can say what and what subjects can do. Through discourses, these truths transmit and produce power and power relations in that they support certain representations of what is constituted as knowledge. These representations create and reinforce what is regarded as the "truth" or worldviews from which dominant discourses arise and are circulated and normalised based on their influence and authority. Dominant discourses privilege certain knowledge over other knowledge as being more important. Given that discourse functions ideologically by determining individuals' relationships with each other and with the wider society, this means that the knowledge economy discourse informs who the role players are, what is expected of them, their place in the social hierarchy and also the social practices that mediate their relationship (Mumby & Stohl, 1991).

The knowledge economy is premised on knowledge as an intangible asset, embodied in human capital, and its application which leads to increased productivity and innovation and economic well-being (Trauth, 2012). In this regime of truth, global competitiveness is seen as being conditional on having certain knowledge and the acquisition of more knowledge and is based on the assumption that this will result in increased innovation. Stiglitz (1999) states that the knowledge economy focuses on education and scientific entrepreneurship, where knowledge and learning are accepted as defining features of the modern economy. The belief is that economic success requires the right knowledge, and this is associated with individual bearers of knowledge (Urbancová et al., 2016). The object of the knowledge economy is knowledge and the conduit thereof is the knowledge worker. Urbancová et al. (2016) posit that a focus on effective knowledge transfer is required in order to support the knowledge economy. This has led organisations to focus on improving their ability to manage knowledge within and across organisational boundaries and their ability to conduct knowledge transfer.

Within a global context, the discourse of the knowledge economy positions Western economies ideologically as the knowledge owners who are more advanced and thus superior to developing countries who are seen as deficient, backwards, and thus inferior. The reference

to the knowledge economy as the modern economy also constructs a dualism between so-called progressive economies and those referred to as traditional economies that are associated with backwardness. According to Said (1985), non-Western countries are constructed as being backwards and create notions of poor expertise and a lack of education that affect the orientation between countries and constitute unequal power relations. The representations of backwardness resonate with discourses of the inferior 'other' against which a Western self is constituted (Said, 1985).

The focus on knowledge as a competitive economic advantage that some have and others do not provides for social and institutional contexts where conditions that reinforce othering practices are created. Othering constructs a boundary between a superior in-group and an inferior out-group, setting them up in opposition to each other, in a manner that serves the interests of the dominant group and legitimises social inequality, social exclusion, discrimination, and therefore subjection of the other becomes justifiable (Rowe & Goodman, 2014). The differentiation and categorisation of those who hold knowledge and those who do not position the West as superior, where a Western notion of science is privileged, and an inferior other whose knowledge deficit establishes their backwardness.

The knowledge economy therefore constitutes power relations through Western dominant discourses, which reproduce the status quo and privilege the voice of the Western knowledge worker, while marginalising those considered to be other. I argue that knowledge transfer as a social practice is constituted by a knowledge economy discourse that is imbued in and constructed from relations of power and sets role players in asymmetrical power relations. This serves to maintain the status quo and impacts the identity construction of those engaged in knowledge transfer.

In this section I argued that the historical context of knowledge economy creates unequal power relations that in privileging a Western view of knowledge as entity impact those engaged within knowledge transfer.

2.2.2 Development of the Concept of Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer has emerged as an important factor in the realisation of the knowledge economy. This is discussed in this section.

Knowledge transfer is presented within the literature as an important aspect for the economic success of organisations operating within a knowledge economy. For example, Ringberg and

Reihlen (2008) refer to the extensive research that suggests that knowledge transfer leads to numerous organisational benefits. Argote and Ingram (2000) argue that knowledge transfer increases the performance of organisations and that it is central to their success. This belief motivates organisations to embark on knowledge transfer activities with other organisations and advances a discourse of the economic value of knowledge.

The early 1990s saw an increased academic interest in the knowledge economy, with Peter Drucker (1994) introducing the phrases “knowledge society” premised on his concept of the “knowledge worker” within the context of knowledge management, which was seen as the new basis for economic competition. Knowledge management became a discipline in the field of economics, supporting the view that organisations that managed their knowledge and learning would be more effective and profitable. Research on how to increase the economic success of organisations increased and resulted in the emergence of the concepts “information management”, “quality management” and “human capital” (Prusak, 2001). Prusak (2001) highlights that although the ability for developed nations to store electronic information and provide access to information resulted in an increase in the stored information that organisations had, organisations did not have the required means to select from this information to put it to use. Prusak (2001) argues that while this was the sentiment, there was also an increase in the value placed on tacit, non-digitised knowledge and expertise. To address the problem of putting knowledge to use, Davenport and Prusak (1998) researched new approaches to information management and found that the notion of management of information was unable to provide necessary insights into processes that would advance knowledge. The focus of research shifted from knowledge management to knowledge transfer, supported by the view that knowledge could be transferred between individuals and within organisations. Knowledge transfer was also conceptualised around the notion that a causal relationship existed between knowledge replication and the replication of economic successes for organisations. In 1996, Szulanski, who conceived of knowledge transfer as concerned with the replication of knowledge, began to focus on the problem of knowledge transfer. His research focused on the nature of knowledge and those engaged in knowledge transfer. He coined the terms “internal stickiness” and “causal ambiguity” to describe the problematic nature of knowledge and studied the characteristics of the knowledge source/recipient and of organisational and relational context to address the difficulty of transferring knowledge (Szulanski & Winter, 2002). In 1998, Davenport and Prusak showed that knowledge cannot be separated from those individuals who develop and share it and began to focus their research on the transmission and absorption of knowledge, knowledge recipients and context (Fahey & Prusak, 1998). Their research indicated their cognisance of Polanyi’s (1966) findings that knowledge was not contained in written documents or codified

information, but that knowledge had to be tacitly understood and applied in order to be used. In the mid-1990s, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) focused their research on explicit and tacit knowledge. They saw knowledge sharing as the process of interaction, both interpersonally and between explicit and tacit knowledge, which brought focus to the social nature of knowledge transfer. In 1994 and 1995, Nonaka focused on the interaction between knowledge and experience, and argued that people built their perspectives of the world based on their experience and rationality which was shared through social interaction or it remained personal (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) turned their research focus to the generation and use of knowledge, with Nonaka, Toyama, and Nagata writing in 2000 that knowledge creation required learning, doing and engaging in the organisation's knowledge creation activities (Nonaka, Toyama, & Nagata, 2000). The involvement of the individual with their context for knowledge creation was highlighted by Nonaka (1994), who argued that when information is interpreted and given context in the beliefs and commitments of the individual it becomes knowledge (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno, 2000; Nonaka, Toyama, & Nagata, 2000). Despite the increased interest in the role of the individual and social interaction in knowledge transfer, the focus of research was still on a linear and top-down approach and the movement of knowledge from generator to recipient. By 2000, the social nature of learning was reflected in knowledge transfer research, with concepts such as community of practice emerging, reflecting a belief that knowledge transfer relied on regular interaction; however, the primary focus of knowledge transfer research was on the characteristics of the knowledge being transferred and the barriers to knowledge transfer (Parent et al., 2007). The prevailing academic discourse of knowledge transfer maintains that successful knowledge transfer is a desired state and constructs it as a complex process that is difficult to achieve, specifically across organisational contexts (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016; Argote et al., 2000; Bigabwa et al., 2015; Cummings & Teng, 2003; Nonaka, Toyama, & Nagata, 2000; Perrin et al., 2007).

Despite there being convergence of a shared view that knowledge transfer involves the conveying or transferral, from one place or person to another place or person, of an entity regarded as knowledge (Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2000), within increased academic focus the domain of knowledge transfer is still an emerging field. According to Bigabwa et al. (2015), there is no clearly defined knowledge transfer model or terminology, and the terms knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and organisational learning are often used interchangeably (Duan et al., 2010). Research findings on successful knowledge transfer are also often conflicting (Bigabwa et al., 2015; Wiig, 1997). There are also contradictions in the research regarding the barriers to successful knowledge transfer, for example Kharabsheh et al. (2012) found that there was a resistance to share knowledge, while Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland (2004) found that

resistance to share knowledge was not a factor. The contradictory findings indicate an emerging theoretical basis that is not yet mature, with Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar (2016) stating that as an emerging concept, knowledge management and its processes, that include knowledge sharing, still require much research, especially in developing countries.

In summary, knowledge transfer promised the realisation of the many advantages that the knowledge economy rhetoric put forward and research endeavours sought answers to address the best ways to ensure knowledge transfer. The knowledge transfer research focus shifted from its initial interest in information management, which was concerned with the capturing and storing of knowledge for reuse, to a focus on the nature of knowledge, with the realisation that mere capture of information did not enable knowledge reuse. It was recognised that different types of knowledge required different approaches to knowledge transfer. Research interests shifted to knowledge replication and creation and to identifying the variables that ensure and inhibit knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer is constructed within the predominantly Western discourse of the knowledge economy, where the view of knowledge is that of an economic asset and an important organisational resource that is considered to result in the achievement of sustainable economic competitiveness. The concept of knowledge transfer is still emerging, with differences in views being the consequence of how the nature of knowledge is regarded. Current research remains primarily concerned with solutions to the problem of knowledge transfer.

Having presented the emergence of the notion of knowledge transfer to contextualise it within the discourse of the knowledge economy in the previous section, in the next section I present differing epistemological considerations regarding knowledge as these influence how the practice of knowledge transfer is conceptualised within the literature.

2.2.3 Epistemological Approaches of Knowledge

In this section the epistemology of knowledge is presented within the context of organisational knowledge literature. Both the positivist and social constructionist epistemological approaches are discussed.

The two main epistemological approaches that define knowledge are the positivist or traditional approach, where knowledge is seen as a reflection of an external objective reality and the constructionistic approach (Heylighen, 1997). In the positivist approach, knowledge is regarded as an objective entity which can be exchanged and transmitted, and the receiver is relatively passive in receiving the knowledge or image of reality, much like a photographic

image being imprinted on the mind through the senses through communication (Heylighen, 1997; Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). Parent et al. (2007) highlight that the view of knowledge as an object is that it can be owned, stored, accumulated and transmitted, and stands independently of an individual mind. This type of knowledge is called explicit knowledge that can be shared with others, requiring little or no interpretation. In order to acquire knowledge, individuals must receive the information by way of instruction. Comprehension of knowledge is unproblematic and both text and technology act as conduits for its transmission (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). In this definition knowledge is regarded as mostly intrapersonal. Nonaka, Toyama, and Konno (2000) argue that the traditional view does not address the dynamic and contextual nature of knowledge.

The second epistemological view of knowledge is provided by constructionism and emphasises the social and constructive nature of knowledge (Heylighen, 1997). For constructionists, knowledge is actively constructed by cognising individuals; it is socially produced and gets its meaning within context, social practices and in relationships (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). Knowledge is embedded in processes and it is constructed through action and embedding it in historical and systemic context (Powell & Swart, 2005). According to this view, meaning is attributed to knowledge through action (Fahey & Prusak, 1998). Knowledge is regarded as dynamic, evolving as it gets interpreted, used and reused. It is made up of perspectives, perceptions, beliefs and values (Fahey & Prusak, 1998). According to Yakhlef (2007), the concept of knowledge as socially constructed also implies that knowledge and context are constitutive of each other, so when knowledge is transferred, both its context and content are transformed.

The verification of what knowledge is depends on shared meaning within a community as assessed by specific rules and procedures (Gergen, 2011). This creates knowledge which has unique codes that allow the receiver to interpret it unproblematically (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). Knowledge comes into being through the social and contextual validation of its meaning which is determined by what the users of knowledge know to be true (Parent et al., 2007). It is the personalised accumulation of practical skills and experiences that are rooted in both individual cognitive processes and contextual processes that allow the individual to do something efficiently (Chen et al., 2010). Knowledge is therefore both determined by and set within disembodied structures, networks and relations of people that influence individual sense-making (Bettoni & Eggs, 2010).

According to Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009), knowledge is acquired during the action of social practice within the context of which the actor is a member and it cannot be separated from the

work culture and the construction of work processes (Pardo et al., 2001). Organisational practices and activities both constitute and transfer knowledge, with the implication that knowledge transfer requires substantial shared pre-existing knowledge (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008).

As summary of this section, the two main epistemology approaches of knowledge were presented as either an objective entity independent of an individual mind that can be transmitted without much personal comprehension, in the positivist and traditional approach, and knowledge as contextual and socially produced by cognising individuals where practices, structures, routines and relationships serve as conduits for sharing in the constructionist approach. Each has different implications for how knowledge transfer is viewed, which is addressed in the following section.

2.2.4 Epistemological Approaches of Knowledge Transfer

The diversity of theoretical and methodological views has resulted in various, and often competing epistemological approaches to knowledge transfer, making it difficult to have a single definition. The research approaches that dominate the field are positivism and social constructionism (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). These and other dominant views within the knowledge transfer literature are presented in this section.

Where knowledge is defined from a positivist epistemology, the view is that meaning can be found in texts and that the decoding of knowledge leads to successful unambiguous knowledge transfer (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). Knowledge transfer practices rely on the type of knowledge assets, good communication, and that the receiving units have the requisite absorptive capacity (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008). A positivist epistemology assumes that it is possible to move knowledge from one entity to another without loss of function and that there is little personal and contextual influence on knowledge. The focus for knowledge transfer practices is on the nature of the knowledge and the ability of knowledge workers to take up the new knowledge to ensure successful transfer. Kuada (2006b) refers to this as the structural view of knowledge transfer, which holds that knowledge is a commodity that stands outside of the knower as an absolute truth. From this perspective, knowledge transfer is depicted as a simple process of moving from one place to another.

When knowledge is defined within a social constructionist epistemology, the view is that knowledge relies on shared knowledge structures and social meaning. Kuada (2006b) refers to this as the process view of knowledge transfer, where knowledge is produced within the

practice and interactions between people and within context. In this view, knowledge does not move freely between entities. Parent et al. (2007, p. 84) define knowledge transfer within a constructionist epistemology as “the dynamic by-product of interactions occurring between actors who are trying to understand, name and act on reality”. As a by-product of interactions within social interaction, knowledge has different knowledge transfer capacities (Parent et al., 2007). Knowledge transfer therefore relies on shared meanings (Thomas et al., 2014), and shared meaning systems are derived from ideology embedded in social context. The focus for successful transfer is then on shared practices and sufficient socialisation (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008).

There are alternative views present in the knowledge transfer literature, the most common of which is that knowledge transfer entails the replication of knowledge. The replication of knowledge is described by Szulanski and Winter (2002) as the purpose of knowledge transfer and involves the attempt to reproduce in one group the complex and systematised activities of another group that has demonstrated success in producing good results. For these researchers the aim of knowledge transfer is not generating new knowledge but the reproduction of existing knowledge. Major and Cordey-Hayes (2000) highlight that transfer does not mean the removal of the knowledge from the source, resulting in a gap, and placing it elsewhere, but that it is passed on, not by being handed over, but by being replicated in the new location. They concede that the replication of knowledge can never be in the perfect image of the original due to the processing of knowledge in the process of transfer. Cummings and Teng (2003) conducted research that focused on the recreation of knowledge within knowledge transfer and concluded that it is only when knowledge is understood sufficiently and adapted so that is recreated effectively and used that knowledge transfer has occurred. Cummings and Teng (2003), however, point out that for knowledge to be replicated from one place to another would require the duplication of the people, networks, culture and norms of the environment, which is not possible. This makes it difficult to know what knowledge is to be transferred in order for it to be recreated. An alternative view is that of Iles et al. (2004), who view knowledge transfer as the process of knowledge migration, translation or that knowledge is recreated as a result of the morphogenic process that takes place through the interconnections of differing worldviews, which results in knowledge being accepted and generated within a new context.

A view that knowledge transfer is concerned with the internalisation or absorption of knowledge is also prevalent in the literature. In this view knowledge acquisition requires active participation in the process and individuals interpret knowledge to fit their context and are not passive receivers of knowledge (Nonaka, 1994). This view considers the intrapersonal and

contextual aspects of knowledge transfer. Knowledge is considered to have been transferred or acquired only when knowledge is internalised by the recipient in a manner that allows for sufficient understanding for its re-recreation and application in a new context (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Knowledge sharing is also defined as the process of interactions both interpersonally and between explicit and tacit knowledge that results in knowledge creation; knowledge transfer is therefore not merely the recreation of knowledge or the production of new knowledge, but results in the co-creation of a new shared knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Shared meaning is regarded as important and Nonaka (1991, p. 103) articulates this in the following quote, “Thus, what makes sense in one context can change or even lose its meaning when communicated to people in a different context”. Davenport and Prusak (1998), in Perrin et al. (2007), are also proponents of knowledge transfer requiring the transmission and absorption of knowledge by individuals or groups from one to another. Argote and Ingram (2000), however, raise issue with this approach, highlighting that knowledge is embedded in the individuals, networks and various parts, processes and systems of organisations and in how these various elements interact. Parent et al. (2007) agree that it is not possible to truly replicate knowledge and argue that knowledge transfer is rather the adaptation of existing knowledge to a new context. Argote and Ingram (2000, p. 3) offer an alternative view that appears to consider both the replication and adaption and the role of the individual in the following definition for knowledge transfer in organisations, “the process through which one unit (e.g. individual, group, department, division) is affected by the experience of another” where the “recipient unit learns from the experience of the other units of the organisation”.

Although authors differ in terms of epistemological approaches that make it difficult to agree on a single or precise definition, there is a shared appreciation in the literature that knowledge transfer is a process in which knowledge is conveyed in some form from one entity to another that involves individuals, with the view to share one party’s experience, skills and know-how to another, into a new context. The proponents that view knowledge as tacit, as opposed to explicit, share a view that knowledge cannot be transferred or appropriated in its entirety due to its personal and contextual nature. From a constructionist perspective, the challenge is that knowledge transfer relies on shared meanings (Thomas et al., 2014), which provide the basis from which knowledge is interpreted. Shared meaning systems are derived from discourse and ideology embedded in divergent social contexts, specifically when dealing with individuals from divergent organisations, professional or national contexts, and knowledge transfer relies on the interactions between individuals to create shared meanings.

In summary, within a positivist approach and its assumption that knowledge can move with relative ease from entity to entity, to address issues arising from poor or unsuccessful knowledge transfer outcomes researchers look to problems with the knowledge itself that must be transferred and to the ability and characteristics of knowledge workers for solutions. For social constructionists, the interactions between individuals engaged in knowledge transfer, shared meaning systems and social context are the important considerations. The focus is on activities, practices and the relationships in which these occur. Both approaches conceptualise knowledge transfer as a relational endeavour that requires engagement on the part of the parties to the knowledge transfer.

In this section I have provided the various epistemological approaches and views of knowledge transfer, with a specific focus on positivism and social constructionism, which elucidates the similarities and possible reasons for difference in approaches and focuses of knowledge transfer in the research literature. In the next section I provide an overview of the knowledge transfer literature as it relates to the present study to contextualise this study in current research.

2.2.5 The Problem with Knowledge Transfer

The review of the knowledge research literature indicates a focus on the factors that inhibit successful knowledge transfer (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Martinkenaite, 2011; Perrin et al., 2007). In their meta-analysis of the literature regarding factors affecting knowledge transfer, Duan et al. (2010) found that the factors grouped into four main areas; the actors, nature and content of knowledge, the role of context, and the media by which transfer was conducted. The literature on the actors concerned the qualities and abilities of participants in knowledge transfer. The role of context includes difference in culture, quality of relationship, amongst other issues regarding where the interaction takes place, while media included the language in which it was conducted and communication factors. These research findings highlight the prevailing positivist approach in the literature on knowledge transfer.

From a social constructionist perspective, the dominant discourses that inform a topic have important implications and my review of the literature aims to both contextualise my study and show how knowledge transfer is depicted. In this section I present what the literature focuses on, which are the important factors for successful knowledge transfer as these relate to my study. These are the relational aspects of knowledge transfer, context, culture and language, and the knowledge worker as participant to knowledge transfer.

2.2.5.1 The Importance of Social and Relational Interaction for Knowledge Transfer

The literature establishes knowledge transfer as a relational endeavour that requires a collaborative effort on the part of engaging parties. The role of those engaged in knowledge transfer is highlighted, and researchers argue for knowledge transfer requiring active participation between individuals who share the purpose of sharing knowledge (Argote & Ingram, 2000). For social constructionists, the interactions between individuals engaged in knowledge transfer are an important consideration, particularly because knowledge transfer is considered to be a dynamic process of sense-making within ongoing practices and their relationships. Bello and Mansor (2013) highlight that knowledge transfer cannot be achieved by merely having knowledge presented or giving individuals access to standardised courses; it must be done in a way that ensures sense-making which entails engagement. Individuals are not passive receptacles of information but constructors of their own knowledge, and therefore the knowledge transfer process is regarded as an active learning process (Thomas et al., 2014). Nonaka, Toyama, and Nagata. (2000) are of the view that knowledge transfer occurs through individuals engaging in knowledge creation activities which require active involvement of the self.

The relationship between the parties has been found to be a significant factor for efficient and effective knowledge transfer (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016; Chen et al., 2010; Szulanski, 1996; Yakhlef, 2007), with some researchers further highlighting the importance of the quality of the relationship (Duan et al., 2010; Goh, 2002; Jensen, 2011; Lin, 2008; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Szulanski et al., 2004).

The literature shows the importance of the interaction between parties involving personal interaction and face-to-face relationships (Chen et al., 2010; Girdauskienė & Savanevičienė, 2012; Goh, 2002; Jensen & Szulanski, 2004; McNichols, 2010; Orazbayeva et al., 2016; Perrin et al., 2007; Šajeva, 2014). The close physical interaction allows for trustful sharing and exchange so that the context can be shared and a shared language can be created for building relationships that are required for successful knowledge transfer, according to Nonaka, Toyama, and Nagata (2000). These researchers conclude that knowledge transfer occurs via observation and by learning-by-doing, which require intensive interpersonal contact involving interpersonal dynamics. The literature shows that social interaction that builds relationships is important (Ajmal & Koskinen, 2008; Argote & Ingram, 2000; Chen et al., 2010; Kowalska-Styczeń et al., 2017; McNichols, 2010; Perrin et al., 2007), while the importance of the extent of interaction required within the relationship is also highlighted, with knowledge transfer being

said to require much interaction (Chen, Chang et al., 2012; Girdauskienė & Savanevičienė, 2012; McNichols, 2010; Nonaka, Toyama, & Nagata, 2000b). Chen, Bapuji et al. (2012), for example, stress the role of active interaction and show that where the knowledge source made an effort to find out more about the knowledge recipient, it aided the establishment of understanding, thus facilitating more effective knowledge transfer.

In addition, the literature points to knowledge transfer also being based on other relationship indicators, such as cooperation, openness and trust. McNichols (2010) found that establishing a trusting and caring environment increased knowledge sharing. Trust, as an initial condition for forming relationships and the result of positive interactions, was found to be an important requirement for knowledge transfer by numerous researchers (Choi & Kim, 2008; Chowdhury, 2005; Davenport & Prusak, 2000, as cited in McNichols, 2010; Lin, 2008; Lucas, 2005; Martinkenaite, 2011; Nonaka, Toyama & Konno, 2000; Pardo et al., 2001).

Turning to the practice of mentorship as the means to do knowledge transfer, Bigabwa et al. (2015) indicate that a strong and participative relationship between the mentor and mentee is required. Mentorship is described as a channel in which an individual who has more experience conducts activities, guides practice and monitors a less experienced person in order to help the less experienced person progress (Bigabwa et al., 2015). Reiche (2011) describes mentorship as the process of developmental assistance from a senior individual to a less experienced one. Talking to the quality of the interaction between participants, research found that for mentoring to be successful requires a deep and trusting relationship characterised by interaction and socialisation (Hamburg, 2013).

The importance of social and relational interaction for knowledge transfer is clearly established within the research literature. The focus is on aspects such as trust and effort on the part of participants to engage and establish a relationship. However, relationship is viewed as a variable within the knowledge transfer process and the literature appears to lack depth in terms of the factors that facilitate and limit the establishment and maintenance of the required relationship. Most studies are self-report surveys or questionnaires and the call for qualitative research (Perrin et al., 2007) suggests that this is recognised as a limitation in the literature. Several researchers have also highlighted the need for more research understanding relationship aspects (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Lucas, 2005). While the literature firmly establishes knowledge transfer as a social and relational practice, and stresses the importance of relations and interactions, there is little consideration for the dynamics within this relation.

2.2.5.2 The Importance of Shared Context for Knowledge Transfer

A social context, including a common understanding of the rules that govern the taken-for-granted practices within a particular context or shared mental models, was found to be important for knowledge transfer by several researchers (Davenport & Prusak, 2000, as cited in McNichols, 2010; Kuada, 2006b; Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008; Yakhlef, 2007). What constitutes context, however, differs amongst researchers. Duan et al. (2010), for example, include considerations of culture, social capital and organisational infrastructure, while others who adopt a more social constructionist approach include consideration of values, language and culture as forming a social context (Yakhlef, 2007).

Within the scope of this study, context includes historical and social aspects that inform meaning within a specific time and this could be at the level of the social processes, institution or national and regional frameworks. Foucault (1980) refers to these as regimes of truth that establish shared meanings in discourses which reinforce what is considered normal, acceptable and thus establish shared meanings. The research literature seems to allude to a similar notion in its articulation of shared meanings or common knowledge base. Alavi and Leidner (2001), for example, advance that for individuals to be able to share knowledge, they must have a common knowledge base from which information can be processed. Nonaka, Toyama, and Nagata (2000) have also highlighted the importance of shared language for knowledge transfer. Researchers (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016) stress that the socialisation of individuals in organisations shapes them to be like each other and argue that it is necessary for knowledge transfer which brings into consideration notions of normative and disciplinary power. Within a social constructionist perspective, the consideration of shared context, as it is portrayed in the literature, points to different meaning systems and existing taken-for-granted norms, each no doubt informed by their own set of power relations.

2.2.5.3 The Importance of Shared Language for Knowledge Transfer

A lack of a shared language as a barrier to knowledge transfer is indicated in the literature, where it is assumed that the language barrier relates to shared understanding (Chen, Sun et al., 2010; Makela et al., 2007). This, however, does not consider the choice of English as the language in which knowledge transfer is conducted as a form of power and the impact that this will have on the knowledge transfer relationship. According to the findings of Duan et al. (2010), the predominant language used in knowledge transfer was English. In the context of globalisation, English is regarded as the international language and as the accepted lingua franca, its use as the chosen language is not unquestioned (Woodend et al., 2019). According to Wodak (2012), language is problematic if a dominant language is viewed as the only

relevant language, specifically when considering issues of diversity and integration. Woodend et al. (2019) argue that those who do not engage in English fluently are likely to be marginalised by this lack of ability due to a lack of tolerance about language diversity. Woodend et al. (2019) found that in addition to the unfair advantage of English speakers conversing easily with colleagues, Chinese participants were inadvertently ignored, which made them passive and silent. Woodend et al. (2019) argue that where language is seen as a barrier for people from countries that are regarded as less developed, it results in them having less opportunity to speak their minds and indicates an association of poor English proficiency with a lack of development. English is therefore more than a means of engaging within the relations and sharing meaning; it also points to a Western ideology of dominance. Within the context of multinational knowledge transfer, English functions as a form of power in that it draws from a dominant Western discourse which will have implications for identity construction and the positioning of individuals within social interaction.

2.2.5.4 The Importance of Culture for Knowledge Transfer

Within the research literature, culture is identified as a significant barrier to the success of knowledge transfer. The literature shows that several researchers (Al-Thawwad, 2008; Chen, Sun et al., 2010; Kuada, 2006a; Perrin et al., 2007; Tey & Idris, 2012) found that cultural factors that highlight differences between people and their shared meanings, such as attitude, language, norms, and customs, impede successful knowledge transfer. It is specifically stated that the challenge in knowledge transfer is to bridge the divergent realities that are a consequence of culture (Kuada, 2006b).

Culture is seen to both produce multiple realities that result in differences and as having a unifying nature that produces collective mental models (Kuada, 2006b). Culture is defined as a social system of shared symbols, meanings, perspectives and mutually negotiated social actions within relationships between people (Stead, 2004). It provides a context of collective sense-making and regulates individuals' behaviour that ensures that there is internal coherence and equilibrium of the overall cultural system (Kuada, 2006b). From a constructionist perspective it is therefore understandable that culture is an important factor in knowledge transfer due the importance of shared meaning implicit in the notion of culture.

The research literature, however, offers differing views on the impact of culture on knowledge transfer, with conflicting research findings. In their study into the effect of national culture on knowledge transfer between Chinese, Canadians and Americans, Chen, Sun et al. (2010) conclude that when participants were located within similar cultural contexts, it resulted in

more effective knowledge transfer than when they were in different cultural contexts. Other research found that in the context of differing national cultures, when knowledge transfer relied on personal interaction mechanisms, such as mentorship, knowledge transfer was impacted more by social, linguistic and cultural distance aspects than by the individual characteristics of the parties to the knowledge transfer process (Ambos & Ambos, 2008). In this research, national culture was defined by the aspects that inform how reality is interpreted and their shared meaning systems which encompass the values, beliefs and assumptions of a group of people. Kuada (2006b) argues that difference in cultural results in barriers in the transfer of tacit knowledge and explains that this is because of the difficulty in reversing the embedded elements of knowledge that are contextually bound. This highlights the importance of context for individual meaning-making, which is important for knowledge creation. Looking to the knowledge recipient, Richards (1991, as cited in Kuada, 2006a) found that for knowledge transfer to occur requires that the knowledge recipient accepts the values and attitudes on which the knowledge and skills are based. Orazbayeva et al. (2016), who also hold that cultural difference poses a barrier to knowledge transfer, however found that within an intercultural context teams working together developed their own team culture and their own way of working. Their research found that knowledge transfer did occur within this team culture, despite the presence of intercultural differences providing an alternative view of the impact of culture. Looking at the impact of both organisational and national cultural differences, research conducted by Vaara et al. (2012) found that while cultural differences at the level of the organisation created social conflict, at the national level cultural differences decreased social conflict. They argue that this suggests that national cultural difference was less of a problem in knowledge transfer than previous research had indicated.

The research of Makela et al. (2007) found that similarity in national cultures and organisational status, with a shared language, were important to increase interaction between parties to knowledge transfer. They found that the more interaction that was present in the process, the higher the amount of knowledge sharing that occurred. They also found that the tendency for people to engage with people who are similar to themselves increased homophily-driven interaction, which resulted in better knowledge flow. Similarly, Mäkelä et al. (2012) found that interpersonal similarity in terms of nationality and functional background resulted in more knowledge sharing between people who are similar than between those who are not.

The literature showed that cultural explanations are widely used to explain differences and similarities between groups and as reasons why knowledge transfer is not successful. This suggests that culturalism, which is the ease and eagerness in which this culture is used to

explain differences (Johnson et al., 2004), is at play. Researchers (Argote et al., 2000) have argued that issues of culture within knowledge transfer research are conflated with the individual characteristics of the participants, such as a lack of responsibility and a lack of motivation. According to Johnson et al. (2004), cultural explanations tend to reflect overgeneralised views and do not treat culture as a dynamic and lived experience. Knowledge transfer researchers (Lin et al., 2010) have argued that any difference that affects how individuals come to form a shared meaning, whether it is ascribed to culture, cognitive style, context or to society, will influence knowledge transfer. This suggests that issues with knowledge transfer are more readily attributed to generalised cultural beliefs and practices than to the considerations of what is at play within interactions between individuals where difference or perceptions of difference are present. The question arises as to the function of attributing the notion of culture to problems within knowledge transfer, especially if one considers that a system of differences such as language, culture, know-how and competence is present in power relations. Foucault (1982, p. 792) said that the relationships of power "puts into operation differentiations which are at the same time its conditions and its results, the objective being pursued must be either the maintenance of privileges, increasing profits, to cause authority or the exercise of a function or trade and the means of bring the power relation into being can be by the effects of the word (amongst others)". Furthermore, encounters between different groups, such as those that characterise the practice of knowledge transfer across national boundaries, open up the possibility for othering (Lamers & Williams, 2015). This possibility is made more prevalent if the relations between the groups are premised on unequal power relations that are implicit in the practice of knowledge transfer that involves those that have knowledge and those that desire to acquire it. Within the context of multicultural knowledge transfer, where the importance interpersonal relations is stressed, an emphasis on difference as a detriment to the success of knowledge transfer presents the possibility of othering, which remains unexplored in the knowledge transfer literature.

2.2.5.5 The Focus on the Knowledge Worker in Knowledge Transfer

Within the knowledge transfer literature, the knowledge receiver seems to be the primary focus of analysis of the knowledge transfer interaction and is generally depicted as an impediment to successful knowledge transfer. Researchers have found a range of issues with the knowledge receiver that causes a lack of knowledge transfer. These include the following: their comprehension deficits (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008), their lack of absorptive capacity (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008; Szulanski, 1996), ignorance and a lack of motivation (Davenport & Prusak, 2000, as cited in McNichols, 2010), and poor learning intent (Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008). Researchers also found that the perception held by the knowledge owners that the

absorptive capacity of the knowledge receiver was low, had an impact on knowledge transfer (Reiche, 2011). Indicating a higher regard and status for the knowledge owner, research found that knowledge receivers must demonstrate a respectful and appreciative attitude towards the knowledge owners for successful transfer to occur (McNichols, 2010). It was also found that it was important that knowledge owners receive status and recognition for their knowledge (Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2000), suggesting a requirement for knowledge recipients to adjust their behaviour in a manner that maintains a position of subservience.

Researchers (Mu et al., 2010) argue that there is a shared view in the knowledge transfer discourse that knowledge owners are less responsible for the success of knowledge transfer than knowledge receivers, based on their findings that the disseminative capacity of knowledge owners is the least researched topic in knowledge transfer. Research on knowledge transfer in acquisitions further showed that a significant barrier to knowledge transfer was the knowledge owners' fear of contamination as a result of dealing with an inferior receiver (Junni, 2011). Their fear was described as the feeling that the knowledge owners would lose their self-image or suffer reputational harm. Although the reputations and perceptions held of both the owner and the recipient were found to be important considerations for successful knowledge transfer (Lucas, 2005), the credibility of specifically the knowledge owner was found to be important (Perrin et al., 2007). This suggests that knowledge owners are constructed as having regard and status. The research literature depicts knowledge owners more favourably where, for example, Cozza (2013) shows that they are depicted as having more knowledge, wisdom, or experience than the knowledge receiver.

The knowledge economy produced the concept of a knowledge worker who is a knowledge owner and is defined by their intelligence, education and ability to innovate in order to develop new ideas for economic benefit (Trauth, 2012). Within the knowledge economy discourse, the knowledge worker is constructed as a desired object situated within a social hierarchy along the lines of the quantum of knowledge that they possess. In the context of knowledge transfer, the knowledge worker, or the person who possesses the knowledge to be transferred, is referred to as knowledge holder, knowledge owner, knowledge sender, knowledge source, mentor, amongst others, in the literature.[1] The positioning of participants to knowledge transfer is therefore not neutral and privileges the knowledge owner as possessing something that the

[1] Each of these terms is of themselves problematic in terms of their literal meaning to me as they depict certain relations and suggest a view of knowledge as entity; however, for the sake of consistency, I will use the terminology "knowledge owner" to refer to the individual(s) who is regarded as the person who must share their knowledge and "knowledge receiver" for the individual(s) with whom knowledge must be shared.

other lacks. This precludes the notion that the knowledge recipient possesses any knowledge from which a knowledge owner can benefit. It also disregards the notion of knowledge transfer as an interactive social process that induces changed behaviour in peers engaged in knowledge transfer.

The construction of knowledge receivers less favourably than knowledge owners places them within a social hierarchy relative to one another (Graham, 2005). This has implications for both the practice of knowledge transfer but also the individual identity formation. Setting up identities in unequal relationship involves othering that affects how people relate to social categories. Individuals, according to Mumby and Stohl (1991), do not necessarily choose to define themselves in particular ways, but the system of power relations that operate through the social practices determine their subjectivity and their interactions. The practice of knowledge transfer therefore determines certain possibilities for positioning and when individuals occupy specific subject positions, they achieve identity (Jensen, 2011). The manner in which the literature depicts the parties to knowledge transfer is indicative of the positioning of role players within the knowledge economy. The impact of positioning of role players is not explored within the literature of knowledge transfer.

2.2.6 Summary

In this section I dealt with the topic of knowledge transfer, showing how it originated from the concept of a knowledge economy which saw an increased focus on acquiring knowledge in order to achieve global economic success, so that the topic of knowledge transfer is shaped by knowledge-based economy discourse that constructs the notion of knowledge as power, primarily within a Western discourse. I highlighted how the topic of knowledge transfer was developed from a focus of knowledge management, to the importance of the knowledge worker and the ability to reuse knowledge for economic competitive advantage. This is particularly important because of a realisation that the value of knowledge was linked to the individual knowers. It was important for me to present the main epistemological approaches of knowledge, positivist and social constructionist, because these determine particular views of knowledge transfer practices. The positivist approach of knowledge as entity that can be transmitted with personal comprehension required differs vastly from that of a social constructionist approach that sees knowledge as socially produced by individuals within social context. These different epistemological approaches of knowledge transfer were then discussed, as these guide the considerations for and practices for successful transfer of knowledge. In short, where a structural view of knowledge transfer is held, knowledge is a commodity and its transfer is a simple process, so the focus is on the type of knowledge and

the characteristics of receivers of that knowledge. However, the process view of knowledge transfer is concerned with the interactions between people within context. The factors that are regarded as important from the knowledge transfer literature were then presented, these being the relational aspects of knowledge transfer, context, culture and language and the knowledge worker as participant to knowledge transfer. The literature review points to a lack of consideration for a social constructionist perspective and that of power in relation that could provide alternative views to factors within knowledge transfer, or for example, an emphasis on difference as problematic in the research points to the possibility of othering; depicting the knowledge owner in opposition to the knowledge receiver has implications in terms of the power relations within the knowledge transfer.

The review of the research literature indicates a focus on the barriers to knowledge transfer, thus depicting it as problematic and shows a prevalence of positivistic approaches. Addressing the factors that are considered important to the success of knowledge transfer relating to my study shows that although the social and relational nature of knowledge transfer is considered important, research does not look to what is happening within the relationship, specifically considering power in relation that is at play within all social interactions. The literature review pointed to different meanings attributed to context and shared meaning and that issues of difference in terms of knowledge, culture and language were important factors. A focus on difference in relations between individuals or groups brings to the fore the possibility of rhetorical othering, which is not considered in the knowledge transfer literature.

In the final section of this chapter I will address specific gaps and considerations arising from the current knowledge transfer literature that argue for the current research study.

2.3 Justification for this Study

This study contributes to research on the dynamics of knowledge transfer within the context of national boundaries. National boundaries entail multinational engagements premised on difference. Studies in knowledge transfer have examined the factors that inhibit successful knowledge transfer extensively, yet do not consider the discursive context of knowledge transfer that creates asymmetrical relations of power. These relations advantage certain people over others and affect identity construction. Although the literature shows that knowledge receivers are depicted as problematic and less favourably than knowledge owners, there has been little analytic attention paid to the power relations involved due to the positioning of individuals and groups within ideologically asymmetrical power relations that arise from a global knowledge economy discourse.

The categorising of individuals, such as those who are party to knowledge transfer, performs various social functions with different ideological consequences that have implications for the rights and entitlements of the participants (Verkuyten, 2005a). This study seeks to show that the way that individuals are positioned legitimises actions and practices which affect the process of knowledge transfer and determines how identities are constituted. Based on the assumption that the manner in which individuals are defined as different provides for categorisation, where some individuals acquire more or less prestige and power than others (Wodak, 2012). This has implications for the interactions between individuals (Johnson et al., 2004) and calls for a deeper consideration of what is happening within the knowledge transfer relationship as an alternative to attributing blame for a lack of success to certain relational elements.

Furthermore, when discourses problematise certain identities, such as that of the knowledge recipient, this can be understood by the process of othering (Jensen, 2011). Othering creates social alignments along superior in-group and inferior out-group dichotomies and produces practices that keep individuals apart in order to maintain asymmetrical positions (Johnson et al., 2004). The positioning of individuals within asymmetrical power relations through making distinctions therefore has a material impact on interactions as it maintains social distance, calling for deeper consideration of what is happening within knowledge transfer, which is said to require social relations with close and deep interaction between the parties involved (Gertler, 2003). By demonstrating that the way in which the self and the other is constructed has an impact on the practice of knowledge transfer, draws attention to practices that maintain the institutional and societal status quo.

Based on the assumption that the manner in which individuals are constructed within relations determines how their positions are defined within the relationship and how they relate to each other (Becvar & Becvar, 2009), it is important to consider the role of othering, which brings to the fore a focus on difference that influences behaviour and the interactions between people (Johnson et al., 2004). This is important because knowledge transfer relies on shared meanings which are derived from interactions between individuals. To have a view of what is happening within the relationship will offer a better understanding of the relational aspect of knowledge transfer.

A further consideration regarding the positioning of the parties within knowledge transfer is the primary view of knowledge as power and as an entity within the literature (Gordon & Grant, 2004). The literature shows that information is seen to be a source of power in the knowledge

transfer context, leading to a reluctance to share it, so that knowledge is withheld in order to maintain the relative strength of the one over the other (Goh, 2002). The research has shown that knowledge is not shared on an equal basis so that one party in the knowledge transfer process can maximise their power over the other and maintain a relationship of dependence (Lin, 2008). The view of knowledge as power depicts the dominant view of knowledge as an entity that privileges the holder in a manner that affects behaviour and sets up unequal power relations. Considering an alternative view to power will provide insight into identity construction as an effect of power in relations within the knowledge transfer relationship.

The current research literature is primarily from a positivistic paradigm and there are few studies that consider knowledge transfer from a social constructionist perspective. Providing for an alternative paradigm, an analytic focus on discursive constructions in knowledge transfer enables another contribution. As such, this study provides additional insight into the dynamics within the interaction of mentorship relationships aimed at knowledge transfer through an analysis of the ways in which knowledge transfer, the self and other are constructed, and its implications for the participants and the social and material practice of the knowledge transfer process.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided the theoretical base for the study, which is social constructionism and is premised on the Foucauldian view of power as embedded in relations. The rhetorical consideration of othering as it pertains to this study was also presented. The second half of the chapter dealt with considerations from the knowledge transfer literature that show how the historical emergence and epistemological views of knowledge influence the current research and thinking on the topic. This provided the basis for considerations for the current study.

The positioning of individuals who are located in divergent ideological and social contexts and the role of power in the formation of identity are the topics of interest that led to the research question. The research question is concerned with the impact of how Saudi Arabian and South African engineers partaking in knowledge transfer construct the self and others. In addressing the research question, the study aims to realise the following objectives:

1. Determine how knowledge transfer is constructed in a mentorship relationship.
2. Determine how self and other are constructed in a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer.
3. Identify discourses around the positions, roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge.

4. Identify power in mentorship relationships and how these relate to barriers in knowledge transfer.

This chapter has provided the theoretical basis for the study and explored the current state of literature on the topic of knowledge transfer that led to the research questions and objectives to be addressed. In the next chapter the research design, epistemological assumptions of the research and a detailed explanation of how the data were collected and analysed are discussed.

Chapter 3 - Research Method

This chapter outlines the research method, including the research design and process. It addresses the issue of quality in the research.

The chapter is structured as follows: first I provide the research question and objectives, which is followed by research paradigm which is poststructural and social constructionist from a Foucauldian perspective to contextualise the methodological choices. I then present the research design and argue for my choice of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) as the research technique by comparing it to Discursive Psychology (DP). I then attend to other research design considerations regarding the research setting, and data generation before attending to anticipated problems in the research design. Matters of ethics and reflexivity are considered next as they pertain to this study. I then attend to the research process including details on the participants, the interviewing process and of how the data were collected and analysed are given, explaining the stages that were applied in the analysis. The chapter is concluded with a justification for the quality of the research and the study's limitations.

3.1 Research Objectives

As the point of departure, this section provides as overview of the research questions and objectives.

The research question is concerned with how individuals partaking in knowledge transfer construct the self and other. In addressing the research question, the study aimed to realise the following objectives:

- Determine how knowledge transfer is constructed in a mentorship relationship;
- Determine how self and other are constructed in a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer;
- Identify discourses around the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge; and
- Identify power in the mentorship relationships and how these relate to barriers in knowledge transfer.

The nature of the research question is constructionist and qualitative. It is focused on how knowledge transfer is constructed and how the participants were discursively positioned within the knowledge transfer interaction. It aims to explore the impact of the construction of identity on knowledge transfer within a multinational context. The focus is on how the participants

construct their world and what is happening to them in terms of the meanings that they ascribe to their experience of knowledge transfer.

3.2 The Research Paradigm

This section presents the paradigm that guided the study, which is poststructural and social constructionistic, with a Foucauldian perspective.

3.2.1 Poststructuralism and Social Constructionism

The study adopted a poststructural theoretical framework with a social constructionist paradigm. The ontological position is that there is a multivariate truth and that there are no single universal truths. In this approach reality is constructed by individual experiences of their social contexts (Stead, 2004). Multiple readings of the truth are possible because change and transformation characterise the construction of reality so that reality is not fixed but is social and contextual (Stead, 2004).

The poststructuralist view differs from positivistic paradigms, which hold that there is only one true reality which is value free and objective. Positivism assumes that an objectively real world exists that is made up of facts that are accessible to individuals through their direct perception (Powers, 2001). In a positivistic approach, reality is understood through examining the components of reality, which are considered to be controllable and causative and therefore predictable. It attempts to provide objective truths that can be statistically proven. Powers (2001) explains that logical positivism and the empirical analytic tradition of science enquiry assume that there is a direct correspondence between what is perceived and the environment. What is perceived is considered to be directly accessible and to be factually the same for all engaging with it. When the research focus is to prove or disprove hypothesis and to discover causal relationships the experimental or scientific method is considered the most valuable. Positivism therefore favours research problems that relate to cause and effect and a desire to discover an absolute truth, whereas poststructural research questions consider effects of individual ways of being and the characteristics of their discursive worlds (Willig, 2013). Gergen (2011) argues that positivism does not consider human agency and is accordingly not best suited for evaluating dynamic concepts such as meaning and identity. A positivist approach is therefore not suitable for the current research study. The focus of the current study is on what knowledge transfer is to the participants, their sense of self, and their subjectivity, experience and the conditions which make these possible.

Social constructionists regard social relationships and our sense of self to be constructed through discourse (Banister et al., 1995). Discourse is implicated in the construction of meaning and subjectivity through language (Willig, 2013). Discourses both shape and enable reality, producing both subjects and reality itself (Jäger & Maier, 2009). Social constructionism does not view language as merely reflecting a reality in a person's mind, but regards reality as created or constructed through the use of words. Language is considered to be constructive and as having a separate existence from the individual who is doing the constructing (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). According to Becvar and Becvar (2009), constructions are expressed through language, and individuals come to know their world through language, and it is through knowing that they construct it. Language and meaning are therefore intimately related and reflexively influence each other (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). Accordingly, the reseach methods used in a social constructionist approach must be able to capture the complex social reality of research participants having regard for its ambiguity and multiplicity (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009), such as offered by a Foucauldian approach.

3.2.2 The Foucauldian Perspective

The production of knowledge through discourse and understanding how human beings came to understand themselves within their culture is a focus of the Foucauldian perspective (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). Foucault was concerned with how reality is constructed through the way in which it is spoken about and how this reality is both influenced and feeds into wider power relations (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Foucault wished to understand how ideas and thoughts expressed in language and actions are controlled and constrained (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). He said that knowledge resided within the relations between statements and is not dependent on who the speaking subjects are, to the extent that the speaking subjects themselves might not be aware thereof (Foucault, 1972), by which he meant that it was discourse and not the speaking subject that produces knowledge.

Foucault described discourse as a particular manner in which something is spoken of which is relevant at a certain time in history thus representing the shared knowledge of the topic, "discourses can be treated as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1969, p. 49). Barad (2003) states this view as:

> Discourse is not what is said, it is that which constrains and enables what can be said. Discursive practices define what counts as meaningful statements. Statements are not mere utterances of the originating consciousness of a unified subject, rather, statements and subjects emerge from a field of

> possibilities. This field of possibilities is not static or singular but rather dynamic and contingent multiplicity (Barad, 2003, p. 819).

According to Foucault (1972), to speak is an action in that discourses are performative and not merely translating what the person knows into language. This action involves context and rules that determine what may be said of the phenomena spoken about and by whom. Foucault (1969) compared what was constituted as truth at various periods in history within certain cultural contexts. He posited that rules govern the nature of the relationship between the statements within discourse. These rules change in different contexts and within certain knowledge bases. Foucault (1969, p. 63) says of this that “the rules of formation operate not only in the mind or consciousness of individuals, but in the discourse itself”. For him rules are not spoken nor are they purposefully created, but they exist in an unobtrusive order (Foucault, 1969). Objects are made thinkable and governable through these rules and procedures (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). This is what Foucault (1969) considers to be the power of discourse, since the rules that determine the discourse and create what is accepted as rational and the truth, provide the choices that the individual has in order to act in a certain manner. Discourse involves a way of thinking that becomes institutionalised and regulates and reinforces action, and in so doing, discourses exercise power (Link, 1982, as cited in Jäger & Maier, 2009). The discourse creates and maintains what is regarded as acceptable behaviour and ways of being. In this way dominate discourses come to privilege particular versions of social reality.

A Foucauldian focus, especially a genealogical focus, on discourse and the construction of identity and practices which have become institutionalised through power relations makes it appropriate for the study of the construction of identity within the practice of knowledge transfer.

3.3 Research Design

In this section I address the research design which is qualitative and used the research method of discourse analysis.

3.3.1 Discourse Analysis

The research aims to identify the discourses used in relation to the participants experience of knowledge transfer and their effects, as such the research technique of discourse analysis was used. Discourse analysis is focused on what is constructed and what is accomplished by dialogue. It is interested in the production of specific identities, knowledge and meanings by

describing something in the manner that it is (Rapeley, 2007) and what is accomplished by the construction of identity (Walton, 2007). The role of language is highlighted in constructing objects, events, and particular subject positions (Willig, 2013).

Discourses are complex as they do not only contain the content of what was spoken; they also contain traces of how what was spoken is itself a construction. The discourses contained in texts provide information on the construction of both the speaker and that of which they are speaking (Lyons, 2007).

This study's interest in how identities are constructed within discourse is different from how identities are traditionally conceptualised, according to Walton (2007), in that it is not concerned with what is known about a person, such as their gender or race, but with what is socially constructed and socially accomplished in the construction of identity. It is interested in how speakers draw from their discursive resources to constitute the identities from the categories of which speakers claim membership and subject positions are offered (Walton, 2007). In this view identity is achieved, or arrived at, through the discourse and the effect that discourse has (Gergen, 2011).

The view that language is performative (Foucault, 1972) and not merely reflective of reality requires complex data and an advanced method of analysis to address the research question. The analysis of the text is not merely about the thematising of the content of the discourse, but about an analysis of the wider contextual aspects of the speaking subject and of whom they are speaking. Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2008) state that discourse analysis is an appropriate method when examining the way that reality is talked about and constructed and how this contributes to the appearance of that reality. Discourse analysis considers text and talk in their own rights and not only as a means of conveying an underlying psychological reality (Gill, 2000). The research concerns of discourse analysis therefore make it an appropriate method for the purpose of this study.

3.3.2 Discursive Psychology and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis refers to various approaches to the study of texts within different theoretical positions and disciplines (Gill, 2000) and as such there are a diversity of approaches. According to Willig (2013), the two most prominent are Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) and Discursive Psychology (DP). The argument for the selection of FDA for this study is made by comparing the two alternative positions in this section.

FDA shares the view held in DP of a linguistic construction of social reality but differs in that DP holds that things have an existence independent of language (Coyle, 2007). For FDA, social reality is not represented by language but is considered to construct it in discourse so that individuals construct their reality by drawing on linguistic resources. Change in language thus results in a change of experience. However, unlike DP, FDA is not concerned with the linguistic properties of language or a focus on language (Kendall & Wickham, 1999).

DP is concerned with the interpersonal objectives within social interaction and how discourse is used to achieve these objectives. It is concerned with the intimate personal and psychological phenomena concerning feeling and thinking, embodiment, and in the way that social life is organised (Wiggins & Potter, 2008). The aim of DP is to describe individuals' discursive worlds. It wishes to address research questions that are concerned with how participants use language to achieve their interpersonal objectives and what it is like to be positioned as a particular subject (Willig, 2013).

FDA is interested in the different kinds of objects and subjects that are constructed through discourses and with the relationship between their experience, of what they do and the material conditions in which they are situated and discourse. FDA is not focused on understanding individual experiences in isolation or their interpersonal communication (Willig, 2013), or looking for meaning or attributing motives as it does not consider language to reflect a deeper experience of the participant. It does not make assumptions about what a speaker meant to say (Banister et al., 1995) with the aim to interpret or to uncover meaning about what is really being said, as it is interested in how individual identities come into existence (Hall, 1997). FDA focuses on the words and phrases that individuals draw on when they talk to construct their identities (Lyons, 2007) and the function of statements that maintain relations of power and how language works within power relations based on the accounts offered by the participants (Lyons, 2007). As such, it considers the ways in which meaning is reproduced and transformed in texts and within institutional power relations (Banister et al., 1995). FDA focuses on the description of that which is present in the here and now and does not analyse beyond the discourse (Foucault, 1972). FDA is concerned with identifying the characteristic ways in which a topic is thought about or known over a number of discursive events at a particular period in time (Hall, 1997).

According to Coyle (2007), studies concerned with issues of identity and selfhood, based on how experiences are constructed and made to appear as if they are factual and objective, are particularly suited to FDA. The aim of FDA to describe the functioning of mechanisms of power and how subjects are constituted within social practices (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008)

as opposed to what is occurring within an individual, which makes it more suitable for the current study than DP because it is concerned with the construction of identity and how this relates to the effects of the productive power of discourse. Given the objectives of this study that is focused on how reality is constructed by the manner that it is spoken of and is influenced by and feeds into wider power relations, FDA is an appropriate data analysis method.

3.3.3 Research Setting

The research study occurred at a South African DERI where technology projects were conducted in partnership with a Saudi Arabian science and technology institute. The technology projects were resourced with engineers from both organisations with the purpose of knowledge transfer. Mentorship was the chosen means of transferring knowledge. The South African engineers were tasked with coaching and mentoring of the Saudi Arabian engineers while they worked together to complete the projects. The engineers were paired for the purposes of mentoring from the start of a project, typically for a period of two to three years, for knowledge transfer to take place. Pairs were typically assigned according to the specialist skills that had to be mastered. As new engineers were recruited over time, new pairs were formed. Existing pairs dissolved after a two-year period. In some cases, one mentor had more than one mentee at the same time. During project execution, the Saudi Arabian engineers spent periods of between two weeks and three months in South Africa working with their mentors. Work was planned to continue when the mentees returned to Saudi Arabia, with expected continued contact occurring via e-mail and using Skype or similar technology.

At the initiation of the study, the overarching knowledge transfer project had existed for several years, with several pairs of engineers having completed their mentorship, while new mentees had joined. At the conclusion of the study, funding constraints for the technology project had resulted in conclusion of projects and the return of Saudi Arabian mentees.

3.3.4 Data Generation

FDA can be applied to all linguistic activities, which include human signs, symbols, and text (Macnaghten, 1993; Willig, 2013). However, where the research question is concerned with how meaning is constructed in relation to the topic of interest, Willig (2013) supports the use of written text from semi-structured interviews as a source for generating data. The data generated for this study was generated from interviews and was in the form of text that was transcribed from the recorded interviews. Although mentorship pairs were formed for the purposes of knowledge transfer, the sampling method used was that of convenient sampling due to participation being voluntary and the dynamic nature of the project environment.

Interviewing is considered to be appropriate for the investigation of social and personal subject matter (Robson & Foster, 1989, as cited in Sham, 1999) as they allow for the dynamic exploration of a topic from the interview participant perspective, giving the participant their own voice, which is not possible with a static collection method such as a questionnaire.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, although according to Frost (1987), in-person engagement is not necessarily required in discourse analysis as the focus is on what is articulated and not on alternative means of communicating, such as body language or posture. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for the participants to share their experience in a free-flowing manner that accesses unsolicited discursive constructions of their experience of knowledge transfer. Semi-structured interviews also allow participants to construct their answers in the most meaningful manner for themselves (Frost, 1987). Semi-structured interviews were preferred over structured interviews because they are likely to restrict the free flow detail that was required and structured interviews construct answers according to the researcher. Semi-structured interviews are also regarded as allowing for naturally occurring discourses to be revealed (Willig, 2013).

According to Jäger and Maier (2009), discourse analysis requires a relatively small amount of qualitative data, and data generation is complete when the analysis leads to no further findings. Analysis continues until the themes begin to repeat themselves or have reached theoretical saturation. Several authors (Coyle, 2007; Frost, 1987; Georgaca & Avdi, 2012) support having a small number of participants where interviews are the source data and highlight that large samples are not desirable due to the level of detail required in the analysis. These authors share the view that interviews lead to a large amount of data that becomes unmanageable to work through when unnecessarily large datasets are used. It is, however, important to ensure that there is sufficient text to provide data to cover the commonly used discursive forms when speaking of the topic as indicated by repetition of patterns within the interviews (Coyle, 2007). A total of 17 interviews were conducted in this study and no further interviews were required as a level of saturation had been achieved.

3.3.5 Anticipated Problems

There were several anticipated challenges with the research design which related to data generation.

The impact of my being female was a consideration with the religiously conservative Saudi Arabians as being alone with a female, who is not a direct family member, is prohibited by law in Saudi Arabia. Although this prohibition did not extend beyond Saudi Arabia, males were not familiar with interacting with females in the work environment. In order to mitigate this, an offer was extended to have a male present during the interview, which formed part of the project leaders' briefing for the study. The offer was, however, never taken up and this was not a concern raised by the participants.

I was known to the South African participants due to my role within their organisation but not to the Saudi Arabian participants. Establishing rapport with participants is important in the interview process to allow for free and unguarded discourse (Willig, 2013). This required that I work with their seniors, who were known to me and with whom I had established a working relationship, to get their support for my engagement with the participants. The anticipation that it would take longer to establish an atmosphere that encouraged the Saudi Arabian participants to talk freely in the interview was realised and I felt a need to work harder in order to establish rapport. I did not experience any barriers to establishing rapport with the South African participants.

It was anticipated that where English was not the first language of the participants, which was the case for the Saudi Arabian and some South African participants, this could constrain free flow of talk and that participants could feel uncomfortable because of their level of English proficiency. English fluency was difficult for some of the Saudi Arabian participants, which affected the flow of the interview; however, this did not have an effect on comprehension and their confidence in expressing themselves.

The research was conducted in the workplace and had to be accommodating of the availability and work pressure of all participants. This meant that it was not possible to direct the timing and frequency of interviews, which were determined by the project priorities. This resulted in infrequent and sometimes extended time gaps between interviews.

Although a limitation of discourse analysis has been raised with regards to the ability to deal with non-verbal data that include facial expressions and gestures (Coyle, 2007), Walton (2007) explained that for FDA, these micro-textual details of talk are less important because the focus is on the dicourses at a macro-textual level.

It was initially anticipated that there would not be a great interest in participating in the study due to project pressures, but this did not realise, and I was encouraged by the eagerness of participants to want to contribute.

3.4 Ethics

In this section I address how ethical considerations were dealt with in the research.

From a poststructuralist perspective, research perturbs the status quo and opens participants to consider questions that they previously might not have (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). The research problem serves a purpose within the system that maintains an established way of doing and being. Within this context, ethical considerations extend beyond the protection of the individual participants' rights to those of the purpose that the research will serve regarding maintaining the situation and the impact of the perturbation (Becvar & Becvar, 2009).

3.4.1 Access to Participants

Assess to the organisation in order to do the study was made possible by a desire for the organisation to gain greater understanding on the topic. Having worked on the JTC initiative, I identified that the mentorship initiative was an area of importance for the project. I approached the South African manager counterpart who held overall responsibility for the project initiative at the most senior level to propose the study and gain his support. He approached his counterpart in Saudi Arabia, who was equally supportive. Both provided their approval to initiate the study during a meeting where the research was discussed. This permission was obtained prior to the initiation of the study. Their support allowed for my access to the participants for the purposes of the study, which was facilitated by the project managers from both organisations with whom I had established a relationship. I had worked previously with them in both South Africa and in Saudi Arabia on projects specific to my role in the organisation, which entailed establishing the human resource policies and procedures for the JTC and the expatriation of engineers and their families to Saudi Arabia. I had also conducted team building initiatives for the project teams for the new members for both South African and Saudi Arabia to familiarise themselves with one another.

Once approval and support at this level was obtained, formal written permission was requested from the Executive manager responsible for the area in which the project resided for the research to be conducted within the organisation. This was granted in addition to support for me to conduct research during the organisation's official office hours. Formal

ethical clearance was also obtained from the university after it was presented to and accepted by an examination panel and submitted for ethics approval.

The potential participants to the research were all the South African mentors and Saudi Arabian mentees who were engaged in the knowledge transfer project as part of the joint initiative between a DERI and research institute. The sampling method used was that of convenient sampling (McCombes, 2019). The potential participants were briefed by their project leaders about the research and the aim of the study. As the knowledge transfer aspect of the project was important to the overall project success, the participants were responsive and willing to contribute to the research project. The project was framed as being a doctoral research study into aspects of knowledge transfer that was aimed at understanding the knowledge transfer and mentorship relationship. It was stressed that participation in the study was strictly voluntary. Names of participants who volunteered were provided to me and I contacted each informing the prospective participants about the nature of the study. Thereafter arrangements were made in terms of time and venue/medium for the meeting. Informed consent documentation was given to participants prior to the interview so that they had time to consider and to raise concerns for me to address prior to the interview.

3.4.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were applied throughout the research process with a commitment to protecting the participants from harm. This included the following, as highlighted by Willig (2013):

- Access to the participants was achieved through the approval to initiate the study from both the South African and Saudi Arabian managerial counterparts responsible for the JTC.
- Permission was also obtained from the organisation where the research would be conducted.
- Ethical clearance obtained from the university prior to the commencement of the study.
- Potential participants were briefed by the project managers of the research project.
- The voluntary nature of participation in the project was stressed.
- Prior to each interview, participants were requested to read and sign a consent document. Questions relating to the study were attended to prior to the commencement of the interview.
- Recordings were saved on a computer that is password protected and were saved without reference to any identification. Recordings were kept separately from the consent forms or any documentation that contained identifying information.

- Pseudonyms were applied and any other identifying information was changed or omitted in the transcripts and used throughout the study to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.
- Audio of the interviews was captured to text by professionals who were required to enter into confidentiality agreements that highlighted ethical considerations.
- Transcription entailed listening to all interviews to ensure that data was captured correctly.

3.4.3 Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained prior to every interview. As part of the consent, participants were provided with an overview of the research topic, the purpose of the study, that the management on the project supported the study, that the study was being conducted as part fulfilment of an academic doctoral study, an overview of the research processes including the recording of the interview, who had access to the data, and how anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained, including data storage. Details of the researcher were provided. The right to withdraw from the study and their right to have access to the research on completion was provided. Any questions arising from the consent document were clarified. This was provided to ensure that participants were fully informed prior to providing their consent and participation. Informed consent was obtained in writing and all informed consent forms stored.

It was important that participants understood that information shared with me in the interview was shared with me in my capacity as researcher and could not be used for purposes other than for the purpose of the research. I made myself available after each interview to address any additional input or questions that might have arose as a consequence of the interview.

3.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a distinctive feature of qualitative research. Discourse analytic approaches regard the researcher as playing an active role in constucting and authoring an account of the data, therefore analytic accounts are seen as constructions of the data under investigation (Lyons, 2007). Social constructionism does not view the role of research as that of discovery of the participants' experiences, but regards the researcher constructive of the research output, by informing what the topic of investigation is, setting the research questions and offering their own construction of the research data. From this perspective the researcher's knowledge and experience are interlinked with the research process. Psychology research can therefore not be neutral in the same manner as natural sciences research, because the object of investigation has the same qualities of reflection as the researcher who carries the

interests that are being served by the research (Banister et al., 1995). The research study itself is a reflexive account.

In discourse analytic research reflexive awareness is regarded as an important component of the research, this entails an awareness of the discourses are used to construct knowledge by the researcher and their knowledge claims (Willig, 2013). Walton (2007) states that reflexivity is central to performing discourse analysis which requires that the researcher maintains a full account of the research process (Banister et al., 1995). Reflexivity positions the author in relationship to the research process and its outcomes. Oliver et al. (2005) support the notion that there are two extremes along a continuum with regard to reflexivity. On the one end, knowledge of an object is regarded as a representation of reality as filtered by the researcher's views and experience, with a more introspective stance on the other end, where reflexivity entails introspection, reflection and the consideration of what is being done by the researcher (Oliver et al., 2005). This study takes the latter stance with the purpose to make explicit the process by which the material and analysis is produced. This entails continued reflecting on and evaluation of the topic, deign, processes and the personal experience of doing the research. It is achieved by the researcher having regard for their own reactions and considerations throughout the research process (Lyons, 2007) and maintaining a full account of the research process (Banister et al., 1995).

As researcher I acknowledge my role in the process of constructing the study, from the choice of the topic to the construction of the research process, in the same manner as the participants have constructed their accounts/experiences. This role of researcher is privileged in that by punctuating the research question as I have and by my questions in the interview process, I am framing a particular experience of the participant in a particular manner, which influences the research. The focus of the research has also led to the possibility of overlooking aspects of the topic while privileging others. Banister et al. (1995, p. 13) state this as: "The ways in which we theorise a problem will affect the ways we examine it, and the ways we explore a problem will affect the explanation we give".

I regard the reflexive account as more than an autobiographical type account, which in itself is a mere construction of that which I choose to portray. It is my responsibility and commitment towards ongoing introspection, reflection, and regard for what I am doing. For completeness and for the reader's contextualisation of the research account, I also provide an autobiographical account.

a. Autobiographical account

My studies and experience working in an organisation that values scientific thought have exposed me to mainstream objectivistic thought that places high regard for justifying truth claims in research endeavours. My own personal view has been that there cannot be a single truth. This resulted in a personal tension throughout the study with regard to my research position in terms of discovering a truth versus my role in constructing the outcomes and a constant checking and reflecting on the objectives of my research.

In terms of biographical detail or the positions I take up within this study, I am a white English-speaking South African female. I did not have the conventional Christian upbringing that was the norm for people of my age and social situation, and the discourse of Christianity and the notion that I was “Western” dominated my cultural context. My family is religiously eclectic and religious tolerance and open-mindedness in this regard are important to me and have led to a curiosity about other religions. In stating this I am constructing myself as appreciative of the various religious points of views of others and as different from others “like me”. This I experienced as important in engaging with the various participants and my experiences of the religious reference points that the participants used to justify their cultural differences. My experience of being female in a country that aspires to a Western notion of gender equality is consistent with that aspiration for the workplace where I experience relative equality and access within the workplace and socially with my male counterparts. This notion proved less of a challenge in terms of my personal views in relation to that which is considered to be held by the Saudi Arabians in relation to woman. Although the predominate view held within the Western notion is that females within Saudi Arabia are treated as oppressed, my experience of my visit to Saudi Arabia was that the difference in treatment had meaning within that context. However, as my being female is an obvious difference, I was aware that assumptions would be made from both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants regarding my possible assumptions in relation to the views of females. This resulted in my awareness of a feeling of needing to position myself as other. I was older than the participants in the study and held the position of Human Resources (HR) Manager in a mostly male-dominated white Afrikaans and Christian working context during the initiation of the research and the data generation process. In my organisational capacity I had done several presentations to the Saudi Arabian senior representatives, both in South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and at the client offices in Saudi Arabia by invitation. It was uncommon at the time to have a female address the Saudi Arabians in a professional capacity due to their position on females in the workplace. My involvement in the HR aspects of the establishment of the joint centre meant that I was known within the JTC.

The reflexive reflection of being othered and othering myself, a desire for sameness, provided frequent opportunities for introspection in terms of my own position in relation to the topic. For example, in an attempt to gain entry and report during the interviews, I would relay my personal experience of Saudi Arabia while interviewing the Saudi Arabian participants as a positive one, and when interviewing the South African participants, I, without thinking, referred to myself as “us”. However, I would also distance myself from “us” when assumptions from the other were made to include me in a category, such as the assumption that I was Christian and would therefore “stand with” a South African participant in his view against Islam. This awareness was exposed in the analysis process and usually evoked emotional responses. Experience of irritation with particular points raised, feelings of boredom or excitement in particular circumstances, a sense of exhaustion with some interviews and not with others provided opportunities to reflect and describe what was happening to me. It was most important to be aware of emotions and reactions so as to check and consider the impact that this had on what I was capturing at that point in the analysis. In this way the reflexive process held me in check not to overly insert myself into the analysis of the data and ensured that my interpretations were grounded in the extracts and were defendable.

3.6 Research Process

In this section, the research process for this study and criteria for quality research, are detailed.

3.6.1 Participants

The participants consisted of 17 degreed professional electronic or computer engineers from South Africa (nine) and Saudi Arabia (eight) who were either assigned as mentees or as mentors. Mentors and mentees had been paired as part of the project and a list of these names formed a schedule of the possible participants. Each pair consisted of a Saudi Arabian engineer, tasked with learning, and a South African engineer, tasked with mentoring or coaching their Saudi Arabian counterpart. Two of the South African engineers in the population were female. All the Saudi Arabian members were male. Participants ranged in age from mid to late twenties to forty years old. Saudi Arabia is an exclusively Muslim country with its laws prescribed by the Koran. The mentees were visibly different, adhering to wearing of traditional attire in accordance with the practice of Islam. The mentees were all practising Muslims and the South Africans identified themselves with Christianity in the main, apart from one Muslim and one Hindu mentor. All participants were able to converse in English, having either studied their degrees in English or English being the language in which they conversed in their business environment.

3.6.2 Process for Conducting Interviews

Interviews were conducted until saturation point was arrived at, which is in keeping with the requirements for FDA. Saturation was determined when discourses and forms of speaking on the topics were repeated and provided similar instances of information. Additional interviews did not lead to additional information, and I was confident that sufficient data had been collected to address the research objectives. Seventeen interviews were conducted in total. The interviews generated 387 pages of transcribed text.

As part of the interview process, two pilot interviews were conducted. One was with a South African mentor and the other with a Saudi Arabian mentee who were part of the same mentorship pair. Preparation for the individual interviews included considering the topics likely to be covered during the interview, as well as the opening scene-setting question in order to guide the interview. The topics that were considered were informed by the concerns raised by the JTC and the preliminary literature review on the topic. The pilot interviews provided a context for the future interviews and, as no resulting amendments were required, provided me with a sense of comfort for the forthcoming interviews.

Individual participants were either approached by me, the project leader or by one of the other participants to request their participation. A suitable time was scheduled for the interview for the participants who wished to participate. The interview consisted of an opening statement with an introduction aimed to provide and initiate discussion.

The interviews varied in duration from approximately 20 minutes to 80 minutes, with most being 60 minutes. Each interview started with a brief overview of the purpose of the study. The voluntary nature of the participation was explained. Written, informed consent had been obtained before the interviews. The interviews took place in private offices kept as free of interruptions as possible. I positioned myself in such a manner that I sat opposite the participants once the participants had selected their preferred seating. The interview space was free of anything other than a note pad, pencil, and the signed consent document and voice recorder.

The interview started with a question similar to, “Could you tell me about your mentorship experience”. The purpose of the interview was to allow the participant to talk about the subject from their own context. Questions that followed were used to probe, expand on, and clarify or to encourage engagement. These questions flowed from the interview process. During the interview, limited notes of any unusual or strong emotions that were experienced or observed

were taken that were then included in the reflexive account. After the interview I captured additional information as part of the notes regarding the context of the interview, the behaviour of the participants and any strong feeling or emotions that I experienced.

The choice of interviews and the process for selection privilege the voice of the participants who volunteered to participate and silence possible others who for various reasons were not participants, which are considerations in the outcomes of the study. The motivation for volunteering to participate is speculative. It is possible that participants felt that they were pleasing their managers as there was no reward or incentive for participation. My experience however with the organisations involved, where further studies were encouraged, is that there is a general appreciation and willingness to participate in research studies required for academic purposes. This awareness was important to ensure that I as researcher was explicit about the purpose of the study and the possible implications in terms of the research outcomes. The possibility that the participants volunteered either because they were overly negative or overly positive about their experiences was also considered. As the analysis does not rely on content analysis, there is some mitigation in terms of this negatively impacting the study outcome.

During the interviews I was aware of the possibility of directing the content of the interview by the questions that I proposed, and after establishing rapport, my interaction was limited to vocalisations that showed agreement, acknowledgements, to express agreement or understanding. I experienced the interviews with the Saudi Arabian participants as more taxing than the South Africans which, after reflection, was partly because I was overly cautious to not offend, being aware of being a female and as an attempt to be seen not as an other because I was different from the participant. This I did not experience with the South African male participants where I, without initial awareness, had accepted my place as being belonging or “us”. In general, I found myself attempting to remain “objective” as I was afraid that I would overly engage in the process of construction of what I wanted to explore in the study. However, the realisation that I was part of this conversation was ever present and an awareness that neutral observer status was not possible as I was in the privileged role position of researcher within the research setting.

3.6.3 Approach to Analysing the Data

3.6.3.1 Interview transcription

The study is interested in discourse practices, where meanings within discourse are important. FDA aims to reveal the meanings contained in speech (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019), and

is concerned with the content of the interview as opposed to the interview mechanics and speech therefore it uses less transcription notation than for example DP does that allows for differing transcription notations across FDA (Riley et al., 2010). According to Oliver et al. (2005), there are two main transcription methods, naturalism and denaturalism. Naturalism requires as much detail as possible for each utterance, including the accents and grammatical errors in order to retain as much of the conversational detail of the interview as possible (Oliver et al., 2005). A denaturalised approach assumes that speech constructs reality so while transcription aims at capturing speech verbatim to ensure accuracy in terms of the substance of the interview and not with depicting detail such as of accents or involuntary vocalisation (Oliver et al., 2005).

Both interviews and transcripts are methodological tools used to capture discourses, and Oliver et al. (2005) suggest that transcription is therefore a powerful act of representation. It is in itself an act of construction and is therefore not neutral (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). My decision regarding how to approach transcription was based on my need to be accurate and ensure a more “truthful” representation of events and a consideration for the analytical steps required. A more denaturalised approach was used with some permutations of naturalism as this was better suited to the purpose of the research objectives. The detail involved in the transcript was guided by ensuring an understanding of the content of the interview while ensuring that the anonymity of the interview participants was maintained.

Methodological rigour was achieved by following the process for transcription as described. The interviews were recorded with electronic audio equipment and sent to data typists using a secure electronic folder specifically set up for the purposes of doing the initial conversion to text. The typists were identified because of their reputation for academic work and their preparedness to treat the material with the strictest confidentiality. Confidentiality agreements were entered into with the typists who worked with the material. Recordings were not accompanied by any identifying details and the participants were not known to the typists.

Once the documents that contained the recordings captured to text were received, the process of transcription was initiated to prepare them for analysis. This entailed listening to each of the audio recordings and ensuring that all detail was accurately captured. In the first round the transcripts were checked for correctness, ensuring that words and phrases had been transcribed correctly, were complete and provided an accurate representation of what was spoken in terms of text. This required first listening to the full recording while scanning the text and then listening, changing, checking and re-listening to the recording against the text. The names of the participants were replaced with pseudonyms for analysis and reporting

purposes. Pseudonyms were also used to replace names referenced in the interviews that could compromise anonymity and any other specific identifying information was changed. I opted to provide names to the participants that reflected typical names of their home language as it was important for me to emphasise their individuality as opposed to allocating the participants numbers or symbols (e.g. Participant 1). Due to my limited familiarity of Saudi Arabian names, Arabic names were selected from an internet search of male Arabic names. Names and their replaced pseudonyms were recorded in a separate research notebook.

This process re-contextualised the transcripts for me and allowed for additional reflection of what I felt, experienced and recalled from the initial interview which I captured as part of my reflective notes. My experience was as articulated by Oliver et al. (2005) that as transcriber I heard the interview through my own cultural-linguistic filters, and I was aware of my thoughts regarding what I thought were the participants' intentions. The fact that I experienced this more readily with the South African participants than the Saudi Arabian participants was an important insight into my own personal filters. This awareness formed part of my reflective approach that provided an opportunity for reflection on the possible impact thereof in the choice of details being captured in the notation process.

The second round of transcription entailed applying a transcription notation adapted from Riley et al. (2010), which is presented in Figure 1. The interpretation of the transcripts included numbering each new segment uttered by each of the participants. Additional details regarding the interview speech and events in the interview such as interruptions were included in the transcript for purposes of clarity. I included involuntary vocalisations such as the continuers *Mm hm*, or *Uh huh* and expressions such as those of agreement, for example *Mm* and *Yeah,* that played the primary role in the conversation between myself and the interviewee. The use of "Uhm" reflected pauses for thinking and were also included. I have also indicated where speech was inaudible. Emphasised speech was indicated where this provided additional meaning but not when due to an individual's style of talking. In correcting words and phrases, I was guided by a concern as to whether my interference in the text would alter the meaning and to retain a focus on content and not on the speech. Any thoughts that arose during this round were captured in my reflective notebook.

Figure 1

Notations

CAPITALS = louder voice <u>Underline</u> = emphasised speech

! exclamation mark signals exclamation
“don’t go” speech marks for direct speech
P = the participant (irrespective of the specific name)
R = researcher
Pauses:
(.) = pause less than a second
(..) = pause more than a second; for long pauses the length to the nearest second is given, e.g. (2).
, comma signifies tone closure, but continuous talk
. full stop signifies tone closure, as at the end of a sentence
[square bracket between turns represents speech overlapping
[square brackets] contain other useful information, such as non-verbal information, e.g. [laughter], aspect of the transcription, e.g. [inaudible], or information about the meaning of the words, i.e. [colloquial words].

The full transcripts were used for FDA. The transcription process was an iterative process that allowed for a deep immersion in the data.

The original recordings were securely filed and removed from the recording device. All research outcomes were saved on my personal laptop. Only my supervisor was permitted to access any of the information and for the purposes of helping with the study, which was also explained in the informed consent to the participants. No one that has any interest in the study or in the participants has access to the recordings or to the transcripts.

3.6.3.2 Analytic Stages

Data analysis was done by means of FDA. As highlighted by Graham (2005), Foucault was reluctant to prescribe a particular research method, which resulted in there not being a single and concise description or model for doing FDA. However, Willig (2013) provides six iterative stages for conducting FDA which are guided by the writings of Foucault. These were applied in this study.

As the stages were worked through and revisited, I listened to each interview before doing the analysis and sometimes again during the analysis which allowed me to immerse myself in the essence of what was being described in the text. This proved valuable in contextualising the text. In the first round of analysis, themes began to emerge as the words that constitute the discourses were identified. The constructions were noted, specifically with a view to identify the rhetorical strategies used. The implications of particular versions of how these were used at particular times were considered. During the analysis, notes capturing thoughts and points that arose during the readings were written alongside the text. Once all the stages had been

worked through, the notes were considered along with the initial notes of the first reading as part of the data outcomes. I found it challenging to stay at the level of text in order to keep with the ontological assumptions of the methodology and had to be disciplined to remain at the level of the text and what was being achieved by what they said and not about what the speaker was trying to say in terms of their intentions and motivations (these would have been my own constructions). This required critical review of my analysis to ensure that I was not falling into thematic or interpretive analysis. As I became more comfortable with the content, this became less of a consideration. I also noted how the accounts of different groups differ from each other and in some cases contradicted or differed from earlier episodes that are talked about for each of the stages (Burman & Parker, 2016). The tendency of a particular statement to reoccur frequently was also noted, as this indicated sustained effects which solidified a particular knowledge and were indicative of trends across the interviews (Jäger & Maier, 2009).

The following stages provided a guide for analysing the text and each stage indicated what the focus of the analysis was. Although indicated as stages, the process was not sequential and was iterative.

Stage 1: Discursive Constructions

This stage entailed identifying how the text constructs objects or created different versions of the phenomena that inform the study. This involved determining what the discursive objects were in order to locate them within the discourses or systems of meaning. The discursive objects identified for this study were determined from each of the research objectives (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). The text in the transcript was read and reread in in order to identify the discursive objects and the various ways that they were directly or indirectly referred to, inferred and described by looking for the nouns that signify the objects and the words that are used to construct the objects (Banister et al., 1995). The words and phrases that were drawn upon when the participants talked about and constructed discursive objects and identities (Walton, 2007) were considered and captured.

In the first reading the discursive objects were highlighted, using different colours for each of the discursive objects, and subsequent readings involved capturing the words and phrases in a spreadsheet. This was done for each individual interview, first considering knowledge transfer, then self and other references. Once all transcriptions were analysed, the recurrent discursive patterns that were shared by the various accounts were identified. How and whether the participants constructed the discursive objects differently was noted.

Stage 2: Discourses

This stage considered the wider discourses in which the discursive objects that were identified in the previous step were located. Discourses were regarded as the systems of meaning from which speakers draw their talk and constructions were assumed to be related to sets of meanings, institutional and social practices (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). As way of illustration when the knowledge transfer discourse is constructed as a business partnership, this links it to an economic discourse, and when it is constructed as a social relationship, it is linked to a friendship discourse. This is because the discursive object is constructed by tapping into broader discourses that contain the shared assumptions and “truths” that have been legitimatised in giving rise to the particular topic. The broader discourses are referenced as they tap into a reserve of assumptions that become the legitimate basis for making decisions or acting in a certain ways (Willig, 2013).

Stage 3: Action orientation

At this stage the dynamics of the interaction were examined on the basis that discourse is action-orientated, and as such fulfils certain functions and positions the speaker within a certain context. This stage focused on how language was used and how interactions were managed to serve particular functions. This is where rhetorical strategies come in with the focus being on the functions of talk (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). This entailed examining the discursive context in which the constructions were located in order to establish what the implications with regard to the purpose or function of the interviewees talk and what the consequences of the function would be (Graham, 2005). The focus was on what possibilities for action they opened up or shut down, and in particular what was being achieved by drawing on the particular resources (Willig, 2013).

Stage 4: Positioning

The focus of this stage was the identities that were made available in the talk. This assumes that subject positions are constructed when they draw from discourses and position the speaker and call upon others to be positioned accordingly (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). Each description of knowledge transfer therefore makes available a particular subject position for the participants, which both allows and constrains ways-of-being (Foucault, 1980). In this stage the subject positions that were taken up or assigned within the constructions of the discursive subjects and their implications were identified. Commonalities in positions made available by the participants were considered.

Stage 5: Practice, institutions and power

At this stage the analytic focus was on practices, institutions and power. The underlying assumption is that dominant discourses become taken for granted which create social and institutional practices, and in turn maintain dominant discourses (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). The possibilities for action that are identified by each of the discursive constructions were examined. It was accepted that the different discursive constructions could result in different and even conflicting practices (Willig, 2013) which were identified.

Stage 6: Subjectivity

This stage considered the subjectivity or the repercussions of accepting the subject positions on the ways that people think, feel and experience themselves (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). This is regarded as a more speculative stage and considered the effects of the constructions on individual subjectivity (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012).

3.7 Research Quality

In this section I provide justification for claims of quality research.

The positivist paradigm has become the predominant frame of reference for judging the research quality in the physical and social sciences (Sale et al., 2002). In this framework there are traditionally four criteria that are applied for establishing the rigour of research studies. These are internal validity or the truth value of the research, external validity or the generalisability and applicability of the research, reliability, which is the consistency of the research, and objectivity or the neutrality of the researcher (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). These criteria are applied in experimental studies (Healy & Perry, 2000), where reality or truth is regarded as being independent or free of the observer.

This study uses discourse analysis, which is regarded as an established qualitative research methodology (Feltham-King & Macleod, 2016), that emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality and makes the ontological assumption that there are multiple realities. It assumes that a single objective truth does not exist and that meaning is not fixed but constructed in specific situations and through specific encounters, making alternative interpretations likely. The research focus is gaining insight to the construction of knowledge transfer from the participants' perspectives and regards the research outcomes as not being independent of the researcher (Healy & Perry, 2000). The ontological stance of constructionism is that there constructed realities cannot be replicated and epistemologically there is only subjectivity in the research process (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). This approach provides particular challenges when applying positivistic criteria as a measure of the quality

for good research (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). This is because the criteria used in quantitative studies of objectivity, reliability and validity are inappropriate due to ontological and epidemiological differences (Sale et al., 2002).

3.7.4.1 “Reliability” and “Validity” for Qualitative Research

Banister et al. (1995, p. 157) explain that completely valid research is unattainable as it is not possible to capture and represent a truthful view of reality that is unchallengeable, despite all adherence to good research practice. According to Willig (2013), validity in qualitative research is about the extent to which the research achieves what it aims to study in how it is described, measured and explained. Banister et al. (1995) provide an alternative definition of validity appropriate to qualitative research, as being concerned with the researcher ability to adequately understand and represent the voice of the participants and their experience of phenomena. The validity of the data therefore implies that the data was the correct data and that this has credibility. Validity in qualitative research therefore has to do with the adequacy of the researcher to understand and present people’s experience of the phenomena.

Reber (1985, as cited in Banister et al., 1995) argues that the concept of reliability is not appropriate for qualitative research. He defines it as a generic term that relates to all aspects concerned with the dependability of the tool used for measurement, highlighting that the key notion is consistency, or the extent that the measurement tool yields the same results when the measurement is repeated under similar conditions. Reliability in quantitative research assumes that it is possible to replicate research. Banister et al. (1995) indicate that within the qualitative tradition, replication is not possible. Reliability assumes that the objects of study are not liable to change. Replication would require that the same participants are used, yet the impact of having already been exposed to the research process would influence the outcome. Findings are specifically contextually-bound and different people behave differently. Different contexts would result in a change in how things are expressed; each researcher will have a different impact. All these aspects influence the possibility of repeatability of the research. Using different researchers, with different participants and different contextual meaning does not allow for replication. Specificity is therefore a better measure of the quality of research (Banister et al, 1995).

The quality of the analysis needs to be judged outside of the tradition of scientific objectivity, according to Walton (2007), where the assumption of independence and objectivity between the researcher and the researched does not exist. Alternative measures of research quality that are considered to be more appropriate should thus be applied. This includes factors such

as contribution to knowledge, rigour and credibility in conducting the research, defensibility of the research in that the research strategy addresses the research question (Northcote, 2012).

The arguments for a different approach highlight the debate regarding the applicability of using the quantitative and positivist constructs of reliability and validity for qualitative research (Healy & Perry, 2000). The quantitative-qualitative debate flourished in the 1970s and 1980s, according to Sale et al. (2002), and concerned the distinctions made based on the particular paradigm, ontology epistemology and methodology, or the particular ways of knowing that reality. According to Pickard and Dixon (2004), the debate regarding how to assess qualitative research continues. This is because there is not yet agreement on alternative criteria for judging quality in qualitative research which is a result of the absence of a unified framework for qualitative research (Rolfe, 2006).

According to Rolfe (2006), there are three dominant views regarding how qualitative research should be judged. These are that qualitative research should use: (i) the same criteria as quantitative research, (ii) different criteria, and (iii) appropriate criteria, where the question of using any predetermined criteria is raised. While various frameworks and guidelines have been devised for judging the quality of qualitative research, Rolfe (2006) raises a concern about establishing generalised criteria for judging quality in qualitative research, because of the lack of a unified qualitative research paradigm. He argues for the view that different criteria should be used for qualitative approaches.

Qualitative and quantitative methods are based on paradigms that view reality differently (Sale et al., 2002), resulting in them not studying the same phenomena. Positivism informs a quantitative paradigm, which is characterised by empirical research and is independent of human perception (Sale et al., 2002). The researcher and the researched are also regarded as independent of one another. The quality of research is therefore measured by criteria that ensure that research results correspond to a real world. In the qualitative paradigm, where there are multiple dynamic realities, reality is not independent of the human minds and truth claims cannot be compared against an external referent. The researcher and the researched are linked, and research findings are co-constructed within the context of the research question. The quality of research can therefore not be the same as those for quantitative research (Sale et al., 2002). Given the ontological stance of constructivism, and similarity constructionism, that there are multiple, constructed realities which cannot be replicated; epistemologically there is only subjectivity in the research process (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). Positivist research criteria of rigour therefore cannot address the needs of qualitative research (Pickard & Dixon, 2004).

3.7.4.2 Criteria for Establishing Quality

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is the measure of research quality and the criteria that make up trustworthiness are defined as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Healy & Perry, 2000; Mutepa, 2016; Pickard & Dixon, 2004). Trustworthiness is concerned with the research credibility, which is the truth value of the research and corresponds with internal validity of a positivist approach. Trustworthiness includes dependability or consistency of the research or the positivist's concept of reliability. Transferability or generalisability and applicability are further elements of trustworthiness and correspond to the positivist notion of external validity and, the issue of presentation is dealt with in addressing confirmability (Rolfe, 2006).

What is important in research credibility is that the outcomes of the research accurately reflect the participant's views (Mutepa, 2016), it has to do with the extent to which the data and the analysis are believable (Healy & Perry, 2000). Prolonged engagement with the research population and participant observation promotes credibility (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). Accordingly, this is addressed in this study, which involved my interaction with the participants, familiarising myself with all aspects of the project through interaction with the project leaders and reviewing multiple documents, such as previous investigations into the project and reviews of initiatives to address the mentorship concerns. My previous engagement in the project for the purposes of drafting policies and procedures, which included visits to Saudi Arabia, provided insight into the mentorship programmes. In addition, I was able to observe the conditions and programme set-up, which enabled me to contextualise the interview content and have regard for distortions and inaccuracies that were presented.

According to Pickard et al. (2004), some authors advocate for the establishment of credibility by having the findings approved by the participants through member checks and asking them to comment on the analysis as a form of validating the findings to establish credibility. Coyle (2007), however, explains that individuals are not always aware of the effects that their discourse create and might therefore not recognise the findings and does not recommended the involvement of participants in validating their findings when using FDA, as was followed in this study.

Pickard and Dixon (2004) state that dependability or consistency is established through carefully documenting the research process. This includes how the data was produced by the analysis and relating this to transcripts and describing the process followed in order to allow

for the consistency of observing the same finding under similar circumstances. In this study this was achieved though documenting the analysis process that was followed in addition to maintaining reflexivity.

Transferability or generalisability is not concerned with extensive generalisation of findings in a constructionist study but is concerned with the transferability of the findings. In order to achieve confidence to do so, researchers must collect and report on sufficiently detailed descriptions of data in context (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). This was achieved in this study by ensuring sufficient coverage of the experience of the population and providing, as far as possible, an equal voice for both the participant groups.

Confirmability is concerned with the undue influence of researcher bias on the research outcome. In order to establish confirmability, the researcher must show their awareness of or account for their individual subjectivity or bias (Healy & Perry, 2000). According to Varela (1979, as cited in Becvar & Becvar, 2009), we cannot have objectivity; we can only have full appreciation of participation. Banister et al. (1995) claim this to be an advantage because denying subjectivity is more powerful if it is not acknowledged. There is an acceptance that the knowledge and experience of the researcher has an impact on the outcomes within constructionist research however the impact cannot result in the changing of meaning (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). As an alternative to objectivity, confirmability is concerned with ensuring that the outcomes can be located in the raw data of the research so that it can be seen that the outcomes are not purely a product of the researcher (Pickard & Dixon, 2004). This was achieved in this study by documenting how the constructions have emerged from the data. Specific reference to the data is made by way of excerpts or quotes that are presented to confirm the research outcomes and ground them in evidence.

Regardless of the debate on the exact criteria to be used for establishing the quality of research it is clear that detailed descriptions of the processes that were followed must be provided to ensure accurate recording and that there is confidence that the data provided sufficient coverage of the population (Mutepa, 2016). To demostrate rigour and discipline in discourse analysis, the research must show how analytic conclusions were reached, with reference to the text (Walton, 2007). In addition, there must be a commitment to maintain a reflexive account and an awareness of their impact on the research outcomes. Maintaining a reflexive diary that acknowledges the impact and accounts for all aspects that could influence the researcher allows for the identification of the researcher’s personal values, assumptions and biases.

3.8 Limitations

According to Powers (2001), FDA does not claim to reveal an absoulte truth. It is open to the possibility of alternative claims of truth being raised. The impication of this is that research outcomes from the analysis can not be generalised to other contexts as the data and interpretations are valid only under the unique conditions of a particular study at a particular time and place (Becvar & Becvar, 2009). Although this does not indicate that they are not valid for a particular context, it does limit their generalisability for other studies.

This study relied on text which was communicated in dialogue in English. Although FDA does not rely on linguistic properties, for some of the participants this would not have been their first language and it is conceded that the ability of the participants to converse fluently could have restricted them to freely express themselves. In as much as these affect the meaning of what is discussed, this entails a limitation.

3.9 Summary

This purpose of this chapter was to provide confidence in the research method used for this study. The chapter has outlined the research paradigm and epistemological assumptions, research method and design used in the study, including detail regarding the process followed, the participants, data generation means, data generation process and analysis methods, and research quality issues, including the criteria used for ensuring research quality.

In the next chapter I present the outcome of the analysis of the interviews that addresses the research question and objectives.

Chapter 4: The Construction of Self and Other impact Knowledge Transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African Engineers

In this chapter I present the outcomes of the data analysis that addresses the research question and objectives. The chapter is structured according to each of the four research objectives, which are 1. Determine how knowledge transfer is constructed in a mentorship relationship, 2. Determine how self and other are constructed in a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer, 3 Identify discourses around the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge, and 4. Identify power in mentorship relationships and how these relate to barriers in knowledge transfer.

In presenting the outcome of the analysis the interview participants are referred to by the nationality of the group that they represent, either as South African participant or Saudi Arabian participant or shortened to South African or Saudi Arabian, where the reference is not to a specific individual mentioned by name. Alternatively, I have referred to the South African participants by the classification of their role as determined within the project, namely mentor, and the Saudi Arabian participants as mentee. The role to which they are referred to in no way reflects their self identity or the identity that is constructed and is merely used for ease of reading. Where names are referred to, these have been used according to the pseudonyms assigned. The interview extracts are identified by a number, the first referring to the interview number and the second referring to the interview section as numbered in the transcripts, so that extracts can be located within the interview transcripts.

The outcome of the analysis that addresses the research objective of how knowledge transfer was constructed by the participants is presented next. This reveals the meanings attributed to knowledge transfer by the participants and their functions and provides the context for the remainder of the analyses. This section addresses the first of the research objectives**.**

4.1 The Construction of Knowledge Transfer in a Mentorship Relationship

This section focuses on the discursive constructions used by the participants to account for their experiences of knowledge transfer within the context of the mentorship relationship between the South African participants and Saudi Arabian participants. It locates the constructions within overarching discourses and addresses the research objective of determining how knowledge transfer is constructed in a mentorship relationship. In accordance with the principles of FDA outlined by Willig (2013), the analysis focused on the

discursive object, which was knowledge transfer. The discursive constructions are illustrated with extracts from the interviews to substantiate the accounts through the voices of the participants. Throughout the analysis, reference is made to relevant research as it relates to knowledge transfer presented in Chapter 2.

The aim of identifying how knowledge transfer was constructed was to show how the participants create their social reality and to what end. Constructions are purposeful and reveal the presence and impact of dominant social contexts (Heylighen, 1997). Identifying the discourses that are drawn from to inform the participants' constructions talks to their systems of meaning (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). This is important because discourses function ideologically in that they determine people's relationships to each other and to the wider society, determining their place in the social hierarchy (Mumby & Stohl, 1991). How something is constructed creates social positions (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012), or social locations or positions that determine the particular ways of being for individuals referred to as subject positions (Frost, 1987). The positioning of subjects brings into play power relations and the relations between individuals (Foucault, 1982), so that the way that knowledge transfer is constructed explains the positioning of the subject in wider power relations (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). The particular constructions of knowledge transfer also indicate what is the taken-for-granted knowledge regarding behaviour and practices of individuals that come to be expected and how these affect the practice of knowledge transfer (Yakhlef, 2007).

The analysis of the interviews showed that knowledge transfer is variably constructed by the participants. This is anticipated from a social constructionist perspective that holds that language is constructive and creates multiple versions of the phenomena that it describes (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). The constructions of knowledge transfer were found to be shared within each group, namely the South African and Saudi Arabian participants; however, differed across the two groups. This indicates a shared meaning system within each group but not between the groups and points to differing social and historical contexts that produce the various meanings (Johnson et al., 2004). This has implications for the practice of knowledge transfer which the literature indicates relies on shared meanings (Thomas et al., 2014).

The different constructions, their functions or the action orientations and the subject positions that these discourses brought forth are presented in this section. Firstly, the discursive constructions of knowledge transfer by the South African participants are presented, followed by the discourse constructions of the Saudi Arabian participants. The section concludes with a discussion of the various constructions and their implications.

4.1.1 Knowledge Transfer as Constructed by the South African Participants

This section presents the various constructions of knowledge transfer based on the analysis of the interviews of the South African participants (mentors).

The analysis found that knowledge transfer was variably referred to as training, mentoring, teaching, knowledge transfer and technology transfer by the South African participants. Although two constructions of knowledge transfer emerged, knowledge transfer was primarily depicted as a developmental endeavour.

The South African participants systematically constructed knowledge transfer by drawing from two dominant discourses to give it meaning. The constructions identified and the discourses in which they are located are:

- A teaching endeavour, drawing on an academic discourse; and
- A work process, drawing on an economic discourse.

These constructions and how they are constructed are detailed with their implications for practice in the following sub-sections.

4.1.1.1 Knowledge Transfer as a Teaching Endeavour

Knowledge transfer is constructed as a teaching endeavour aimed at developing another to be at a requisite level of capability. To achieve this construction, the mentors use descriptions, concepts and phrases drawn from a broader academic discourse. Constructing knowledge transfer as a teaching endeavour constructs the Saudi Arabian participants as lacking skill and ability at the level required to make a professional contribution to the workplace, which in turn requires intervention from the mentors to correct. Within this context, the subject positioning of student is made available for the Saudi Arabian participants. The South African participants take up the subject position of professional engineering teacher, thus situating the participants in unequal power relations. The South African's portray the self as engineering professionals experienced in teaching, which serves to legitimise the teaching practices to which they subject the other. Collectively, the strategies construct knowledge transfer as focused on developmental training from an academic teaching and learning perspective. The construction of knowledge transfer as a teaching endeavour provides a meaning system that locates knowledge transfer outside of the economic workplace, shutting down opportunities for the mentees to partake in making economic contributions.

The South African participants refer to their engagement with the Saudi Arabians using words and concepts that draw from an academic discourse, such as “teaching”, “training”, “coaching”, while establishing themselves as responsible for the development of the other who requires corrective intervention from the mentors. The following quote indicates how Peter draws from an academic discourse using the words “teach” and “train” to construct knowledge transfer as a means to get the Saudi Arabians to a required level of efficiency, thus suggesting that they are not, while depicting himself as responsible for correcting this:

> 8-48 ... we have to teach these guys and have to train them; we have to bring them up to speed.

The portrayal of the self as responsible is achieved through the triple reference to “have to”, which works to stress a sense of importance and a duty on the part of the mentor to address the situation. The self is referred to in the collective “we”, implying a unified “in group” which together with “these guys” works to distinguish the self from the other in a manner that sets the South African and Saudi Arabian participants apart. Peter’s depiction works to establish the knowledge transfer process within a network of power relations resonant of the authoritative teacher figure and the deficient student that legitimises practices of subjugation related to teaching and educating.

In the following extract, Bram is explaining his engagement with the mentees and distinguishes between the concepts of learning, training, teaching and lecturing that are located in an academic discourse, on the basis of the level of involvement required from the person dispensing knowledge, to depict himself as invested at the highest level of involvement. This depiction works to establish Bram as knowledgeable, while working up to position himself as a lecturer and, by suggestion, highly dedicated in terms of his time and energy:

> 1-158. P: Learning for me is, you know, there’s this book, read through these pages in this chapter. If you have any questions come and ask me. So er training for me is giving them the right material so they can get to this next level. For me teaching is actually, yes, skim through this book but I will spend time with you to explain to you these concepts and that takes energy. You’re becoming a lecturer, you start lecturing for what, a few hours a week, eight hours a week, that’s draining. If you speak to any lecturer it’s draining.

Learning is described as requiring involvement limited to direction from the mentor, whereas training relies on the correct material being selected and provided, and as such increased involvement, while teaching requires additional involvement in the form of time and explanation. The constructed escalation of commitment that is stated as required functions to

demonstrate Bram's experience and knowledge of the academic developmental processes. Bram's reference to "you're becoming a lecturer" demonstrates subjectivity and his absorption of the subject position of lecturer. Bram presents the notion of lecturing as being draining as a fact that is built on consensus in referencing that this can be verified by "any lecturer", and as such exists independently from his own views. In presenting this as a fact and not as a personal account, Bram establishes his objectivity and credibility, while inoculating him against a claim of stake interest.

In the following quote, Lana draws from an academic discourse using concepts such as "tutoring" and "teaching" to describe her engagement with the mentees and is constructing knowledge transfer as a teaching endeavour while positioning the self as teacher:

> 4-139. P: Uhm so just, it's, it's time consuming and it's tiring 'cause you need to also (.) as you would when, in any teaching situation I used to tutor maths and stuff.

Here Lana, who describes that it is expected of her to teach skills elsewhere in the interview, is establishing herself as an experienced teacher by referencing her previous tutoring experience and through suggestion in using a commonplace notion that "any teaching situation" is time consuming. By likening the teaching of the Saudi Arabian mentees to "any teaching" situations Lana inoculates herself against a possible inference that teaching them is more difficult than teaching others.

Bram describes his interaction with the mentees in the following quote and draws on practices that are associated with teaching to construct it as a teaching endeavour, while establishing the self as knowledgeable on the topic:

> 1-22. P: Uhm, your second point that said how you intend to transfer knowledge [reading from notes written during the conversation]. The way I can maybe answer that question is there's another mind map that I, that I drew up, which now this one is meant to summarise your sort of interactions with er, with the mentee. So you, you can probably break it down to a few things that you will spend some time to interact with them like coaching, go and assign a new task. Assessing progress, just giving advice and then this is sort of its appraising awareness of how to think to get to a quality output at the end. You'd probably spend your time interacting with these things in mind. And what things should you be doing to lead to a more positive er outcome, is what I listed in here [referring to his notes].

Terms such as “coaching”, “assessing progress”, and “appraisal” construct knowledge transfer as a teaching endeavour. The phrase “appraising awareness of how to think to get a quality output” is interesting as it suggests that knowledge transfer is aimed at producing an object, as suggested by “quality output”, and that it is a formative process that takes hold of the thinking processes of the other. The notion of moulding the person to get a “quality output” in order to make a desired object works to depict the other as inferior in quality, while the self assumes a position of authority to correct the other. This sets the interaction between the South African and Saudi Arabians within asymmetrical power relations where the self is legitimised in their exercise of control over the thinking of the other.

Presenting a mind map portrays knowledge transfer as complex and establishes Bram as competent on the topic of knowledge transfer. This works with the confidence expressed that “keeping these things in mind” will lead to a “positive outcome”. Bram’s reference to his authorship of “another mind map” functions to depict the self as an authority; however, his reference to it being a “summary” that “breaks down” the process to a “few” things” suggests that he is orientating himself to possible rebuttal of his claims and functions to inoculate himself to a challenge regarding this authority.

Constructing knowledge transfer as a teaching endeavour that is located in an academic discourse emphasises a learning perspective that brings forth the subject position of teacher who possesses desired knowledge and holds authority over an other who lacks knowledge and skill who is subjugated to the position of student. The teacher assumes responsibility for dispensing developmental material and assessing the student’s progress, while the student is made to be dependent on the teacher to “close the gap” in knowledge. The “gap” is illustrative of the divide between an “us” and a “them”. The teacher/student dualism establishes an “us” and “them” power distance which holds that learning takes place on the terms of the teacher who serves as a conduit for knowledge to a passive student. Learning practices are legitimised by virtue of the authority of the teacher. The student is subject to assessment and evaluation and other practices to form a desired product. These practices function to maintain the unequal power balance. The teacher as figure of authority enacts power within social relations, which is realised by controlling access to learning material, determining the learning content and organisation of opportunities for knowledge transfer on a material and practical level. As power figure, the teacher controls the formation of the other which is determined by the norms and standards set by the teacher.

An academic discourse situates knowledge transfer outside of the workplace and functions to justify the exclusion of the students from participating in work on workplace projects. The

student is depicted as not yet ready for the workplace, which closes off opportunities for and access to meaningful participation in the workplace in order to exercise enterprise knowledge on projects. Closing down the possibilities for participation indicates the functioning of power in the relationship that creates social alignments between an “us” in opposition to a “them” (Rouse, 2005). As such, an asymmetrical power relation is maintained, where the mentor remains the knowledge owner (Hartsock, 1990).

In the next section the alternate construction of knowledge transfer as a work endeavour is described. Two sub-constructions emerge which differ ideologically, giving rise to ideological dilemmas that have implications for rights, entitlements and practices of knowledge transfer, which are discussed.

4.1.1.2 Knowledge Transfer as a Work Process

The mentors also draw from an economic discourse within a Western perspective to construct knowledge transfer as a work process which is an enterprise, business or economic process that advances shared business objectives within a workplace context. The construction is achieved by using strategies that include the use of words and concepts located in a workplace and business discourse, evoking the subject positioning of productive engineers and employees, work colleagues and business partners with corresponding expectations. The discursive construction of knowledge transfer as a work process gives rise to two secondary constructions that have contradictory meanings. These are: (i) knowledge transfer as a collaborative working initiative between equal counterparts that has its purpose to advance a shared vision, and (ii) knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task that is burdensome and is in the way of the achievement of economic ideals. The South Africans take up the subject position of responsible productive engineer for the self.

Each of the subordinate constructions is presented in the following sub-sections.

4.1.1.2.1 Knowledge Transfer as a Collaborative Working Initiative

The construction of knowledge transfer as a collaborative working initiative is achieved drawing from an economic business discourse where knowledge transfer is portrayed as being part of a mutually beneficial partnership aimed at achieving a shared business vision that is realised through sharing of knowledge and collective work efforts. The South African participants use words such as “collaboration” and “partner” that are associated with business dealings to depict a close working relationship. The Saudi Arabian participants are referred to as “counterparts”, “colleagues” and “partners” to depict a relationship of peers and equals who

share in a common goal. This construction buys into a meaning system where knowledge transfer is concerned with the sharing of knowledge for the benefit of both parties and their business objectives. Knowledge transfer constructed as a collaborative effort, described as "transferring knowledge and improving capability" (interview 15-249), depicts the relationship favourably and suggests a relationship of equal standing.

The following extract provides an example of the relationship being portrayed as mutually beneficial. Dirk depicts the knowledge transfer project in a positive light, using the words "nice opportunity", "working together", "collaboration" and "big future" to evoke an image of a mutually beneficial partnership. This works with the words "long time" to imply a future investment:

> 10-268. P: Uhm The first project was a It was really a nice opportunity also for me, because I saw this nice collaboration and I could share my knowledge with this guy and there was this big future that we would work together for a long time.

The words "also for me" suggest reciprocity and works with the words "share my knowledge" to portray Dirk as a willing contributor. However, Dirk's reference to the Saudi Arabian participant as "this guy" implies a depersonalising of the other which has the effect of objectifying the other and suggests that Dirk is presenting a somewhat idealised version of the relationship that is perhaps concealing an experience which does not align with the version that he is presenting. Similarly, in the following quote, Dirk describes the sharing of office space and of "everything I did" to depict a close working relationship that was more than a mere "exercise", yet refers to the mentees as "Shadows":

> 10-10. P: … We actually shared an office and everything I did I showed my Saudi (.) we called them 'Shadows', because they were supposed to follow us.
>
> 11. R: [Yeah].
>
> 12. P: everything we did was, they had to see what we were doing, and why and so it was more than you saying an exercise.

The reference to "Shadows" while depicting the relationship as a close working relationship suggests that it is a less personal relationship. Although sharing of space would suggest physical proximity, the term "Shadows" depersonalises the mentee and suggests that the possibility of true engagement is closed. By implication the mentees are reduced to observer status, belying the depiction of the other as partners, suggesting the presence of a possible ideological conflict.

Henk also portrays the relationship as physically close, using words and phrases such as "paired", "over the shoulder" and "sit together physically". In the following quote he is constructing a close working relationship using phrases such as "we'd look at the problem together" and "come up with the solution together":

> 3-36. P: … And In a lot of cases we worked in an almost a paired (.) development or sort of an over the shoulder type approach, especially now in the cases where the guys were here, we would actually sit together physically, for a couple of hours a day.
>
> 37. R: [Okay].
>
> 38. P: And physically work at the problem together uhm, as opposed to maybe giving tasks and then leaving them to do it on their own for a period of time. And uhm it was really getting these sort of sessions where he would then ask questions and we'd look at the problem together and come up with the solution together.

To achieve the construction of a close working relationship, Henk describes an opposite alternative, suggested in "giving tasks and leaving them alone", to emphasise his selected choice of closeness as opposed to isolating the other. This works to emphasise his depiction of partnership and interaction. Hans, in the following quote, also refers to the mentees as "counterparts", which works with the phrase "work side-by-side together" to portray knowledge transfer, a collaborative working relationship;

> 11-4. P: Yeah well, I we've have been involved in, since I joined the SAJTC, we have been involved in two major like technology transfer mentoring uhm programmes with the Saudis, where we actually need to, we actually deliver a working system as well.
>
> 5. R: Hm, hm.
>
> 6. P: And work side-by-side together with the guys, and the whole idea of this was to, while we complete the system, and, and work on that, we also use all the different uhm tasks on developing the system, to train our Saudi counterparts. And it was also a lot about uhm just getting to know the colleagues, the Saudi colleagues as well uhm and I'm getting them to know their culture a little bit and know ... So the whole process entailed more than just uhm, uhm doing the work.

Hans's depiction of a close relationship is complete when he states that the engagement is "more than just …doing the work" after describing that it is "also" "a lot" about getting to know

the other", suggesting that the engagement was more than merely work. Depicting the close relationship that is more than work is offered directly after Hans refers to it as the "technology transfer mentoring programmes" and implies that the knowledge transfer is not the only focus of the project with "we actually need to we actually deliver a working system as well". The repeated use of the honest phrase "actually" works with "as well" to depict the purpose of his work as to "deliver a working system" and not to transfer knowledge. The involvement of the Saudi Arabian counterparts is referred to as "training" which, while differentiating it from "doing the work", is done in a manner that suggests it is training specific to job tasks.

The "Saudi counterparts" are named, which functions to differentiate them and highlight that they are separate from those working on the project, while suggesting that knowledge transfer is secondary to "completing the system". Project work is privileged over training. Here we see the management of an ideological conflict that arises out of the secondary constructions of knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer cannot simultaneously be a collaborative effort of peers working together and a separate training effort. Hans manages the discourse back to the depiction of a close relationship by concluding his talk with a double reference to "colleagues" and the suggestion that the relationship extended beyond "doing the work". The use of the word "work" in the last sense draws the construction back to the function of work as opposed to the earlier reference to training.

The depiction of knowledge transfer as a partnership functions to set up an expectation of shared level of professional knowledge and understanding of work practices. This provides a basis for othering as the following extract demonstrates. Henk demonstrates the use of this assumption and makes a distinction between the South African colleagues, referred to as "my colleagues", and his Saudi Arabian mentee, referred to as "my Saudi colleague", to imply an inferior other in the following:

> 3-20. P: … Uhm (.) so, essentially, I, when I talk to my colleagues I can assume that all underlying concepts uhm are apparent and I regularly do that when I'm, yeah, in (.) in explaining something to my JTCKSA colleague, my Saudi colleague, I do assume that he knows lots of stuff and I do use language that I'm used to but probably that he's not used to.

The assumption being made is that there is a shared knowledge and understanding between colleagues; however, Henk makes a distinction between the South African and the Saudi Arabian colleagues that works to suggest the Saudi Arabians have less knowledge and understanding. Henk inoculates himself against a claim that he is being prejudiced with the reference to the other who "know lots of stuff", implying that it is not the others' knowledge that

is lacking but that the problem is an issue of unfamiliar language. Using the word “probably” allows for alternative readings to Henk’s suggested lack of understanding by the others; however, the implication remains that Henk cannot engage equally with the mentees regarding “underlying concepts” which maintains a depiction of the other as not knowing and therefore not equal. The reference to underlying concepts is suggestive of a shared knowledge, a regime of truth, works to infer not only a lack of knowledge on the part of the other but specifically a lack of the “correct knowledge” or assumed knowledge. Foucault (1965, as cited in Phillips et al., 2004) spoke of institutions and professional bodies as sites for the formation of discourse practices. The institution suggested here is that of the engineering body of knowledge which has its own language and practices that become part of the profession’s norms and ways of doing things. Henk’s depiction of the mentees therefore functions to exclude them from the professional body of engineering and positions them as other and not as engineer.

The function of the construction of knowledge transfer as a collaborative business effort aimed at the achievement of a shared vision between equals is to portray the endeavour in a positive light and works to justify an expectation that the mentees have the same knowledge and standards assumed for the self. These expectations subsequently inform attitudes and discursive practices that serve to create, justify and locate the mentee as other which serves to maintain a power relationship that favours the self and finds the other as lacking.

A further construction of knowledge transfer is drawn from an economic discourse that also depicts knowledge transfer as a workplace process; however, differs from the construction of knowledge transfer as a collaborative working initiative in that it depicts knowledge transfer as being in conflict with the economic ideals of the workplace as an additional and separate work task. This is presented in the following section.

4.1.2.2 Knowledge Transfer as an Additional and Separate Work Task

The analysis identified a second construction of knowledge transfer, located in an economic discourse, which depicts knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task that is in conflict with the achievement of economic ideals. Business success is portrayed as being attained through the achievement of specific economic factors which are measured by the completion of projects within delivery time, budget management and securing repeat contracts. Knowledge transfer is constructed as a burden that detracts from achieving success in the completion of time-driven projects, which is regarded as the driving purpose of the mentors’ work efforts. The construction is achieved by describing knowledge transfer as a

separate task that places extensive demands on the mentors in terms of their time, personal and emotional energy, requiring personal sacrifices; making a causal link between project risk and the inclusion of mentees, and positioning the mentors as productive engineers who are hardworking and committed, while depicting the mentees as unable to contribute meaningful to project work.

The notion of time and personal energy and its links to economic value feature prominently in this construction. Time is portrayed as limited, with knowledge transfer being associated with excessive demands on this limited resource. The construction of knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task functions to justify the exclusion of the mentees from project work and the related practice of a “dual track” approach.

The South African participants make reference to a “dual track” as their approach to conduct knowledge transfer. This approach entails training the mentees as a separate task from conducting project work while the mentors work on their projects, thus constructing work and knowledge transfer as two separate processes with different and conflicting purposes. The two cannot be integrated as they have opposing end goals. Project work is prioritised over knowledge transfer and the practice of training or mentoring for knowledge transfer is seen as happening at the expense of time and energy required for successful project delivery. In the following quote, Dirk explicitly refers to knowledge transfer as an extra load and depicts it as a burden:

> 10-50. P: ... doing this whole knowledge transfer it was really, it was an extra load at that stage**.**

Charl also constructs knowledge transfer as burdensome in the following extract:

> 6-68. P: It is sometimes frustrating. It’s not in general a big worry but when you do have other things to do, it, it does get in the way. Uhm it, it does take up a lot more time than, than anyone expects it would. It’s so it often gets, (.) on this project I’ve spent probably, yeah, probably (.) half the time uhm, busy mentoring.
>
> 69. R: Okay.
>
> 70. P: And not just because, yeah, the, well, the reason for that is also because I’m giving Achlam the, the big tasks. So, so while I’m actually mentoring, I’m sort of actually also working on the big tasks.

Depicting the practice of knowledge transfer as a hindrance is achieved by using the words “frustrating”, and the phrase “it does get in the way”, implying that it prevents the mentor from

“doing other things” in a context of available time. The words “half the time” and that it takes “more time” than “anyone expects” depict time as limited and that knowledge transfer requires more time than allocated, planned for or reasonable. The reference to “anyone expects” works to construct Charl’s account as factual and independent of himself. The suggestion is that knowledge transfer mentorship detracts from the correct use of time and effort and that it is not a priority.

Charl indicates hesitation after each expression of negativity, as in “It’s so it often gets, (.) on this project”, and “not just because, yeah, the, well, the reason”. He also minimises the expressed negativity with “It’s not in general a big worry” and offers justification for his position by offering a plausible reason for it, as suggested by “the reason for that is also because I’m giving Achlam the, the big tasks”. This indicates the possible presence of an ideological conflict where Charl wishes to detract from a negative reading of what is being said while managing the portrayal of self in a positive light. Charl is possibly also managing the conflict that arises from presenting knowledge transfer in a manner that is not aligned with the positive portrayal of knowledge transfer as a collaborative effort as presented in the previous section. Comments made in a guarded way indicate an orientation to the taboo against prejudice and demonstrates Charl’s governance and regulation of the self according to the norm against criticism of the other.

In the following quote, Peter introduces the “dual track” approach that highlights the construction of knowledge transfer as being in conflict with project delivery:

> 8-197. P: ... So by doing that, we’re able to keep the work going, while at the same time sort of getting him involved, getting his knowledge up, feeling him out and figuring out where he could be, and then slowly starting to incur incorporate more and more of his things. I get the impression from my colleagues that this sort of dual track thing happens even more aggressively on some of the more (.) “aggressively” is maybe the wrong word uhm strongly, on some of the more the, the deadline budget-driven projects, because you can’t afford to be training someone and doing the work, it’s physically impossible.
>
> 198. R: [Hm].
>
> 199. P: Just training someone means you don’t have time for work and training is a very tiring thing, far more than one expects. It’s much easier to sit a computer writing code for a day, than it is to sit trying to explain something to someone today, especially if you’re working across languages. So I think that, I think that is one of the big problems.

In this extract the mentors are positioned as responsible for maintaining the flow of work, as suggested by “we’re able to keep the work going”, with the initial suggestion being made that the mentees are simultaneously involved in the work, implied with “while at the same time sort of getting him involved”. However, the words “sort of” implies that their inclusion is superficial and suggest that the mentees are not involved.

The mentee is made an object of evaluation by Peter who assumes the right to assess him to determine his value, suggested by “feeling him out and figuring out”. Talking from a position of responsible engineer, Peter presents the mentees as not having the desired level of knowledge, as implied by the phrase “getting his knowledge up” and the reference to the mentee’s contributions as “his things” which acts to diminish the value of their contribution. Suggesting that the mentee would require slowly paced intervention that is broken down into sub-sections within the context of a deadline and budget-driven working environment makes the argument that it is not possible to simultaneously do training and perform the required project work.

Peter describes the “dual track” approach which is to “keep the work going, while at the same time sort of getting him involved”. Peter argues for this approach using extreme case formulation to reason that it is not possible to do training and work on projects simultaneously, calling it “physically impossible” and drawing a comparison with “coding for a day” and the explanation that it is like spending all day “explaining something to someone”. By inference, doing engineering work, as suggested by “coding”, is far easier than doing knowledge transfer. Peter suggests that knowledge transfer is done at the cost of his work with the references to “you cannot afford to be training ... and doing work”, that “you don’t have time for work and training”, that it is “very tiring ... far more than one expects”. Peter is making an argument that knowledge transfer is a full-time effort, constructing training and work as mutually exclusive. Peter’s reference to “working across languages” infers additional complexity and completes his argument. Locating the argument that it is physically impossible to do both within an economic discourse that is concerned with deadlines and budgets depicts Peter’s argument as reasonable. The discursive strategies work together to construct knowledge transfer as in conflict with the practice of work and function to legitimise the practice of the dual track approach and the mentees’ exclusion from project involvement.

Further, Peter works in an environment that is multilingual so the reference to working across languages, which is intended to emphasise the difficulty of training and working, is perhaps

more specifically a comment regarding working across cultural differences or working with the Saudi Arabians. The inference suggests an “us” and “them” distinction.

In the following quote from Charl’s interview, the argument being made is that the mentees pose a technical risk to the delivery of the project, which justifies not involving them on the project:

> 6-248. P: Right, right and we sort of want to just get them out of the way such that the mentoring is not a technical risk. We don’t want to place responsibility on, on people that we’re not sure if they will be able to do the job. Uhm but, but seeing as this is the technology transfer project, that’s sort of the whole point of the project. I think that is a risk we should be taking. But then also, we should be identifying that as a risk uhm for, for the Saudi people. There’s, there’s that exchange. If you want your people to be trained, uhm (.) but then you’re going to need them to be involved in critical, critical aspects of the project. But then you must assume, you must know that then there’s risk associated with this. Uhm but the deliverables not, not being met in time or on budget, whatever.

Charl establishes a causal association between mentoring/training and risk to the delivery of projects to argue for the exclusion of the mentees from the project work. This is done by the inference that keeping the mentees from the project, as suggested by “get them out of the way”, reduces the technical risk that is posed in involving the mentees on the project. Drawing from an economic discourse that is concerned with budget and delivery times, Charl depicts himself as reasonable in his concern for the project and for the other in not giving responsibility to someone who is unable to do the task. As a responsible engineer, the inference is that it is his duty to highlight risks that would impede the project success as well as to avoid embarking on risky undertakings. The mentee is being portrayed as not capable to work on project work, supporting the argument that they should be excluded.

Orientating himself to a potential challenge to the practice of excluding the mentees from projects and acknowledging the expectation that this is a “technology transfer project”, Charl argues for the relaxing of project requirements to accommodate the risk, thus maintaining the construction of knowledge transfer being a risk to the project. The suggestion that a compromise or exchange is required to do training, with such risk being undertaken by the South Africans who do knowledge transfer, and that the responsibility and consequence of the risk should be moved to the Saudi Arabians, makes the argument that knowledge transfer is in conflict with project success, thus justifying not involving the mentees on the project for the

sake of the achievement of project success as measured by time and budget. Similarly, the notion of time and budget is drawn upon to depict knowledge transfer as being in conflict with successful project work delivery in the following quote from Peter's interview:

> 8-93 … We need to have, we need to actually have too much time for the project so that we can use it to do all these extra things and to have the freedom to manoeuvre. But we've been contracted to deliver products on a budget and a deadline, so it becomes very difficult to do it, but that made a huge difference just having this bit of slack, well a lot of slack that we could actually move around and, and spend time just talking to guys about what is an antenna ray for example. That helped a lot.

Peter's argument for the requirement for extra time to do knowledge transfer depicts it as being in conflict with successful delivery of project work. Peter makes the argument that it is difficult to do both, justifying this within the constraints of time and budget. This constructs knowledge transfer and project work as separate activities, where project work is being privileged and justified as being a contractual responsibility, as suggested by "we've been contracted to deliver products on a budget and a deadline".

In the following, Hans is making a distinction between technology transfer and project delivery that functions to construct knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task:

> 11-4. P: Yeah, well, we've have been involved in, since I joined the SAJTC, we have been involved in two major like technology transfer mentoring programmes with the Saudis, where we actually need to we actually deliver a working system as well.

The use of the words "as well" emphasises that knowledge transfer is a task that is additional to the work required of the mentors. The word "actually" works to emphasise what the true focus is of their work, while the inclusion of "working" in "deliver a working system" highlights the importance of their work, as it suggests that the system must be functional and without error.

The privileging of work over knowledge transfer is legitimised based on the justification that the mentors are contractually bound to do so, a notion located within a business and economic discourse, which is also indicated in the following quote from Lana's interview:

> 4-7. P: … because ultimately, contractually, your deliverable is not focussed on the skills development of this individual. It's based on getting the product out.

The argument being made is that knowledge transfer is not a business prerogative and therefore is less important in terms of the mentors' priorities. Product delivery is prioritised, while the reference to the mentee as "this individual" makes him an object secondary to the "product".

In the following extract, Henk makes the argument that without the requirement to do knowledge transfer work can be achieved at "optimum efficiency":

> 3-214. P: But it, but it has a, a massive impact actually on the schedule. Now obviously, that's the nature of our relationships. So I'm not saying it changed that.
>
> 215. P: [No, no, no].
>
> 216. P: Because it's not possible.
>
> 217. R: Yeah.
>
> 218. P: But yeah, without a doubt if we could, if you could come to work and spend all your time just working at your optimum efficiency on your own work and maybe doing the coaching for some of the more junior guys in in our group, we would get a lot more actual work done without a doubt. Even on this project with Alka, he was a very good candidate. Uhm, it still ended up taking a lot of time and our, our budget and schedule and everything uhm (.) also essentially ran out …
>
> 224. P: Yeah, and you will just get a mail this guy is on your project, okay, fine, talk to him [chuckles]. Start figuring out where he wants to work and so on, its fine. It's not a, there's not a complaint but without a doubt we would get quite a bit more work done if we didn't need to do this.
>
> 232. P: It can't just be for any, any old reason but in general we found that they're pretty accommodating and I'm not sure if it's maybe as a result of, of the knowledge transfer. So it's again like I said it's not a, it's not a complaint but uhm (.) it does take a lot of time. You've had cases where you have to finish the project but you also have this knowledge transfer thing. You've got your counterpart there and you're effectively sitting and explaining concepts and you're showing things step by step and you're incorporating ideas and so on where you actually should be [chuckles] …
>
> 233. R: [Doing it]
>
> 234. P: Quickly and very you know directly really finishing the thing off and just getting everything to work together but you, you're in a different mode there and then that is going to take more time.

Here the notion of time is used to argue that knowledge transfer is a distraction from project delivery. Knowledge transfer is said to be time consuming, as suggested by “it does take a lot of time”, and words and phrases such as “schedule”, “spend all your time”, “finishing”, “finish the project” “going to take more time” are used with “budget and schedule … ran out” to depict knowledge transfer as being a hurdle to work. Henk offers a detailed explanation of what the knowledge transfer entails with “you’re effectively sitting and explaining concepts and you’re showing things step by step and you’re incorporating ideas” to further build on this construction.

Henk is more explicit in making the causal link between completing project work and the hindrance of knowledge transfer in the following sentence, “You’ve had cases where you have to finish the project, but you also have this knowledge transfer thing”. The implication is that there is a choice to be made, either finishing the project or doing knowledge transfer. His reference to “actual work”, which implies that the knowledge transfer is not a priority, shows the extent of what is required in terms of effort. This works with the reference made that the client is “pretty accommodating”, presumably regarding time and budgetary commitments, to depict Henk’s argument as reasonable. The suggestion being made is that the clients are willing to make accommodation for knowledge transfer as they also buy into the notion that it is time consuming.

Henk indicates his awareness of the relation of power with the client by repeatedly offering disclaimers, as suggested by “it is not a complaint” and stressing that that it is “obviously” the nature of the relationship, which cannot be changed. This portrays the self in a positive manner in relation to his commitment toward the client.

The depiction of the mentee as other is suggested by the inference being drawn that “coaching for some of the more junior guys in in our group” is less time consuming than working with the Saudi Arabian mentees. This works with the distinction being made between working with a “good” Saudi Arabian candidate, as suggested by "even on this project with Alka, he was a very good candidate”, presumably in contrast to the other mentees and the comparison with our “junior guys” to depict the other as inferior to an “us”. The argument being made is that a Saudi Arabian “very good candidate” is more burdensome to project delivery than having to work with a South African junior guy. This works to emphasise, by inference, how difficult it is to work with the Saudi Arabian mentees.

Located within an economic discourse that privileges time spent on output and product delivery, the depiction of knowledge transfer as energy draining and time consuming, a risk to the project and as a lessor priority, systematically constructs knowledge transfer as not integrated into work activities and as a separate activity from the focus of work that is at the expense of project delivery. This functions to privilege practices aimed at the attainment of business objectives and to legitimise the practice of a “dual track” approach and justify the exclusion of the mentees from project work (Willig, 2013). It highlights the normative expectations of the productive engineer, which are to privilege project work. This construction of knowledge transfer is in conflict with the construction of knowledge transfer as a collaborative initiate. The conflicting constructions both draw from an economic discourse, which has particular implications regarding the negotiation of the conflict that arises, which is presented in the following section.

4.1.1.3 Negotiating Conflicting Meanings of Knowledge Transfer from an Economic Discourse

Locating knowledge transfer within an economic discourse that draws from a Western economic perspective and is concerned with economic practices and the norms of delivery, time and money, privileges practices aimed at the attainment of business objectives and regulates the mentors’ behaviour accordingly. These practices include sharing work to ensure productive work efforts, efficient use of time and resources, prioritising tasks that increase project productivity, and minimising risks and reducing tasks that could result in delays. Within an economic discourse, the success of business is measured by attainment of contractual obligations that consider completion of working projects on time and on budget in a manner that ensures securing repeat contracts governs behaviour. Constructing knowledge transfer as a collaborative working initiative portrays it in a positive light that indicates willingness on the part of the South African participants to engage with the Saudi Arabian participants and share their knowledge and skills and inoculates against any inferences of prejudice towards an other, whereas constructing knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task that is in conflict with achieving economic ideals and depicts the involvement of the Saudi Arabian on projects as a risk, offers an opposing construction. The different discursive constructions result in conflicting practices and oscillations between the different subject positions (Edley, 2001).

Ideologically, knowledge transfer as a collaborative effort entails involving the mentee on the project in a meaningful manner where their contributions are of equal value, whereas constructing it as separate from project work and in conflict with achieving delivery results in

an ideological dilemma that must be navigated. The mentors negotiate this conflict using strategies of discursive delicacy, othering and privileging project work that subjugate knowledge transfer and highlight the power of the Western notion of economic success. According to Rowe and Goodman (2014), delicacy is indicative of the possibility of ideological dilemmas, while Jensen (2011) asserts that a strategy of othering is in place when the standards of the self are both seen as superior and as of universal validity. Consequently, it suggests a difference between the self or in-group and the other or out-group, where the other is portrayed as violating universal principles and is evaluated against the characteristics of the self.

In terms of practice, the following extract offers an example of the use of delicacy, where Peter demonstrates his awareness of the conflict that the two constructions pose. His use of delicacy is indicated by his reference to the situation being "tricky" and suggesting that "one has to be a little bit careful". Peter manages the conflict by justifying the use of "two streams", on the one hand arguing for the importance of the outcome of the project and suggesting that because of the mentees' age, lack of experience and not being at the expected level, they are both unable to make a contribution and pose a risk, and on the other hand arguing that the mentees are actually still involved.

> 8-193. P: Oh yes. So we essentially had these two streams and what that did was it meant we could keep the project risk low while and this is where it becomes tricky because essentially they weren't involved, in, in the larger senses they were involved but their work was not necessarily key to the project and unfortunately when you get into especially the delivery mode where the outcome of the project is also important, which is still the case in this case, uhm one has to be a little bit careful as I say, these guys are very young, very inexperienced, not necessarily at the level we'd expect from our own guys [attends to his phone]. Hang on, I think I might have answered that instead of killing it. I did indeed. Sorry, it's probably a marketer. So that, that is the one risk that, that we do have and it does and the guys are not per default at the level where they're going to be able to make a contribution; however, at every stage that a decision was taken, at every stage that something was done, we made sure and sat with the guys, explained to them why we're doing it, what we're doing, where we're going, that kind of thing.

Peter concedes that "essentially they weren't involved" regarding the mentees' involvement but also justifies that they were involved, as suggested by "in the large senses", but that their contribution "was not necessarily key to the project". He argues that this is justified, because

they are not at the level where they can be expected to make a contribution. Peter uses this argument to further justify the practice of “involving” the mentees by offering explanations regarding the workings of the project, implying that this makes up for their exclusion from the project.

There is a clear distinction been made between “our own guys” and “these guys” along the lines of experience and ability to make a contribution where of “our guys” are considered to be at the expected level of expertise. The distinction establishes a desired “us” and a lacking and inferior “other”.

The impact of constructing knowledge transfer from an economic discourse that is ideologically concerned with efficient use of time and resources for financial gain closes down the possibility of the mentees gaining working access to the project. The implication is that the mentees are denied access to the project for knowledge sharing. Using the strategy of othering results in desirable characteristics with regard to the achievement of business outcomes being assumed for the self, while being found to be lacking in the other. This sets up the participants in an asymmetrical power relation, with the self as superior in contrast to an inferior other on a basis other than specific knowledge to be gained on the project. An asymmetrical relationship could be expected in a mentor-mentee relationship based on who has the knowledge to be transferred; however, in this case the distinction is being made on the basis of the characteristics of the other. This aspect will be explored further when addressing the strategic objective that is focused on the ways that the self and other are constructed.

Having presented the impact of the conflicting constructions that arise from the South African participants constructing knowledge transfer as a work process, the implications in terms of the practice of knowledge transfer from both an academic and an economic discourse are presented in the following section.

4.1.1.4 Negotiating Conflicting Meanings of Knowledge Transfer from both an Academic Discourse and an Economic Discourse

Knowledge transfer is variably constructed drawing from an academic discourse, which ideologically aims to replicate the student in the image of the teacher in order to place them at a desired level of knowledge, and from an economic discourse that is concerned ideologically with the efficient use of resources for financial gain. Each construction legitimises certain practices and sets the participants up within certain power relations that draw from the respective dominant discourses. The constructions offer various functions that come to the

fore within particular discursive contexts and give rise to ideological dilemmas which must be navigated to make sense of their experiences. The mentors both construct and negotiate these dilemmas using the discursive strategies of othering and of delicacy.

The following quote demonstrates how Henk navigates the dilemma that arises as a result of locating knowledge transfer as a training initiative and not as a collaborative effort. A distinction is made between training and working on the project, and Henk dismisses the possibility of collaborative work by arguing for an alternative purpose regarding the engagement with the Saudi Arabians, which is not to work on the project:

> 3-202. Because even when they come here they, their trips, it's always the purpose of the trip is, is to do training. It's never to work on the project.

The South African participants variably draw of the various constructions to achieve certain functions. In the following extract, Dirk depicts knowledge transfer as a workplace activity, yet draws from a coaching discourse to liken it to "first year coaching", implying a teaching approach that draws from an academic discourse:

> 10-152. P: We actually found that er just the fact that we sat together didn't mean he will be doing stuff. I will be doing the most of the work. Uhm And then we got a stage where I said: 'Okay now you have to do this part, and next week I will check it.' And it was really elementary stuff. Really easy Excel spreadsheet stuff and ...
>
> 153. R: [Hm].
>
> 154. P: Just writing up in a Word document. If I gave him stuff to measure in the laboratory, I would still help him, but I had just asked him to write it up and write a little report. Uhm So it was really very, like er first year coaching.

Here the suggestion being made is that the mentee is only capable of a level of work that Dirk implies requires "first year coaching", locating it within an academic discourse and making available the subject position of student for the other. The portrayal of the level of work as basic is achieved by describing it as "elementary stuff", "easy … stuff" and using the diminutive "little" to describe the type of work that the mentees must produce. The repeated use of the modelising term "really" (Verkuyten, 2003) as prefix works to strengthen the construction of how easy the tasks assigned to the mentees are. Referring specifically to the tools used by name, "Excel spreadsheet" and "Word document", suggests that the mentees are not capable of engaging with more complex engineering-specific tools and implies their level of skill is limited to non-specialised and basic tools. Dirk also portrays the mentee as lacking in initiative

and the self as proactive and responsible for the work. He establishes a position of superiority over the other with the comment that the mentees' work must be "checked" by himself while likening the mentee to a first-year student and by stating that he does "most of the work". In this way the other is positioned as inferior and the self as superior in terms of ability. Dirk uses the collective "we" to present his account, thus suggesting that his experience is shared by others, presumably the other mentors. This works to establish his account as credible.

In the following extract, Henk establishes a clear distinction between an academic approach, which he describes using words and concepts such as "curriculum", "structured course", "chapters", "theory", "formally doing things on paper" and a "university" "filler" "course", drawing from an academic discourse and hands-on practical experience, which entails "exposure to the entire development", and a practical hands-on experience that will "produce something useful at the end" when describing the knowledge transfer approach. The suggestion being made is that an academic approach functions outside of the workplace and is limited in what it exposes the mentee to, whereas a "hands-on approach", which is favoured by the mentors, entails physical integration into the workplace that leads to productive activity. Knowledge transfer is being depicted as addressing the mentees' development through their involvement on the project:

> 3-138. P: … Is to not really have a very formal, can we say sort of a curriculum? We're not trying to do a substitute or a, a sort of a filler on in terms of what the university did to really provide a, a course or a something like that that the guys work through formally, do things on paper. We instead take a very a much more dynamic approach and try and give them as much practical hands-on experience as possible. So we try and involve them and in as many aspects of the project as possible as well to, to try and sort of broaden their skill base. So we would also don't use the approach of saying, 'okay, you go and sit in the corner there you're going to work on the software that's it. We'll do the rest, don't worry about it.' We try and, and involved them in the entire system engineering process. But then obviously, primarily in the aspect that they're going to be involved in but to some extent give them visibility about the entire process. So for us it's, it's been much more about real (.) uhm exposure to the entire development and a practical hands-on experience, physically taking something that you've, you've got on paper as something you need to do and then getting that to actually to realise it, as such. That's now only really one part of it but, but, but that's where we try I think and, and focus and to, to really get them to actually physically get their hands dirty, so to speak and, and engage and actually produce something useful at the end and, and hopefully

get them to, to get a bit of an, an understanding about the entire system and the entire development. So that they don't feel like they did this one small little piece but they don't even know what the work involves.

The exchange continues in the next extract; however; Henk now suggests that they are not involved in the actual project, implied in "we largely stayed away from giving them work like saying they have to help us er write the document for specifying the requirements". The suggestion being made is that they are merely observers:

3-139. R: Okay.

140. P: So it's much, than something like as opposed to a something that's structured like the course or a, a curriculum where we've got like chapters or specific things in theory that we want them to look or read through and so on. So we largely stayed away from giving them work like saying they have to help us er write the document for specifying the requirements. We would specifically ask them to give inputs and maybe create opportunities for them to see what are the requirements. What are we thinking of and provide more inputs. But not tell to the guy you have to go and write this document because that will just bog down the whole process.

The several references to "practical", "hands-on" involvement, "physically realising" draw on a workplace discourse that is being differentiated from an academic approach implied by references to "structured", "curriculum", "course", "chapters", and "theory". The comparison is one of active involvement and the other of a passive lack of involvement, with the suggestion that development occurs with active involvement.

Henk both argues that the academic approach will not provide sufficient understanding of the "whole process" and that allowing the mentees to be involved in working on tasks on the project will create a delay in the process, as implied by "will just bog down the whole process". This indicates the underlying conflict. Phrases such as "as much as possible", "try and sort of", "to some extent", "to realise it, as such", "we try I think", "so to speak", "a bit of an understanding", and "hopefully" pretext the reference to practical hands-on work, suggesting delicacy and tentativeness.

To involve the mentees in the entire process in a hands-on manner, as distinguished from a curriculum approach, would entail the mentees being involved on real tasks. The dilemma is that practical hands-on learning comes from participation on the project; however, Henk states

this is avoided. Henk manages the dilemma using a strategy of othering and blaming the mentees for their lack of initiative, ability and motivation to take on responsibility:

> 3-142. P: And so we will, we will sort of, we avoided those types of things. Rather let the guys know about more things that are going on but not get them so tied up in taking full responsibility for things that they become so entrenched in that one thing that they don't see what's going in the whole project. And (.) that is sort of a general approach that we've been following now. For, for myself, or especially with Alka now and Ahmed uhm and to some extent Ibraam, what I've, what I've just sort of realised after a while works and doesn't work for me and unfortunately, it's much more sort of labour intensive [chuckles]. I just found that then some people might say it's completely wrong but I just found that if you, if you, if you try and allocate sort of formal tasks to the guy and you give him the full responsibility for the tasks, we would see that as an opportunity for you to now take responsibility and grow and that's typically how we work.
>
> 143. R: [Yeah].
>
> 144. P: When you think about university you, you have to start by maybe doing things in groups initially, but at some point it's a thing you have to do on your own, take responsibility and do it. But I just found that, that especially because of the shorter, interaction cycles that it tends to not really work that well. I mean, for us it would be something that almost drives you. If you, you've been given responsibility for this thing and you've got a certain period of time to finish and it's, it's going to sort of motivate you to really work on it. But in their case that I found that it just often, it just falls flat if you, you give the tasks and then all that happens is he, he gets to a point where he gets stuck. He doesn't ask you for help and it ends up being a mess. And then you have to look at it and say 'ooh, okay, but he didn't really do anything now or the stuff that I wanted him to do'.

The mentees are depicted as not being capable of assuming responsibility, as implied by the suggestion that giving the mentees responsibility will result in the project "falling flat" and "being a mess" and limit them from being able to have a holistic view. The portrayal of the mentees as unable to work independently positions them as the inferior other while depicting Henk's action as reasonable.

Using a normative evaluation, Henk depicts the other as problematic (Verkuyten, 2003). Henk's assessment of the mentee against an expressed universal norm, stated as common place, is that the opportunity to take on responsibility provides motivation. The mentee is

judged as lacking. Henk states that “for us”, as opposed to in “their case”, clearly differentiates between an us and them, where the other is being accused of deviating from the norm. This constructs the inferior other and works to justify their exclusion from the project work while maintaining Henk’s portrayal of himself as reasonable.

Knowledge transfer is constructed as a developmental process that relies on training and exposure to the workplace but is limited to observer status to preserve the integrity of the workplace. In this view, the enactment of social power is realised in differential access to meaningful participation and contribution on working projects which are available to those who are knowledgeable and experienced and occupy subject positions of responsible engineer, and who exercise control over the norms and expectations that serve to position the other. The mentors are entitled to determine the learning content and justify exclusion from the workplace based on their privileging of Western workplace norms.

In this section I have presented the constructions of knowledge transfer by the South African mentors, their function, and impact on the practice of knowledge transfer. In the following section I will present the analysis of the construction of knowledge transfer by the Saudi Arabian mentees.

4.1.2 Knowledge Transfer as Constructed by the Saudi Arabian Participants

This section presents the various constructions of knowledge transfer from the perspective of the Saudi Arabian participants and mentees.

The Saudi Arabian participants (mentees) use the terms knowledge transfer and technology transfer both interchangeably and at other times differentiate the terms by indicating their respective meanings. Technology transfer is, however, used predominantly. The mentees almost never use the word mentorship, despite referring to the South Africans as mentors, which is significant in terms of the meaning that they ascribed to knowledge transfer. The analysis of the Saudi Arabian interviews identified two dominant constructions of knowledge transfer, both drawing from an economic discourse that locates it within the workplace. Knowledge transfer was systematically constructed as:

- A professional development internship, drawing from an economic discourse; and
- The sharing of proprietary knowledge, which draws from a business partnership economic discourse.

The constructions and functions of the various constructions are detailed, as well as their impact for practice in the following sections.

4.1.2.1 Knowledge Transfer as a Professional Development Internship

The Saudi Arabian participants depict knowledge transfer as being focused on on-the-job practical development for a junior engineer and construct it as a professional development internship that is located within an economic discourse. Knowledge transfer is described as a guided career development process through various stages aimed at improving a young professional's background knowledge, growing their technical expertise and experience through the practical application of technology projects within the workplace. Learning for career development is about technical know-how and workplace conduct and occurs through the integration of the engineer within the workplace who is offered guidance from a more experienced and knowledgeable workplace guide or mentor.

The construction is achieved by the mentees using strategies that include framing knowledge transfer as a normal professional development process within the workplace and a consequence of working on projects, using terminology associated with an engineer in the workplace, describing learning as integral to involvement in workplace practices, differentiating knowledge transfer from the practice of training or teaching, taking up the subject position of inexperienced engineer who works independently and making available the subject position of workplace mentor or guide for the South African participants.

The following extract from the interview with Aaquil provides an example of how knowledge transfer is constructed as located within the workplace. This is achieved by reference to workplace practice of meetings, teams within departments and using the term colleague to indicate his belonging:

> 2-151. P: Let people listen to other people talking more and if we're having a meeting with each other and we're seeing other on a regular basis then we will become part of the team. Then there is you know, we feel there is a connection between each other, and this is how we can, you know, as a colleague of that department.

Aaquil describes the integration of the mentees into the workplace as becoming "part of the team" and there being "a connection between each other", which leads to the formation of the self as colleague. Although reference to "let people listening to other people talking" suggests a passive role, Aaquil is positioning the mentees as participating in and belonging to the

workplace as team members. In the following two excerpts Ali similarly describes working together as a team with the South African engineers, that provides the opportunity for knowledge sharing to occur:

> 12-72. P: But, er me and him we are working as a team, and I can say that we have done the good job that time. And also the interacting er with the Person C [works for another company] and Person B [works for another company], the people that are working at Company A [similar type of company]. They offered us a very good chance to contact with them er and to really learn from their knowledge er and to work with them, er as a team,
>
> 73. R: [Hm].
>
> 74. P: a normal team, that they can discuss the problems, and sorry, and that we can discuss the problems together and we can er speak about our ideas. And about our understanding of the problems and they can correct us. And they tried to er educate us about which book they have a better explanation of our problems and er they, also they provided us with a references, direct references. They helped us, helped us to learn the programme er that is used in this field to design and to er development this kind of system or this kind of antenna. So we started with that programme. So we had er two days or three days small er course, a training course. After that we, after the course ended er we started using that programme in our time …

Here learning is described as an outcome of team interaction and engaging on ideas and problems with others who have specific technical knowledge, constructing knowledge transfer as a natural outcome of working within a team. Ali's naming of the team he worked in as a "normal team" works to show that the team he works with is part of usual workplace practice, distinguishing it from a training session. Together with his reference to common place meeting practices, such as discussion and sharing of ideas, this differentiation establishes the self as a participative team member. The other is positioned as guide who direct the mentees to external reference material to aid their problem-solving and who show them how to use technical programmes specific to the systems used in the workplace. The reference to a training course appears to be external to the working environment and there is no suggestion that this is presented by the mentors. Formal learning and teaching are depicted as occurring outside of the work environment, while knowledge transfer occurs in interaction within the workplace. Ali continues to build on this construction, as indicated in the following extract, describing the interaction at meetings which both locates knowledge transfer as a practice within the workplace and positions the self as a participating team member:

12-96. P: … Also, we used to stay with their engineers, like in our level like it is the one, one called Johan and the other one called also Peter I think.

97. R: [Hm].

98. P: ... and we used to have a meeting with them once discussing the things about, relating to er programme designs and er our, our implementation for their programme. So also we have joined er lots of meetings between them, and JTCKSA, the system engineer of JTCKSA, the systems engineer of SAJTC, and the Company A [similar type of company] itself and antenna track and we have then learned how we can speak at meetings. How we can learn from the (.) discussions. How we can also add a comment. How we can many things we have learned er from these meetings. So also I can I think these meetings has good value for us.

99. R: [Uhm].

100. P: In terms of learning, I think we have that, that duration we have had two types of the learning, kind of learning that we have here at JTCKSA, and the kind of learning there at the SAJTC. And I can say that 80% of learning, 80% of our knowledge we gained in that time, it is from the time we have spent in the SAJTC.

In this extract, Ali is establishing himself as being of equal professional standing as the South African engineers, referring to the South African engineers with whom he worked as being "like in our level". Constructing the self as being on an equal technical footing as the South African engineers is strengthened by his highlighting that both JTCKSA and SAJTC system engineers were present while he references his partaking in meetings. Ali uses terminology associated with an engineering work environment, as suggested by "programme designs", "system engineering" and "antenna track", to establish his credibility as an engineer who is able to engage in technical specifics, as implied by "discussing the things about, relating to er programme designs and er our, our implementation for their programme". Speaking as an engineer, Ali describes the learning that came about in the meetings not as technical knowledge, but as concerned with the norms regarding behavioural conduct in meetings, which suggests that workplace practices are unfamiliar to him. This works to maintain his positioning as engineer who has the requisite knowledge and merely lacks particular workplace know-how. The description of engagement within teams leading to increasing know-how of engineering work practice is indicated in the following extract from later in Ali's interview:

12-114. P: … Working with the SAJTC in general er have opened my eyes, sorry my eye to many things that we can't see here in JTCKSA. er

Actually, like working in a team that there are design er sorry er, er a big system er and they, they that big system er have a lot of parts that each part can interact with the sorry, each part has a team and each team used to make contact with the other teams and see how to address their goals and their and to also to build their plan, to finish their goals and to also er. Yeah, also to manage, to check, or to make sure the project is finished in the in the correct time. er They used to have something called BDR and CDR meetings that they, they, they collect all the teams in one place,

115. R: [Hm, hm].

116. P: and they have very long three days meetings, full-time meetings, and each team er trying to present his work as part of er that project. And also we learned from that a very good experience because you hear er all the people that are working in your er project, and you also you start understand their part (.) er their part of er of the system that you are both working in, in that system.

The description of knowledge gained is related to engineering practice typically gained only with experience in the workplace, such as how parts interact within large systems, addressing team goals, and project planning, as implied by “finishing the project on time”. There is no reference to technical engineering skill or knowledge gained, which serves to maintain Ali’s self construction as contributing engineer by virtue of having the required skills. The construction of knowledge transfer as achieved while working on projects is specifically highlighted by Ali where he refers to the projects that were worked on as “transferred technology projects” explicitly stating that the goal of the projects was to learn in the following extract:

12-202. P: … because it is transferred technology projects, and the main goal of the project to learn.

Ali constructs knowledge transfer as being concerned with learning how to function within a particular work environment by positioning the self as a contributing team member, thus differentiating it from a construction of it being concerned with acquiring skills. This functions to establish the self as an engineer, constructing knowledge transfer as a form of induction or internship into the workplace for qualified professional engineers.

In the following extract, Ibraham highlights that knowledge transfer is concerned with transferring knowledge that is not freely available, as suggested by “from the internet or books“, in addition to the reference to “experience, the custom, the behaviour, the thinking,

how to solve the problem, how to learn to do the task". He states that knowledge transfer cannot occur if the parties do not "sit together", "thinking together" and "work together". He is constructing knowledge transfer as focused on acquiring workplace know-how while working together with others:

> 17-44. P: … um The other thing also, the transfer technology, it's not just transfer the technology or the knowledge. I'll transfer the technology, it's not just transfer the knowledge. You transfer the custom. You transfer the behaviour, you transfer the thinking, how to think, how to solve the problem. And also the knowledge, the knowledge itself, you can't, you can't find it somewhere, on the internet or in the books or but the important thing, if you sit together, how to solve this problem, how to do with this one, how come? This is the important thing, to transfer, not just the knowledge. Some people just focus on the knowledge, how to get the knowledge, how to get the knowledge. Okay, it's this, give me that. The file. Give me this one. This whole thing that you can't, you can't find somewhere, but the technology search or the transfer that you need it also not the knowledge, it's the experience, the custom, the behaviour, the thinking, how to solve the problem, how to learn to do the task, all that we transfer and that not happen if you er not sit together, not thinking together, not work together that's important that we er, er actually we transfer. What other thing in my experience for transfer technology, the duration of the stay in in the country, in the South African country er now that I have experience, learning experience for the duration, I have spent one month and also during my duration two months, I find sometimes, three months until six months.

By omission, the construction of knowledge transfer does not concern the acquiring of professional skills. Ibraham repeats that knowledge transfer is not about transferring available knowledge, implied by the words "the file", which suggests that he is referring to explicit knowledge that can be captured in a file and handed over. By distinguishing this knowledge from know-how knowledge, as articulated as how-to problem solve, how to think or tacit knowledge, Ibraham constructs knowledge transfer as being concerned with workplace context-specific knowledge. Ibraham repeats the words "sitting together" which works with the reference to "thinking together" and "work together" to construct knowledge transfer as happening within the context of interaction and engagement within the workplace with those who have the contextual know-how. Ibraham positions the self as experienced, as suggested by the word "now" in the sentence, "now that I have experience" which, used in relation with the detail regarding the time that he has spent working at SAJTC, implies that he once was

inexperienced, strengthening the depiction of knowledge transfer as aimed at building work experience.

Constructing knowledge transfer as a workplace induction for inexperienced engineers frames knowledge transfer as a career development process for the young professional and makes available the subject position of mentor. The development entails a structured process through which they gain experience and improve skills applicable to the workplace through their contribution to the productivity of the workplace working on projects while building on their professional knowledge acquired in formal education. The following quote shows Aaquil describing the "evolution" of the engineer as a process that is "natural", and by implication career development is an inherent process that holds true for all engineers:

> 2-23. P: ... a bigger picture of what is the evolution of his career or what ... what should be the natural evolution of, you know, ... that he should learn and keep an eye that he's getting this close.

Depicting career development in this manner works to normalise learning in the workplace in a way that does not link its meaning to addressing a deficiency in the mentee. The implication is that learning in the workplace is an expected outcome of workplace activities and therefore does not diminish the credibility of the young engineer to contribute to workplace productivity. In the extract, Aaquil's use of the phrase "keep an eye" suggests that the mentee is responsible for his own learning and assessing his progress to gauge his development, thus depicting the engineer as self-directed and independent.

In the following quote from later in the interview, Aaquil continues the construction of knowledge transfer as a process of gaining skills required for professional development while working on projects. This is achieved by describing that skills are gained on projects as an engineer passes through defined development stages.

> 2-31. P: So now I need an experienced engineer and we should have a similar, a similar guy to him, but what happens is they start working on that project, on that technology or they embrace one skill, then they, when they move to another project they embrace completely different skill. So now he is forgetting about his first skill and he learning about second skill and after three, four project he's still Level 1 engineer and I spoke to Renier about that. I said 'look, Renier, you have to treat our JTCKSA engineers with, with a plan that as part of your team'. So if he your JTCKSA resource we have like sorry
>
> 32. R: [indistinct, voice too soft]

33. P: we about a ten year partnership now. So our resources, it is still the same as your resources and even when you're starting a new project, you should even put your input on that. I said 'I need that people because I am building him or trying to transfer him from first stage engineer to like the fifth stage engineer and this would happen through many projects'. But we'll form as a part manager the new engineer he doesn't see this uh he doesn't see his future and I'm not speaking about only his future. We have to take care about his future but also, we have to take care of what anything probability about building the capability for us and the manager or the department manager he don't want this and put these two together. And I think we uh and this should be also happening with JTCKSA and DSEA [sister organisation] uh sorry, SAJTC with DSEA [sister organisation] together because Renier, like Renier, he see further than me the in the next project. Even I will be the, like we're having a new project now with uh SADAH2 two [project name], him and I are going to be responsible for that project but he is already developing uh the and he know the project and what is the next step.

34. R: Hm.

35. P: Even when I sit on the road map, I know what, what is going to develop, but I still doesn't fully understand the (.) the skills that the engineer can develop with that. And then we should sit together and we said 'we have that have career path for that engineer for, any hardware engineer number one; and we have hardware engineer number two, we have a different career path for him, that after two year or too many project that we can reach him to that level'. But that doesn't happen as part of the technology transfer right now. I go, I need engineer and that's 'this is what I have now, you work you work with it'. That's one part.

In this excerpt Aaquil talks of his need to build a similar capacity for JTCKSA and appears to be complaining about the lack of progress of the mentees in this regard. The first sentence of this exchange suggests that the meaning that knowledge transfer has for Aaquil is as being concerned with the replication of skill and technology in an engineer through a process of moving through projects for future capacity needs. This is implied by Aaquil expressing the need for having a "similar guy", presumably to a SAJTC engineer, who represents a required desired level of experience and linking this to skills obtained on the project. Skill acquisition is stated as occurring while working on the project, which Aaquil refers to as "embracing" skill. Naming the development trajectory of the engineer as "first stage" to "fifth stage" suggests a recognised process and implies developmental progress from being a more junior

inexperienced engineer or “first stage engineer” and “Level 1 engineer” to a “fifth stage engineer”. The quote that states, “Renier, you have to treat our JTCKSA engineers with, with a plan that as part of your team’” further supports the construction that inclusion of the mentees with the South African engineers is required for knowledge transfer to occur. The South African mentors are being portrayed as being career guides who have knowledge of the skills that are required for the development to transition through the various stages, suggested when Aaquil states that they should jointly “sit together”, suggesting the Saudi Arabians and South Africans need to craft a “career path” because while the mentee has knowledge of what is required for the project on the road map, he lacks understanding of the skills required to develop. Despite this admission, Aaquil manages his portrayal of self as being a competent engineer by referencing his knowledge of the “road map”, which is regarded as a complex aspect of engineering. He refers to the mentees as engineers with a pretext of “new” and “level 1”, which works to highlight their professional status, invoking associated expectations which functions to locate them as belonging within the engineering workplace while differentiating them only on the basis of their lack of experience. Achmat similarly constructs knowledge transfer from the perspective of a “fresh graduate” who needs to gain experience and knowledge while working with an experienced person in the following excerpt:

> 18-8. P: And it lasted for a year and a half, or so. So my experience I think wasn’t that er just let me think er It wasn’t the ideal situation, because we had some issues, like with the funding and stuff like that. But overall my experience was great. I enjoyed working with the experienced people, since I was like a, I worked with JTCKSA as a fresh graduate, so it was a good experience for me to work with advanced people and gain some knowledge, and I think that expedited my knowledge and. This is what I think, yeah.

Achmat makes available the subject position of experienced mentor for the South African engineers while managing his own identity by referring to himself as a graduate who lacks experience, as implied by the pretext of “fresh”. The suggestion is that knowledge transfer offers experiential know-how to an already qualified individual.

Knowledge transfer is similarly constructed as a process of capability development by Fahad in the following quote by describing it as entailing an assessment at the starting point of where the engineer is and planning how to get them to have the capability that is required of them to have, thus implying a structured process:

> 14-227. P: So if there is people from an organisation, from JTCKSA as a [inaudible] for technology…
>
> 228. R: Hm.

229. P: ... knows that the people capabilities, and have planned for those people, and then the people from the SAJTC, you know, comes help with providing you know and the plan how to, how to go from this point to that point. But JTCKSA needs to look to specify the starting point where the engineer is and what we want from the engineers to be able to do at the end of that.

The Saudi Arabian participants construct the self as professional engineers who are guided by the mentor who is more experienced in a way that maintains their depiction as independent learners, as seen in the following extract from the interview with Mohammed:

5-34. P: Yes. Uh She has a knowledge more than me in this, in this (.) in this track or the antennas of ours, yeah she uh gave me tasks. Uh the first tasks was, were that was, that I was has reading about antennas and just and something like that in paper, White Paper. She give me some papers to read, then I read it and I refer to her when I need to ask about something which I couldn't understand. Uh And then step by step we transfer to another tasks choosing the programme to write something and she helped me, she and Peter. She [speaker refers to Peter incorrectly using "she"] is a doctor here.

Here knowledge transfer is being constructed as a "step-by-step" process moving through different tasks with the help of a mentor who is more knowledgeable than himself in the specific field of "antennas". By highlighting a specialised area of engineering, Mohammed is demarcating a specific area in which the mentor is more knowledgeable than himself without loss of his credibility as engineer. By implication of the assigning of tasks, the mentor has authority over Mohammed; however, he manages his depiction of self as independent by stating that he only refers to his mentor if there is something which he does not understand. Mohammed also references a "we" in relation to the steps in his learning, suggesting his own role in the selection of these tasks. The reference to Peter's title as Doctor works to position the mentors as knowledgeable guides and helpers in relation to the inexperienced mentees. Knowledge transfer is being depicted as occurring within relationships between professionals where power relations are differentiated based on specific specialised knowledge and expertise.

Knowledge transfer is constructed as a professional development internship drawing from a work discourse that depicts it as a process for the career development and progression of engineers within the workplace through involvement on projects. This functions to depict the Saudi Arabian participants as engineering professionals who have the requisite qualifications and skills to contribute as team members within in the workplace. The Saudi Arabian

participants tap into a discourse of the world of work and construct themselves foremost as engineers. In terms of practice this affords the Saudi Arabian engineers the same rights and entitlements to participate as contributing team members such that their participation in the projects is both important to the success of the project and to their career development. The focus on inclusion in the workplace talks to belonging as an aspect of identity. Belonging considers identification with the in-group that entitles individuals to share in interaction and access to the same rights and privileges as those of the larger group (Wangler, 2012). Belonging also entails acceptance (Wangler, 2012). The Saudi Arabian engineer is depicted as different only in terms of a lack of workplace experience, which is constructed as normal for all junior engineers, thus limiting the difference between the self and the other. As engineers who are in their first career stage, the mentees accept guidance and direction from the mentors that aid them in navigating the workplace. The implication for the practice of knowledge transfer is that professional career development is derived from being embedded in working experience and being incorporated into projects. Normalising knowledge transfer as the practice of guiding and helping junior engineers' functions to maintain the credibly of the self as professional independent contributor.

The Saudi Arabian mentees also construct knowledge transfer as the sharing of proprietary knowledge drawing from an economic discourse. This differs from a construction of knowledge transfer as a professional development internship, where knowledge is depicted as contextual know-how and common to all engineers in that in this construction knowledge transfer is depicted as involving highly specialised technology that is not easy to acquire. This construction is presented in the following section.

4.1.2.2 Knowledge Transfer as Sharing of Proprietary Knowledge

Drawing from an economic workplace discourse, the Saudi Arabian participants construct knowledge transfer as the sharing of proprietary knowledge through partnership with a credible organisation for the purpose of replicating technologies that enable the creation of a knowledge-based organisation of experts in highly specialised fields. The knowledge that is to be shared is depicted as advanced and highly specialised technology that is created and shared by experts in their areas of specialisation. The construction is achieved by the mentees using strategies that include differentiating the transfer of specialised proprietary knowledge that took many years to develop from the transfer of basic and available knowledge and referring to the transfer of this advanced knowledge as "technology transfer", drawing a distinction between knowledge/technology transfer and teaching/training and research, portraying knowledge transfer as requiring a partnership of colleagues who share and work

toward a common goal, positioning knowledge owner as highly specialised and knowledgeable mentors and the self as professional engineers and ready recipients.

The construction draws from an economic discourse, with its ideology of market competitiveness aligned to the knowledge economy (Stiglitz, 1999). The construction of knowledge transfer as sharing of proprietary knowledge functions as a strategy of othering and legitimises an expectation that the mentors will have significant expertise that they are willing to share and that the knowledge shared will be of the nature of trade secrets. An example of the specialist knowledge that is the focus of knowledge transfer in this construction is provided from the following extract from the interview with Achmat, where he names it using specialist technical terminology ("Radar and EW") describing it as advanced:

> 18-40. P: Because when we think, we think about the JTCKSA is working with the SAJTC, or the application we are working with is Radar and EW. So it sounds a bit, er advanced for us and it's er kind of new for us.
>
> 41. R: Hm.
>
> 42. P: ... because I'm a commissioned engineer and I would have several fields and radar we don't understand.

Achmat establishes his credibility as an engineer, calling himself a "commissioned engineer", which works to highlight the specialised nature of the new knowledge in relation to his own. This is stressed by the acknowledgement that he does not know all the fields of the specialist field. Achmat also depicts himself as an active participant working in partnership with the two organisations in the field of application.

In the following quote from Ali's interview, he describes his motivation to join JTCKSA and work with a foreign partner, referring to knowledge transfer as technology transfer:

> 12-20. P: … So then I see it as a challenge to me to work with er foreign partner that wants to put me in the, the end of the technology that er that they and they want to develop these things, so, but I had that er I had that motivation to work in similar er similar er, er environment, because I was, after my, after I graduated, I worked er for a company here in Saudi Arabia, it's called Company X [changed to in order to maintain anonymity], I think it is similar to Company Z [changed to in order to maintain anonymity] in your country.
>
> 21. R: Okay.
>
> and

12-34. P: But, yeah, but I started to do that because I think since I am at university and heard about JTCKSA environment, and their goals and they want to build something new, and they want to er, they want to transfer the technology from very good partner but, yeah.

Using the words “challenge” and “foreign” depicts the knowledge that is to be transferred as not being readily available, which works with the phrase “the end of the technology” to infer that that it is cutting-edge technology. Referring to the partner organisation as “very good partner” and as “foreign partner” who wants to build new things, draws from the discourse of the global knowledge economy and works to depict a partner organisation as advanced and of international standing. The suggestion is that the knowledge is not available locally and must be sought in a global market. Ali establishes himself as a professional with work experience who seeks a challenge and depicts knowledge transfer as being difficult and involving advanced knowledge. Ali builds on this construction later in the interview:

12-64. P: And one of them on the antenna side, because they, they er want to build it er, er maybe er I can say that new technology in that what he did, so they, they recognised it as a high risk task ...

65. R: [Hm, hm].

66. P: So er they wanted people, they er can, they can catch the normal knowledge, then they can also work in the advance part. So it was a challenge for, and also for my friend.

Ali’s uses the words “high risk” and “new technology” to describe the nature of the work, which with the distinction being made between “normal knowledge” and “advanced” work, portrays knowledge transfer as involving novel and advanced work. Ali makes reference to his friend also finding it challenging, which functions to establish consensus, confirming his view as held by others.

Similarly, Fahad says the technology to be gained in knowledge transfer is difficult to build and not freely available, as implied by his reference to the answers to questions not being “publicly answered” and not being available on the intranet in the following quote:

14-213. P: That is not publicly, publicly answered. So there is nothing that if you do a good search on the intranet, that you won’t find an answer on it.

214. R: [Hm].

215. P: And then, if you go to SAJTC to find someone to tell you the answer. Because these things, because you know the, the people with

technology, real technology, they work very hard to build this technology, trying to answering these questions that not, are not publicly answered.

216. R: [Hm].

217. P: Which is not the driver of SAJTC.

The suggestion being made is that the knowledge to be transferred is not accessible within the public domain, constructing technology transfer as involving knowledge that is difficult to create and therefore protected. By suggesting that people in SAJTC can give you answers, and that technology is not their driver, Fahad implies that they do not possess proprietary knowledge. Earlier in the interview Fahad differentiated the concept of technology from that of knowledge, arguing that knowledge is general and freely available, while technology is specialised, as implied by the word "specific", and developed in-house through hard work and expertise, as per the following quote:

14-193. P: The knowledge, just the knowledge is general knowledge is ...

194. R: Hm, hm.

195. P: The technology is specific. So it is something that SAJTC come out with it. That is not written in a book.

196. R: Okay.

197. P: It's specific technology that based on, so if. So you just open the books and you have some expert that you cannot reach it. These guys have worked these years to develop this technology, that they have, you know, many, many simulations and many engineering work that is so many small problems, that end up with the design, that is complete and, and accurate.

198. R: [Hm].

199. P: But for our work at the SAJTC it is not that. It is not. Just applying that general knowledge and know and understanding to make things happen.

200. R: Do you have a view about why they give you the general knowledge and not the technology transfer (.) the technology transfer?

201. P: For me, because there is (.) the things that we asked for is not something that the SAJTC has technology on.

Technology is being constructed as something difficult to develop and the output of numerous engineers over an extended period of time. Fahad repeats the modalising term "many" to stress the expertise and skill required to develop technology. The suggestion being made with "So you just open the books and you have some expert that you cannot reach it" is that this type of knowledge is not freely available, also implied by "That is not written in a book", but

requires deep expertise. Constructing technology in this manner differentiates general knowledge from knowledge that is specialised and constructs knowledge transfer as involving access to knowledge that is of significant economic value. Constructing knowledge transfer in this manner functions to highlight that what the Saudi Arabian mentees are undergoing with the South African mentors is not knowledge transfer and argues for the mentors only providing general knowledge. This functions as othering of the South African mentors in relation to what is expected from mentors regarding the type of technology knowledge that they should have. Fahad completes his argument with the statement that SAJTC lacks the technology that was required of them, which devalues the expertise of the SAJTC mentors.

Having constructed technology as highly specialised knowledge, the Saudi Arabian participants depict the transfer of it as requiring a partnership between organisations, which is achieved by describing their inclusion in the goals of the organisation, as implied by the words "bigger picture" as quoted from the interview with Aaquil in the following:

> 2-161. P: And we, we - we can develop that easily with team meeting and project meeting and stuff like that and if you feel, you feel included more in the bigger picture of what we need to do and it's stuff like that.

Aaquil is depicting an engagement of inclusion referencing "meetings" and a sense of participation in the attainment of a bigger goal, while in the following Ali argues that because the goal of the project is technology transfer, implied by "technology transfer project", is to learn there is an expectation that the mentees are included in the decisions:

> 12-200. P: … But in the beginning we, sometimes you can't get the full information, you can't get involved with the decision er from er yeah, the decision er purposes so sometimes you find an e-mail that says; 'We have decided that and that…', But you did not know why they decided that, and when they decided that.
>
> 201. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 202. P: So it was an issue, an issue, and we, because it is transferred technology projects, and the main goal of the project to learn ...
>
> 203. R: [Hm].
>
> 204. P: ... it is kind of our er, er right that we should know how that decision is done.

Aaquil's complaint that the mentees were not given all the required information or included in decision-making suggests that technology transfer engagement entails true partnership that gives them equal rights and privileges as the South African employees, a suggestion that he

advances further on in the interview where he complains of being treated differently from the South African employees, as per the following quote:

> 12-210. P: Also sometimes you er find it difficult to work with some people. So maybe er I believe sometimes it's a personal issue, but he is representing the SAJTC. So er sometimes you get ignored, or sometimes you, you, you are treated not as a SAJTC er employment, so it may sometimes er, er make us feel that we should improve the relationship between both and work as a team.

Aaquil is arguing for inclusion and team participation, which he justifies as legitimate because of the nature of the project, being knowledge transfer. The implication is that it is through this engagement that learning takes place. Similarly, Ibraham refers to engaging with "colleagues" and learning from the "partner", arguing that learning occurs in a shared working environment that enables one to discuss and engage freely, as evidenced in the following excerpt:

> 17-54. P: The good thing also with the transfer technology it's to write the report and to write down what you learn during the weeks or during the month that you have to work with the project and you have to also someone ask me about the report, write the report and I see the report and I see my colleagues when the colleagues that write the report learn a lot from that one just er either did the task or write or write down that knowledge and experience that you learn with the partner. Um (3) the good thing also, [sighs] if we work together in the same office. In the same office, the, this is In SAJTC, the first project, the partner we sit together in the same office which is a good thing er the other project we separate.
>
> 55. R: Hm.
>
> 56. P: Not the same but also actually in the same buildings, the different buildings and it's difficult to communicate together and discuss together. We have to put the meeting and to meet ourselves in the lab or at the office or that. That it's, for me it's, it, it's not, it's not like when we sit together in er the same office, during the work we maybe ask something, maybe discuss something, maybe the er last product project we split in different building. I think that's it was not, it's not good for transfer technology. I think partnership we have to sit together all the time because the visit, it's limited, it's not we not sit and during the project.

Drawing a comparison between an earlier project, "the first project", and the "last" project with regard to sharing of a working environment, Ibraham is arguing for shared office space to

enable successful knowledge transfer. This functions to construct knowledge transfer as requiring engagement of professionals working in close proximity and together on projects.

The following excerpt from Achmat's interview builds on the depiction of partnership, where the argument being made is that the Saudi Arabian mentees must be given work responsibilities on the project:

> 18-112. P: 'I will work for one hour'. Some certain people think like this. Other guys like they complain about this to the management and they said that: We have to be given some responsibilities.
>
> 113. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 114. P: ... and have to be given some thoughts in order to transfer the knowledge.

The reference to being "given thoughts" implies that there is an expectation to be involved in decision-making in the workplace, suggesting that knowledge transfer involves engaging the mind through active involvement. This depicts knowledge transfer as an intellectual partnership.

Constructing knowledge transfer as the sharing of proprietary knowledge through partnership with a credible organisation located within the broader knowledge economy discourse legitimises the expectation around the type of knowledge that will be gained to enable the achievement of economic positioning within the global market. It sets up the relational interaction with the other as premised on partnership and its associated assumptions of collaboration and inclusion. In the following extract from the interview, Omar states that it is different goals that resulted in the mentees being disappointed, suggesting that expectations regarding the knowledge to be accessed were not met. This depicts the mentors and the SAJTC as lacking the requisite knowledge and experience and implies that SAJTC is not of international standing:

> 16-377. P: And different goals. But sometimes er it makes some disappointments for some of students [corrects] the engineers sorry. They feel like We don't get the best knowledge. We don't get the best experience when we work with the SAJTC.

Similarly, Ibraham makes an argument in the following quote, that knowledge transfer requires engaging with a credible more advanced organisation by stating that SAJTC has only the ability to build capability, and lacks the ability to develop products:

> 17-116. P: Yes, in in JTCKSA, in JTCKSA the focus the, they split the transfer technology in three parts. Three parts. The first part involve the capability, capability and the other, the situation this is how it's the good organisation that can build a credibility because we as I've said before, we're in the same level and the organisation but the second part now we have to move to build the facility to go, to, to we need the product now. Because the SAJTC now it's, it's not the right partner for this part of transfer technology, but the first part to build the capability, it's organisation to work with. That er once that the, the plan that now will the second part now that relation in the SAJTC is now, is not like that.

Ibraham makes a comparison between JTCKSA and SAJTC as being on the "same level" and that the SAJTC is "not like that" in relation to what is required in the next step in technology transfer for the JTCSA to achieve their goals, thus implying that the South African organisation does not have the more advanced expertise required for knowledge transfer. The distinction that Ibraham makes between capability building and the ability to build facilities and develop products suggests a distinction between developing skill and developing technology, where the latter is portrayed as more advanced. In a similar vein Fahad, in the following extract, takes the distinction between teaching and transferring knowledge, suggesting that technology transfer is more advanced than merely learning:

> 14-85. P: But you know the learning is happening when you do your task for a whole week and then you discuss the outcome of it and then you show your mistakes that you have made. So I thought that it is the teaching process, the training process more than transferring knowledge.

Later in Fahad's interview he uses what he calls "Apple Technology" to signify the nature of proprietary knowledge to differentiate from research and its relative economic value:

> 14-203. P: And SAJTC, SAJTC is a research, research organisation that don't focus on building technology that has, has value in the market. They are more build to have research and research and do things and apply it. Apply what they know and apply the latest publications and latest research.
>
> 204. R: [Hm].
>
> 205. P: So they I don't know, but the guys maybe know better than me that they didn't feel that they have trade secrets and have things that … that people outside SAJTC didn't want. You know they just The Apple knows that there is nobody that can make the item. There are many secrets that are not in

the books, that is not in anything outside Apple so they call it 'Apple Technology'.

206. R: [Hm].

207. P: So every product in the market, or most of the products in the market, they have sometimes technology that cannot be imitate somewhere in those, because there are secrets there that nobody knows it, except these guys.

208. R: [Hm].

209. P: The things that we worked on at JTCKSA and SAJTC it not that, it is more that is the latest research, the same the ... So the knowledge that we have in how to do it, not in what is the right thing to do.

The distinction being made between research, which is being suggested as being available in books, and technology which is depicted as being difficult to replicate because of its proprietary nature, works to differentiate SAJTC as a research organisation from an organisation which has valuable knowledge to share. In the last segment of this quote, Fahad states that the mentees engaged in research activities at SAJTC, implying that this was not knowledge transfer. Fahad's explanation that what he learned at SAJTC was concerned with "how to do" as opposed to the "right thing to do" completes his argument that the engagement with SAJTC did not entail knowledge transfer which is advanced by nature. This portrays SAJTC in a poor light. The construction of knowledge transfer as the sharing of specialised knowledge, in turn, positions the mentees as engineers who are able to assimilate advanced knowledge and argues for their right to fully participate in the work environment and their entitlement to be granted access to knowledge and technology that is not freely available.

In this section I have presented the construction of knowledge transfer by the Saudi Arabian participants, their functions, and impact on the practice of knowledge transfer. In the following section the findings of the analysis of both participating groups predominant will be summarised, providing an account of how the participants' constructions differ and their effects.

4.1.3 Discussion of the Construction of Knowledge Transfer by the Participants Engaged in a Mentorship Relationship

In this section I discuss the variable construction of knowledge transfer to show the meanings that are ascribed to the knowledge transfer and the dominant discourses from which these constructions draw. Because the constructions of the South Africans and Saudi Arabians were

presented separately, I begin this section with a summary of the findings. This is followed by a discussion of these findings as they relate to the research question aimed at addressing the construction of self and other, and its impact on knowledge transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers.

4.1.3.1 Summary of Construction of Knowledge Transfer by the Participants

The summary of the constructions of knowledge transfer as detailed earlier in this chapter with the discourses drawn from, subject positioning and the functions of the constructions are presented here.

The South African participants constructed knowledge transfer as a:

- Teaching training endeavour, drawing on an academic discourse with the purpose to provide skills to enable future contribution to the workplace. The construction makes available the subject positioning of student for the mentees and that of professional engineering teacher for the self. The construction functions to locate knowledge transfer outside of the economic workplace and legitimises teaching practices from an academic perspective. The construction achieves and maintains an asymmetrical power relation between knowledge owner and student.
- Work process, drawing on an economic discourse focused on the advancement of business objectives. This gave rise to the subject positions of productive engineer and employee and business partner and colleague. This construction functioned to set up expectations for the other. The construction gives rise to two secondary constructions that are in conflict ideologically, which are:
    - Knowledge transfer as a close collaborative working initiative between equal counterparts aimed at advancing a shared vision where knowledge sharing benefits both parties and their business objectives. The subject position of business peers is made available. This construction functions to both portray the interaction in a positive light and to justify an expectation that the other has the same professional knowledge and standards for work practices assumed for the self. This provides the basis for othering that develops attitudes and discursive practices that serve to create, justify, and locate the mentee as other, maintaining a power relationship that favours the self.
    - Knowledge transfer as an additional and separate work task that is in conflict with achieving economic ideals in that it is a burden that prevents the attainment of business success as measured by delivery time, budget and repeat contracts. Business success is privileged above the dissemination of knowledge. The

construction makes available the subject positioning of productive engineers for the mentors while portraying the mentees as unable to meaningfully contribute to the project work. The construction functions to privilege practices aimed at the attainment of business objectives and to justify the exclusion of the mentees from participation in project work. An asymmetrical power relation is achieved between engineer and “not engineer”, where knowledge sharing is closed off to the mentees. The construction is indicative of resistance to the requirement to transfer knowledge.

The South African participants’ variable constructions of knowledge transfer pose different ideologies with conflicting practices and result in the oscillation between the different subject positions (Edley, 2001) which must be navigated by the mentors.

The Saudi Arabian participants constructed knowledge transfer as:

- A professional development internship, drawing from an economic discourse aimed at gaining work experience and developing technical expertise through guided career phases. Knowledge is depicted as the contextual know-how required by all engineers to successfully navigate the workplace. The construction positions the self as inexperienced engineer and makes available the subject position of knowledgeable workplace guide or mentor for the South African mentors. The construction functions to legitimise the integration of the young engineer into the workplace while normalising knowledge transfer as a career development practice for all engineers. The power relation between engineer and mentor is asymmetrical in as much as it relates to the acceptance of the guidance offered by the mentor; however, the young engineer is placed in relation to their team members as peers.
- Sharing of proprietary knowledge, which uses principles of business partnership drawing on an economic discourse to depict knowledge transfer as achieved through partnering with a credible organisation in order to replicate a knowledge-based organisation. The knowledge to be transferred is depicted as highly specialised technology that is not in the public domain. The construction positions knowledge owners as highly specialised knowledgeable mentors and the self as professional engineers. The construction functions to set up a relationship of expectation, legitimising the mentees’ expectation that they will be provided access to expertise of the nature of trade secrets and provides the basis for othering. The construction portrays the South African mentors in an inferior light that establishes an asymmetrical power relation.

The constructions of both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants within a knowledge transfer discourse reveal the systematic setting up of self and other within unequal power relations that favour the self, which indicates both the presence of power and the rhetorical strategy of othering. The participants to knowledge transfer are placed in opposition to one another closing down the possibility of identities being positioned on an equal basis. The setting up of unequal power relations is not unexpected in the broader context of the knowledge economy where knowledge owners are privileged (Stiglitz, 1999). However, the way that the subjects are positioned legitimised certain actions and practices that do not support the knowledge transfer process.

Both parties ascribe meaning to knowledge transfer that involves a form of development/ advancement or progress; however, the different discourses that are drawn from to construct this meaning reveal the different ideological functioning of the discourses. The South African participants draw on an academic discourse focused on developmental training. This sets up an asymmetrical power relationship between each other as student and teacher and by implication, the positioning of engineer is closed off to the Saudi Arabian mentees. The student subject is subjected to the power afforded the teacher subject by being depicted as subordinate and an object of intervention (Frost, 1987). This locates the mentees within a social hierarchy where they are outside of the workplace (Mumby & Stohl, 1991). Within the broader knowledge economy with its notion of the globalisation, the constructions depict the Saudi Arabians as having poor expertise and lacking in education, which is associated with non-Western countries that are constructed as being backwards (Said, 1985). The Saudi Arabian participants conversely ascribe knowledge transfer with a developmental meaning that is specifically located within the workplace as a working internship, drawing from an economic discourse, while the mentors draw from an academic discourse. This Saudi Arabian construction also sets up the relationship within an asymmetrical relationship; however, the hierarchical gap implicit in the subject positions of young graduate and workplace guide or mentor is not as significant as that structured by the South African construction. Grooming of the professional in the workplace is concerned with the acquiring of workplace practices and behaviours that are normalised within the Western workplace. The normalisation of concepts indicates the presence of normative power that shapes and influences what is regarded as appropriate behaviour within specific contexts (Diez, 2005). The power of the dominant discourse of a Western concept of the workplace is evident in this construction, in that the Saudi Arabians desire to take on the workplace practices of the South African engineers. It is taken for granted that the workplace practices and know-how of the South African workplace will lead to the professional development of the mentees. As per Georgaca and Avdi (2012), dominant discourses become taken for granted and enable practices which introduce aspects

of power and resistance in discourse. The acceptance of this normative power by the Saudi Arabian participants demonstrates the impact of a dominant Western view of the workplace and the role that the context of a knowledge economy plays in how they attribute meaning to their experience of knowledge transfer (Heylighen, 1997).

Although constructed differently, knowledge transfer is specifically linked to development and progress to a desired state in the meaning systems of both the participating groups. Whereas the South African participants' construction functions to locate knowledge transfer outside of the economic workplace and legitimise teaching practices, implying that the mentees are not yet engineers and therefore not ready to enter the workplace, the Saudi Arabian participants' positioning of the self functions to legitimise the integration of the young engineer into the workplace and normalises development as a workplace practice. Having regard for the construction of self within social reciprocal interaction with others within social, historical and cultural contexts (Scott, 2016), the subject position of student made available to the mentees by the mentors is in conflict with the subject position of self as engineer for the Saudi Arabians.

The normalising of professional development as part of workplace practice is perhaps an attempt to for the Saudi Arabians to provide meaning to training and development discursive actions and practices by the South Africans in a way that does not undermine the self. Jensen (2011) explains that one of the reactions to othering is for the other to capitulate by appropriating elements of othering discourses in an attempt to imbue it with value. The other thus resists being devalued by giving it meaning. Meaning is given to the teaching practices that the mentees are subjected to by ascribing this not to undergraduate training and learning but to professional workplace development.

Drawing from an economic discourse, knowledge transfer was constructed as ideologically concerned with the advancement of business needs by both the South African participants and the Saudi Arabian participants; however, differed in terms of its purpose. The economic discourse is shaped by a Western discourse and its associated Western norms, customs and workplace behaviour. For the South African participants who are contracted by the JTCKSA, knowledge transfer is a product offering, a work task for which they receive payment that can secure further business that sustains and advances business interests. The Saudi Arabian construction is concerned with the advancement of the organisation to enable a global competitive advantage. The rhetorical strategy of delicacy used by the South African participants within their somewhat ideologised construction of knowledge transfer as a close collaborative working initiative to negotiate competing ideologies (Rowe & Goodman, 2014), indicates the functioning of a network of power relations which shows the extent to which the

South Africans buy into a dominant Western notion of business success. The dominant discourse of business success produces institutional practices and determines what is taken-for-granted knowledge (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012), in a manner that the attainment of business objectives is privileged and knowledge transfer practices are marginalised**.** Knowledge transfer is both a means to the attainment of business objectives in that they are being paid for knowledge transfer by the client who is represented by the Saudi Arabian mentees. Tropes such as “client is king” come to mind. Yet caught in a meaning system that promotes the attainment of business success measured by time and budget and informs the South African engineers’ behaviour and identity, time spent on knowledge transfer is seen to deny them this achievement. There appears to be a sense of fear that deadlines will not be met and the prioritising of time towards this end suggests the internalisation of the norms of the dominant discourse that drives behaviour regulating their conduct, which Foucault referred to as the domination of self (Alexander, 2018). The mentor cannot be successful on both accounts; project delivery and knowledge transfer. The oscillation between the push to deliver on task and the need to invest time in knowledge transfer, with which they are also being tasked, is managed through the process of othering. Power is seen in operation between the conflict inherent in the competing systems of meaning (Butin, 2001). Failure on the part of either implies the risk of being devalued, while to devalue the other indicates the presence of resistance to the normative effect of power (Jensen, 2011).

For the Saudi Arabian participants, knowledge transfer represents the means to economic development and global business success promised by the concept of the knowledge economy (Stiglitz, 1999). Buying into the notion that the credibility of the knowledge owner is important (Perrin et al., 2007) shows a meaning system that attributes value and status to knowledge. There is, however, a complex dynamic of oscillation between positioning of the self as colleague and self as fresh graduate, implying both dependency and independence. The operation of power is seen in management of effective social alignments (Rouse, 2005) by resisting the subject positioning of student through othering of the mentors.

Relations of power and effects of power result in tensions between the self and the other. Tensions between the subject positions made available by the other (teacher versus student, graduate engineer versus mentor), and within subjects (productive engineer versus unproductive engineer, graduate learner versus professional contributor) are evident in the frequent resistance to their positions. The analysis indicated that the participant’s utilised positioning to show that their practices were normal and rule bound (Korobov, 2010). The othering that produced these identities constructed an unequally legitimised one at the cost of the other (Park, 2005) to justify certain practices.

The impact of the various constructions of knowledge transfer on the practice of knowledge transfer is evident from the analysis. The research literature highlights the importance of shared practices (Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008), and close interaction between parties (Gertler, 2003). The analysis indicates that the way that the participants position and construct themselves close down certain possibilities that allow for this closeness. The consequence of othering is also seen in their interactions that result in practices that keep them apart (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). In terms of learning, knowledge transfer requires active involvement and not passive dissemination (Thompson et al., 2006). To acquire knowledge relies on active participation (Thomas et al., 2014) by doing and engaging in knowledge creation activities (Nonaka et al., 2000). What is happening in the relationship is that opportunities for engagement in dialogue, reflection and discussion are closed down (Von Glasersfeld, 1996). The ideology of the knowledge economy and economic success was evident in that it set up a social context that assigned power to subject positions within a social hierarchy where only certain people will share certain knowledge with others (Zaidman & Brock, 2009). The analysis shows how the various constructions of the knowledge transfer serve to create power inequalities through their use of the discursive strategies of othering and subject positioning. The relations of power implicit in knowledge transfer are seen in the positioning of the self and how the participants orient themselves to the other and influence the power relations that are constituted in the practice of knowledge transfer. The strategy of othering is evident in how the self and other are positioned through the subject positions made available as an effect of power in the relations aimed at maintaining a superior self and inferior other.

4.1.3.2 Conclusion

In this section I have addressed the discursive construction of knowledge transfer by the participants within the context of a mentorship relationship between the South African mentors and Saudi Arabian mentees that indicate the different meanings and their ideological functioning. The discourses from which these constructions were drawn and the subject positions that these made available were presented. The research objective of determining how self and other are constructed by the participants is presented in the following section.

4.2 The Construction of Self and Other in a Mentorship Relationship aimed at Knowledge Transfer

This section presents the constructions of self and of other by the participants. It addresses the research objective of identifying how self and other are constructed within the context of the mentorship relationship between the South African and Saudi Arabian participants aimed

at knowledge transfer. It looks to the participants' use of discursive resources to constitute their identities from the categories of which they claim membership and the subject positions that they assume. As identity is constructed within the context of relations, this section addresses the construction of other in relation to self. It aims to show how the participants construct identities for the self and other in order to provide insight into the contextual relations that are at play within knowledge transfer.

The context for knowledge transfer is the immediate workplace, characterised by the institution of the engineering profession and a Western ideology of economic productivity. The relationship between the parties is contextualised within a mentorship discourse and knowledge sharing from a mentor to a mentee. The macro context is determined by the discourse of the knowledge economy and the ideology of scientific and technological advancement of the global West. Each context provides for social categories that set individuals up within asymmetrical power relations. The construction of self occurs when individuals subject themselves to the meanings and power of the contextual discourse in which they find themselves (Hall, 2001). Each contextual ideology affects how the individual experiences the self and the other and creates their identities (Edley, 2001). Individuals come to know who they are through a reflexive process of positioning the self within specific social contexts (Jensen, 2011). In the previous section I showed how the discursive construction of knowledge transfer gave rise to subject positions. The subject positions made available in constructing knowledge transfer are relevant to the construction of self identity in as far as the self identifies with the subject positions that are offered (Hall, 2001), such that it takes hold of behaviour and influences attributes and expectations for the self. The analysis indicated the effect of the various contexts, the assumptions of certain subject positions and the rejection of others in self construction through the meanings ascribed to knowledge transfer by the participants.

Self construction entails other construction where self other identify construction is the implicit modelling of the other as the self, in that what is assumed to hold for the self is assumed to hold for the other (Brons, 2015). The construction of the other was done in relation to the self, which mutually constructed the other and reinforced the construction of the self. This was evident in the analysis in how the other was constructed by the participants based on what was regarded as different from their norms and the categories available within their experience of their social contexts (Johnson et al., 2004; Khawaja & Mørck, 2009).

In accordance with the principles of FDA outlined by Willig (2013), the focus of the analysis was the reciprocal or mutual construction of "self" and "other" within a mentorship context. The

discursive constructions are illustrated with extracts from the interviews to demonstrate the accounts and reference is made to relevant literature presented in Chapter 2 as it relates to self and other construction. Although all interviews were included in the analysis, not all participants are represented by the quotations.

The analysis of the interviews identified that the participants discursively constructed different identities, which is not unexpected (Goodman, 2017) given their interaction within varying social contexts which take on differing meanings (Johnson et al., 2004; Stead, 2004). The analysis showed in the construction of the self, the uptake of subject positions and the subjugation of self regarding accepted norms for behaviour through the discursive strategies of dissimilation and othering for constructing the other. The discourse of the global West was extensively drawn upon in construction of identity, as evidenced by its power effects. The construction of self and other functioned to establish and maintain unequal power relations that positioned the self as superior to the other, specifically within the context of a Western ideology.

Both participant groups variably constructed the self as engineer, identifying the self with the subject position of engineer and workplace contributor that was offered from an economic discourse, and as “Western self”, locating the self within a Western ideology assuming the norms and expectations of a modern global citizen. Whereas the South African participants construct the Saudi Arabian mentees as other, inferior engineer, and as culturally backward, the Saudi Arabian participants construct the other as unavailable, distant mentors and as culturally inferior.

It was noted that the Saudi Arabian participants tended to steer away from direct negative talk about the mentors, while the South African participants spoke more freely. I, as researcher, found it difficult to move beyond the resistance I experienced when trying to engage the Saudi Arabian participants on the mentors and found myself being more “polite” with them than I experienced toward the South African participants. The effects of my self regulation of my behaviour pointed to the relations of power that were present in the differing contexts I found myself in with regard to the interaction with the two groups, which spoke to the dynamic of the variable construction of my identity for various purposes, namely to negotiate the “us” and “them” dynamic that functioned in an attempt to establish and maintain rapport and resisting being othered.

The self other constructions and the subject positions, together with the discourses drawn from, are detailed in this section. The constructions are presented in relation to how they are

constructed by each group, concluding with a discussion of their implications for knowledge transfer.

4.2.1 The Self as Engineer

In constructing the self and other, the analysis showed that the participants buy into a discourse of the workplace, which I called an economic discourse in the previous section. Characteristics of a market economy, which guide the economic discourse, and workplace practices, include market competitiveness, business for profit, and the role afforded the consumer or customer. The market economy is concerned with increased efficiency, productivity and innovation, and incentives for workers to work harder. These aspects are aligned to the ideology of the knowledge economy that is embodied by the knowledge worker. Within the context of an engineering workplace such as that of a DERI, the economic discourse is concerned with engineering practice and professional discipline, which give rise to the subject of the engineer as worker that determines what is expected of the engineer in terms of requisite qualifications, experience and skill. In constructing knowledge transfer, the subject position of the engineer was the most dominant from both the South African participants, who positioned the self as professional engineer teacher, and the Saudi Arabian participants, who positioned the self as inexperienced engineers. In terms of identity construction, the analysis showed that both participant groups internalised the subject position of engineer within the workplace for self. The construction of self as engineer, however, differed somewhat between the groups as defined by the meaning ascribed to the reciprocal interaction with others within the context of the knowledge transfer relationship. I first detail the positioning as engineer and then present the difference in construction between the two groups.

The following two extracts demonstrate the construction of self as engineer by the South African participants. In both examples the constructions are resourced by drawing on engineering stereotypes. In the interaction with myself as researcher, Charl reveals the internalisation of the cliché of the socially inept engineer to construct the self as engineer in the following:

6-4. And a quiet engineer that might appreciate leading questions.

Here Charl's reference to "quiet engineer" draws on the stereotype of the reticent individual who must be drawn into conversation by "leading questions". This functions to regulate the interaction with the researcher who is called upon to direct the engagement, while establishing the self as engineer. Similarly, in the following, Charl draws on the cliché of the socially inept

engineer who, as such, is excused from socialising with the mentees, through which Charl constructs the self as engineer:

6-96. P: Right. uh, you mean almost on a personal level or?

97. R: Yeah.

98. P: We're engineers.

99. R: [chuckles].

100. P: Uh we don't have personal levels.

This interaction was in response to a question regarding the nature of social interaction with the mentees and works to simultaneously provide justification for maintaining a superficial level of engagement, while establishing Charl's identity as engineer. Verkuyten (2003) indicates that the use of clichés and tropes acts as a discursive device because it draws from what is regarded as common place within a specific context and portrays a given image.

The following two extracts demonstrate the construction of self as engineer by the Saudi Arabian participants. Both demonstrate the internalisation of the subject position of engineer. In the first, Achmat is identifying himself with a "commissioned" category of engineer which also functions to justify his lack of knowledge in unrelated fields of engineering while maintaining self identity;

18-42. P: ... because I'm a commissioned engineer and I would have several fields and radar we don't understand.

Achmat is constructing a self as engineer in a manner that differentiates his area of knowledge from that which he is required to learn, without loss of identity due to his lack of engineering knowledge of alternative fields. In the following extract from the interview with Omar construction of the self as engineer is demonstrated in the taking up of engineering practice which he indicates influence his behaviour:

16-142. P: er actually in the system engineering it reflected on my life, even in doing my business. You know the methods for solving the problem using system engineering approach.

Omar references "systems engineering", which is a specialised discipline within engineering, which works to show his command of this area of knowledge and construct the self as engineer.

Social processes both construct the person and are constructed by the person (Scott, 2016) and the analysis indicated the impact of the unequal power relation within the context of the

knowledge transfer process in the variance in the constructions of self as engineer. The South African interview participants, who are placed in the role of mentor, constructed the self as superior engineer, differentiating the self from the other in terms of expertise and ability to contribute to the workplace. The South African participants construct the Saudi Arabians, who are in the role of mentees, as other and unable to contribute to the workplace as engineers. The discourse also showed that both the power of the workplace discourse in defining the meaning of engineer for the South Africans and the maintenance of power distance between self and other. The Saudi Arabian interview participants constructed the self alternatively as new engineer, distinguishing the self from the other in terms of limited experience yet as well qualified and ambitious, and as engineering peer, constructing the self as similar to the South African mentors in terms of expertise. These functioned to depict the self as able to contribute to the workplace as engineering professionals. The construction of self as engineering peer in turn constructed the other as lacking in terms of the requisite experience for mentorship, and alternatively as unavailable or busy mentor, which indicated a resistance to being positioned as inferior engineers. This is described more fully in the following sections.

4.2.1.1 The Construction of the Superior Engineer for the South African Self and the Inferior Other for the Saudi Arabian Mentees

In constructing the self as engineer, the analysis showed that the South African participants constructed a desirable and superior self, while simultaneously constructing an inferior other. This was achieved by assuming the characteristics required for an engineer for self and distinguishing the self from the other by emphasising the specialist nature of their work. In relation the other is constructed as different from the self and lacking in the characteristics assumed for the self. This indicates the presence of othering in the construction of the Saudi Arabian mentees, as evidenced by a focus on difference (Dervin, 2012) and the identification of desirable characteristic for the self that are found wanting in the other (Brons, 2015).

For the South African participants, the self as superior engineer was constructed as being an independent thinker, who is creative in their design abilities, is willing to take career risks, is technically hands on and who, as a worker, is hard-working, willing to take on more, responsible and driven by internal motivation. Taking up these qualities, the self as engineer was constructed as superior also by highlighting that they are highly specialised by virtue of the work that they do.

Constructing a desirable self, the South African participants construct their superiority as engineer by virtue of being specialists. This is achieved by referencing the specialised nature

of the work that they do within a highly complex engineering work environment working with specialised systems and processes. This works to portray the self as both technically skilled and capable engineers, while differencing the self from engineers who are not specialised. The following extract demonstrates how Lana constructs the self as an engineer with specialised skills by association with the work that she does:

> 4-5 P: … specialised type of engineering environment already, working with very specialised systems. It's not common place stuff. So even if you are an engineer of suitable quality, just contextualising yourself in here uhm takes a while.

Lana's use of the word "yourself" indicates internalisation of the engineering requirements of the environment. The phrase "not common place" implies something superior to the usual, which presents the engineering work that she performs as more technical than the norm. The repetition of the word "specialised" provides emphasis, which functions to support the contention that it takes more than being "an engineer of suitable quality" to work in her workplace, while suggesting that by virtue of this being her workplace, she has attained the superior qualities required, thus constructing herself as a specialised and superior engineer. Similarly, Henk's construction of self as superior engineer in the following quote is inferred by association with his employment at SAJTC, which is referenced as being viewed as a "premium place for knowledge transfer":

> 3-262. P: Yes, yes, he said that it's, that it's definitely it's actually sort of viewed as the, the premium place for knowledge transfer.

Henk's claim of SAJTC being a premium place is presented as existing independently from his own views, inoculating him against an appearance of stake interest, while the honest phrase "actually" makes him appear honest and when used with "definitely", works to establish the claim being made as factual. Being tasked to do knowledge transfer at a sought-after organisation infers his superiority. The following quote similarity indicates inferred superiority as engineer by virtue of Bram's employment at SAJTC:

> 1-24 P: … I mean JTCKSA has sent them here work with the best people in the world …

In constructing the self as a superior specialised engineer, the engineers also differentiate the self based on the complexity of their work, as demonstrated in the following excerpt where Bram indicates his belonging to a team that he describes performs complex work:

> 1-220. P: For somebody to work in my team, with all due respect to other teams uhm, I think it's very challenging. Mainly because the other teams when

> they deal with hardware, so they're building this new board with all these fancy components on there or they're writing software to do a certain thing, they are, they are taught in their undergraduate studies, hardware. There's a course they're taught on hardware. There's a course they're taught on software. So they have experience. When they come to my team, they need to know so many new things. They need to know Radar. You're not taught Radar at university. If you have the ability to learn Radar you have some principles that you can apply to the Radar context but you don't have that, that one knowledge base. So you first need to have the Radar knowledge base. So that takes some time to, to build. Then there's the other, there's the other knowledge base which you need to have, which is more mathematics statistics, signal processing type things, which is a whole, another body of information you need to know. I'm not sure if the other teams the guys doing hardware and software. At the end they build this hardware board. They might generate some documents but if they've got this board that's working, that's great. For us, we don't build anything physical. We go write some software and we go and generate reports.

Bram constructs the self as a specialised engineer, drawing a distinction between the work of his team, which is superior in terms of knowledge and expertise, and that of other teams. The use of the words "my" in reference to the team and providing a detail of his experience indicates his assimilation of the subject position of engineer. What is being suggested by the phrase "if you have the ability" is that acquiring his level of skill is premised on skill that is not generally accessible. Bram's reference to multiple skill sets such as "mathematics statistics", "signal processing", "Radar" in relation to what the other teams need to know, stated as "only a few skills", with the suggestion that this knowledge cannot be gained from undergraduate studies or courses, functions to demonstrate the technical breadth and complexity of the work that he performs and constructs the self as a specialist engineer.

The analysis indicated that the construction of the other was done in relation to self-construction as a recursive process where other construction reinforces the construction of the self. This revealed that the South African participants constructed the other based on what is different from the taken-for-granted norms of the self (Johnson et al., 2004; Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). In relation to the self, the other is thus constructed as the opposite of the self and the self as the opposite of the other (Jensen, 2011; Jones, 1997; Jun, 2005). The South African participants differentiate the self from other who they constructed as an inferior engineer. This was achieved by drawing comparisons against a discursively constructed ideal engineer embodied by required behavioural norms and characteristics. In constructing the self

as engineer, the mentors offer essentialising explanations to ascribe characteristics of the engineer subject position. These characteristics are claimed for self and regarded as defining of and universally true for all engineers. The standards of the engineer self were seen as applicable to all engineers, with the consequence that the other is measured against them and considered lacking. This concurs with Jensen (2011), who states that self-other distinction is made when the standards of the self are seen as both superior and of universal validity, so that the other is represented as violating these standards. The Saudi Arabian mentees are thus constructed as lacking in education, capability, and devoid of the characteristics that the self assumes to be true for all engineers.

Dissimilarly in terms of engineering experience and terminology is also used to differentiate the self from the other, as evidenced in the following excerpt from interview of Charl, thus implying that the other is different as engineer to the self:

> 6-75. ... Uhm the problem really from an engineering perspective, well, for for me, for my engineering background and of conditioning and language that I'm used to, uhm it's very easy for me to explain concepts on whichever level to my colleagues here at the SAJTC by just hand-wagging because we share that, that same experience terminology, whereas when I interface with the Saudi guys, they have a totally different, yeah, background and level of experience.

A distinction is being made in terms of background and experience. The distinction being made between South African engineers, as suggested with "my colleagues", and "the Saudi guys" works to establish Charl as part of an "in" group of like-minded engineers and an out group for the mentees. Charl establishes his identity as engineer, while inferring that the background and experience of the Saudi Arabian mentees is not comparable with that of an engineering perspective. The inference is not neutral as reinforced by the use of the words "whichever level", which suggests that understanding is not dependent on level of seniority, implying that even a junior engineer would understand, while the word "whereas" in relation to the "Saudi guys" suggests that this is not the case for them. This distinction being made is negative toward the other within the context of the talk that is problematising working with the Saudis. The depiction of the other is one of the Saudi Arabian engineer with an engineering background and experience that is inferior to that of the self.

The South African participants construct the self as possessing certain characteristics that are deemed essential for being an engineer, while constructing the other as lacking or negative. The following excerpts provide examples of the characteristics that are regarded as normal and deemed essential for an engineer and that are found to be lacking in the mentees. In the

following extract Lana is constructing the self as capable by virtue of possessing particular thinking processes;

> 4-147. P: ... and that's what, that's what makes us capable of doing our jobs, is thinking processes. Is asking the right questions, not knowing all of the answers.

The use of the word "us" implies that "thinking processes" is a characteristic true for the self and by association an engineering "in" group. Engineering capability is being constructed as inherently linked to the process of thought, which is being differentiated from merely having knowledge. It is implied that "asking the right questions" will access knowledge if there are correct thinking processes. This construction is made in relation to the Saudi Arabian mentees who are qualified engineers, which would suggest that they have the required knowledge. In this context the distinction being made is establishing a standard for the self that is used to construct the self as superior to the other.

In the following, Antony describes the engineering process as one of problem-solving and relays that this concept was not understood by a senior Saudi Arabian engineer:

> 13-89. P: And I found that right in the beginning with Dr Haam the same. He said he is going to give me these two people, and by the end of this year they must be engineers. In other words, I must see something working. And I said, yes but to get there you've got to be a designer.
>
> 90. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 91. P: You've got to resolve a problem. And once you've got that, you are halfway. And then you've got to implement it and get to a product to work. And he seemed to not quite understand, and he wanted to know more about this problem-solving thing that I was talking about, which is very natural to me.
>
> 92. R: [Hm].
>
> 93. P: It was a surprise to me that him, being a doctor himself, found that a bit awkward from me to say: 'You are halfway once you've resolved a problem'.

Antony's reference to "this problem-solving thing that I was talking about" portrays the interaction with the Saudi Arabian engineer, who is referred to by title as Doctor to denote seniority in terms of qualification, while highlighting that he was unfamiliar with the concept. The inference is that despite his education and level of superiority, he did not have this insight. By claiming that it as "natural to him", Antony is establishing problem-solving as a requirement for engineers, which is supported by offering a factual statement of how the engineering

process works. He also constructs the self as someone for whom being a problem-solver is not difficult. This is contrasted with the portrayed lack of understanding and knowledge on the part of a senior Saudi Arabian engineer, whose level of qualification is highlighted in reference to “being a doctor himself”. This, with the statement that problem-solving accounts for half of the engineering solution, emphasises its importance for engineering, which works to present the other as deviating from a required standard of engineering, while highlighting Antony’s ability. According to Brons (2015), self other identification occurs when there is an implicit modelling of the other as the self. The qualities and standards that are regarded as true for the self are assumed to be true for the other and perceived difference is taken to be undesirable.

In the following, Antony draws a comparison between engineers and technicians in a manner that constructs the other as technician:

> 13-85. P: … But what they want to do is, they want to sit at a network analyser or um work with things. More like we call a technician,
>
> 86. R: [Okay].
>
> 87. P: than to analyse things and design and so on. More on the level of technicians. They want to work with their hands more and get things going.

The suggestion is being made that “work with things” and “work with the hands more”, which is associated with being a technician, is opposed to analysing and designing, which is associated with an engineer. Highlighting the Saudi Arabian engineers’ preference for working with their hands and suggesting that this is on an implied lower level, suggested with “that of an technician“, works to construct the other as different from and inferior to engineers. What is being implied is that the other is not an engineer. Henk’s description of the mentees, however, contradicts Antony’s in that Henk describes a preference for a hands-off approach. This is used to differentiate the mentees from the South African engineers in a manner that constructs the self as able to see things through from theory to implementation and the other as lacking in this ability. Both portrayals function to construct the other as inferior.

In the following quote, Henk draws a comparison between an academically-inclined other and a self that has practical insight. Given a workplace context that is focused on product delivery, the comparison is not neutral and works to construct the other as deficient:

> 3-132. P: It, well, I think in a lot of cases there maybe they, they, they’ve got the background but what we found is, is that maybe, maybe that’s more a uhm, a function of the workplace than necessarily the educational background. But in most cases their background has been (.) primarily academic and not as

practical as, as what a lot of our engineers and technical people have had. So it, it seems in general that they've really (.) er in a lot cases, lacking that, that the practical insight and really seeing things through from sort of the academic more conceptual er type designs and theoretical background to practically implementing something, getting it working and dealing with the realities of practically doing something and actually being involved in taking charge of something and trying it out and really getting it to work. They, they see much more a uhm, bit more of a like a hands-off type approach where if there is a system there or something, they would rather not touch it. They, they're not too comfortable with doing that necessarily. We found that with a lot of guys like the, the physical hardware systems, they're initially very scared of breaking it or touching it and then it seems to come from this bit of a lack of, of, of experience with practical systems and practical aspects and it, it's out of that, that I think a lot of the, the fear and the uncertainty comes is, is in that that lack of past experience or they don't a lot of them are very comfortable with theoretical concepts. They, they in a lot of cases they really know the, the theory and in some cases, better than a lot of our guys do. Maybe because it's been a, I think most of our guys are maybe slightly more senior and more years of practical experience and it's, it's been a while since we've been to the university.

Henk is presenting the mentees as inept in implementation and application of their knowledge by making a distinction of "our engineers and technical people" who can do this. The inclusion of "technical people" extends the comparison to those who operate in a capacity other than engineering, which in an engineering workplace context is usually a function in support of engineers and works to "lower the bar" in comparing the other. The inference being made is that despite the mentees having the academic and theoretical knowledge required of engineers, they lack the ability to apply that knowledge which constructs an other that is inept as engineer. Orientating to the norm against prejudice, Henk stresses that in "some cases" the mentees' theoretical knowledge is better than "our guys"; however, this suggestion is then negated by an explanation that it has "been a while" since the South African engineers were at university, suggesting that it is merely due to a time delay in a manner that also highlights superior experience. This works to maintain the construction of the self as superior in engineering experience and ability to apply theoretical knowledge. Similarly, Lana is problematising the mentees' ability to apply their knowledge in the following quote:

4-11. P: … Technical qualification here never seems to me to be the problem. People seem to I've I've heard other engineers talking and so on and

saying ‘yeah, maybe we should send them on a course, and maybe we should’. They’ve been on courses. They’re highly educated. They’ve been, they’ve got more qualifications than I do. It seems to be a problem of applying this, somehow …

The comparison that is drawn between the self and other regarding qualifications works to construct a deficient other. This is achieved with the suggestion that despite being “highly qualified”, which is emphasised by Lana, stating that the mentees are more qualified than herself, the South African engineers, implied by the “other engineers”, yet it is still suggested that the mentees should be sent on training courses. The inference being made is that the other is unable to put into practice their knowledge, which devalues their education and training, problematising the other. In this context Lana’s inferior level of qualifications is implicitly superior to that of the other. The construction of the other as inferior in terms of knowledge is also achieved by questioning the standard of the qualification, as shown in the following quote from Charl’s interview. Charl states that graduates learn more quickly than the mentees do, which infers that the mentees are not university graduates. In the exchange, Charl is confronted with the fact that the mentees are graduates. Charl manages the conflict of the mentees being graduates and his portrayal of the mentees as not being graduates by questioning the standard of the mentees’ qualifications:

6-134. P: Right. I’m not sure if it’s. People that do come from university do seem to pick it up much quicker than, than the Saudi guys though.

135. R: They also come from university?

136. P: Right.

137. R: They have degrees?

138. P: Uhm, yes. (3) Though it’s, it’s questionable what, what we don’t really know what they, what their academic background is. We’re not really sure what the standard of, of those degrees are.

139. R: Okay.

140. P: Uhm, yeah, (.) not entirely sure what they know.

Charl manages a discounting challenge to his suggestion that the mentees are not qualified in a manner that maintains an other construction. He achieves this by conceding that the mentees are qualified and resolves the dilemma by calling to question the quality of that qualification. The comparison that is made between those who have been to university and the Saudi Arabian mentees, with regard to being quick learners, suggests that they are slow to learn, thus constructing an inferior other. This construction is maintained when the quality of the qualifications is put in doubt. The comment “we’re not really sure” works to show that

the standard of mentees' degrees is not self-evident, while the reference to "we" is suggestive of the collective self, which implies that this is not a personal view and is shared by others, which works to make his argument more credible. What is being suggested is that the mentees' degrees have no effect on their ability to grasp learning due to its poor standard, while non-Saudi Arabian graduates are quick learners. Antony similarly questions the standard of their qualification by suggesting that the mentees lack certain skills in the following excerpt:

> 13-47. P: Yeah they all had degrees. Every single one of them. um But still, I found er also that they are not keen on writing. Er You don't find them that they can write like er, er a report.
>
> 48. R: [Hm, hm]
>
> 49. P: Not at all. They don't have that skill. So we often had to do that for them.
>
> 50. R: Alright.
>
> 51. P: um Which was a surprise to me. How do you get a degree without reporting? Without having that skill to write a report?

Antony is arguing that report-writing is an essential skill for obtaining a degree. The inference is that because the mentees are not able to write a report, their degrees are in some way deficient. The lack of skill is emphasised with the phrase "Not at all" and the words "Every single one of them" works to generalise and extend this as true for all the mentees. The expression of surprise indicates an acceptance of a norm against which the other is evaluated and found to be wanting. The final questions posed in the extract functions to emphasise this deficiency as problematic, while the reference to the "we often had to do it for them" constructs the self as having this skill, reinforcing a construction of the deficient other and the self as superior.

In the following quote, Peter makes a comparison on the basis of his technical assessment of the mentees with that of the South African undergraduates. The inference is made that the level of technical expertise of a South African Bachelors' degree graduate is superior to that of a Saudi Arabian Bachelors' degree graduate:

> 8-95. P: The guys coming in are at a very low level. My, it was actually interesting to me because I sat down and thought about it the one day and thought, ah they are round about a third-year level, third year student level in South Africa and a couple months later, James Mack who is there [in Saudi Arabia] at the moment wrote to me in a comment. He thinks the guys are on about a third-year level. I think that, that's one of the things that we don't necessarily realise and I am not sure they necessarily realise it either, it's not

> that the guys are stupid, it's not that they can't learn, it's just they're not at the level we assume they're at and that's why our Bachelor Engineering guys can supervise their Bachelor Engineering guys despite that theoretically they're on the same level. So the technical expertise is lower, and one needs to work around that and I am not sure that we've planned, that planned for that up until now. But I believe that we can and I believe it is still possible to get useful results. ...

The self is being constructed as superior in relation to the other with regard to the technical expertise. Although there is not a direct questioning of the quality of the mentees' degrees, this is being inferred through the suggestion that the mentees' technical expertise is at a "third-year level" (this is within a context where an engineering degree is four years in duration). Peter achieves his claim by offering a detailed explanation of how he derived at this assessment to make it acceptable and factual and provides collaborative evidence in the form of an independent third person to present his claim as substantiated. This establishes Peter as objective, while constructing his claim as factual and independent of himself. Peter suggests that "we", implying the mentors, regard the mentees as "stupid" and unable to learn, which he suggests is an incorrect assessment; however, he argues this from an assumption that they should be at a certain level. Peter links an assessment of the mentees' technical level to their intellectual ability, as suggested with "stupid" and "can't learn" but does so in a manner that portrays his view as factual.

The extracts demonstrate the construction of the mentees as lacking in comparison with the self, and the mentees are portrayed as having deficient education, to the extent that they are unable to do engineering. Alternatively, the mentees are also portrayed as being somehow deficient themselves, and that the problem does not lie in the quality of their education, in that they have the ability to acquire knowledge, but that they lack the ability to apply it, while the self is adept in the application of their knowledge which, despite being at a lower level, is of superior quality.

In the following excerpt, Bram is making an us and them distinction between "our guys", who are constructed as being independent thinkers and contributors versus the other, who are constructed as lacking in agency and dependent on the mentors with regard to their ability to learn:

> 1-86. P: Mmm, they feel from their point of view when they come here it's the SAJTC's, it's the mentor's responsibility to play these roles. To uhm draw up the project plan, to sketch the vision and to transfer knowledge as in

coaching. So even if they've been working on the project for a year they would still feel they're in this mode like training mode.

87. R: Okay.

88. P: Whereas our guys are not in that mode. We, we can't be in training mode otherwise we'd be fired. Renier [his manager] will come to me and say 'Bram, what do you think you're doing?' We er, er when you work at the SAJTC we, we're meant to deliver independently. When they get sent from JTCKSA to SAJTC they're sent here 'go and learn from these guys.' So they have this misconception that they're here to only learn from us and they can't think for themselves. They've been programmed into saying "learn" instead of 'you can learn independently'. Go there and figure out how to learn independently. That might not be an easy process but that's what you're aiming towards.

An asymmetrical distinction is being made between us, implied by "our guys", and the other, suggested by the use of the word "they". The construction of dependent learners is made by way of comparison of the self as independent agents to the other, who is described as being in "training mode" and "programmed" to not think for themselves. The capacity for independent thought is being associated with the capacity to deliver, and the statement that "we'd be fired" if the mentor displayed the same behaviour as the mentees, indicates normative power, suggesting the norm on independent thought. By highlighting that even after a year of working on the project the other is still not independent, together with his final suggestion that is will not be an "easy process", Bram is indicating the extent of the problem with the other. What is being implied with the words "that's what you're aiming towards" is that the mentors are responsible for teaching the other independent thought, which further resources a construction of self as superior in relation to the other related to their capacity for independence.

In the following quote, Lana constructs the self as being a responsible employee by drawing a comparison between "serious" work and a university work attitude, which is being inferred at the attitude of the mentees towards work:

4-15. … I don't want you to think this is a university. I want you to understand that the work you do here is serious. There's no re-exam. That doesn't mean you can't make mistakes but it means you can't treat it like it's something that will be gone next year and then we take another module. The work you do here is permanent and it gets fed back into your own interest. That kind of stuff …

Lana is addressing the mentees and conveying that a student attitude, implied by “treat it like it’s something gone next year and then you take another module”, does not have a place in the workplace. By drawing an association with university students and the mentees, she is suggesting that the mentees do not have the correct attitude to engage responsibly in the workplace. Lana is depicting herself as someone who does take the work seriously, differentiating herself from the other, and as a responsible engineer. The other is thus constructed as opposite to the self and as a student who cannot be relied on to take the workplace seriously.

Contradictory information that arises that conflicts with constructing the other as inferior is managed as being “an exception”. The South African participants draw distinctions between the mentees by highlighting, as an exception from the other mentees, mentees who demonstrate behaviour that is like the self and does not support the mentor’s construction of them. The exception stands outside of the collective other construction. These distinctions are made by referring to incidences as “exceptions”, “uncommon” and “unusual”, and point to what is regarded as true for the collective other. This strategy allows the South African participants to avoid confronting alternative versions of the other in a manner that both constructs and reinforces the integrity of their construction of the other. The following extract demonstrates the maintenance of a construction of the other as reticent and lazy through Antony’s management of discounting behaviour:

> 13-391. R: You looked surprised now when you said he came back, he wanted more? [referring to work]
>
> 392. P: Yeah, yeah. He, he had more an attitude of er he wants to know more and he wants to take the lead in some of the things which is not very common that I found from those guys.

By suggesting that the behaviour of mentees that he is discussing is “uncommon” suggests that Antony is constructing the opposite behaviour as the norm for the other. Differentiating this behaviour as outside of the norm for the other both discounts it from a possible alternative construction of the other and maintains a construction of the other as lazy, despite behaviour that indicates the contrary. Similarly, in the following Peter refers to a mentee as an “exceptional individual” and as “unusual”, implying that this behaviour is out of the norm, thus maintaining a construction of an unambitious other:

> 8-48. I think we got a, I think he’s, he’s also an exceptional individual, very much a ‘go-getter’ which is unusual from what I hear again.

By highlighting the mentee's behaviour as out of the norm Peter is constructing the norm for the collective other. He references unnamed others with the words "from what I hear", which works to present the claim as not his own, thus inoculating the self from inference that he is prejudiced, while making the claim appear objective. The following extract from the interview with Lana demonstrates a distinction being made for an individual that potentially discounts a version of the other by referring to being "lucky":

> 4-21. ... we've been lucky, as I say, with these gentlemen. We've been lucky with Mohammed Ed that's been the project manager now, that's been willing to give feedback, willing to make an effort. Uhm we've been lucky with the guys that have not only, were they you know, remarkably sort of skilled and adept at what they were doing but they, they really gave a damn. You know, they would bugs us, ages and ages, 'what's next, what's next, what's next,

The inference being made by Lana is that the individual is different from the other mentees by a stroke of fortune and thus not the norm. This establishes the norm as the opposite of what is being described of "willing to give feedback", "willing to make an effort", "skilled and adept" and "gave a damn". Lana's reference to "these gentlemen" draws a distinction that works to differentiate them from others. They are being differentiated based on qualities that are ascribed to "luck", which functions to construct the collective other as inferior, even in the face of contradictory evidence. Lana also uses rhetorical softening, using tentative words such as "sort of", perhaps to indicate that she has not fully bought into the notion that the mentees are fully skilled and adept. In the following, Charl uses the word "surprise" to indicate contradictory behaviour from that expected of the norm:

> 6-28. P: Uhm, if I give them something to do and they are excited by that they do it very quickly and they complete the task very quickly and surprise me very often and find intuitive ways of, of, well, very interesting ways of completing that task.

Using the notion of surprise, Charl is suggesting that it was unexpected to have mentees who showed intuition and worked quickly. This functions to show that this behaviour was outside of an expected norm and by inference Charl is constructing the other as lacking intuition, passion and being slow. Similarly, Henk talks of being "caught off guard" and refers to the behaviour of the mentee as "somewhat different" to navigate a conflicting and discounting behaviour of an implied norm:

> 3-40. P: Where he was willing to sort of interject and say 'hang on, why aren't we doing this or can we try this?' And a couple of times it even caught me slightly off guard, which I think is good … It was just this, this thing of

> approachability and, and willingness to ask questions and incorporate his own ideas was, was somewhat different …

Henk draws a distinction between the mentee whom he is describing and others with his reference to being “caught off guard”, which implies that he was expecting contrary behaviour to willingness to ask questions and incorporate ideas. This functions to construct an other that is the opposite and as reticent and unwilling. In the following Hans refers to a particular mentee as an “exception” to the general perception that is held, pointing to a construction of the other as different to the mentee to whom he is referring:

> 11-123. P: [Yes]. So, yes on the first group I was working closer with one of the hardware design engineers. And he was actually really a talented guy, very, very talented. uhm So me and Charl actually worked very close with him. uhm So he was one of the … how can I put it? The exceptions to the general perceived in that, in a sense that he won’t just do the tasks that we asked him to do, he would put in even more effort and,
>
> 124. R: [Yeah]?
>
> 125. P: ... he was like a really go-getter in terms of that.

Hans is saying that putting in more effort and being a “go-getter” is behaviour outside of the norm, thus constructing the collective other as the opposite and by implication that what is expected as the norm for the other is a lack of ambition and laziness.

The analysis showed that all the South African participants used discounting to manage opposing versions in their construction of the other by depicting these as exceptions to the norm. This discounting strategy functions to maintain the coherence of the constructed other identity and reveals what is regarded as the norm for the self. The other is constructed as lazy, reticent, unambitious, and lacking in skill. Othering that creates social conditions and practices limit possibilities for action for the other, which is justified by the self through reasons that are based on the perceived negative attributes of the other (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). The construction of self as specialised engineer to an inferior not-engineer other justifies the inclusion of the self, while marginalising the other within the workplace. According to Johnson et al. (2004), marginalisation which creates practices that produce positions of domination and subordination is the result of othering. Characteristics and qualities are claimed for self and regarded as defining of and universally true for all engineers. The deficient and inferior other stands apart from the engineer as they do not meet the standards of self as engineer. A justified lack of inclusion further reinforces practices that maintain the other construction as inferior, while maintaining the construction of self as superior, responsible and capable

engineers. The justification of this course of behaviour as demonstrated thus further maintains the larger system (Pardo et al., 2001) and maintains power relations (Hartsock, 1990) in which it is only the superior self that has the requisite characteristics and knowledge to engage in the institutions of engineering and the Western workplace.

4.2.1.2 The Variable Construction of the New and Engineering Peers for the Saudi Arabian Self and the Unavailable Mentor Other for the South African Mentors

The Saudi Arabian participants constructed the self variably as new engineer and as engineering peers. The constructions were accomplished by establishing the Saudi Arabian participants' credibility as qualified engineers and locating the self within the workplace as contributing peers. The self as new engineer is constructed as ambitious, seeking of challenge to advance their career as engineer, with the importance of obtaining advanced qualifications (Master's and Doctoral degrees) being emphasised. The self is systematically constructed as hardworking and as independent contributor toward projects and workplace productively. Taking up aspects of the subject position of mentee, the new engineer is constructed as differentiated from the other only in terms of having less experience. This construction provides meaning to the reliance on the other for learning and guidance. Alternatively, the construction of self as equal to the South African engineers or engineering peers is achieved by the Saudi Arabian participants by drawing on a notion of sameness with the South African engineers. The construction works to construct the other as lacking as mentor, who is alternatively not sufficiently experienced or specialised to offer learning and unavailable due to a focus on other work.

To resource the construction of new engineer, the Saudi Arabian participants present the self as ambitious in terms of growing professionally and eager to advance their careers, which entails acquiring advanced qualifications. Reference was made by most of the Saudi Arabian participants to furthering their qualifications, with the following quotes providing a few examples. In Omar's interview he shares that he competed his Master's degree:

> 16-244. P: But er the last two years, I went to Cape Town for, for er my Master's degree.

Ali indicates that he has started his Master's degree:

> 12-48. P: And it was very good experience for me. Then I back here to JTCKSA for maybe one or two years, and er after that I joined another project with JTCKSA called, I think, SADDAS [project name], and since that time I was

> working in that project maybe for four years, I think, and er yeah, and in 2014 I have started my Master's degree in University A.

Mohammed also expresses a desire to continue with a Master's degree and then a doctoral degree in the field that he has been exposed to as part of the knowledge transfer:

> 5-214. P: But uh I need this chance to work in the, the and maybe the Master, my Master Degree in this uh track and if I can PhD.

In expressing a desire to complete further qualifications the mentees, construct a self that is both qualified and orientated towards continuous development and academic growth.

The construction of new engineer as independent is resourced by the Saudi Arabian participants indicating their lack of reliance on the mentors to solve of problems, as demonstrated in the following two extracts. Achlam is constructing the self as independently able to resolve problems; in the following quote:

> 7-48. P: No, sometime if I struggle with something, I, I try to find a solution by Google it or Wikipedia or try to read about it. If I really stuck, I'll, I'll come after that I'll go to him and ask him.

The reference to Google or Wikipedia works to show that Achlam can source solutions where the modalising term "really" in relation to stuckness emphasises that it is only in extreme cases that the mentor is consulted, thus completing a construction of independence. Similarly, in the following, Omar, in describing his approach to problem-solving, portrays the self as an independent thinker who is not reliant on the mentor:

> 16-52. P: ... It is to give me the problem and maybe give me some hints about how I should approach it. What is the approach they need. Then I go and make my research and try to solve the problem.

The use of the words "some hints" works to suggest that there was limited involvement from the mentor and "Then I go and make my research" implies that he works on the solution without the mentor.

The construction of the new engineer provides justification for the mentees' difficulty in contributing to the work projects and in the following extract, when Achmat is asked why some of the mentees were unhappy with their mentors, he attributes it to the difference knowledge:

18-126. P: Maybe because I think that most of us in the beginning we weren't like er well, we aren't er we are new to the field in the radar, so they don't take us seriously, I think.

127. R: [Hm, hm].

128. P: This is a big issue. Some of the guys they didn't take us seriously and er this is what I think. Because the difference in the knowledge, and respect that because they have, they have been working in the departments for several years,

129. R: [Hm].

130. P: but as us, we are fresh, so sometimes like we are the bottleneck in the project. So they just try to keep the project on time and try to do the project …

18-137. R: Oh, okay.

138. P: And sometimes people don't er, doesn't er or people don't work well under pressure. So when they have a certain timeline to meet, they just give up and somebody else from the SAJTC will do it.

139. R: Okay.

140. P: May like two days on the task that somebody else take took two weeks. So it does make a difference. Maybe it's already involved with the other projects, so they can just use another er subsystem from another project if it fits.

Achmat attributes a negative attitude from the mentors towards the mentees to the difference in knowledge and experience between them. Stating that the mentees are not taken seriously suggests an entitlement to the same, which works with the argument that problems in contribution by the mentees are by virtue of their inexperience, implied by "we are fresh", to construct the self as inexperienced. Speed in performance is being associated with experience, a lack of performance is attributed to being inexperienced as opposed to being unwilling to perform. Given the normative context of pressure to deliver in the workplace, the suggestion that the mentees "just give up" and someone else does the work legitimises the mentees' non-delivery and that the mentors take over the work. The last comment works to argue that as the mentors are already working on other projects it is not additional work for them to take on the mentees' work. It is being argued as reasonable behaviour based on the need for efficiency. This functions to maintain a positive construction of self in the face of a lack of contribution to projects. Later in the interview Achmat argues for a gradual exposure from smaller to bigger projects for the mentees, constructing the new engineer:

18-246. P: ... So for me, like involve graduates, or freshly graduates people on the project, it's like a big, a big track for them.

247. R: Hm, hm.

248. P: So I think they had to first being involved in the smaller projects or maybe smaller subset of the project,

249. R: [Hm].

250. P: and then be like involved in the project.

251. R: Okay.

252. P: Because sometimes the concept itself is like scary.

253. R: Hm.

254. P: They didn't know anything about that project and sometimes it's too, too big to like to, to grasp in our minds. So I think it's, it's been important for the person and the er for the fresh graduate, fresh graduate, taking two steps.

Achmat refers to the mentees as "graduates", which provides emphasis on their qualification as engineers, while the word "fresh" provides a distinction from others to suggest a lack of experience within the workplace. It is being argued that the involvement is on the project and the suggestion that the mentees are "first involved" in smaller projects or subsets of the project does not detract from their contribution to the workplace, thus maintaining a construction of workplace contributors.

The construction as ambitious learner is demonstrated in the following extracts. Omar constructs the self as capable of taking on greater responsibilities in the following extract:

16-50. P: er Two or three years. Er (.) I, I think I achieved a lot of experience during that time. er Also I think after two years from starting the work, they, they gave er me the project management of the project that I was. So it was a lot of work at that time, yeah.

Omar refers to "they" calling on uncited others who recognised his ability and technical growth, which functions to provide credibility to depicting the self as a fast learner, implied by "a lot of experience" in a short time, "two to three years", and presents this as an objective reflection of reality rather than a personal opinion. Later in the interview Omar again refers to his promotion as project manager, building on the notion of recognition by an other, resourcing the construction of the self as ambitious learner through the depiction of himself as having been identified as a leader:

16-222. P: Maybe he has confidence maybe he wanted me to lead the team.

223. R: Okay.

224. P: He asked me first to be the project manager. And I am, and I told him then it is, it would be very difficult for me to work in parallel with signal processing. But he insists and he wanted me to be the project manager at the same time.

Omar's explanation that it is difficult to work both in the technical speciality area of "signal processing" and project management, while indicating the expressed "insistence" of the other, works to portray him as being regarded as competent and hardworking by others. It establishes him as a contributor to the workplace with managerial responsibilities, which by citing the unknown other is made credible. The depiction of self as quick to learn and progress is resourced by pointing to his ability to grasp difficult and new knowledge. In the following two extracts, Achmat at first presents the field of "Radar and EW" as difficult by referring to it as "advanced" and "new" despite his being a "commissioned engineer". Naming the self as engineer works to show that he is knowledgeable in a particular field of engineering, while justifying his lack of knowledge in other areas. His lack of expertise in radar is being portrayed as reasonable and not on account of deficiency of the self. Being knowledgeable as engineer is reinforced in the second extract, where he names himself a "firmware engineer", which establishes him as having acquired specialist knowledge within a new domain for him, namely radar. Achmat is constructing the self as a quick learner of complex knowledge, while establishing himself as a contributor of this specialised knowledge to the workplace:

18-40. P: Because when we think, we think about the JTCKSA is working with the SAJTC, or the application we are working with is Radar and EW. So it sounds a bit, er advanced for us and it's er kind of new for us,

41. R: Hm.

42. P: because I'm a commissioned engineer and I would have several fields and radar we don't understand.

and

18-170. P: er I was like my part in the radar as a whole is like I am firmware engineer.

171. R: Okay.

172. P: like I work on the, with the FBGS, so the FBGS itself er it was the best interest for me.

173. R: [Hm].

174. P: Radar, as a whole, to be honest, it was my interest. But when I came here and worked with JTCKSA, they er introduce, introduce us to radar and I didn't quite get it, because of the cert ... of other stuff with radar. But I became interested in FBGM, the development of FBG. So we took like, I think, a couple of courses here with JTCKSA about the introduction to radar, like, again, like the big picture about radar, and we get it. So it wasn't like it wasn't, like very bad as we imagined before.

Achmat's reference to "didn't quite get it" and ""wasn't like very bad as we imagined" works to show that despite the domain of radar being considered to be difficult, the Saudi Arabian engineers were able to grasp the knowledge with relative ease, implied by attending "a couple introductory courses". This depicts Achmat, and by inference the other Saudi engineers, as capable engineers who acquire difficult knowledge without difficulty. Aaquil is constructing the self as a capable contributor and hard worker in the following extract, by making an association with the South African engineers, implied by the "SAJTC guy" and highlighting his involvement on multiple projects:

2-27. P: And the engineer, we, the engineer that we used to the first report that we generated from that time, he wasn't available and he's the only one that have that experience.

28. R: Hm-hm.

29. P: and that actually was, he the one that did the board, not even the SAJTC guy. And he's working in different, three different project and this is the maximum that anyone can work at JTCKSA and I understand two projects are too much [chuckles].

Aaquil uses the word "we" establishing himself as part of the Saudi Arabian engineer in-group and distinguished from the South African engineers, implied by "SAJTC guy". The reference to "not even the SAJTC guy" in relation to the work being conducted without the assistance of the South African engineers, constructions the self as a capable and competent contributor to the workplace. The reference to the maximum number of projects works to emphasise the construction of the Saudi Arabian engineers as hard workers.

The constructions of the self as both new, inexperienced engineers and as contributing engineers result in an ideological dilemma with regard to their contribution to projects in the workplace. The conflict that arises from the self that identifies with both self as independent contributor and peer and as new engineer and mentee who merely learns, is shown in the

following extract. Fahad explains that the mentees are requested by their employers to evaluate the progress of the project. The dilemma surfaces when Fahad is confronted with opposing expectations that are presented:

14-97. P: Yes. But there was one, one very silly contradict in the process,

98. R: [Hm, hm]

99. P: that, for our, for me and all our engineers we were the working mentees and then when the milestone come, we had to evaluate our mentor.

100. R: Hm, hm.

101. P: So at the milestone, I change my shoes, and rather than learning from this person, now that the waiting is up. So it was,

102. R: You have to ...

103. P: ... it was really silly ...

104. R: You have to evaluate your mentor?

105. P: Yes. No I have to evaluate the whole work that I have done.

106. R: Oh.

107. P: that the mentor has done and the whole. Yeah, you know because for JTCKSA, for JTCKSA to accept the milestone, they need the engineers, to say: 'Yes the work is done and it is accurate'. So the mentee is responsible to do that to sign that the work that I was trained. I was the least expert in that work, is, is right.

108. R: I can see.

109. P: And that happens, that it has happened at JTCKSA and SAJTC …

and

14-117. P: And how can I talking to you, and now you are teaching me, and then suddenly in one week I'm evaluating you. And then the next week now, you are back teaching me. So it's, it's, it was want it wasn't a healthy process. And it wasn't a good process.

118. R: No that doesn't sound I mean, like you've said about in the meeting, I could imagine that it's put you in a difficult position because, like you say, you are not the expert. You don't have the knowledge. But also tomorrow the relationship changes again. And I must learn from you.

119. P: Yes.

120. R: But tomorrow I evaluate you. You know, um?

121. P: Yes.

122. R: How did you handle that? I mean how did it affect the relationship?

123. P: I I think it had some effect.

124. R: [Hm, hm].

125. P: It wasn't good you know. Especially around the, when someone assume that they are teaching you, you know, you do feel that I did not have right to, to er criticise his work. So it was, was, for me, and it was difficult. I had these things with Jasper so many times. For me he was teaching me a lot, and then now I think have to let him know what he is doing was wrong. If I assigned to do that I will do, you do. I know I am not the right person, but I didn't select myself to do this task. This task just assigned to me, so I will do it as they want.

The different areas of expectation harbour an ideological dilemma. As independent engineer there is an expectation that he has the expertise to evaluate the work progress versus the mentee's expectation to learn because he lacks the expertise. These are mutually exclusive. The evaluation of the work is an evaluation of the self, as suggested with "I have to evaluate the whole work that I have done" and "the mentee is responsible to do that to sign that the work that I was trained". "I" and the mentee are the same person. Fahad's declaration of discomfort using the word "silly" on two occasions reveals his conflict. The conflict cannot be negotiated, and he resolves the dilemma by buying into a discourse of compliance. Acting on the "task assigned to" him, the mentee justifies his action as one of no choice, as suggested by "I did not select myself to do this task". As independent engineer he must accept the instruction or be seen to admit to his incompetence, which he does with full knowledge of the implications to his future relationship in doing so.

In constructing the self as engineering peer, the Saudi Arabian participants draw on a notion of sameness in terms of skill and knowledge with the South African engineers and alternatively construct a small gap in the skills gap to construct the self as peer within the workplace. In the following the view being expressed by Mohammed is that JTCKSA and SAJTC "work in the same field" and have shared interests, constructing the self as equals:

17-32. P: We work in the same field. We are not looking for the product. We are looking for the knowledge itself. This is the one thing, it is good to use SAJTC from other company in South Africa er that because mechanisms, experience in other company it's usually they are not looking for the product that had to be done there, this way, that the SAJTC would know it's looking for the knowledge, the research, and also we love this field and work together to get this idea. We are in the same view. But that is a good thing in the SAJTC.

> Also, er, er especially in our partner or my partner in the project, we did the mistake we do the mistake. We do this and actually within learn a lot from the mistake.

The concepts of “working together” and “same view” work with the reference to the SAJTC as “partners in the project” to construct the Saudi Arabian engineers as equal contributors to the professional workplace. The Saudi Arabian and South African engineers are positioned as collaborators, suggesting that the engineers of the two organisations are on par in terms of skills and knowledge. Mohammed makes frequent use of the word “we”, which with the reference to “my partner” constructs a single entity. What is being suggested by making and learning from mistakes is that there is shared input and shared learning, which strengthens a construction of sameness. In the following extract, Fahad uses a description of himself as a university graduate with broad knowledge who is “willing to do some engineering” to reject the positioning of the self as a junior engineer made available in the practice of training. In drawing a distinction between training as “teaching”, “how to do” work, which is being associated with a junior engineer, and technology transfer as “special technology”, “real technology”, Fahad is depicting the self as capable to contribute to the workplace and of acquiring specialised knowledge.

> 14-35. P: And now, when I look back at that time, you now, I honestly don’t call it transfer technology. Because it was more training than transfer technology, if you want to transfer technology, special technology that, that other people don’t have it. What is happening you know, it is just like teaching and a junior engineer how to do this type of work. You know an engineer, er he studied at university broad things, you know. And now he is willing to do some engineering.
>
> 36. R: [Hm].
>
> 37. P: So teaching him in this specific part of engineering how to design, and on how to work, this is the work the, the, that I was involved in, in most of the work between JTCKSA and ECD [sister organisation to the JTCKSA]. I understand that with the transfer of technology, if you’ve done the basic things and you want to learn the real technology that this organisation have, not that, the, the normal knowledge that everybody knows and that is available.

Fahad distinguishes the self from a junior engineer as more experienced, implied by the suggestion that he has already done “basic things” and desires to learn “real technology” and do “some engineering” to portray the self as more capable than he is being regarded.

The Saudi Arabian participants depict the proximity or gap in terms of skill and knowledge from the South Africans as close, so although they buy into a discourse of mentorship and an asymmetrical power relationship that is present between the subject positions of mentor and mentee, the subject position of mentor is not offered to the other to take up. Constructing the self as equal, peer or similar in skills and expertise, closes off the possibility of positioning the South African mentors in a position of superiority and works to construct the self as similar to the other. Without a mentor, the self rejects being positioned as mentee.

The construction of self as peer is achieved by constructing the other as not sufficiently skilled and senior in expertise and constructing the skills and knowledge gap between the self and the other as too small to enable learning to occur. In the few incidents where the position of mentor is afforded to the South African mentors by virtue of their perceived expertise, the other is constructed as unavailable and too busy to provide required mentorship. Constructing the other as unavailable, which is given meaning by attributing this to being due to multiple demands on their expertise, works to construct the Saudi Arabian mentees as competent and entitled to learning from only those who are highly specialised. It also indicates subtle othering of the mentors who, by implication of their lack of availability, are derelict in the duty to mentor. The argument is that being similar in knowledge, the Saudi Arabian mentees can only learn from highly specialised individuals, of whom there are not many in SAJTC, and those who are, as evidenced by the multiple demands made on them, do not avail themselves as mentor for the mentees, thus rendering them lacking as mentor.

In the following quote, Achlam draws from a mentorship discourse and the expectation that that the mentor must be more experienced, which is compared to the knowledge gap with the assigned mentors:

> 7-266. P: But sometimes the problem becomes from the Saudi, sometime it comes from their mentor because he' busy, he didn't want to spend all of time with the Saudis because sometime they come as a fresh graduate,
>
> 267. R: [Hm-hm].
>
> 268. P: and, and the JTCKSA they are or the SAJTC mentor may be 30 years or 35 years his experience there is gap between them.
>
> 269. R: Hm-hm.
>
> 270. P: And maybe that's a, that's a problem sometime. But if you work with someone like Charl or Lana, they for example Charl having your Bachelor, because there's the gap is not that big and they understand what you want to learn.

Achlam is constructing the subject position of mentor by referring to years of experience. In the context of problematising the mentorship experience, as suggested by the double reference to “the problem” and “a problem”, a comparison is being drawn between an experienced mentor and the assigned mentors (Charl and Lana) in terms of the gap in experience with the self. The experienced mentor is too busy and resistant to spend time with the mentee, while the assigned mentors are constructed as so similar to the self, as inferred by the qualification level of the latter and the self, that the implication is they have nothing to teach. The suggestion being made in Achlam’s quote is that Charl and Lana are too similar to the mentee in terms of expertise and knowledge and qualification to be legitimised as mentors. What is being implied with Charl and Lana being able to “understand what you want to learn” is that because they are so similar in knowledge and skill, they would have similar needs. Similarly, in the following Fahad shares that the proximity of himself, in terms of knowledge, to the mentor is close, which resources a construction of the self as a peer to the other:

> 14-21. P: … The main problem that I faced was also, my work with the mentor, my mentor wasn’t much more experienced. It was three years’ experience, and so, so,
>
> 22. R: [Hm].
>
> 23. P: in the topic were almost quite similar and there was not really transfer of technology with the direct mentor. The transfer of technology happen when we meet with the higher people who can, you know, you know train or teach you the things you did not know,
>
> 24. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 25. P: and the things that you, in the right way?

Drawing from a mentorship discourse, Fahad constructs the subject position of mentor as being “higher people” implying those with greater knowledge, education or status. Expertise is associated with many years of experience and by implication the assigned mentor is too junior to transfer knowledge. The construction of self as peer is suggested by the assessment that the assigned mentor “wasn’t much more experienced”, where three years is regarded as being too similar in experience, and in the assessment that their knowledge on the topic, in reference to the area of specialisation, was similar. The argument being made is that Fahad has the same knowledge as the South African mentor, who is therefore unable to teach him more than what he already knows. In the following extract, Mohammed is also equating expertise with working experience:

> 5-92. P: Uhm Peter can, (.) Peter has more, more knowledge than Lana and she’s uh [Peter] is a doctor, he was working for a longer duration, and uh

> Lana (2) uhm both are kind but that (13). What, are you talking about with uh, when I am talking with Peter he has knowledge more than Lana so he can respond to any questions. Most of the questions but the knowledge, about the theory of. But uh Lana she's not specialised in the very, very deep in the, she's not very deep in the antenna knowledge. And uh then sometimes when I ask Lana some questions she can, she cannot uh, she couldn't uh answer about it because she's not specialised in this, theory. And uh about the respecting, they both are very kind.

Mohammed constructs the subject position of mentor as someone who is specialised, suggested by the reference to "more knowledge", which is being associated with the title of "doctor". Peter's credibility is assumed by virtue of him having a doctorate. Lana is depicted as lacking in knowledge due to having less years' working experience and presumably because she does not have a doctorate. This is offered as accounting for the difference in Lana and Peter's ability to respond to questions. While a negative inference is being made towards Lana in the comparison, Mohammed reveals an awareness of the norm against prejudice, as evidenced by his repeated reference to both as being kind. This is stated each time he makes a negative inference against Lana. The extract shows the expectations that arise from the subject position of mentor which Mohammed makes available, regarding being able to answer challenging questions, implied by Mohammed suggestion that Lana, as a less experienced individual is unable to answer.

The Saudi Arabian participants draw from a workplace discourse to provide meaning to the mentors' lack of availability, as evidenced in frequent reference to how busy the mentors are and justification of this to the self. The construction of social distance in constructing the other as psychologically and physically distant is indicative of othering (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012). The following two extracts are in response to questions relating to access to the mentors beyond mere work tasks and show how the Saudi Arabian participants buy into a workplace discourse to provide meaning to a lack of access to the mentors. In the first extract, Achlam responds that there was limited time for interaction outside of work due to workload, while in the second extract, Achmat responds that there was limited interaction between visits with the mentors due to their work.

> 7-220. P: Yes. But they, they didn't mind if we can talk about anything else or if we are, if we are going to meet out. But sometime we feel busy and I saw them, they feel busy and they, they are not working on the just only one project maybe for more one We just (.) talk about the work if we have some time to talk about something else, we can talk.

and

18-66. P: Yeah, not that much, because as I have said it was on-line meetings. And er sometimes there I think the guys at the SAJTC they have other projects to work on and er they have, there was a little bit busy.

In constructing the other as too busy and unavailable, the Saudi Arabian participants make no suggestion that this affected transfer of knowledge; however, the following two excerpts reveal the impact that this has to the self. In the first extract, Omar indicates that the mentees feel like a second priority due to the mentor being busy and focusing on deadlines, while Ali shares that he feels excluded from the team:

16-318. P: … This is one thing, more so through the type of projects makes the engineers at the SAJTC that they are very busy.

319. R: Okay.

320. P: Sometimes they don't have time work. I'm not talking about myself, I'm talking from the feedback that I get from my colleagues.

321. R: Yes.

322. P: So sometimes they think they don't have time. They, you know sometimes there is a deadline, they want satisfy the deadlines. So sometimes they feel like, they are like, er secondary priority not like they are first priority.

and

12-210. P: Also sometimes you er find it difficult to work with some people. So maybe er I believe sometimes it's a personal issue, but he is representing the SAJTC. So er sometimes you get ignored, or sometimes you, you, you are treated not as a SAJTC er employment, so it may sometimes er, er make us feel that we should improve the relationship between both and work as a team.

Ali's portrayal of his sense of exclusion is achieved in reference to not being treated as an SAJTC employee, being ignored and suggesting that if the relationship is improved, they would work as a team. These extracts indicate how the participants subject themselves to both the meanings of the workplace discourse and to its power and regulation through identifying the self with the position of mentee (Hall, 2001), and the internalisation of this knowledge by the self (Hofmeyr, 2006) in these incidents.

The analysis showed that although the Saudi Arabian participants buy into the discourse of learning from a senior that is premised by an unequal power relation, they reject the positioning of student implied in a training discourse and emphasise their contribution to the workplace. The construction of the new engineer navigates the ideological dilemma that arises from presenting the self as professional engineer capable of independent contribution, while being dependent on the mentor for guidance within the workplace and accounts for not being in an equal position to make an independent contribution to work endeavours. Taking up the subject positioning of less experienced engineer as new engineer for self, works to give meaning to subjection of power by the mentors and rejects the effects of othering. Constructing the other as undifferentiated in terms of experience constructs the self as having attained a level of knowledge that requires more senior mentorship to learn from, while constructing the other as not sufficiently competent to learn from. The practice of mentorship that produces positions of domination and subordination and the marginalisation that is brought forth by othering (Johnson et al., 2004) are resisted through the construction of new engineer and engineering as peer, protecting the sense of self as belonging to the workplace.

4.2.1.3 The Variable Construction of the Self as Engineer for the South African Mentors and for the Saudi Arabian Mentees

The effect of power in the practice of mentorship that situates the mentee and mentor within asymmetrical relations and the discourse of the economic workplace was evident in the self-construction. The South African participants constructed a desirable and superior self and an inferior other which functions to marginalise the other within the context of knowledge transfer practice, while the function of the Saudi Arabian participants' construction of self as contributing engineers gives meaning to the effect of being subjugated as other within the context of the mentorship relationship.

In the following section I present the alternative construction of self and of other within the discourse of knowledge economy that is contextualised within an ideology of advancement drawn from a discourse of the global West.

4.2.2 The Western Self

The knowledge economy and its ideology of economic and scientific advancement are located in the discourse of the global West where societies that have access to scientific and technological knowledge are regarded as advanced (Stiglitz, 1999), and those that do not are regarded as backwards (Said, 1985). The knowledge economy privileges the advanced West

over the backward rest, who are regarded as requiring intervention. The analysis showed that both participant groups bought into a discourse of the global West to resource their constructions of self and other. The constructions revealed the taken-for-granted acceptance of innovation and engineering knowledge as originating from the global West, and that this knowledge is the only knowledge worth transferring. Furthermore, English was accepted as the language of choice for knowledge transfer. This discourse is concerned with cultural differences, specifically relating to the “modern West” and the “traditional East”. The analysis indicated that internalising the discourse of an advanced West and backward other and accepting the subject positions that this made available for self, affected self identity and the participants’ experience of themselves (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). The constructions of the self for both the South African and the Saudi Arabian participants, although resourced differently, functioned to portray the other as limited by culture in a manner that maintained a position of superiority for the self.

Culturalism was evident in the construction of the self and other in how the participants drew on cultural characteristics and generalisations to explain behaviour. As a discursive strategy, cultural explanations were offered to account for differences in a manner that attributed generalised and inferior attributes to the other. Cultural differentiation, attributed to behaviour that was regarded as deviating from the norm, was used to justify binary creations of us and them, good and bad, appropriate and inappropriate. The notion of culture functioned as a relational demarcation that justified social distancing. According to Johnson et al. (2004), using cultural characteristics and generalisations is referred to as culturalism or the ease with which cultural explanations are used to explain differences and similarities between groups.

The South African participants locate the self within a Western notion of the workplace governed by its norms and identify the self as “Western” and advanced or “modern” and simultaneously construct an other that is traditional and culturally constrained. The Saudi Arabian participants, on the other hand, construct the self in relation to the West as advanced global citizens and variably accept or reject certain Western norms. The discursive strategies used in constructing the Western self differ between the participant groups in that the South African construction is achieved primarily by self other distinction, using the rhetorical strategy of othering, buying into Western norms for the self, whereas the Saudi Arabian participants use various strategies to systematically achieve the construction of self, and self other distinction is achieved by rejecting aspects of a Western perspective that they regard as true for the other but not for the self.

The construction of the Western self functions to depict a superior and inferior, a good self and a bad other. It highlights the power effects of competing ideologies that are evident in the constructions, as shown by the impact of subjugation and by the interactions between the participants. The construction of Western self and other is described more fully in the following sections.

4.2.2.1 The Construction of the South African Western Self and the Other

The analysis showed that the South African participants' construction of the Western self was achieved primarily through the process of othering of the Saudi Arabian mentees. The Western self was constructed primarily in relation to the mentees as opposite and as other (Jensen, 2011; Jones, 1997; Jun, 2005), accepting the norms of a Western discourse for the self and that the other deviated from, and focusing on difference from self that constructed the other (Johnson et al., 2004; Khawaja & Mørck, 2009). Cultural explanations were used to depict culture as a barrier in knowledge transfer that had to be overcome, and a lack of knowledge transfer progress was attributed to cultural attributes and religious practices. Dervin (2012) highlights that discourses of culture are ideologically driven by the positioning of social and political structures, and the use of cultural differentiation in constructing the other, which the analysis showed occurred and was not neutral in that it functioned to construct a superior self and an inferior other.

The South African participants constructed the opposite other as constrained by culture and rigid hierarchical authoritarian views, restrained, and limited within a modern workplace, lacking in autonomy, unable to think for themselves, lacking in initiative and motivation, having backward views of gender equality within the workplace, and as prioritising family above work commitments, which was frowned upon. The construction was achieved by highlighting differences between the self and the other regarding social practices, beliefs, and values, specifically in matters of religion, engineering practice and commitment to the workplace. The other is portrayed as being out of place in a modern Western workplace to the extent that they are limited in their ability to contribute productively. The self is constructed as advanced, open-minded, self-driven and productive, which are attributes deemed by the self as essential for the Western worker and in particular the good engineer.

The South African participants bought into a dominant Western discourse to resource the constructions of self and other, as demonstrated in the following extracts that show the assumed prevalence of a Western culture. In the following, Henk depicts a known Western

culture while depicting the others' culture as opaque, about which there is not much known which, according to Todorov (1984, in Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012), constitutes othering:

> 3-127. R: Do they enquire about your culture, your religion, the mentees that you've had?
>
> 128. P: They do, yes. They do actually. Uhm, they, they seem to be fairly interested as well in how things work here. Uhm, but I suspect that, that they've got a better idea of really how our culture works than we do about theirs, just because of television and, and those types of things. They've got a reasonably good idea I think of how things work in, in the West but we perhaps to a lesser extent about how their culture works. I think it's much more (.) closed and less publicised and visible. So it tends to be a bit more weighted to the other side but they are also interested in, in our culture and they're interested in visiting places over here that they can go and enjoy and then they a lot of them seem to be very keen on, on travelling and actually bringing their families here and showing them the country and going to the Kruger Park and stuff like that … But like I say I think in terms of the culture they've got a reasonably good idea of what the culture is because it's, it's similar to sort of general Western culture.

Here the culture in which the self is located, as implied by "our" culture, is depicted by Henk as the West and as the norm, while locating the other outside of this norm. It is being assumed that the West is widely well-known, suggested by reference to "television and those type of things", and well-known to the other, as suggested in "they've got a better idea of really how our culture works". Henk justifies his lack of knowledge of the other culture based on it being less "publicised". The inference is that there is less interest or alternatively the culture is of less significance to warrant wider visibility. The alterative inference is that it is hidden, depicting it as less accessible. While Henk describes the mentees' interest and desire to know more about his culture, he offers no suggestion of interest in getting to know the other. The suggestion is that there is a desire to know more about his culture, whereas the other is not worthy of same. By referring to knowing how a culture "works", Henk is setting the norm against which the other behaviour will be measured, which will be a Western perspective, which is justified by virtue of its implied universality. In the final sentence, Henk appears to soften his earlier position that his culture is a Western culture to that it is "similar to", orientating himself to a possible challenge that it is not. Perhaps this indicates an awareness of the difference between "first world" and "developing world" in which South African is often viewed. The argument remains unchanged that the culture with which Henk associates himself is known from which universality of its norms is assumed.

In the following quote, Bhaumik refers to a “South African centric view on engineering” in drawing a distinction between the culture of the self and the culture of the other, which demonstrates his awareness of different worldviews between the participating groups:

> 15-14. P: Transferring the capability that we have, or the skills that we have to the mentees and to our clients in client’s engineers. (.) Right. Um One of the things that, for me, I think when I started off some of the first projects um working with the guys, I didn’t fully understand the vast difference in culture, which is a major thing. You know? I had a very, um let’s calls it a very South African centric view on engineering and how things should be done, and on, you know, on what, what can a mentor expect.
>
> 15. R: [Hm]
>
> 16. P: What is the deadline, all of those type of things.

This extract demonstrates how Bhaumik locates himself within his cultural context and the hold that it has on his behaviour, as suggested by it informing “how things should be done” and what can be expected from the self. In the context of expectations, a South African view is being associated with “deadlines”, suggesting that the two cultures had differing norms regarding the attainment of deadlines. This provides an example of how social norms shape individual identities conditioning thoughts, delimiting actions and controlling actions (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). According to Hall (2001), the individual subject is subjected to the meanings of a discourse by which they are regulated when identifying the self with the position. Bhaumik is constructing himself as different from the other in terms of culture, and by implication a culture which is more aligned with a Western notion of workplace conduct. The difference is, however, not neutral and drawing from an engineering discourse and Western workplace ideology, implied by “deadline” and the inference being made is that the other culture does not hold to the same expectations as those that are deemed important by the self. The following extract provides a further example of the South African participants as constructing a Western self by locating the self in a Western discourse. The example is not one that demonstrates the taking up of Western workplace norms, but is located in a discourse of religion. The extract demonstrates Antony’s assumption of the pervasiveness of the Western norms and functions to differentiate the self from the other. The extract is part of an exchange regarding religious differences, where Antony is expressing that the Christian norms are regarded as sinful by the other. In this extract he depicts knowledge of Christian norms as being pervasive, as suggested by “you would expect them to hear all these things very often”, and he associates Christian norms with the West, as suggested by the reference to “Western people”:

13-290. P: So you would expect them to hear all these things very often.

291. R: Hm.

292. P: And how disobedient others are, and how fallen the West, Western people are.

293. R: Yeah.

294. P: And how sinful they are. And sin must be. They must hear it all the time. And they become so accustomed to it, it becomes one with them.

What is being suggested is that the other is constantly being told of the sinful nature of the West to the extent that they assimilate that Western people are sinful, suggested by “they must hear it all the time” and “become so accustomed to it” and it “becomes one with them”. The depiction of the other as intolerant of others to the extent of radical action, as suggested by “punished by death”, functions to highlight the difference in norms in a manner that radicalises the other. Within a context of a Western discourse that upholds religious freedom, Antony’s argument echoes representations of backwardness of the inferior other against which a Western self is constituted (Said, 1985). The other is being constructed as morally different from Western norms of the self and this over-inflation of a radical difference is, according to Brons (2015), an othering practice that leads to justifying subjection of the alien other and social exclusion.

The self other construction is further achieved by the South African participants attributing blame based on difference in culture for problems in the workplace. The notion of culture is associated with morality and good and bad, suggesting a good self and bad other. In the following quotes from Hans’s interview, he distinguishes the self from the other where in the first two quotes a binary between an “us” and “them” on the basis of culture is established, and in the third quote moral goodness and badness is ascribed to the self and other, which works up to third quote where the portrayal of culture as good and bad is assigned to the workplace. In the following extract, Hans draws a distinction between two groups of mentees in terms of the improved collaboration and mentoring, where he ascribes the improvement to modernisation of the mentees:

11-86. P: So, (.) yeah, it just uhm but, but overall there was a big improvement in the collaboration and the mentoring between us and the Saudi people on the last uhm projects. Definitely better than it was the first time around.

87. R: Okay.

88. P: Yeah.

89. R: And you say that is around, because of the age difference, and because they are less strict about their culture?

90. P: Yes. Yes, they somehow they started to, I can almost say modernised a bit.

The modern self suggests a backward other comparison and by implication Hans is associating culture, as suggested by his acceptance of the researcher's question regarding culture, as traditional and not modern. The construction as traditional is not neutral as it is being blamed for problems in the mentorship relationship:

11-102. P: I think for the first group there was more, this almost like a separation. Like, 'It is us' an 'them'. It was like almost two separate entities and it's like there was a divided between cultures which was much deeper. uhm Or maybe the perceived divide between the two cultures seemed much more deeper. And I think it's not only uhm (.) only because of them, I think it's also because of, of if I can call it some enlightenment on our side.

In the next extract self and other distinction is made on the basis of morality:

11-151. P: And they are good people, just like we are. Well most of them.

152. R: [laugh]

153. P: And so, the thing is, it's not consigned whether you are morally good, or morally bad person. It's got nothing to do with your religion at all.

Hans uses the phrase "almost two separate entities" to construct an image of otherness. Difference in culture is being associated with good and bad morality. Hans ascribes goodness to the self as taken for granted, suggested by "they are good people, just like we are". Hans offers a disclaimer with the words "well most of them", which works to show that the generalisation of goodness attributed to the self does not hold for the other. Morality holds for the self, while the possibility of immorality only holds for the other. Hans offers a further disclaimer with the words, "It's got nothing to do with your religion at all". According to Rowe and Goodman (2014), the use of disclaimers usually reveals competing ideologies. Morality is being attributed to culture and not religion, whereas religion and morality are usually linked ideologically. Hans navigates a possible prejudicial viewing of his attribution of good and bad morality by ascribing it to culture and not to religion, which is perhaps indicative of the norm not to criticise religion. His assertion that a cultural divide was bridged through "enlightenment" works to emphasise the effect of culture in keeping apart. In the last of the four extracts, Hans

builds the construction of the other as culturally inferior by attributing behavioural attributes to culture:

> 11-257. P: And whatever happened there, but Yeah. But that's I think that's a general concern coming from Yeah. uhm And, again, I think it is definitely also It is a cultural thing and it's not that I am again and I am stressing it, it is not that there is a right and a wrong culture, I think it is just the way in which our cultures differ. (.) Yeah (.) but uhm we (.) in their culture it's okay if you, you know, just sit back and relax and you are not doing your part one hundred percent of the time. And wherein in our culture it's just seen Yeah, just differently. You really would be seen as a lazy and incompetent engineer in our culture if you have that kind of attitude towards your work,
>
> 258. R: [Hm].
>
> 259. P: whereas it is it's almost like a normal thing in their culture.

In this extract culture is being used as a unidirectional identifier for the other who is being constructed as other by drawing on normative statements to define the opposite (Verkuyten, 2003). Orientating himself to a challenge of prejudice, Hans offers an emphatic disclaimer about there being a right or wrong culture when he says, "I am again and I am stressing it, it is not that there is a right and a wrong culture", while inferring negative attributes to the other. His talk is guarded and suggestive as opposed to direct when he talks about the other, as suggested with "not doing your part one hundred percent of the time". The inference is that the other is lazy and incompetent and is presented as a comparison to the culture of the self and is coached as being merely different, as suggested with "You really would be seen as a lazy and incompetent engineer in our culture". Hans uses cautions and polite wording and draws comparisons with what is acceptable for the self and describes the other as merely "different". By drawing a comparison between the norm of behaviour for the self and that of the other in the workplace, the other is being essentialised as lazy and incompetent, simultaneously constructing an inferior other and a competent and diligent self. The notions of modernity, enlightenment, and good morals that are linked with Christianity and productivity within the workplace are associated with the discourse of the West, and the opposite of these are associated with the discourse of the backward other.

The following quote from Dirk offers additional evidence of the construction of the other as culturally different and attributing negative attributes to this difference, which is offered as reasons for problematic knowledge transfer:

> 10-8. P: In the end uhm it was about differing cultures that played a big part uhm in some of the unhappiness amongst some of the colleagues because

> it felt like, uhm in general, and that's why I say it's not er something that helps for all of us, but in general there was this sort of an attitude of the, the Saudi counterparts being, you know, somewhat lazy and doesn't want er to do their part on projects.

Dirk attributes negativity to the difference in cultures and ascribes the poor behaviour to the other. The distinction being made works to construct the other as lazy and unwilling to contribute, and by inference of cultural difference, constructs the self as the opposite.

The following offers further examples of the mentees being constructed as other based on the norms for the self and highlights the attributes that are assigned to the other that both construct the favourable self and the inferior other within a workplace discourse.

Charl describes the mentees as performing less work than the self and differentiates the self from other based on working hours. In the extract, Charl is depicting the self as more diligent than the other, constructing the Saudi Arabian workplace as inferior in terms of productivity:

> 6-176. P: … uhm, it, what was interesting, the only really difference between their, well, main differences that we noted uhm, from sitting there and working with them is that their working hours are shorter and they do hang out, they go praying and they hang out a lot. [chuckles] So they do work less (.) but uhm, that was the only observation really that in how their working environment radically differs from ours. Uhm Yeah, I'm trying to think if there would be anything that, that could have influenced my attitude towards the mentee. yeah, I can't think of anything, no.
>
> 177. R: And the working, the radically different working hours, how, with that insight, how does it, does it, do you do anything with that with the mentees?
>
> 178. P: No. No, I do expect them to conform to our working hours when they're here.

One of the aspects of othering is that the other is constructed as detached from context and behaviour is explained in generalised terms and not in response to circumstances. In this cited exchange with Charl, the reference to the Saudi Arabian working hours as different without accounting for the particular context, such as accounting for extreme weather conditions in Saudi Arabia, or religious practice, is that it makes the others' behaviour seem without reason (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012), resulting in it being seen in a poor light.

The other is also constructed as lacking accountability and ownership, while the self is constructed as responsible for both self and the other. In the following excerpt, Lana describes the mentees' lack of accountability, depicting the self as internally motivated against an other who must be driven:

> 4-229. P: No sense of accountability, no sense of and I'm not saying, you know, forty lashes with a whip, but just no sense of dedication on his side has increased as if, you know, 'I've got a bit of a talking to, I feel bad, let me work a bit harder'.

Lana uses the term "forty lashes" to suggest corrective punishment, but stated within the context of the modern workplace, demonstrates the use of absurdity to inoculate her against a claim of prejudice as it can be retracted as not being a serious comment. However, it draws from a discourse of legislative corporal punishment in Saudi Arabia and the association between corporal punishment and the others' poor behaviour is suggestive of behaviour that is inappropriate within a modern workplace and thus works to construct the other as backward within a modern day working context. The suggestion being made with the comment "if ... I've got a bit of a talking to, I feel bad, let me work a bit harder' is that it is the norm in the workplace to be self-directed and that a simple talking to would have sufficed for the self to induce an increased sense of dedication, but this is not the case with the other. The exchange highlights what is taken for granted by the self in the workplace as the norm, namely accountability and dedication towards work performance that induces self-regulatory behaviour.

Independent thought and the ability to express autonomy in thought is highly regarded within the context of the "free world" that is associated with the notion of the West. The other is constructed as lacking in agency, either by being constrained or by their ability to do so. The following extracts provide examples of the construction of self as autonomous thinker and the construction of the mentees as other.

In the following extract, Antony is constructing the mentees as restrained in their ability to make decisions and think for themselves:

> 13-129. P: ... The other guys, they come fresh from Saudi Arabia, and they get in here. I get the idea that in their culture they are more placed than what they can make the decisions.
>
> 130. R: [Okay].
>
> 131. P: Specifically from the Middle East. Those guys are, they not too much allowed to think for themselves and make decisions for themselves. The king places them and the king pays their salaries. The industry doesn't decide

what the salary is, the king decides. And when there is a salary increase, every year the king comes up on the TV and then he announces all over: 'This is the salary increase' so much percentage or whatever. And then they smile. They might not be happy, but they will smile.

132. R: [Alright].

133. P: And they will accept that. You never get someone saying: No, that is ridiculous, we want we want more or whatever. That is out. They don't have that.

The construction of the obedient unthinking other is achieved by drawing from a discourse of sovereign rule, where the king rules over his powerless subjects. The words, "And then they smile", work to construct the other as powerless but also to position them as objects in a non-democratic non-Western world. Culture is being attributed to the lack of ability of the other to make decisions. Antony refers to the other as "servant to the king" to resource a construction of the other as externally controlled:

13-141. P: Seemingly a little bit ambitionless, if I can call it that?

142. R: [Hm].

143. P: Not that strong, but it is like they don't really care exactly where they go. It is very rarely that you find real passion. He wants someone that is so focussed, he wants to become that.

144. R: [Hm].

145. P: They are not, they do not tend to be like that. They tend to be like servants for the king. Go where they are needed, or whatever. Or they go back to studies, for instance.

In these excerpts the mentors are orientating themselves to the norm against prejudice by using tentative phrases such as "rarely", "little bit ambitionless" to discount any counterclaim. This works to guard the self against a claim of prejudice while constructing the other in a poor light, drawing from a workplace discourse where the self is constructed passionate in comparison to the lazy and ambitionless other. The suggestion being made with the word "servant" is that the other lacks autonomy. Peter suggests that the other has an overreliance on titles, which he ascribes to "their" society to construct an other who is regulated by hierarchical power in the following extracts:

8-80. P: … Because they come from a very rigid hierarchical society. So one needs to break that down to a point, obviously you can take it too far, but one needs to break that down to point and as I say you know, this whole Doctor thing was just weird to me, [changed to in order to maintain anonymity].

81. R: [Doctor].

82. [Laughter]

83. P: So, so yeah, I think that did help though, especially initially because it's not, you know 'ah you know, this is my name' and I think given the way their society works, I think titles do count for a lot. But one has to be aware that it can also put barriers in the way and when you're working routinely with someone, you don't want that kind of barrier.

Peter draws on a discourse of respect for titles to construct the mentees as overly concerned with hierarchy. The reference that he makes to being referred to by the title (Doctor) works to position them as superior within the hierarchal order, while presenting them as being unconcerned with titles by referring to it as "weird". Peter's position of superiority over the other is suggested not by virtue of the title, but by the assumed power that he has over the other suggested by the need to "break down" the rigidity inherent in the other. The implication is that the backward other must be corrected by the informed and enlightened self who is not constrained or affected by hierarchal power. This is also demonstrated in the following, where the other is constructed as lacking in independent agency, while Peter expresses the desire to have the other demonstrate more initiative:

8-157. P: ... But it, it does get a bit difficult trying to nudge the guys in the right direction. I think, I think in a sense they're used to receiving direct instructions, whereas in this case you want them to exhibit more initiative and I am not sure that that's always allowed where they are.

In the following, Bhaumik similarly describes the other as constrained:

15-223. P: Definitely. That is a key thing. And I think for them (.) I don't know, it's difficult to say on sort on behalf of the mentees, but um yeah, um a yeah, so I think sort of they are so used to in a society where everyone follows a single manner of doing things, that being in a society where there's different approaches to doing things, it is actually very difficult for them even just to, to comprehend that (you know), that can even be the case.

Bhaumik attributes rigidity to societal formation, which works to depict the other as lacking free will. In the following extract, Dirk describes the mentees as desiring freedom, which portrays the other as being trapped:

10-246. P: So to them, or to that guy specifically, it was just a stepping stone to get out of JTCKSA and to be sponsored to go and study uhm (2) and like I've said before, for them to study is two things. They get out of the

country for free for X amount of years. They have a, they go to some nice place or a different place where they have all the freedom they could dream of.

The portrayal of the other as oppressed is achieved by the suggestion that they wish to “get out” of their home country. The reference to “freedom” that is desired, as suggested by “dream of” which implies that they are trapped in an unpleasant place and that this is not of their free will. Dirk is constructing the other oppressed. This stands in contrast to a Western notion of the free world and supports the construction of backwardness within a Western context.

In the following extract, Bhaumik constructs the other as being limited in growth and learning, which he attributes to their culture. The construction is achieved by drawing comparisons between his own development as an engineer and that of the other, who it is being suggested is limited by the internalisation of a social context of authority:

15-29. P: Okay, well, I think specifically with the JTCKSA engineers or with the Saudis engineers let me say that in general, the context of authority I found was to be, was quite different. Authority is very hierarchal. Um (.) It is respected in a different manner in South Africa and part of the reason for that is authority, I think or I think part of the reason for that is that authority in KSA [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] is very um can have a lot of influence, can have a lot of power. And um someone’s future can really be influenced by the way they speak to authority. So the fear of failure is a very different thing to South Africa, in the sense that um typically we um most of the work that I’ve done, I don’t think, I don’t think I was probably ever really ready to do any of the things that I would have done at the time when I had the task. On all the tasks that I had to do, at the point when I started it off, I was not ready. I didn’t um even up to now, that is still the case, you know? You can never truly be ready to take on the next wave of responsibility, because that is what, that is what pushes yourself is that you are not ready. You need to grow. You need to learn new things. You need to push yourself in a different dimension of what you thought was possible. But that also means that the risk of failure is very real. The risk of failure is very genuine. You will most likely actually fail a few times before you will succeed by default. Whereas, in KSA [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] I think most of the engineers I dealt with, the risk of failure was extremely high to the point of where it became, it can become a barrier to do anything.

30. R: [Hm]

31. P: So you don’t try to do anything, because you are so afraid of failing, and that failing makes you look bad, and you’re afraid of the

repercussions because of that. So, in general, it's a much more conservative approach to engineering, it's, it's not a very creative approach.

32. R: [Hm].

33. P: It's sort of very you're really be sure before you do something in case, in case it goes wrong. So I found that to be a, a very important element. (2) [pauses to drink water] And if I have to sort of think about all of the mentees that I had, from Saudi Arabia, I would say that was in general the case. So it was not um I would not say it was a personality trait per se, you know of the individual.

34. R: [Hm. Yeah].

35. P: I would say that was a broader arc that was a trend across multiple individuals. Um But having said that, you know the engineers are very willing and they are, they are quite good engineers as well. I mean they have solid technical backgrounds, they have good marks. They're academically well, academically good engineers. [drinks water] But the cultural differences are definitely very real and that is a major, a major barrier.

The suggestion being made is that although they are academically and technically strong, the other is limited as engineer, which is ascribed to culture. Bhaumik draws from an engineering discourse to refer to the other as having a conservative approach to engineering, which is contrasted to a creative approach for the self. In the context of a knowledge economy that values innovation and the ability to solve complex problems, technical and academic grounding alone is of little value. Bhaumik depicts the self as risk takers who are unafraid of challenges. Bhaumik forms an extreme case by using modalising terms such as "extremely high" to portray the other as immobilised by fear to perform. The depiction of the other as fearful of authority to the extent that this is a "barrier to do anything" works to show the other as being dominated by sovereign power, lacking in freedom that is associated with the West, constructing the backward other.

In constructing the Western modern self and the backward other, the South African participants also draw on the mentees' orientation towards females. In the following two extracts, Bram's suggestion that working with females is like "working with an alien" for the other, and Antony's description of females being of less value to the mentees than their animals constructs the other as ridiculous within a modern Western context, where equitable treatment of females, particularly in the workplace, is regulated. In the following, Bram voices the inner conflict that the mentees experience when working with a female as "awkward" and

in conflict with religious views to depict the other as internally conflicted by opposing ideological views:

> 1-360. P: But I was there in the conversation when Aaquil was asking these questions but he was, he was so, he was speaking [changed to in order to maintain anonymity], where he's asking about Lana and how are things going with her and he was like unsure and then he's not sure but he will do something. So he's sitting in this awkward situation where his beliefs are telling him you know, he's not supposed to do this but he's not sure how to deal with this.
>
> 361. R: It must be very, very difficult.
>
> 362. P: Yeah. They're not used to working with females so you can understand. It's like working with an alien from their side, do you understand?

The reference to "alien" acts to over-inflate the differences between the cultures and constructs a backward self. This has a similar effect as Antony's suggestion in the following that the other treats their animals better than women:

> 13-312. P: So it's loosening up, I think too slow, but much faster I think before now. So that's another thing, it is the women thing. They saw women as even lower than animals, because they look … believe me, they look very well after their animals …
>
> 316. P: And how they look after their camels and all the other animals and so on, they get top treatment, but not even the women. So I get the impression that even their animals are to them more important than their women. [chuckles]
>
> 317. R: Gosh, How did that impact your one-on-one relationship? I mean their views?
>
> 318. P: Oh well not at all, because women was not in the picture.
>
> 319. R: Okay.
>
> 320. P: But you pick it up, the way he comes out every now and then,
>
> 321. R: Okay.
>
> 322. P: ... because there are women around where we work. And we treat them as equal. It is just another colleague.
>
> 323. R: [Hm].
>
> 324. P: And sometimes they are more knowledgeable than you, especially if it's like Digital stuff Marika knew much more than I did. So she was my superior in that way,
>
> 325. R: [Um].

326. P: and they would never accept something like that. So when there are women around, usually they are sort of a little bit shy, they shy away a bit and would rather not speak. There is this huge barrier.

Antony provides a detailed view of the relative importance of animals over women for the mentees and compares this with his own view of the equality of females in the workplace. The comparison works to emphasise the difference between self and other. The suggestion being made is that South African females "would never accept something like that", which works to portray the strength and superiority of females which, with the suggested superiority of Antony's female colleague in terms of her greater knowledge in a particular technical area, highlights a norm of gender equality. This constructs the self as having a modern view of the place of the female, while constructing the other as backward and outdated in terms of gender equality.

The other is constructed as culturally different in terms of their social approach in the workplace. In the following extract, Bhaumik describes the other as having a clear distinction between professional and family life. He establishes that it is normal to discuss family matters in the workplace, while this is inappropriate for the other. The difference is not neutral in the context of the Western view of workplace productivity and depicts the self as focused on work, while the other is portrayed as prioritising family over work:

15-175. P: ... whereas, you know, for us, if you're married is talking about your wife now and then at the coffee station is a very normal thing to do, um whereas for them that was really not, not normal as well. So I would say relationship-wise (.) I think it varied, but I think definitely the typical profile or person that we worked with was, there was a very clear I think. Yeah I think the broader concept is that there is a very clear distinction between family life and professional life. And actually, um I mean I remember this quite clearly as well because I mean at some point someone told us in that or I think Frans let me know that if you're interacting with the Saudis, it's quite normal that if someone comes in to work in Saudi Arabia, and let's say they are not they miss work for a day, the reason could just be he had family matters to attend to. You know? What those matters were, all of everything else associated with that, is not the company's business.

176. R: [Hm].

177. P: That line, in itself is enough that you should just accept that.

178. R: [Hm].

179. P: So the distinction between what is considered family life versus what is considered professional life, I think is very, that's like a solid line you know. There is not,

180. R: [Hm]

181. P: There is not a lot of things permeates that line and even in their own minds, it sort of works like that as well where that is, that is a solid line, and er I think it is even it's considered, I wouldn't say rude, "rude" is not the right word it's considered not inappropriate, it's considered inappropriate to sort of cross that line willy-nilly.

15-189. P: So it is very normal that if you worked the whole day with someone in South Africa, at some point the guy will tell you: 'You know this weekend this happened and this' and, and what you would pick up with the Saudi guys is that that would, that type of conversation would not come up that much. And since it wouldn't come up that much you at some point, you would start to infer that you sort of start to infer that there is a line. …

Bhaumik's comparison with the norm of sharing matters of personal life within the work life discussions functions to show what is regarded as normal workplace behaviour for the self, while constructing an other with regard to priorities. The extent of the difference works to show the extent of otherness. Within the Western workplace norms, the employer is entitled to have access to information regarding the employee's personal life to the extent that this has an impact on the workplace. The suggestion that the personal life of the other is off limits within the workplace constructs the other as placing their family interests over the best interests of the work, which is deemed to be inappropriate in a modern workplace. Henk similarly constructs the other as being more concerned with matters outside of the workplace in the following:

3-192. P: That's the impression that we got again. I'm not sure how much truth there is, there is in that. But when we were talking now about the (.) uhm, sort of the urgency and time prioritisation type of thing, I think there again, it, it could be a cultural thing where the, the emphasis is really on, on family and religion rather than on work. So work is not the highest priority objective while I think in our cases for some people it is. If you're not doing well in your work, or you're not satisfying your client, then that's a major, major problem.

193. R: Yes.

194. P: And I don't think it's necessarily the same (.) over there.

Henk problematises the prioritisation of family and religion over satisfying the client needs by referring to such behaviour as “a major, major problem”. Henk suggests that this could be as a result of a “cultural thing”, which works to essentialise the behaviour of other and depicts the other as lacking in concern for work commitments. The comparison works to construct the self as favourable, as in the context of the Western workplace prioritising of work is deemed a desirable attribute.

The analysis showed that the South African participants made extensive use of cultural explanations as a strategy to achieve a construction of the other as different from the self. The notion of culture differentiates them from the self and the notion of a Western society in such a way that culture becomes a signifier of identity, and what is held as true for the other is regarded as true only for them (Park, 2005). References to culture regarding the other were used as synonymous for inferior culture that represented an inferior “other” culture (Dervin, 2012). Attributing cultural attributes to problems in the knowledge transfer process constructs a problematised other and functions to justify conditions and practices (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009) that limit access to the workplace for the mentees. The construction of Western self and the culturally backward other within the context of the workplace portrays the other as excluded from participation in the knowledge economy while legitimating a position of dominance for the self within a knowledge economy.

4.2.2.2 The Construction of the Saudi Arabian Western Self and the Other

In constructing the Western self, the analysis showed that the Saudi Arabian participants variably drew from a Western discourse to construct the self as advanced global citizens and to a lesser extent from an Islamic discourse that rejected the Western norm that prioritises work above family. Creutz-Kämppi (2008) explains that the dominant discourse regarding Islam in the Western world shows Islam to be culturally backward and distinguished from the “modern Western world”. He argues that these discursive formations of Islam as the other and as an antipode to the Western world result in polarisation. The construction of Western self by the Saudi Arabian participants indicates an awareness and rejection of the othering that is prevalent in the discourse of Islam.

Constructing the Western self was achieved by arguing that Saudi Arabia is misrepresented in the media, describing the self as well-travelled and exposed to multiple cultures, portraying the self as engaged with Western norms and practices and justifying views regarding working with females. An acceptance of English as the global standard for communication and for the self, as indicated in the analysis, indicates an internalisation of a Western discourse and the

subject position of global citizen. The construction of the Western self functions to protect the self identity from the effects of othering. The alternative construction of self as Muslim as superior to the other was achieved by highlighting societal differences with regard to the role of the family and religion as being superior to the other. This construct functioned to differentiate the self from the other in a manner that justified social distancing. The varying identities constructed is not unexpected as they serve particular purposes (Goodman, 2017); however, the conflicting self constructions indicate the presence of ideological differences that must be negotiated through interaction within differing social contexts (Noels et al., 2012, as cited in Dervin, 2012).

In the following extract, Aaquil responds to a statement from myself regarding being told not to engage with the Saudi Arabian engineers directly when not invited to do so, rejecting it as stemming from a misconception of what is known about Saudi Arabia and offers a further response that constructs a Western self:

> 2-106. P: I understand that Saudi Arabia is the biggest country that has a misconception about it and has, lots of people talk about build their image, even from Muslim people, that they don't know Saudi Arabia they have Saudi Arabia, which most of the time is not true. As you said that why you don't, you don't talk to them. I'm, I am not saying the reason for that, but some people think that is correct and they start to build a relationship from that.
>
> 107. I one time I was in USA University, I was taking a course on uhm SARS and such line, who to me was sitting a General and, and we was talking and I said 'no copy a report, which uh something similar to John', which is talking issue and political issue, American political issue, and he that, like that and he do that and he said 'how you know about Kruger report? You watch that?' I said 'yeah, it's very funny'. He said 'didn't know that.'
>
> 108. R: [chuckles]
>
> 109. P: And you see he's, he's a General and he know that Saudi Arabia and USA is allies and we have very big project and we have good nature with the public who doesn't know that and even our public maybe doesn't fully understand that, but this is the true and he understand that our officer they train with them and, but he still believe that uh we're very different and stuff like that. Though uh so what I'm saying is that friendship and partnership would be better uh to integrate and help to transfer anything ideas and what.

The construction of the Western self is achieved by rejecting the notion of other, which was suggested by my statement and describing the self as engaging with Americans on American

topics, as suggested by Aaquil, highlighting that he was conversing with an American on an "American political issue". America is typically the symbol of the Western world, which suggests that Aaquil's choice of reference is a reference to the global West. The reference to being allies with America works to portray the countries as equal, with his reference to the training of the American and Saudi Arabian officers implies that the Saudi Arabian officers are no different from the American officers. In the description of the interaction, there are several references that the "General" held a different view from Aaquil, as suggested by the "General" being surprised by Aaquil's knowledge on a topic, the "General" believing that they are different, which functions to highlight the misconceptions of the Saudi Arabians which are suggested as extending to the "public". There is a suggestion that the Saudi Arabian public might also not have knowledge of similarities, but this is dismissed as being as a result of a lack of understanding. The construction of similarity is complete, with Aaquil's suggestion of friendship, partnership and integration aiding knowledge transfer as implied in the final sentence. In this extract, Aaquil is also constructing the self as well-travelled, which is similar to the following two extracts from Omar's interview. In the first he references traveling to "other countries" and his reference knowing engineers who work in different countries expands the construction beyond the self, while in the second extract he expresses a desire to be exposed to others outside of his country, as suggested by exposure not merely being within his organisation because they are not "the world", implying that they are not from other countries, and "working with other people", which constructs him as open to engaging with and being exposed to people who are not Saudi Arabian:

> 16-170. P: I went to other countries also. I know some of the engineers working in different countries.
>
> and
>
> 16-437. P: er When you work in your organisation that you know in JTCKSA I mean, er you don't deal with the world. You need to, to be confident when you talking, when you talk to others.
>
> 438. R: [Hm]
>
> 439. P: So you are exposed, you make, you negotiate with others. You discuss your ideas. You sometimes you will advise yeah.
>
> 440. R: Yes.
>
> 441. P: So you need to be very open for people. So you can do the same thing with other organisations. And this happens actually with us. I, I work with other people.

Omar makes reference to “negotiating with others”, discussing his ideas and “advising”, which suggests that his engagement with others is at least on a level of peer and as specialist. This construction works to establish equality for the self on a global level. By implication, the desire to travel and be exposed to the global world constructs a global citizen that is unlike the othering discourse held of Saudi Arabians. It thus functions to resist being othered.

The self is constructed as modern, as demonstrated in the following where Aaquil draws on concepts that are associated with the modern world, such as malls, international travel and “Facebook”:

> 2-219. P: … One thing that I, my sister likes to go to the mall and buy stuff like that and when we’re travelling like this there is so much of more and it is shitty mall compared to Riyadh. We have much better but and they’re feeling much happier and they feel we have bigger mall, we have better shops. ... But Saudi Arabia as a relation to people [inaudible]. You watch over the, uh you watch the television. You find someone going fully covered and stuff like that and the mean, the people have that image of Saudi Arabia and sometimes it not’s true. As I was once in [European country] and my sister [inaudible] sister and she liked Facebook so I was working she came and my sister wife starting to fight. She started fighting with my sister and everyone trying to or she was trying to make my sister is [well educated - changed to in order to maintain anonymity]. My sister she said ‘I’m not stupid.’ [laughing]
>
> 220. R: [Laughing]
>
> [We start to leave the room, voices getting less audible]
>
> 221. P: My sister has a driver’s licence. She’s [changed to in order to maintain anonymity], she doesn’t have [inaudible]. She doesn’t even want to drive because she [inaudible] [chuckles] Everyone has different pleasure, different belief and no-one each other telling people trying to force their beliefs ...

Aaquil is resourcing his construction of a modern self in this reference to better and bigger shopping malls which are a symbol of the modern capitalist economy and works to present Saudi Arabia as globally competitive. Aaquil, who presents himself as well-travelled, has earlier indicated that he studied at a USA university (2-107) and now references a first-world European country as a place he has also visited to construct an image of a global citizen. In the context of it being illegal for women to drive in Saudi Arabia at the time of the interview, the reference to his sister having a driver’s licence works together with the reference to her being a doctor and with voicing that she is not stupid, to counter preconceptions of Saudi

Arabia females as being oppressed. The reference to Facebook functions to depict his sister as modern and Westernised. Aaquil is contrasting this with the image held of Saudi Arabia females, inferred by his reference to their depiction on television as “You find someone going fully covered” implying the *abaya*, which is the traditional long black cloak that women wear, which he states is not true. Drawing this distinction portrays the self as Westernised. There is no reference made to the legality of females driving in Saudi Arabian and Aaquil offers a suggestion that his sister does not drive because she perhaps does not want to, which functions to counter a challenge to his depiction. It is interesting that Aaquil’s reference to the modern female is by omission not extended to his wife for whom he offers little information. Aaquil’s last sentence suggests that individuals are able to exercise their beliefs and desires without restriction and functions to substantiate the construction of a free modern society.

The Saudi Arabian participants orientate themselves towards being positioned as other with regard to their societal view regarding working with females in the workplace in the context of this being a Western norm and the governance of gender equity in the workplace by justifying their position as being in consideration for the female. In the following quote, Aaquil argues that Saudi Arabian men do not wish to work with women in the workplace so as to avoid misunderstandings:

> 2-127. P: But what I’m thinking is like the one of our guys that he was very re religious, but I think, like he wouldn’t like to contact with the uh people of Europe or something like that and uh feeling it is very necessary or something like that. With the guys he’s very open and he speak to everyone uh I, most of the time like watching him speaking with uh like guards on the streets and stuff like that. I don’t know how he knows that [chuckles] and uh I don't mind talking to anyone, but uh he is very important and like with Glenda or something she doesn’t speak too. And uh he’s shy with the women and I understand uh she’s different but doesn’t, this doesn’t mean that all we can do we do, we, we do not couple him with a lady as a partner or, and even if we did, he will do it as work and he will not mind, but the other thing, I think, the, the people that will mind, the lady that she would feel offended from his action that he’s not talking to her or uh yeah, I understand that. So this is why I am not saying that he will not work with her, but something he will might do, the uh good intention she take it as a bad thing or understands it wrong. But these guys, uh usually he doesn’t like to travel and even if they travel, [short sigh] he can work correctly with a different partner and this like one percent,
>
> 128. R: Hmm.

129. P: and most of the people put this has uh most of the Saudis are like that. And I am also a very special case because [by virtue of his family circumstances, withheld in order to maintain anonymity]. I travel all around the world.

Aaquil orientates himself to the norm in the Western workplace regarding working with females and presents a case for not working with females in the workplace. Aaquil references a “very religious” and “very important” Saudi Arabian who talks freely with everyone, implied by his reference to talking with guards, inferring that this extends to people of less importance than himself, which functions to show willingness to work with others on the part of the self. This is being contrasted with not working with females and is being justified as being in the interests of the female, as implied by not offending the “lady”, and in order to avoid misunderstandings of the male’s intentions. His reference to this being “like one percent” suggests that it is an exception to find someone not prepared to work with females. The argument is strengthened with the statement that “most Saudis are like that”, suggesting that it is the norm to accept working with females. The suggestion is that only conservative people, implied by the reference to those not willing to travel outside of the country, do not wish to work with females. The argument being made is that it is not the norm for gender segregation to occur in the workplace, but that this is done in the interests of avoiding misunderstandings between men and women, which legitimises the practice. This counters a construction of self as other regarding working with females.

Aaquil’s final comments that he a “special case” because of his family circumstances and that he travelled extensively function to distinguish and distance himself from other Saudi Arabians by depicting himself as different from them, which in the context of this exchange reveals the presence of an ideological dilemma. Aaquil constructs a self that embraces Western norms and a self where he justifies traditional customs such as not engaging with females. Aaquil navigates the dilemma by minimising the extent of the traditional practice, framing it as due to individual shyness and by differentiating himself from the collective self as a “special case”.

In the following, Fahad and Achmat navigate the ideological difference with regard to the Western norm of working with females by depicting it as being unfamiliar and in the interest of not offending the female. In the extracts he justifies not working with females which functions to maintain a construction of a modern self and to resist being constructed as other:

18-268. P: ... with like with other guys, so (.) sometimes they may I can’t say that. Sometimes it’s because here like in Saudi Arabia, like we don’t usually work with women.

269. R: Okay.

270. P: So it was, some of the guys they had like some issues working with other women. So it wasn't (.) it wasn't pleasant for them, so they don't usually, we are not used to work with women.

271. R: Hm, hm.

272. P: So it was like and you know the country in Saudi Arabia? I think you know?

273. R: Yes.

274. P: So sometimes you have this, some difficulty just talking to them but some and sometimes they don't want to talk to them. So, or even work with them …

293. R: Okay.

294. P: Yeah, I think some of the guys here like er face this problem and no, we are not used to it, so,

295. R: [Hm].

296. P: have some, yeah. Sometimes we're like, we don't want to do something that is er like how I say? (.) Uh yeah, I mean like er I'm trying to some to say some we don't want to like, as I said before, is something like offensive to the er, er females, so yeah.

297. R: Okay. No, I understand.

298. P: So sometime yeah, sometimes like when I work, I try to like keep my hands, to keep everything, so I don't take my er freedom like when a guy is sit next to me.

299. R: Yes.

300. P: Sometimes, because we don't know how, how to approach we don't, yeah.

and Fahad

14-47. P: er For me you know it was, I was working with the girl.

48. R: [Okay].

49. P: It was hard for me to work with a girl.

50. R: [Okay?]

51. P: So I always felt the tension that I don't want to say something wrong that we perceive as culturally wrong, but what you guys didn't consider wrong. So it was, so I still don't have these things. The other thing I said earlier

about those years, if you work with someone sometimes if you work with someone it is not just work, you need to learn about other things.

52. R: [Hm, hm].

53. P: You do know that this joke is okay, with these guys, asking them these questions is okay for these guys. So it's er, it's, it's not a major issue but it has a problem feel (.) er you don't feel, er you feel some pressure about that. You don't want to make mistake. You don't want to be unpolite. You don't want to show some er unappreciation for the other people. So sometimes you don't want to intentionally make mistakes. Sometimes there is no problem, but you do know that there is no problem.

In both extracts the justification for not working with females is offered as reasonable and it is the omission of any reference to a religious prohibition with working with females that is of interest. The justification offered is based on advancing workplace harmony, which makes it even more legitimate within a Western context that frowns on workplace conflict. This suggests an awareness of a Western workplace norm regarding working with females and an orientation away from cultural or religious attribution as other and as backward.

The Saudi Arabian participants accept that English is the language of preference for knowledge transfer. English is regarded as the relevant language within Western ideology and competence in English is assumed for knowledge recipients (Wodak, 2012). Ideologically English as lingua franca is not questioned as the language to use in the world (Woodend et al., 2019). This is accepted as the truth by the participants, as evidenced by their subjugation of the self with regard to their English proficiency. English as the organisational medium to communicate ideas and thoughts is internalised and takes hold of their thoughts and actions, restricting organisational interactions. The analysis showed that this impacts their identity construction in that the self is problematised due to their experience of difficulties in learning and communicating in English. The self is depicted as lacking understanding, requiring additional time to read and translate, having difficulty in learning and constrained in the ability to freely engage regarding thoughts and ideas in the workplace.

The following quote demonstrates acceptance of English as the preferred global language and as the language for knowledge transfer. Ibraham buys into the discourse that English proficiency is necessary for the transfer of technology:

17-10. P: er er If I have to spoke exactly about my experience itself, not my colleague, er the important thing er the language, er the language, it's been

the English language, it's really important because you have to transfer technology with other company or other culture or other overseas country.

11. R: [Hm].

12. P: er That's really very important because that transfer of technology. My experience when I, where I have travel there, my language is not, not bad, it's also not very er good, we learn something, but the first is the month of the transfer technology we missed something. We lose some of knowledge that because I didn't speak English very well, or listened very well, that's er, er in the beginning.

13. R: Okay.

14. P: Then er in South Africa if someone want, you know, they need to transfer technology and stuff, you have to learn the language that you er work with. This is an important thing.

The importance of English is highlighted in the multiple references to it being important, specifically in relation to multinational knowledge transfer, as suggested with "other overseas country". English is associated with the other or not self by implication by the use of the word "other" that is being applied to "other company", "other culture" and especially reference to "South Africa". The inference being made is that for the not English self to engage in global knowledge transfer, the self must be proficient in the language. In terms of identity construction, Ibraham is assuming responsibility for loss of learning, suggested by "we missed something", due to his English not being "very good". There is not a suggestion of an expectation that this be considered or accommodated by the mentors. The impact on self is evident in that Ibraham initially regarded his English as "not bad", which he revisited in the context of having to learn in English. Ibraham's use of the words "in the beginning" in reference to his struggle suggests that he believes that his English has subsequently improved, which functions to construct the self in a more positive light.

Similarly, in the following quote Fahad is associating language with other culture, linking it to the West and constructing the self as problematic with regard to English proficiency:

14-13. P: So the process is that when I came to South Africa, the problem you know I wasn't er I wasn't good in communicating with using English, and I wasn't used to being exposed to other cultures.

14. R: [Hm, hm].

15. P: I was a fresh graduate, so there was some cultural problems, and some speaking problems.

Language and culture are being linked which functions to differentiate the self from the Western norm. In terms of identity construction, Fahad's reference to having been a fresh graduate functions to offer an explanation for his lack of proficiency in English and suggests an awareness of possible othering due to the expectation of English proficiency in the Western workplace.

Ibraham describes the impact of his English proficiency as limiting his ability to ask questions in the following extract:

> 17-92. P: ... And me also the Arabic to speak all the English language. I mean I'm just, I spoke about the first time or the first six months of my visit to South Africa, I just waste my time. I didn't understand very well when he speak. I can't also ask the question. I want to ask the question and get something but I can't ask the question very well because the language it sometimes help me to ask this question. This is just experiences. Someone, they need to transfer they'll have to make sure to be good at the language to work with the partner.

Ibraham differentiates the self as "me … the Arabic" from the "English language", which with his reference to speaking English for the first time offers an explanation for his difficulty in acquiring new knowledge, as implied by wasting his time. Ibraham links the ability to transfer knowledge to the language proficiency and constructs the self as constrained and limited in his ability to engage to gain a better understanding, ascribing this to English ability.

Similarly, Ali shares the view that his normal learning was affected by his poor English:

> 12-12. P: Sorry my English language was not that good enough that allowed me to learn normally, like we would. But with time it, it was for the first time to use the English language as a language er to learn sorry and to work at the same time,
>
> 13. R: [Um].
>
> 14. P: and that was a challenge for me, but I also worked hard to catch that, because my English, we actually studied English language, but we used a lot of the Arabic language in the university quite often.

Ali's reference to this being his first time to use English to learn offers as an explanation for his difficulty. What is being suggested, within the context of Ali offering that he studied English at university, is that the level of proficiency required is higher than what would be usually expected. This is similar to what Mohammed expresses when he describes the impact of a lack of English proficiency to learning in the following two extracts:

5-44. P: Yeah, yeah. Maybe the problem for me uh, my English language is not very good, so this makes the learning, is slow, a little bit,

45. R: Alright.

46. P: uh because sometimes I can't understand every word she, she say during the meeting. Uh when I read the papers I face some problem to understand everything,

47. R: Hm-hm.

48. P: uh, because my English language is not proficient so I need to translate every word.

49. R: [Oh, okay].

50. P: And uh, sometimes I need to read every sentence, again when I translate the words, sometimes I can't understand very well, very well. And uh, especially some papers has academic language which is difficult and it's not straight sentences. Uh, so, the problem from, is not from Lana, [chuckles] it's from me.

and

5-142. P: Because he can't uh, he's uh efficiency to learn it will be more than uh it will very, very, very good when he, uh is very good in the English word language. Because when reading, he can read and understand. So he will need to read this page, half-an-hour. He will not need two hours or something like that.

Mohammed constructs the self as limited on account of English proficiency. The multiple use of the word "very" stresses that the importance of English ability and with the specification of "academic language" functions to differentiate the general ability to converse in English from a more proficient English knowledge. Mohammed especially assigns blame to the self and not to the other with regard to his ability to understand, which indicates his assimilation of the norm for English as the language of knowledge transfer.

Locating the self within a Western ideology that holds that non-English speakers must adapt and are responsible for their understanding and to make themselves understood (Woodend et al., 2019), the Saudi Arabian participants blame the self for the impact that their lack of English proficiently has on the transfer of knowledge. The mentees are apologetic about their English proficiency and construct self identity in relation to the effort that they make to correct the situation.

In the following extract between myself and Achlam, I explored the question of whether the use of organisational jargon was different and thus problematic for him. Achlam rejected the notion, highlighting that there is no difference and that it is “easy because if we are talking the technical it’s easy to learn”. In doing so, Achlam is distinguishing his English ability from his technical ability and constructs a self that is technically proficient:

7-128. R: In terms of the language and I don’t mean the English language in terms of the language that South Africa uses, the engineering concepts that we, the words that we use for the engineering concepts and the words that you learnt at school, is there a big difference?

129. P: No, because the English technical the same.

130. R: Is it the same?

131. P: Yes, the same.

132. R: Alright. So there’s no problems in terms of,

133. P: No, no problem.

134. R: Of common ground almost?

135. P: Hm.

136. R: Nothing?

137. P: Nothing.

138. R: Okay, so it’s easy? It’s,

139. P: It’s easy because if we are talking the technical it’s easy to learn.

Achlam is protecting his identity as able engineer and rejecting a possible inference that the problem is one of general ability to learn.

Similarly, Fahad explanation differentiates technical understanding from English proficiency and expresses how he was inhibited in that he did not share his thoughts in meetings due to the pressure to express himself without making a mistake:

14-67. P: Yes. In the technical things the English was not that problem. No, I didn’t have any problem in the listening, in the beginning. So I was able to understand English easily. But the problem I had, was how to describe things and (.) so (.) And some technical processes wasn’t er especially for you when you speak with your mentor direct, the problem was minimal. The problem was more when you had the meetings, and you weren’t too sure how to discuss that with them then.

68. R: [Hm].

69. P: And other people. And other people are just listening, so your worrying with making a mistake is more so. You couldn't speak freely.

70. R: Yeah.

71. P: So.

72. R: So, if I understand you correctly, in the meeting context, you were worrying that you were making mistakes, so you don't speak freely?

73. P: Yes. Yes, so sometimes you didn't even say what you wanted to say because you don't want to say something and in the language you know you probably make mistakes.

74. R: [Hm].

75. P: So you keep it for yourself and you didn't describe it in the meeting. Just for the lack of speaking capability.

76. R: Yes. No I understand. And was that different when you were just alone with your mentor?

77. P: Yeah, when she was around it was fine.

78. R: Okay.

79. P: You don't feel the pressure it's okay to make mistakes.

Fahad is constructing himself as technically competent, implied by a desire to contribute to meetings, but concerned with not being able to express himself correctly in meetings. This, with his explanation that he is proficient enough to engage with the mentor directly in English, offers an explanation for withholding in meetings. Woodend et al. (2019) state that in an international context, people who are considered to come from less developed areas and struggle to speak English, result in having less opportunity to speak their minds, which is indicative of the association of English proficiency with a lack of development. This reveals an awareness of the self's lack of tolerance of those who do not engage in English fluently and this being attributed to competence. The importance of English as a measure of career success within an international context is indicated in the following extract from Mohammed's interview:

5-80. P: Uh, I, I learnt, I have learnt some new knowledge by using, reading in the papers or something like that. Dr Peter shared me and, and, as author in paper.

81. R: [Alright].

82. P: In the English paper and in submitting this paper in the conference. So it's a good chance for me to succeed, to present the paper against some, maybe some scholars or other, or some professional persons in this uh track or in this area. Uh And when I, when I do very well in this

> presenting this will get a good for me and a starting point as presenting new papers in the future. Because, you know when you exceed some challenge or some, when you exceed challenge then you will feel you can do more and more and more.

Mohammed stresses that he was included as a co-author in an English paper which works to highlight the regard for English in an international context. In terms of self construction this links this achievement with a sense of personal achievement and the attainment of success.

A lack of English proficiency in their host country functions as evidence of difference from the Western norm that affects the Saudi Arabian participants' construction of self as responsible for a lack of understanding and as technically constrained. This reveals the presence of normative power. Frost (1987) speaks of the effect of power in relations as that of privileging the dominant group while silencing or disadvantaging the other group. The privileging of English as the language of choice within the knowledge transfer process can be seen to marginalise the self due to their lack of proficiency and confidence in conversing in English. The discourse of English functions to construct the able self and resist being othered.

The Saudi Arabian participants construct the South African mentors as foreign other, drawing a distinction on the grounds of culture and religion. This is achieved by identifying the self as culturally different and as Muslim. This could indicate the extent to which the self desires to assimilate Western norms to the extent that difference based on culture is not articulated. This construction is not pervasive and is limited to a few of the participants.

In the following, Achmat draws a distinction between the self from the other on the basis of culture, as suggested by "my culture" and "we are very different culture":

> 18-306. P: Yes. Sometimes, yes. But er I think when we like, when we worked together like for a longer period, I think it's you're gonna to face some issues and you're going to like: 'This is my culture, you're gonna have to understand this is normal for me. If you are feel offensive that's I'm not gonna do it again'.
>
> 307. R: Yes.
>
> 308. P: Something because we are from very different culture.

Achmat is suggesting that the difference in culture and what is regarded as normal for one could be seen to be offensive by the other due to the difference in culture. This establishes a "self" and "other" differentiation that affects behaviour, as suggested by, "I'm not gonna do it

again'", which implies sensitivity for the other requiring behaviour changes. In the following, Achmat is expressing a preference for engaging with other "Saudis" indicating the distinction between self and other:

> 18-224. P: Yeah, I got your point. (2) No. Yeah, for us like as Saudis like we must when we sit together like on a table or stuff like that, we enjoy sitting like with all good Saudis and sometimes we keep the African like aside.
>
> 225. R: Okay.
>
> 226. P: And we didn't, we didn't like, we didn't want to know that we didn't like them. We do like them,
>
> 227. R: Oh, okay.
>
> 228. P: but it's like we're more like, we're more comfortable like talking to each other and talking about the stuff that we like.
>
> 229. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 230. P: And sometimes they sat with us, like it's with er it's hard for the conversation and stuff, because it's maybe like the similar, er similar interests.
>
> 231. R: Yes.
>
> 232. P: So yeah, sometimes they look at us and they say they're rude like they didn't want us to sit with them, but it doesn't mean like,
>
> 233. R: Okay.
>
> 234. P: they were welcome to join us if they want, it's okay.

It is being argued that there is an ease in conversing within the in-group, suggested by "we're more comfortable like talking to each other" which is lacking with the other, suggested by "it's hard for the conversation and stuff". It is not clear if the reference to "African" is indicative of race difference and it is possible that the reference to being considered as not liking the other and to being rude indicates an awareness of the taboo of prejudice. In the following Ali draws a distinction between the self and the other as foreigner regardless of shared religion:

> 12-120. P: Because you can see some Muslims in other place. Maybe we er didn't use to, because Saudi Arabia you Yeah, it's rare to have contact with er our Muslims in. We have Muslims from other countries, but er once you are as a foreigner, then maybe there is a common issue that offer appear between you er and the people over there. So I like that place, because sometimes we er, er yeah we used to stay and er have a nice discussion with us.

The Muslim self is differentiated from the Muslim South Africans, suggested by seeing "Muslims in other place" implying other than Saudi Arabia. The Muslim other is referred to a

“foreigner” and although there is a shared religion, or “common issue”, the self other distinction remains as inferred by the words “appear between you er and the people over there”.

Presenting the self as different is not neutral and the Western other is constructed as inferior, as indicated in the following quote. Ali is discussing the trading hours of the malls in Saudi Arabia and is using a strategy of othering to differentiate his cultural orientation towards family from that of foreigners:

> 12-180. P: Because in normal shops they have foreign people, they came from places like India or Pakistan to run that shop and they don’t have the er normal connection or the normal er family connection that we have, because their family is on the other side and they can stay until 12. They don’t have a problem with that.
>
> 181. R: [Hm].
>
> 182. P: But when the local people try to do it, then er and at the same time we had, we are extreme in our family communication, not like South Africa or the West in county culture. We are used to have, we used to visiting our fathers daily, or sometimes er three times a week or something like this, then you can’t do similar to you can’t stay in the shop until 12.

Ali is constructing a self other distinction by referencing the self or “we” as being “extreme in our family communication”, implying a close commitment and engagement with the family system, and my inference in contrast to that of the other. This is achieved by comparing work practices and suggesting that foreigners do not have a “normal family connection” because “their family is on the other side”, meaning that their family are not in the country with them, while the self is used to visiting their fathers daily. The suggestion is that foreigners lack commitment to their family. Ali likens the foreigners in Saudi Arabia with South Africans which he collectively refers to as the “Western country culture”. This works to create a clear boundary between an “us” and “them”. Ali draws from a family discourse and ideologically positions the Saudi Arabians as superior in their approach to family values over the other. The other or the “West” are objectified as workers lacking in family relations.

The Saudi Arabian participants construct the self predominantly as part of the global West and variably as differentiated from the other by virtue of religious and cultural difference. In the context of the knowledge economy and its promise of economic growth through knowledge acquisition, the ideology of the West driven by the discourse of modernisation stands in opposition with the views that prevail regarding Islam. The participants seldom reference religion or religious practice in their self construction in what appears to be a strategy of

omission that functions to resist the effects of othering present in the Western discourse on Islam. This stands in contrast to their adherence to Islam, as evidenced in their traditional attire and participation to regular calls to prayer as evident in interacting with others. Constructing the Western self functions to claim a self identity that resists being othered in a socially injurious way and to legitimise participation in the so called Western world. Distancing the self from the category other or subject position located in the backward East functions as a means to resist the effects of othering and a refusal to be devalued (Jensen, 2011). The construction of the Western self, global citizen and participant in the Western world orientates against negative social positioning by the West that is associated with Islam. In this way the effect of power relations present in othering is evident in how the self constructs and is constructed as a self (Butin, 2001).

4.2.2.3 Summary and Discussion of Construction of Self and Other

In this section the discursive resources used to constitute the participants' identities were presented.

The analysis showed that both participant groups bought into a discourse of the West in constructing the self and the other, as evident in the taken-for-granted acceptance of Western norms and workplace practices. This discourse is concerned with cultural differences specifically relating to the "modern West" and the "traditional East". Cultural explanations were offered to account for perceived differences and functioned to construct a superior self and inferior other. The analysis indicated that internalising the discourse of an advanced West and backward other and accepting the subject positions that this made available for self impacted self identity and the participants' experience of themselves (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012).

The self was constructed by both participant groupings as engineer and as the Western self, while the other was constructed in the main as the opposite of self. These discursive constructions indicate the effect of the reciprocal interaction between the participants and the effect of the societal and historical contexts within which the participants are situated (Scott, 2016).

- South African participants constructed the engineer self and other as:

  Located within a Western workplace context a superior engineer for self, constituting and essentialising the engineer as worker with the following characteristics and attributes that are assumed for self, which are independent thinker, creative, risks taking, technically hands on, internally motivated, responsible, hardworking and willing to take on more. The

attributes of the subject position of productive engineer made available in construction of knowledge transfer are taken up. The construction of self reveals the assimilation of Western expectations of workplace conduct and the effect of power of a Western ideology over the governance of the self. According to Piazza and Taylor (2017), identity construction indicates the workings of power which are visible in other-representations. In relation to the self, the construction of other is resourced by what is found to be lacking in the self and the other is constructed as lazy, reticent, afraid to take chances, lacking ambition, lacking in skill and although qualified, the quality of these qualifications are questioned. The construction calls to question the other as engineer, who is likened to a technician and makes visible the normative power informed by a Western engineering workplace discourse.

- Saudi Arabian participants constructed the engineer self and other as:

Located within a Western workplace context self as engineering peers, differentiated only by a lack of experience and thus similar to the other in terms of ability and education. Attributes assumed for self-constructed as self that is ambitious, challenge-seeking, hardworking and independent contributor, and desirous of advancing their careers and pursuing advanced qualifications. Variably taking up the subject positions of inexperienced engineer and of professional engineers that were made available in construction of knowledge transfer constructed the other as unavailable mentor to the inexperienced engineer and insufficiently experienced or specialised mentor to the professional engineer. The construction calls to question the other as mentor and also makes visible the normative power informed by a Western engineering workplace discourse.

- South African participants constructed the Western self and other as:

Located within a Western ideology as modern and culturally uninhibited for self, self governed by Western norms, characterised by the attributes of being open-minded, self-driven and productive employees. The construction of self also highlights the assimilation of Western ideologies. Cultural explanations resource the construction of the other who was constructed as culturally constrained, rigid hierarchical and authoritarian views, restrained and limited within a modern workplace, lacking in autonomy, unable to think for themselves, lacking in initiative and motivation, having backward views of gender equality and as prioritising family above work commitments. This construction calls into question the others' commitment to the workplace norms and makes visible cultural discourse of backwardness.

- Saudi Arabian participants constructed the Western self and other as:

  Locating the self both in a Western ideology as advanced global citizens for self, part of the global West and variably locating the self in Islamic ideology, constructing the self to a lesser extent as Muslim self who is differentiated from the foreign other by virtue of religious and cultural difference. The Western self is constructed as modern and accepting of Western norms, such as English as the lingua franca. These constructions makes visible the power effect on the self identity of opposing ideologies that resource the participants' identity construction. The construction of the Western self functions to resist being othered, revealing an awareness of the dominant discourse regarding Islam in the Western world that constructs an other that is distinguished from the "modern Western world" (Creutz-Kämppi, 2008).

The ideological dilemmas identified in the analysis showed the dominance of a Western discourse that is present in identity construction, particularly that of the Western workplace, and the different meanings ascribed to these discourses between the participant groups. For the South African participants, the self as productive engineer harbours conflicting expectations with the subject position of mentor. For the South African participants, self construction and the position of mentor is variably accepted and rejected to the extent that they do not see the self as responsible for career advancement or nurturing of the other. The dominance of the identity of self as engineer reveals the prioritising of expectations of the Western employee drawn from the economic discourse of Western ideology. The conflict for the Saudi Arabian participants is the resistance to being othered as culturally backward Muslim within a Western discourse, while simultaneously embracing a Western ideology of advancement.

The presence of othering and resistance to being othered that is identified in the analysis as evidenced in the self other constructions, provides insight into the relationship between the parties within the context of the knowledge transfer processes that is set up in asymmetrical power relations. The knowledge economy provides for an ideology of economic and scientific advancement that is associated with the West and access to scientific and technological knowledge. The impact of this context in setting up the participants in asymmetrical power relations is that it brings to the fore othering and resistance within the knowledge transfer interaction.

4.2.3 Conclusion

In this section I have addressed the discursive construction of self and of other by the participants within the context of a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer between the South African mentors and Saudi Arabian mentees. The discursive strategies used by the participants to resource self other construction, together with the discourses that were drawn from and their ideological functioning, were presented. The research objective of identifying discourses around the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge is presented in the following section.

4.3 Identify Discourses around the Positions Roles and Qualities assigned to the Other and how these relate to Constructions of Successful Transfer of Knowledge

This section presents the discourses drawn from by the participants relating to roles and qualities that are associated with successful knowledge transfer. It addresses the research objective of identifying discourses around the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other and how these relate to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge.

This section aims to provide insight into the meanings attributed in the construction of successful knowledge transfer and to the position's roles and qualities informed by subject positions made available in the discourse. According to Hall (1997), discourses define the attributes that are expected of subjects given the way that knowledge is constructed. The discourses create social positions that govern the conduct of individuals so that they adhere to certain practices, creating possibilities for how individuals can understand themselves (Kramsch & Uryu, 2012). Informing the roles and qualities, discourses assign expectations to subjects which they must adhere to and which require them to be certain people (Mansfield, 2000), thus shaping their identities (Hall, 1997; Sharp & Richardson, 2001). In addressing the research objective, the assumptions on which the assigned roles and qualities are based are revealed, providing insight into broader power dynamics that are at play between the participants.

In accordance with the principles of FDA outlined by Willig (2013), the discursive object of analysis was the attributes assigned to the other in relation to successful knowledge transfer. The discursive constructions are illustrated with extracts from the interviews to demonstrate the accounts and reference is made to relevant literature presented in Chapter 2. Although all interviews were included in the analysis, not all participants are represented by the quotations.

The analysis of the interviews found that the construction of successful knowledge transfer was resourced similarly by both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants drawing from two dominant discourses, namely a discourse of mentorship and a discourse of relationship.

In this section I present the discourses drawn from to construct successful knowledge transfer and the qualities and roles assigned to the other. I consider the outcome of the analysis in sections 4.1 and 4.2 with regard to the subject positions made available in the constructions of knowledge transfer and of the self other constructions. This section presents each of the two discourses from which the participants draw their constructions, presenting the outcomes of the South African and then the Saudi Arabian participants. Each of the sub-sections details the analysis outcome and is followed by a discussion thereof.

4.3.1 Constructions of Successful Transfer of Knowledge

Successful knowledge transfer was constructed by the participants as both the attainment of knowledge/skills drawing from a mentorship discourse and as the quality of the relationship between the parties which were resourced by a relationship discourse. The mentorship discourse made available the subject positions of mentee and mentors.

In constructing successful knowledge transfer as the attainment of skills or knowledge, the participants draw from a mentorship discourse that makes available the subject positions of mentee and mentor. The construction differs slightly between the parties in that the South African participants regard successful knowledge transfer as the development of certain skills and abilities by the mentee, whereas the Saudi Arabian participants consider it to be the attainment of certain knowledge and experience.

The following extract provides an example of the meaning ascribed to successful knowledge transfer by the South African participants as that of the mentee developing the capabilities that allow them to be independent:

> 1-104. P: I think they, I think they're programmed to believe that they're here to learn from others. And they don't fully believe in their, in their capability or their potential that they can learn independently. Some of them might not know what it means to work and learn independently. Or they might not understand the value of that. So they feel, they feel their objective in coming here is simply to learn from the people at the SAJTC. They've done that full

> stop, they've done their task. That's successful and that's far from successful. They need to become a stage where they're independent. They might, some of them might realise that's where they want to go but they don't know how to do that and they might have the fear of trying something out and failing and their mentor says 'but how can you do that?'

Bram argues that it is a misconception that the objective of knowledge transfer is just learning, as suggested with the reference to "simply learning" being the conclusion of their task. The words "full stop" work to emphasise that there is no additional objective other than learning "from the people at the SAJTC". Bram, by implication, suggests that what is successful is overcoming doubt in the mentees' ability to be independent and fear of failing and becoming independent learners and workers. Bram is talking from a position of knowing with the function to legitimise his assessment of what is the required outcome for knowledge transfer engagement between the parties. That engineers should be independent risk-takers, as is being suggested, reveals what is being taken for granted as the desired end state for the other in the mentoring process.

The Saudi Arabian participants construct successful transfer as the attainment of knowledge by an inexperienced person working with more experienced individuals which facilitates their development, as demonstrated in the following excerpt;

> 18-8. P: … But overall my experience was great. I enjoyed working with the experienced people, since I was like a, I worked with JTCKSA as a fresh graduate, so it was a good experience for me to work with advanced people and gain some knowledge, and I think that expedited my knowledge and. This is what I think, yeah.

Achmat invokes a mentorship discourse speaking from a past position of "fresh graduate", which suggests the role of mentee, who worked with "advanced people" and "experienced people", and attributes this experience to "expediting" and gaining knowledge. This works to construct knowledge transfer as aimed at growing the knowledge of a less experienced person. The distinction being made between the "fresh graduate" and the "advanced people" reveals the awareness of a knowledge gap between the two, and by implication their interaction is aimed to remedy this.

The second construction of successful knowledge transfer was resourced by a relationship discourse and constructed as a good relationship with the other, as evidenced by positive interaction and engagement. The South African participants related the relationship discourse

to social interaction beyond or outside of the workplace, while the Saudi Arabian participants depicted the relationship as one of togetherness and belonging within the workplace. This difference indicates that the notion of relationship with the other differed in the meanings attributed to it. For the South African participants, the relationship was about bridging perceived differences and the acknowledgement of sameness with the other, while for the Saudi Arabian participants relationship was about being regarded as colleagues and inclusion.

The following extracts demonstrate how both participating groups draw from a relationship discourse yet attributed different meanings to their experience.

In the following quote the South African participant Hans draws on the notion of sameness and friendship which he attributes to having an easier knowledge transfer experience (which he later also links to success 11-145):

> 11-96. P: … But the second time around, I just realised that, that once we actually befriended them more than just working as colleagues, we, you know, really realised that there is a lot more similarities, you know, between our cultures, than what there are actually differences. And I think that also played a part, just realising that fact that, that played a part in just making the whole process much easier.

Hans's use of the word "befriend" suggests an effort or initiative on the part of self to establish friendship. Hans is sharing a sense of awakening, suggested by "I just realised" and the word "really" before "realised", with regard to seeing the other as same once they established a friendship. The realisation reveals an initial assumption of difference based on cultural generalisations. What is being implied with "more than as colleagues" is an engagement outside of the workplace and on a social level.

In the following quote the Saudi Arabian participant Ali describes his positive knowledge transfer experience, drawing on the notion of teamwork:

> 12-72. P: But, er me and him we are working as a team, and I can say that we have done the good job that time. And also the interacting er with the Person C [works for another company] and Person B [works for another company], the people that are working at Company A [similar type of company]. They offered us a very good chance to contact with them er and to really learn from their knowledge er and to work with them, er as a team.

Ali depicts an engagement of belonging, suggested by the frequent reference to being part of the team. The words “interaction” brings forth the notion of working in a team with the other and having the opportunity to be in “contact” with the other suggest interpersonal engagement. There is no reference to any social interaction, which suggests that the interaction is limited to the workplace. The suggestion being made is that knowledge acquisition, suggested by “really learn from their knowledge”, occurred within a team context.

The discourses that inform the constructions of successful knowledge transfer assign expectations of the other, in terms of roles and qualities assumed for the subject positions that are made available in the discourse. These are addressed in the following sections for the mentorship and relationship discourses.

4.3.2 Discourse of Mentorship

The analysis showed that the participants draw from a discourse of mentorship that makes available the subject positions of mentor and mentee respectively by the Saudi Arabian participants and South African participants.

Speaking from the position of mentor, the South African participants assign the necessary qualities required from the mentee subject for successful knowledge transfer, namely initiative, independent thinking, ownership, willingness, technical risk-taking, quick learning, willing to engage, and self-confidence. The following extracts are provided as examples of the qualities that are assigned to the other in constructing successful knowledge transfer.

Bram mentee taking ownership and responsibility for their learning needs:

> 1-24. P: … It’s not only the SAJTC mentor’s responsibility to draw it up and give it to you. I can spend some time with the board or whatever but you can go and write it up. If it’s so important to you, which it is important, you can help to get to that. Not sit back and say there’s no plan, I don’t what do …

Henk talks of the importance of communication, willingness to try and independence:

> 3-60. P: So level of communication was, was way beyond what any of the other guys that, that sort of shown before and they really sort of like I said much more a willingness to learn and a willingness to, to ask questions and make mistakes. It was really very good. I think he was willing to actually try stuff on his own uhm, even if he wasn’t sure whether it was going to work and, and actually get to a point where he’d actually now tried something on his own and

where he would then let me know so that we can have a, we could have a look and actually see what he had done. So, so much more willing to, to actually try stuff out to ask questions all the time to make for him to make sure that he understands what we're doing and it just turned into a really good sort of a relationship.

Lana describes the qualities of one of the mentees of enthusiasm and independence:

4-3. P: … Uhm we were so lucky in being able to work with him because he showed like immense enthusiasm and real sort of just eagerness to get stuff done. So we could sort of uhm give him a bit more independence and just have, can I say, technical support rather than a sort of a (.) hm sort of keeping his own momentum going.

Peter talks of the qualities of working hard, being interested and keen learners:

8-241. P: So I think also having good people did make a very big difference and, and 'good' does not necessarily mean good academically, it means people who do a good job, who work hard, who are interested, who are keen to learn and that I think we, we helped with a lot.

Hans refers to a mentee with whom he had a successful experience as eager and willing to do more than was asked of him:

11-127. P: But at least the mentorship and the training part, that went very well because uhm he was different in a sense, different from his colleagues in the sense that he, he won't say no if you give him a task, and he will always complete it and he will always do even more than what was required or asked of him. And in the end that is the guy that actually learned the most.

Antony describes a successful mentee as eager to take on more work and to take the lead:

13-388. P: And it actually worked very well, from the onset, it was wow this guy actually asked for more work. And er he wants to know more about which programmes to analyse this with. Okay Let's give it to him to see how it goes. And then he gobbles it up and he comes back for more and more. Okay. So we really got going.

389. R: [Yeah].

390. P: Quite well. And we ended quite far with him. One of the first guys Mohammed Ed was also a little bit like that. But I think Bahiy was the star in the whole er sequence of mentorship that I had.

391. R: You looked surprised now when you said he came back, he wanted more?

392. P: Yeah, yeah. He, he had more an attitude of er he wants to know more and he wants to take the lead in some of the things which is not very common that I found from those guys.

The qualities that are assigned to the mentee echo those that the South African participants use to resource their construction of self as superior engineer in section 4.2. In terms of what the literature regards as important qualities for successful knowledge transfer in the mentee, and those identified in the analysis, the quality of motivation is the only similarity (Davenport & Prusak, 2000, as cited in McNichols, 2010). This suggests that what is expected of the mentees relies less on an assumption of universal set of generic qualities of mentees and is determined rather by modelling the qualities assumed true for the self. The implication is that the qualities what are sought in the mentee are those that are considered true for self in terms of behaviours. Not only does this suggest what for-granted for the desired self that is worthy of being emulated, it also suggests that when the mentors find these attributes lacking in the mentee, these are not attributed to a lack of experience and specialised skill, but that this is experienced by the mentors as deviant behaviour. Possessing these qualities, the role of the mentee can be justified as being responsible for their own development and learning. As mentors are not responsible for the attributes of the other, they cannot be responsible for knowledge transfer.

Speaking from the position of mentee or new engineer, the Saudi Arabian participants assign the mentor subject the roles of sharing knowledge, providing direction and offering guidance, specifically related to the workplace, for the achievement of successful knowledge transfer. What is emphasised in the construction of successful knowledge transfer for the Saudi Arabian participants in terms of the qualities of the other is the expectation that the other is highly knowledgeable, a specialist and is very experienced. Additionally, the other must have the skill or ability to teach or convey knowledge and must be respectful toward the self. The following two extracts demonstrate the roles and qualities that are assigned to the other.

In the following quote, Fahad makes reference to the qualities of experience and having specialised knowledge and the role of guide who provides direction:

14-80. R: … um What do you contribute the success to?

81. P: I think the most successful thing you have someone is more experience than you and is directing you to the right way. So most of the knowledge obtained from the open source, from the mentoring, but the one that

> will point you to the right way to share was the mentor. And then in my case, it wasn't Marika, we were working. She, she was named as mentor. But at that she has experience but in other field. At that time in that field almost same.
>
> 82. R: Okay.
>
> 83. P: So I was working with Jasper du Toit but he is not the mentor that I worked with directly. But he is the one that I learned from the most.

Fahad is arguing that knowledge transfer occurs from someone other than his assigned mentor. The inference is that only an experienced person can offer learning and direction, and that this cannot happen from someone who has the same experience regardless of them begin named as mentor.

In the second extract, Mohammed similarly highlights experience while specialist knowledge is inferred by the reference to the mentor having a doctorate. The role of the mentor is described as being able to answer questions. In this quote reference is also made to the mentors being respectful:

> 5-92. P: Uhm Peter can, (.) Peter has more, more knowledge than Lana and she's uh [Peter] is a doctor, he was working for a longer duration, and uh Lana (2) uhm both are kind but that (13). What, are you talking about with uh, when I am talking with Peter he has knowledge more than Lana so he can respond to any questions. Most of the questions but the knowledge, about the theory of. But uh Lana she's not specialised in the, very, very deep in the, she's not very deep in the antenna knowledge. And uh then sometimes when I ask Lana some questions she can, she cannot uh, she couldn't uh answer about it because she's not specialised in this, theory. And uh about the respecting, they both are very kind.

Mohammed makes a comparison between two of the mentors, depicting one as knowledgeable mentor and the other as inexperienced. He attributes the ability of the mentor to answer his questions to having more knowledge, experience and being a specialist, which are qualities that establish the mentor's credibility. Experience is equated with having worked for a longer period, and by highlighting that the mentor has a doctorate, it is being inferred that he has advanced knowledge. Mohammed is aware of the negative inference being made about Lana that she lacks credibility to be a mentor in drawing the comparison with Peter as indicated by the repeated reference to them both being kind. This is stated each time he makes a negative comparison with Lana. Mohammed buys into an assumption that mentors must be experienced and knowledgeable.

The literature describes mentorship as the process of developmental assistance (Reiche, 2011) involving individuals who have more experience who provide activities, guide practice and monitor those who are less experienced in order to help the less experienced person progress (Bigabwa et al., 2015). In terms of roles within the literature, mentorship is regarded as involving the mentee drawing from the mentors' experience to enhance their technical skills, which is aligned with the role as depicted by the Saudi Arabian participants; however, the literature also considers the mentor's role to pass on interpersonal skills and there is no reference made to this by the mentors (Cozza, 2013). In terms of the qualities assigned, the literature shows that mentors are regarded as having greater and more relevant knowledge, or experience than the knowledge receiver, which aligns with the qualities expected of the other by the Saudi Arabian participants. The literature also typically associates the quality of wisdom to the mentor (Cozza, 2013), which is not referred to by the Saudi Arabian participants. The omission of the quality of wisdom, or similar, and of the role in developing interpersonal skills for the other as mentor suggests that for the Saudi Arabian participants, successful transfer is not concerned with the formation of the mentee as whole person and more focused on the gaining of technical knowledge. The qualities that are assigned to the mentor align with the subject positions of knowledgeable workplace guide or mentor made available in the construction of knowledge transfer as a workplace internship, and of highly specialised knowledgeable mentors made available in the construction of knowledge transfer as the sharing of proprietary knowledge by the Saudi Arabian participants in section 4.1. The qualities highlighted within the context of successful knowledge transfer, however, align more closely with the latter of the two subject positions in that they stress that the mentor must have specialised knowledge.

Respect as an assigned quality of the mentor featured prominently in the Saudi Arabian participants' discourse related to successful knowledge transfer. The Saudi Arabian participants refer to the mentor having a respectful attitude toward them, which suggests an awareness of the asymmetrical power relations that arise from a mentorship discourse. In assigning the other the position of mentor, the mentees allow for their positioning as inferior other as taken for granted. The expectation of being treated with respect indicates an awareness and concern for being positioned as subordinate and functions to resist or mitigate the power effect implicit in being accepting the self as inferior.

The discourse of mentorship reveals an acceptance of the assumptions, the norms and behaviours associated with the subject positions that exist within a broader mentorship discourse, as evidenced by the subject positions of mentor, assumed to be an expert, and

mentee, assumed to be inexperienced. The analysis also highlighted the rejection of certain roles or qualities that are associated with mentorship roles. While the notion of the mentor as being an experienced guide and teacher who is a specialist in their field is reflected in what is expected by the Saudi Arabian participants, the qualities of mentor as nurturer and counsellor with an interest in the personal and professional development of the mentee (Alexander, 2018) are absent. Ideologically, the mentor is the vehicle or conduit through which knowledge is shared within a nurturing approach, which typically precludes a relationship of management or control associated with a workplace discourse of manager and subordinate. The expectations of the mentor are limited to technical expertise and knowledge, with no regard for the concern for personal development. The aspect of nurturing the mentee is also missing from the manner in which successful knowledge transfer is constructed by the South African participants. The expectation that an inexperienced mentee will have the same qualities as those expected of an experienced engineer indicates resistance to the possibility of the other having the potential to develop to be equal to the self, yet there is no evidence of the role of supervisor and subordinate that is usually associated with only work tasks. It is interesting that the construction of self as new engineer by the Saudi Arabian participants portrays the self as having similar qualities, namely seeking of challenges, independence and hardworking, as those described by the South African participants for the subject position of mentee. This suggests the power effect of a constructed desired subject in the form of the knowledge worker engineer.

In the following section the alternative constructions of successful knowledge transfer identified in the analysis are presented.

4.3.3 Discourse of Relationship

The analysis showed that the participants draw from a relationship discourse to give meaning to successful knowledge transfer. The literature highlights the importance of relationship for successful knowledge transfer (Duan et al., 2010; Goh, 2002; Jensen, 2011; Lin, 2008; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Szulanski et al., 2004). Within the relationship, particularly when mentorship is the means used for knowledge transfer, the literature addresses the importance of social interaction, having a participative relationship between the parties (Bigabwa et al., 2015), and it being a trusting relationship (Hamburg, 2013). The analysis shows that these aspects are reflected in the qualities that are assigned by the participants within the relationship discourse.

From a relationship discourse the South African participants draw on the notions of friendship and getting to know the other on a personal level to resource a construction of successful knowledge transfer. The quality of sameness and the other being similar to the self is linked to the forming of relationships beyond that of workplace colleagues. The following extracts provide examples where the notion of sameness is drawn on:

> 1-146. P: Uhm, whereas Aaquil, I think he was more left brained and that's more like me. So the way I think he could, he could easily relate to that and he so wanted to work more closely with me to get to the uhm, uhm, sort of the answer. And we also spent time after hours just to interact and sort of thing. Well, but also with Sali, but probably after that, but with Aaquil I was more successful.

Here Bram portrays his interaction with two of his mentees as a close relationship that extended beyond the workplace, as suggested by "we also spent time after hours to interact" and describes the other as having similar qualities to him, suggested by his reference to the mentee being "left brained" which is "more like me".

> 10-56. P: … And (.) As far as I remember that actually … it was … it worked out very well. And we were both the same age. I was also not married at that stage, so we were both not married. We had the same kind of interests. So, that actually worked out very well. It was a good match actually. Both myself and Salif.

In this extract, Dirk depicts his relationship with one of the mentees as being a "good match" that worked out well, suggesting that this was because they were similar to each other, having many of the same characteristics and interests.

In the following, although the notion of sameness is not drawn upon, the importance of relationship connection for inclusion is shown. Hans argues that connecting on a social and personal level results in increased work productivity:

> 11-157. P: And that makes it a lot better, because once you can really connect on a personal level with these guys, then that is when, when both parties actually learn the most and, and you know, grow more.
>
> 158. R: [Hm].
>
> 159. P: And you can work more productively in such an environment.
>
> 160. R: [Hm].

161. P: Because even at work, if you cannot connect with your colleagues on any level at all, you are going to be like a loner and you are not going to, you know, like be part of a group actually, as you can.

162. R: [Hm].

163. P: So, you can still do your work but you won't be able to excel in your work. So I think those social connections is really important.

164. R: [Hm].

165. P: And so, as important as it is in your own company, organisation, it's even that important, or especially important if you work across cultural, you know, boundaries.

Hans is arguing that connecting with others is important for inclusion. A distinction is made between an "in group" of his colleagues, also implied by "your own company," and the other, "these guys". In the last sentence he highlights that this is particularly important when working "across cultural" boundaries. Hans makes the argument that forming relationships between those within the "in-group" is taken for granted to be important for inclusion and stresses that it is particularly important when dealing with the out-group. By implication, social connection is being associated with bridging differences.

Research on knowledge sharing within multinational contexts shows that interpersonal similarity leads to increased interaction and is a key factor in successful knowledge sharing. (Mäkelä et al., 2012). By arguing that finding personal similarities with the other fosters relationships that facilitate successful transfer and in stressing the importance of relationships with the other, there is an implicit assumption that difference constrains knowledge transfer. As the South African participants do not highlight technical sameness and rather that of personal aspects of the other, it suggests that the other is seen as a problematic collective. This points to the effect of othering which, within a cultural context, essentialises and creates stereotypes (Johnson et al., 2004). This results in a denial of individualism and the other being seen as a problematic other (Dervin, 2012). The meanings attributed by the South African participants within the relationship discourse reveal the power effect of an "us" and "them" binary that is at play within the knowledge transfer process as experienced.

The Saudi Arabian participants draw on the relationship discourse to depict a trusted colleague as the other party to successful knowledge transfer. The qualities that are expected of the other are that they encourage regular interaction, treat the mentee with respect, and that they are not judgemental of the mentee's faults. Although the Saudi Arabian participants refer to the other as "friends", the relationship is depicted as being confined to the working context.

The following extracts provide examples of the role of the other with regard to encouraging a sense of belonging and engagement of the mentees within workplace teams:

Similar to the focus on being included in the work team from the quote of Ali's interview (12-72) in the beginning of this section, in the following Aaquil describes the positive impact of building a relationship with a mentor who the mentee feels will not be judging him;

> 2-100. P: I believe that. You see, sometime someone starts to experience something. Most of the new engineer they feel or, if like someone like Billy or Renier speaking to a new engineer, from JTCKSA or SAJTC, and he's trying to explain something to him, or idea. He will hesitate to ask some questions that make him look stupid and he forget that he has to ask these questions to ensure that, but I think if you're building the relationship uh you wouldn't you will not feel uh you'll not mind that person which you consider a friend, to see your faults.
>
> 101. R: Hm.
>
> 102. P: Yeah, he can know that I don't know that. I don't mind. But I don't like another person which I think, but I don't know what he going to say about me and I think this is what's make if you have a friend as a mentor, you will not hesitate to ask.

In a response to a question posed by myself in the interview regarding building an environment conducive to successful knowledge transfer, Aaquil highlights the importance of connection and being viewed as members of the workplace:

> 2-150. R: Hmm. If you could do one thing to build that environment what would that be?
>
> 151. P: Let people listen to other people talking more and if we're having a meeting with each other and we're seeing other on a regular basis then we will become part of the team. Then there is you know, we feel there is a connection between each other, and this is how we can, you know, as a colleague of that department.

The focus is on interaction as team members, and unlike the South African participants, there is not an interest in getting to know the other on an interpersonal level. Within the broader analysis there are indications of resistance from the Saudi Arabian participants to having personal relationships with the South African, with a general awareness of ensuring boundaries that do not extend beyond being work colleagues. This is illustrated in the following extract from the interview with Achmat, which provides an example of how the Saudi Arabian

participants place boundaries on the relationship with the other so that they do not extend to the personal:

> 18-182. P: We didn't like er we didn't get er I didn't get too personal with Dave. But it was okay. It was like each, each of us like has respect for the other one and well I didn't know about him that much, like I didn't get too personal.

Achmat constructs a relationship with the other that has boundaries in relation to personal knowledge of the other and that maintains mutual respect.

The notion of teamwork draws on an assumption of belonging and inclusion. Belonging implies acceptance as part of a group or community (Wangler, 2012). Within the discourse of successful knowledge transfer, the focus for the Saudi Arabian participants regarding relationship has to do with being treated with respect and being treated in a manner that allows for participation without fear of ridicule or judgement. This reveals an awareness of being positioned as other, as an outsider or as inferior other in the context of the workplace. The effect of othering is that interactions are characterised by preconceptions and judgement (Löytty, 2005, in Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). The expectations in terms of qualities and roles determined for the other by the Saudi Arabian participants with regard to successful knowledge transfer resist the effect of othering practices.

4.3.4 Summary

The analysis showed that successful knowledge transfer was constructed by the participants as both:

- The attainment of knowledge/skills drawing from a mentorship discourse; and
- The quality of the relationship between the parties which was resourced by a relationship discourse.

Drawing from these constructions, qualities and roles were assigned to the other. For the South African participants, successful development is concerned with the forming of the other into desired subjects. The qualities assigned to the other are considered essential for independent contribution to workplace projects and are also the qualities that are assumed for the self. For the Saudi Arabian participants, successful development is concerned with gaining knowledge that enables participation in the workplace. The mentor other is expected to be highly knowledgeable, a specialist and is very experienced and offers workplace knowledge, direction and guidance that does not extend to personal development. The analysis

highlighted the rejection of the mentorship roles concerned with the personal and professional development of the mentee. The South African participants favoured social interaction that bridged differences and extended workplace interaction as important for successful knowledge sharing. For the Saudi Arabian participants, what was important is inclusion and belonging within the workplace and being treated as colleagues, while they rejected social interaction.

The constructions of successful knowledge transfer that differed between the parties reveal what is regarded as important for knowledge transfer between the two participant groups. For the South African participants, successful development is concerned with the forming of the other into a desired subject that has certain qualities that are considered essential for independent contribution to workplace projects. This talks to normative power and the belief that the desired object is the norm to which to aspire. For the Saudi Arabian participants, successful development is concerned with gaining knowledge that enables their participation in the workplace. This talks to identification and access into the desired group (Wangler, 2012).

Successful knowledge transfer was constructed differently from that of knowledge transfer, as presented in section 4.1, whereas knowledge transfer was resourced from primarily an economic discourse, successful knowledge transfer was resourced from a mentorship and a discourse of relationship, which is aligned with knowledge transfer literature. Whereas the subject position of engineer emerged as more prominent than those of mentee and mentor in the construction of knowledge transfer these subject positions are viewed as important when ascribing the qualities and roles of the other. The analysis revealed that the discourse of successful knowledge transfer was overshadowed by the discourse of the workplace, evidenced by its less frequent mention in the interviews. This is indicative of the power effect of a privileged economic discourse over mentorship within the workplace. Although the subject positions of mentee and mentor are assigned to the other in the discourse of successful knowledge transfer, these are articulated as expectations or a desired “wish list” against which the other is found wanting. This talks to the overall dissatisfaction with the current initiative and also highlights the effect of power within the relationship. For the South African participants, the concern with forming of the other into a desired subject, talks to normative power revealing what is considered the norm for a Western engineer, whereas the meaning attributed to successful knowledge transfer for the Saudi Arabian participants concerns the “grooming” or integration of the self into the institution of the engineering workplace brought about by the mentor and highlights the desire to assimilate and identify with the desired “in” group (Wangler, 2012).

4.3.5 Conclusion

In this section I identified the discourses around the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other relating to constructions of successful transfer of knowledge by the participants within the mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer between the South African mentors and Saudi Arabian mentees. The meanings attributed to successful knowledge transfer and the roles and qualities of the subject positions that were ascribed to the other were presented.

In the following section I will address the research objective of identifying power in mentorship relationships and how these relate to barriers in knowledge transfer.

4.4 Power in Mentorship Relationships and how these relate to Barriers in Knowledge Transfer

This section addresses the research objective of identifying power in the mentorship relationship and how this relates to barriers in knowledge transfer within the context of the interaction between the South African and Saudi Arabian participants aimed at knowledge transfer. It aims to highlight the operation of power in relations as per the Foucauldian view of power as that which influences the actions of self and other that is present in social relations and practices. By identifying power in the knowledge transfer partnership, this section aims to provide a view of what is happening within the relationship and how this impacts effective knowledge transfer and identity construction.

In accordance with the principles of FDA outlined by Willig (2013), the focus of the analysis was to identify power in the interviews and their effect in limiting effective knowledge transfer. The discursive constructions are illustrated with extracts from the interviews to demonstrate the accounts and reference is made to relevant literature presented in Chapter 2. Although all interviews were included in the analysis, not all participants are represented by the quotations.

Power is implicated in all social interactions, but especially where unequal power relations exist (Foucault, 1977), and this was evident from the analysis. The analysis showed the operation of power in the interviews in various ways, which included the dominance of Western discourses in attributing meaning to knowledge transfer and the subject positions that this made available, subjectivity in taking up certain subject positions and regulating the self-according to taken-for-granted norms, the multiple subjectivities that were negotiated, and resistance to being positioned in certain ways.

This section builds on the previous sections in this chapter and does not address the numerous incidences of power identified in the analysis which have been addressed as they relate to each research objective. In addressing how knowledge transfer is constructed the analysis showed the effects of dominant discourses and how the ways in which knowledge transfer was constructed created subject positions that were positioned within power relations for certain purposes. The analysis of how self and other were constructed revealed the operation of power in the internalisation of subject positions and the rhetorical strategy of othering that set up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group. In addressing the research objective of the positions roles and qualities assigned to the other power was evident in the normative expectations assigned to the other through the subject positioning made available to the other.

In this section I will address the areas that relate to barriers that have not been presented elsewhere within this chapter. These pertain specifically to the rejection and resistance of the mentorship discourse which shows the functioning of power in both maintaining of power relations and in the prevalence of a workplace and economic discourse. I will then show the effect of positioning the self within the economic discourse that offers conflicting multiple subjectivities for the participants and the differing effects of English as the language of choice on the participants.

4.4.1 Barriers in Knowledge Transfer

In this section I look at barriers within the knowledge transfer as constructed by both the literature and the participants.

The South African and Arabian participants attribute blame or apportion responsibility for the lack of success on various factors which align with those articulated within the knowledge transfer literature. The knowledge transfer literature points to the negative characteristics, qualities or behaviours of the knowledge receiver such as laziness, lack of motivation (Chen, Chang et al., 2012; Szulanski, 1996). Similarly, the South African participants construct the Saudi Arabian mentees as lacking in qualities required for successful knowledge transfer and construct a deficient other. This study is concerned with what is happening within the relationship and the effect of othering. The analysis showed that othering marginalised the mentees within the workplace so that they are not included in the workplace. The effects of othering are seen in the resistance to being positioned as other by both participating groups and on the effects of subjectivity of the Saudi Arabian participants in terms of belonging within a dominant Western economy. Furthermore, the literature considers the lack of certain

positive attributes of the knowledge owner as a barrier to its success, such as credibility, passion and personal commitment to share (McNichols, 2010; Perrin et al., 2007). In this chapter I showed that the manner in which the Saudi Arabian mentees construct the mentors relates to issues of their credibility and expertise as mentors and their lack of availability for mentoring. The subject position of mentor is not offered to the South Africans by the Saudi Arabian participants with the function to construct the self in a manner that resists being othered. Relating barriers to the qualities of the participants talks to the problematisation of role players in knowledge transfer and the operation of power as evidenced by othering in the analysis. Othering functions to maintain social distance between individuals, as seen in the establishment of borders between an in-group and an out-group (Brons, 2015; Johnson et al., 2004). The literature highlights a poor quality relationship between the knowledge owner and receiver engaged in knowledge transfer as a barrier showing that it relies on the depth of a social relationship that is typically made possible through interpersonal socialisation between individuals (Chen et al., 2010). It was also found that effective knowledge transfer requires two-way communication in close proximity to a close working relationship, within social relationships that allow for open minds (McNichols, 2010). Poor relationship is attributed to a lack of trust, and poor communication (Goh, 2002; Junni, 2011; Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2002). In the analysis the issue of poor communication is raised by the South African participants and attributed to cultural factors; a lack of discipline related to adhering to proper workplace norms. The analysis showed that the issue of a poor quality relationship was not identified as a barrier; however, the participants justified maintaining a more formal and professional relationship. The Saudi Arabian participants justify a distant formal relationship by making a clear distinction between a social relationship and an appropriate relationship in the workplace while the South African participants argue that cultural differences make it difficult to have close relationships. The following extracts demonstrate the meanings attributed to relationships by the participants. In the first extract Aaquil makes a distinction between a colleague and a friend suggestion that having a good relationship does not make one a friend.

> 2-135. P: … I understand there is two different relations. This is my colleague, this is my friend.
>
> 136. R: Hmm.
>
> 137. P: And my co we're still even not reaching the colleague uh partnership or the relationship between the colleague. I see it I have too many colleague in JTCKSA. I have very good relationship with everyone but they are not my friend...

Aaquil justifies an argument for not being friends with people in the workplace by arguing that a good relationship in the workplace should not be premised on friendship.

In the following quote Lana justifies not forming social relationships with the mentees drawing from a workplace discourse that says that there is no socialising "'cause there's work to do":

> 4-73. P: Yeah. I'm not very good with the personal background type job. Uhm it also feels a weird thing to force in a meeting and I don't spend much of my work time small talking, you know, 'cause there's work to do. [Chuckles], yeah.
>
> and
>
> 4-83. P: Uhm but my mother was visiting and so on, so I politely declined but that was a lovely initiative. Uhm but also just and it has nothing to do with the fact that they're Saudi or whatever I just don't do a lot of work socialising.
>
> and
>
> 4-91. P: Yeah. So uhm yeah, but uhm as I say so in general it's, it's it's formal interaction but very civil and, you know, not, well, shall I say, sort of professional but not formal, yeah.

Lana is justifying her lack of social engagement with the mentees by portraying herself as both work focused but also as being unsociable, as suggested with "I just don't do a lot of work socialising". By stating that this has "nothing to do with the fact that they are Saudi" she is orientating herself to a claim of prejudice toward the other.

The analysis did not show any suggestion that a close or social relationship had a negative impact to the knowledge transfer relationship, although it was regarded as contributing to successful knowledge transfer by the South African participants, highlighting the privileging of an economic discourse that separates relationships into social and professional in the workplace and the effect of power in maintaining relations that keep participants apart characterised by othering.

In addition to ascribing a lack of knowledge transfer to attributes of the other, the participants raise issue with culture and with language. This is also raised as a key barrier to knowledge transfer within the literature (Chen et al., 2010; Orazbayeva et al., 2016). The analysis showed

that the notion of culture functioned as a relational demarcation justifying othering in the construction of self and other that functioned to depict an inferior other and superior self. The analysis showed that English as language of preference in the knowledge transfer process had implications for the subjectivity of the Saudi Arabian participants relating to their construction of self as belonging within the global Western world.

Having reviewed power relating to barriers presented elsewhere in this chapter, the rest of this section addresses the analysis outcomes related to this objective that have not been presented previously. I first turn to the topic of mentorship to show the operation of power that is resisted in the knowledge transfer engagement.

4.4.2 Power and Resistance within Mentorship

In this section I address the operation of power in the practice of mentorship and Western workplace practices. The engineering workplace provides the context for the mentorship relationship through which knowledge is created and shared through practices and processes. These are premised on a dominant discourse of the Western workplace and engineering practice, as evident in the analysis.

The discourse of the knowledge economy gives rise to a network of power relations that sets up individuals within asymmetrical power relations, where the knowledge worker, who embodies knowledge, as engineer is the desired object. Globalisation and ideological aspirations to advance are premised on the notion of the modern West and the backward other, while knowledge transfer positions the knowledge owner in opposition to the knowledge receiver. Similarly, mentorship sets the mentor and mentee in unequal power relations enacting the ideology of the knowledge economy through knowledge transfer and the assumption that so-called Western economies possess knowledge that others desire (Stiglitz, 1999).

The analysis revealed the prevalence of a workplace discourse that privileges Western economic ideologies. Power is evident in the taken for granted practices, and the subject positions of the desired engineer, the mentor and legitimate authority regarding knowledge dissemination made available in this discourse. The subject positions of knowledge owner, who is accorded the status of being knowledgeable, and the knowledge recipient, who is constructed as knowledge deficient, created within the knowledge transfer process, places the participants in opposition to one another however, the setting up of unequal power relations is not unexpected in the broader context of the knowledge economy where knowledge owners

are privileged (Stiglitz, 1999). The analysis showed the systematic setting up of self and other in opposition to one another within unequal power relations that favour the self by both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants. The analysis showed that the positioning of self and other within knowledge transfer closed down the possibility of identities being constructed on an equal basis, giving rise to resistance.

Within the knowledge economy, the knowledge worker is constructed as a desired object, and the analysis showed that the desired object constructed within the context of this study was the productive engineer. Knowledge transfer, and in particular mentorship, is concerned with the formation of the desired knowledge worker and the replication of the knowledge owner through socialisation and training (Argote & Ingram, 2000). In this way the knowledge economy is reminiscent of what Foucault (1980) referred to as the institution that determines what knowledge is worthy of sharing through the practice of knowledge transfer and its processes (Duan et al., 2010). The subject position of mentor as knowledge owner, emerges as the legitimate authority who may, by virtue of their knowledge, impart knowledge to others. The analysis indicated that, tasked with the role of mentor, the South African participants construct themselves as superior engineer, to depict the self as credible knowledge providers. Drawing from the knowledge economy discourse, the exercise of power is seen in how it determines what knowledge is deemed valuable and how the knowledge worker is objectified and constructed in terms of desired qualities and attributes. In being positioned as mentor, the South African participants are tasked with the replication of the norms and practices and also of the knowledge and skills in the mentees through knowledge transfer. Power is indicated in that mentors assume the legacy of the authority granted to them to determine the kind of knowledge that is shared and the practices that are engaged in. The analysis indicates that the mentors do not question that the knowledge they choose to share with the other is correct for them.

The following extract demonstrates the taken-for-granted by the South African mentors regarding what should be taught and what is expected. Bram talks from a position of authority of what knowledge should be shared, which is based on the replication of his expectations of the South African engineers referred to as “our guys”:

> 1-16. P: … What they what, they also want is to, to learn the way that we think. The way that we solve problems and I mean because if I work with our guys I don’t need to teach them that. I will expect them to know that and those guys know that. I don’t need to break things down to a certain level. But these guys they don’t, they haven’t been taught how to think in this way. We’ve been taught in this way but just interacting with people and through university. But

> you haven't been involved in such complex projects or maybe people in general and you want to know, if I'm given this problem, how do I think, how do I even start to think to solve it?

What Bram is describing as his role as mentor is forming of the mentee to replicate the self by changing the mentee's thinking processes. He describes the role that socialisation within his own university experience had on his own formation and makes the assumption that the mentees have not been exposed to the same processes. The assumption rests on the taken-for-granted that informs that the other is lacking. Bram acts in the manner expected of him as superior engineer who believes he knows what should be taught. It is taken for granted that the other must be moulded and formed in this form of desired engineer. Here the working of power is evident in how the discourse creates the mentor subject and how they to behave in expected ways (Foucault, 1972) and in how the discourse of the desired engineer acts to regulate the mentee's thinking to make a particular kind of being (Rose, 1992).

Power is exercised through various means that affect how people are viewed and the regulation of their behaviour. The analysis indicated the effect of the dominant workplace discourse in organisational practices that were taken for granted by the mentors. These include hierarchical observation, reporting of the mentees' conduct, the use of classification systems seen in the analysis in the classification of engineer versus the lessor valued technician, and using comparison with the norm to determine what behaviour is appropriate and acceptable (Hall, 1997).

The example of a workplace practice that provides insight into how the relationship is constructed is that of the assumed right of mentor to know the whereabouts of their mentees. This provides insight into the how the relationship is constructed. The South African mentors take it for granted that it is a right within the workplace to be informed of the whereabouts of those whose work outputs they have responsibility for. This right extends beyond workplace to personal matters and is justified on the basis of the mentors being responsible for the mentees' work output, as seen in the following excerpt. Bram expresses his dissatisfaction that the mentees did not inform their mentor of their whereabouts:

> 1-92. P: … I think the word (,) there are also many things they have to do with regards settling in here and they don't sometimes make it clear to their mentor you know, we're sorting out this thing, sorting out the family or the medical aid or you're buying this new car. So you just keep all that hush hush and your mentor doesn't know why you're making progress.

Bram expectation that the mentees “make it clear to their mentor” what they are busy with in dealing with personal matters highlights the right that Bram assumes based on his role as mentor. His criticism of the mentees’ behaviour is softened by his indicating understanding for the “many things” that must be done regarding “settling in”. However, his use of the phrase “keep all that hush hush” indicates sarcasm that implies that the behaviour is a wilful disregard of his authority by the mentees. This works to show the mentees as deviant and in opposition to the norm. Monitoring the mentees’ whereabouts is being justified as enabling the mentor to monitor progress, as suggested by the link made between assessing progress and sharing of information. The justification brings to light the power within the relationship in that it highlights it as taken for granted that the mentor has the right to monitor the mentee. The expectations that are taken for granted and justified in relation to the mentor’s role indicate the unequal power relations of mentor over the mentee.

In the following quote, Bhaumik describes a taken-for-granted practice of discussing the weaknesses of their mentee with other work colleagues. The excerpt highlights the relation of power present in mentorship that legitimises the mentor as knowing and intervening where the mentor is and make them an object of this knowledge and intervention (Park, 2005):

> 15-49. P: The typical way that we deal with it, is that. I would say that mentors in our environment, typically are also champions for their mentees as well, but they could also talk about it, you are at much more liberty to speak about a mentee’s weakness as much as his strengths. So, inasmuch as you would advocate for someone’s strengths, you would also say that: ‘Person X is my mentee; these are his strengths, and he can do really well’.
>
> 50. R: [Hm].
>
> 51. P: but he’s, for example, one of his weaknesses is interacting in a team of diverse individuals and that needs to be an area where if he gets this, opportunity, we will need to improve that area for him to tackle this.
>
> 52. R: [Hm].
>
> 53. P: In Saudi talking about someone’s weaknesses, you have to be very careful, especially if you’re doing that in front of his peers or in front of um his supervisors or reporting line.
>
> 54. R: [Hm. Hm].
>
> 55. P: That would typically be considered very, to some extent it’s almost sort of like a breach of trust kind of, and you know between a mentee and mentor trust is obviously very key and that breach of trust um can be very difficult to rebuild.

Bhaumik is arguing that objectification of the other is justified as it is in the interest of the mentee within a taken-for-granted practice. The use of the phrase “at more liberty to speak” is contrasted with the use of the words “very careful” with regard to talking of the mentee’s weaknesses. The practice is being contextualised within a mentorship relationship that is depicted as trusting and nurturing, which serves to further legitimise it as valid. What is being implied is that without discussing weaknesses, these cannot be addressed, which is assumed as necessary for development. The purpose of mentorship, being to develop the other, the assertion that to talk of weaknesses within a Saudi Arabian context is considered a breach of trust depicts the mentees as foreign other. Highlighting the need not to speak poorly about his mentee portrays Bhaumik as concerned for his mentee and for the importance of maintaining a trusting relationship. Bhaumik argues that mentorship relies on speaking of the mentee’s weaknesses and trust; however, within the context of mentoring the Saudi Arabian mentees, the former will break trust. The implication is that the mentor is unable to fulfil their mentorship obligation toward the other. The conflicting discourses offer conflicting subjectivity that must be negotiated.

In this section I have addressed the formative nature of mentorship which open possibilities for subjects to accept or resist the subjectification and normalisation of a dominant meaning system. In the following I show the effect of power in resisting the positioning made available within the mentorship relationship.

4.4.3 Resisting the Power Effects of Mentorship

Resistance is seen as the exercise of oppositional action to power (UKEssays, 2018). Power was evidenced in the degree to which the parties to the relationship drew on the respective subject positions and in the particular circumstances in which these were resisted. The analysis showed that the participants drew on and resisted occupying the position of other and alternatively withdrew positioning initially made available as an action to power. Acts of distancing from particular categories or refusing to occupy particular subject positions indicate resistance to power (Jensen, 2011).

The subject position of mentor that was made available within the Saudi Arabians’ construction of knowledge transfer as sharing of priority knowledge was not offered to the South African participants, who were constructed as not sufficiently specialised or alternatively unavailable. The Saudi Arabians seldom refer to mentorship or the self as mentee, which indicates resistance to the power effect of being positioned as inferior to the other. The South African participants often use the terms mentee and mentor; however, do not construct the self as

mentor in favour of a construction of the self as engineer. This highlighted the power of workplace discourse and the construction of self as superior to the other so as to resist being positioned as inferior to the other.

The Saudi Arabian participants furthermore resist organisational practices that position them as mentee. The following extract demonstrates Aaquil's resistance to the power effect of being evaluated by the other. The resistance functions to maintain a construction of self as capable:

> 2-59. P: … I even Sali that was working with Bram, sometime he uh Bram, he's a very tho ... thorough guy in reviewing and Sali he think like that. So this is what the things that he didn't like it about Bram. For me I like it because I know someone uh reviewing my mistake and uh the final outcome which will be better if he have much help the review. It's up to me to dismiss that or not, but at least I know what the other people think. But some people 'no, this is my job, this is my report, like it or not, it's your problem'. Uh or you shouldn't think on that much detail. Uh I'm giving you result for uh something and you're reviewing (.) everything. …

Although Aaquil accedes to the benefit of having his work reviewed, he resists the power of the other by claiming ownership for his work and his right to choose to act on the input of the mentor, as implied with "up to me to dismiss that or not". The mentees' refusal to take up subject positions implied in the mentorship discourse indicates their resistance by their refusal to be devalued (Georgaca & Avdi, 2012). This functions to position the self as competent contributor and Aaquil rejects being positioned as inferior by the mentor.

The resistance of the South African participants is manifest in their declarations of reluctance to assume the position of mentor and in how they manage the challenge to their identity in the positioning made available to them when faced with conflicting expectations within the workforce. The South African participants are subjected to an interplay of different discourses that offer conflicting subjectivities in terms of their rights, obligations and what they can and cannot do in terms of action. As such, power of the dominant workplace discourse is evident in the privileging of the positioning of engineer and necessitates the negotiation of the subject position as mentor. Resisting the positioning of mentor by the South African participants functions to maintain their identity construction, established as a superior to the other, and functions to counters a challenge to their elevated positioning of superior engineer.

Resistance is evidenced in the various strategies used by the mentors, including expressing their reluctance at having to teach or mentor, expressing their frustration with the responsibility

to mentor, sharing that they lack training to mentor and teach, highlighting the effort that mentoring requires, and indicating that they lack a choice in taking up the responsibility which they feel is forced upon them.

The resistance to taking up the position of mentor reveals what is at stake in terms of the mentors constructing the self as superior engineer brought about by conflicting expectations. The resistance functions to anticipate potential counters to criticism and to orientate the self to alternative positionings, such as poor mentor who lacks the superior knowledge and bad employee who fails to adhere to workplace duties and client commitments. The following quotations provide examples of resistance to the subject position of mentor.

In the following, Lana speaks from a position of engineer and rejects the positioning of mentor by expressing her frustration with having to do skills transfer:

> 4-9. P: Also, engineers aren't teachers. You know? It's not uh I, I, I don't find it a particularly thrilling activity to do skills transfer because it's required of my job and you're also not going leave this poor fool sitting there alone, that's not nice, you know, they're here, we're going to have to work together, we might as well make it work, there it is.

This extract highlights the conflicting expectations of engineer and of mentor. The conflict is that Lana is required to be both engineer and to teach to fulfil her obligation as employee. Her resistance is indicated by arguing that being an engineer precludes the possibility of being a teacher and the reference to teaching not being a "thrilling activity". Lana portrays herself as the dutiful employee in that she is complying with the expectations of her job, while also behaving in a socially expected manner in being "nice" towards the other. It is not socially acceptable to ignore someone with whom one is required to work, implied by "leave alone". Referring to the mentee as "this poor fool" functions to undermine the other, who is objectified by the use of the word "this" as an object of derision, emphasising her resistance. Lana, however, complies on both accounts despite her personal dislikes. Her compliance is indicative of how the power of the workplace norms induces her to behave in a certain manner. Within a workplace discourse, the construction of the reluctant employee who accepts her duty regardless of her dislikes, indicates how the employee is subject to workplace norms governed in terms of what is expected of her as employee. This demonstrates the workings of power which, according to Foucault (1982), structure the field of possible actions by directing and modifying an individual's behaviour. Lana's acceptance of workplace norms indicates her subjugation to a dominant system of meaning that puts pressure on the subject to behave in

an expected manner. Later in her interview, Lana again expresses her frustration with mentoring, arguing that it is time-consuming and that she is not qualified to do so:

> 4-181. P: Uhm Because, you know, uhm again, because it's such a time-consuming thing and me not literally being qualified to sit and do this kind of investigation, you know, I don't want to say 'listen, you've obviously got a problem with writing reports'. You can see those walls coming down already.

In putting forward an argument that mentoring is time-consuming that draws from workplace discourse, where time is equated with economic productivity, while the argument that she is not qualified to give negative feedback functions to justify her rejection of being positioned as mentor. The resistance appears to be in anticipation of the negative reaction of the mentee, as implied by "You can see those walls coming down already".

The following quote similarly illustrates resistance to having to take up the position of mentor. Bram is arguing from the position of engineer that he has not been taught how to mentor:

> 1-4. P: … I think most of the guys, we were mentoring the guys from JTCKSA most of the SAJTC engineers, we didn't, we were, were not taught how to work with these guys. We were not taught how to mentor effectively. We, we weren't given any guidance of you know this sort of works with this, but this stuff doesn't work. And people have to do their own travelling around, type of approaches to see if what they're doing is working. Some people got highly frustrated because they didn't, they couldn't figure out what they're doing wrong or they couldn't figure out what wasn't working. Some people have got to try different things. From my point of view I'd probably try different things.

Bram's argument that effective mentorship is reliant on having received training to do so functions to inoculate him from anticipated critique, implied by his acknowledgement that he would have done different things, to suggest that his mentorship was perhaps not effective. There is no reference to who is responsible for teaching effective mentorship and the omission works to emphasise the lack of support for the mentors that is being portrayed. Arguing that as engineers the mentors do not have training, knowledge or support to effectively mentor, suggests that mentorship is a skill that is outside the ambit of engineering skill. As engineer, Bram cannot be held responsible for the success of mentorship. In arguing that training makes the mentor, Bram rejects the subject positioning of mentor and justifies this by arguing that the subject engineer and the subject mentors are in conflict with one another.

In the following, Peter speaks from a position of engineer employee/worker to make a distinction between training and working. Training is described as being in opposition to work, revealing the privileging of a workplace discourse over a training discourse:

> 8-199. P: Just training someone means you don't have time for work and training is a very tiring thing, far more than one expects. It's much easier to sit a computer writing code for a day, than it is to sit trying to explain something to someone today, especially if you're working across languages. So I think that, I think that is one of the big problems …

Peter is constructing training as problematic and as an interference to work. The reference to "working across languages" functions to emphasise the difficulty of the task and by implication problematises mentorship with the Saudi Arabians. The extract demonstrates Peter's resistance to being positioned as mentor.

The discourse around the reluctant mentor within the workplace highlights the resistance to taking up the subject position of mentor in favour of maintaining the identity position of engineer. The ability to mentor is constructed as a quality outside of being an engineer and indeed in conflict with the functions of engineering. Constructing mentorship as separate and in conflict with the function of the engineer has the effect of problematising mentorship within the workplace and thus as belonging outside of the workplace. Given the potential that this has to marginalise mentorship, which entails the acquiring of workplace skill and know-how, this indicates a barrier to knowledge transfer.

The South African participants do not construct self as mentor but as teacher and workplace guide. Perhaps the awareness of the expectations of the mentor subject as encompassing more than teaching indicates both what is happening within the relationship and the function of resisting taking up of the position of mentor. Alexander (2018) posits that a multi-attribute definition of mentoring constructs the subject position of mentor with numerous qualities such as being an experienced guide and teacher who is an authority in their field, nurturer, and counsellor who has an interest in and promotes the personal and professional development of his mentee. This definition assumes a close relationship with the mentee and offers contradictions in terms of the experience of self as authority and as counsellor. By rejecting the position of mentor, the South Africans participants negotiate the more satisfactory identity for the self of supervisor engineer, and maintain a favourable identity construction.

In the next section I consider the effect of power that arose from conflicting discourses that are present in the analysis.

4.4.4 Negotiating of Conflicting Discourses

Discourses offer contradictory experiences and practices that require negotiation by the subject positions. How these are negotiated reflects the operation of power which is discussed in this section in relation to the subjectivities made available in the mentorship discourse.

The presence of discourses that make available conflicting subjectivities reveals the effect of power. The operation of power is seen in the management of effective social alignments (Rouse, 2005) that require negotiation of multiple and conflicting positions that threatened the construction of the superior self. The analysis showed that both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants negotiated conflicting subjectivities that stem from the various discourses that provide meaning to knowledge transfer.

The South African participants must negotiate the conflicting subjectivities that arise from taking up the subject position of productive engineer, and others made available within the context of knowledge transfer, as demonstrated in the following few extracts from the interview with Bhaumik. Bhaumik calls this effect of his experience of the opposing subjectivities as a "conflict of interest". As a good mentor, Bhaumik must promote his mentee, and as a good engineer/employee, Bhaumik must succeed on his projects. Bhaumik is both "contractually bound" to deliver on projects and to develop the mentees. These expectations are constructed as mutually exclusive and Bhaumik navigates the conflicting expectations that arise by drawing on taken-for-granted norms to justify his arguments. In the following excerpt, Bhaumik talks from the position of mentor who must navigate conflicting expectations:

> 15-39 P: … But what it means for you as a mentor, is that the way you champion someone's cause, it's a bit different in terms of how you would typically do it. You know? You, you have to, you play a very key role in terms of how a mentee is perceived by his superiors and supervisors and how you represent that, is very, very important.
>
> 40. R: [Hm]
>
> 41. P: Especially when the goal of the programme is to do technology transfer.
>
> 42. R: [Hm]
>
> 43. P: It's almost a little bit, it's actually, sometimes you can sort of be in a bit of a conflict of an interest because you're sort of representing the project and you want the project to succeed. You're representing your mentee. You want that to be maximum technology transfer. But in cases where a mentee

needs um let's say needs improvement, the way you approach that is quite tricky sometimes.

Bhaumik is confronted with different expectations, to promote both the project and his mentee. The conflict arises in the implicit suggestion that the mentee is unable to contribute to the success of the project because of an implied lack of ability, suggested by "needs improvement", which is in conflict with Bhaumik's role to promote him. Later in the interview Bhaumik's reference to being in a "Catch-22" and being "contractually bound" demonstrates his boundedness to the conflicting subjectivities offered to him as "good mentor" and as "good employee":

15-69. P: ... But I did find navigating sort of the complexities to be quite challenging and a major learning experience, because one of the challenges is that, um as a mentor working with the Saudis, you are contractually, you see it's a bit different to sort of a mentee in sort of your own work environment, because um with the Saudis you have a formal, you are contractually (.) the contract that you have with them is to deliver technical work, like other contracts that we have,

70. R: [Hm].

71. P: but also to deliver on HCD [Human Capital Development, which is also used as an alternative phrased for mentorship], which means that if you identify in shortcomings in your mentee, to some extent contractually, but you are responsible to actually make this happen. So you sort of, you're sort of in a bit of a Catch-22 to, if you really want to do it properly, to some extent you will always be at a slight. If you're really doing it properly and if you're honest about it, that is a natural process of doing knowledge transfers, that there must be weaknesses and there must be improvements. But you run the risk of, that being used against your own employer and your own company contractually where that's so, it's sort of, it's a very sort of tricky line that you sort of walk.

Referring to the experience as a "tricky line" that must be walked, functions to highlight the conflicting expectations of his experiences. A comparison is made between the Saudi Arabian mentee and a mentee in his own work environment that works to highlight the conflicting subject positions of the mentee. The mentee is both mentee, subject to the actions of the mentor, and "different to sort of a mentee" in that he is also the client to whom the engineer is subject to within a workplace discourse.

In the following two excerpts, Bhaumik navigates the consequences of the differing expectations:

15-104. R: [Hm]. And the consequences? You were talking now about at the, the organisational level?

105. P: Yeah, so the consequences at organisational level is that we were obviously contracted to deliver technical outputs, but also HCD outputs,

106. R: [Hm]

107. P: and the fact that we had now failed to some extent, we were considered to have failed with this, with this person, and whose fault it is, it is sort of um it's sort of not that important I guess to some extent. But it was sort of viewed as at least that it was a SAJTC sort of [coughs] excuse me it was sort of the SAJTC sort of negligence or fault for not having, you know, successfully done this.

and

15-119. P: I think sort of the, the tail of that previous story is almost like it's a, it's sort of a lesson for us that the mentee's success is sort of not independent from the mentor's success. If I can put it that way?

120. R: Hm.

121. P: In a sense that if a mentee fails, to some extent all those programmes, it was sort of considered that as a mentor you have also failed, because why, because sort of why has the mentee failed? And, in yourself as an organisation, you have also failed as well to deliver on what you were obligated to do.

122. R: Hm.

123. P: So that is I mean and that's not necessarily the norm, if you normally if you have a mentee, the mentee is, it is the mentee onus to (you know) to use the advice that you give them and do well with that.

124. R: [Hm]. Yeah, the way we view it, it's a two-way.

125. P: It's a two-way, yeah, exactly.

126. R: Yes.

127. P: It's a two-way. It's not a it's not a lob-sided sort of er thing,

128. R: Yeah.

129. P: where the mentor is only responsible for the mentee's performance.

130. R: Hm.

131. P: It's a two-way street. Um ...

By admitting that his mentee has weaknesses, he is admitting that he has failed in his job. This failure is not his own, but extends to how his employer is viewed, as implied by "you run the risk of, that being used against your own employer and your own company contractually". Bhaumik's struggle indicates the exercise of normative power and the subjectification of self as employee within a Western workplace discourse. Drawing from a mentorship discourse, Bhaumik navigates the conflicting expectations by uncoupling the notion of the mentee being responsible for the success of mentorship and attributing responsibility for success to the mentee, suggested with, the "onus to (you know) to use the advice that you give them and do well with that". Bhaumik argues that the mentor's responsibility toward the mentee is limited to providing advice and their performance on the project, which indicates that Bhaumik is talking as engineer informed by a workplace discourse. The way that the conflict is navigated reveals the power of the workplace discourse in its prevalence and in Bhaumik's acceptance of the positioning as engineer over that of mentor through the justification provided.

Competing subjectivities are also offered to the Saudi Arabian participants. The following extracts from the interview with Fahad demonstrate the navigation of the competing subject positions of mentee and of assessor of the mentor's work. Fahad refers to the change in expectations as having to "change my shoes". The shift highlights the conflict of shifting between subject positions within unequal hierarchical power relations on the individual's experience of self and identity construction. In the first of the extracts, Fahad relays how the mentees were requested to evaluate their mentors:

14-97. P: Yes. But there was one, one very silly contradict in the process,

98. R: [Hm, hm]

99. P: that, for our, for me and all our engineers we were the working mentees and then, then the milestone come, we had to evaluate our mentor.

100. R: Hm, hm.

101. P: So at the milestone, I change my shoes, and rather than learning from this person, now that the waiting is up. So it was,

102. R: You have to,

103. P: it was really silly

104. R: You have to evaluate your mentor?

105. P: Yes. No I have to evaluate the whole work that I have done.

106. R: Oh.

107. P: That the mentor has done and the whole. Yeah, you know because for JTCKSA, for JTCKSA to accept the milestone, they need the

> engineers, to say; 'Yes the work is done and it is accurate'. So the mentee is responsible to do that to sign that the work that I was trained. I was the least expert in that work, is, is right.

Here Fahad is positioned as mentee who must accept both the authority of the mentor and as evaluator of his own work that he regards as the responsibility of the mentor. Fahad's awareness of the conflict is expressed in his acknowledgement of his lack of expertise in the work that he must assess, suggested in the reference to "I was the least expert in that work". His resistance to taking up the task is indicated in naming it a "really silly" practice and that it "was not good".

Knowledge transfer is a paid-for outcome between two organisations. The Saudi Arabian organisation is the client, and the South African organisation is contractually bound to deliver on projects and to develop Saudi Arabian engineers. This provides a context where relations are determined by an economic discourse that makes available the subject positions of client and of consultant-employee. Within the context of knowledge transfer of this study, the client is represented by the Saudi Arabian participants (and also positioned as mentee) and the South African participants are positioned as both consultant-employee and mentor. Here I use the term consultant-employee to refer to the South African mentors who are employed by the employer, SAJTC, to both mentor and deliver projects for the JTCKSA. This situates the relation in an economic discourse whose dominance is evident in the ideological struggles that are brought forth as the participants navigate contrasting meaning systems.

Ideologically, the consultant-employee must maintain the best interests of his employer, which include focusing their productive efforts to ensure business productivity and delivery, and also to maintain good relations with the employer's clients that ensure continued future work. The employer must maintain a productive workforce which legitimises sanction of those who fail to be productive and act in its best interests. This determines an asymmetrical relationship of power between client and consultant-employee and between employer and employee where the mentor is subject to the power effect of the norms of practices that arise from an economic discourse.

The power of the economic discourse on the South African participants is evident in their acceptance of its discursive practices, beliefs and by which the self regulates their conduct, or which Foucault referred to as the domination self (Alexander, 2018). The following quotes demonstrate the subjectification of self of the meaning system that is offered in an economic

discourse by the South African participants. In the following, Henk buys into the notion of the consultant-employee's responsibility to satisfy the client:

> 3-192 P: … If you're not doing well in your work, or you're not satisfying your client, then that's a major, major problem.

The repeated use of the word "major" strengthens the argument being made that the consultant-employee is responsible for maintaining the satisfaction of the client, failure of which would be highly problematic.

The organisation is structured to ensure delivery of that what is being paid for. Practices focus on treating the client in a manner that ensures that they are satisfied, and productivity is monitored to ensure that the employers' interests are achieved. The power present in this dynamic is evident in how the South African participants discussed the care that they took to avoid offending the client. The use of words such as "sensitivity" and "subtle" with regard to dealing with the clients indicate self-restraint and self-regulation. This, and an awareness of the consequences of not behaving according to the expected organisational norms, featured prominently in the interviews reflecting disciplinary power in monitoring of the self against what is normal or expected (Foucault, 1975).

The loss of employment is the ultimate disciplinary action afforded to the employer within an economic discourse. Organisations have practices in place to sanction deviation from organisational norms and employees regulate their actions for fear of loss of employment. Disciplinary power operates through the threat of loss of continued employment and was evident in the mentors' interviews. Lana, for example, quotes the taken-for-granted norm in an economic discourse, which is 'I don't deliver, I lose my job' (4-223). Antony similarly demonstrates how the norm against offending the client limits his actions for fear of his employment being terminated in the following excerpt:

> 13-233. P: Because you don't want to come and say the wrong thing and the next day you are axed, or something like that.

Acceptance of the organisational norms for engaging with clients is demonstrated in the following extract from Henk's interview:

> 3-164. P: That's again I think just, just sensitivity uhm from our side, just from a general sensitivity that we've got. I don't think it's,
>
> 165. R: Why?
>
> 166. P: because it's the, your client essentially, you don't really want to unless it's really necessary, step on their toes, so to speak.

167. R: Yeah.

168. P: Uhm. That's maybe the main driver. I think that's just the way that we are (.) expected to deal with clients. I don't think you can necessarily, round every corner sort of try and confront your client and push them in a corner and so on ...

Henk is constructing himself as good employee, suggesting that the mentees are to be treated with care, which indicates the unequal power relationship of the client and employee-consultant. It also highlights the positioning of the Saudi Arabian participants as both mentee and as client in a way that shows the privileging of the subject position of mentee, and functions to serve the interests of both the employer and the client.

In the following excerpt Hans is talking from the position of consultant-employee and positioning the mentees as client, explaining that he is compelled to complete both his tasks and those of the mentees who did not complete theirs:

11-227. P: So that caused a lot of frustration for us, because uhm in the end, because we worked on a project where the funding is also depended on the completion of a project, it mean that a lot of our guys had to put in extra effort to finish the task that those guys didn't finish.

228. R: [Hm].

229. P: So that was the cause of a bit of frustration, but then, in the end, our managers were just telling us; 'Hey these guys are paying your salaries. So, So you better just do your part and finish whatever need to be finished!', so it was a little bit frustrating, but yeah in the end the instructions from above were 'Hey, just do your work'.

230. R: Just do your work.

231. P: You know,

232. R: Yes.

233. P: And theirs. [Laughter]

The suggestion is that the client is in a position of power because they are paying the mentors' salaries. This provides certain entitlements over the conduct of the consultant-employee, with the suggested loss of employment for non-delivery. The same sanction for non-delivery does not, however, apply to the client-mentees Here I use the term client-mentee to refer to the Saudi Arabian mentees who are employed by the client, JTCKSA, and are to be both mentored and contribute to the delivery of projects together with the mentors for knowledge transfer to take place, where the consultant-employee is constrained by the norm to treat the client well,

which precludes them from taking action for their non-delivery. The use of the words “the instructions from above” implies that a greater authority, presumably the employer representative or “management”, has silenced the voicing of dissatisfaction from the mentors regarding the client’s poor conduct. Hans’s choice of action is limited to finishing the additional work or losing his employment, which is dependent on the client’s funding and the work being completed.

In the following excerpt the impact of the client power is evidenced in the way in which the mentors take care not to behave in a manner that will offend. When asked if there were consequences for the mentees not doing their work, Hans explains that although performance evaluations were requested to be done for the mentees to determine their work efforts, these were done in a manner so as not to offend:

> 11-237. P: uhm (2) Yeah, the thing is uhm (.) there were, but there were also instructions from our side to (.) to you know [laughs]. We actually had some performance evaluation stuff on some of the guys. [hesitant talking]
>
> 238. R: [Hm, hm].
>
> 239. P: But we were not that strict on them.
>
> 240. R: Okay.
>
> 241. P: Because the managers on their side also didn’t want their engineers to look bad, you know. So there was this negotiations and stuff, so we tried to fix something as soon as possible when we’ve spotted something. But we’ve been lenient. I think if it was a performance review of somebody in my own company, I think one would have been a bit more to a point and maybe harsh, if necessary.
>
> 242. R: [Yeah].
>
> 243. P: But for them it was always like sort of a sensitive subject because from their side their managers also didn’t want to be in the difficult position to report to their top structures that they, these guys were not doing their part. uhm So we sometimes just need to bend the facts a little bit and made it look not that bad.

Hans orientates himself to the norm of treating clients well and explains how he would be “lenient” and “bend the facts” in the evaluations to ensure that the mentees could look good to their managers. The norm for assessing contribution of work effort within the organisational context is the performance review. The mentors, however, are constrained in the action to provide honest feedback, as this would equate to giving their client negative feedback, which is a choice that is not open to them. This excerpt indicates the network of power present in the

knowledge transfer endeavour and conflicting subjectivities available to the mentors. The actors are the mentors who are tasked with mentoring the mentees while they both work alongside one another to ensure the unidirectional transfer of knowledge from of the mentors to the mentees, and the mentees are tasked with assimilating the knowledge while contributing to the projects. The power hierarchy positions the mentors as knowledge owners and the mentees as lacking in knowledge. The mentors are also familiar with the work tasks and environment and the mentees are not, indicating that the mentees are placed lower in a power hierarchy on the one hand. On the other, the actors are also the mentees who represent the client and who are paying for both the project that must be delivered and the transfer of knowledge and the employees who are being paid to both complete the task and transfer their knowledge. They represent their employer who is present in the form of "instructions from our side". The mentees also have managers who want their mentees to be seen to be doing their part to their "top structures". Management induces disciplinary power that governs the behaviour of the employee to the extent that they will not be factual, ensuring that a positive image is portrayed, work harder to make up for loss of productivity caused by the mentees and hold the mentees to a lower or more lenient standard than they would their own. The mentor's freedom to act is limited within the client relationship, which would not be the case within the context of a relationship with South African mentees in the organisation. Here the client has the power to withhold payment, to which management responds by instructing their employees to conduct their actions in a fashion that lets the client preserve an image of being a good mentee, inversing power relations.

The privileging of an economic discourse over a learning discourse is evidenced by the actions that are chosen to serve the interests of the organisation at the expense of learning of the mentees, where the norm suggests that feedback is required for mentees to progress. There is no reference to the project outcome of knowledge transfer to the mentee, to the extent that their progress is obscured in lenient reviews; the focus is on the economic outcome of the project that will maintain the status quo.

Henk describes the complexity of the situation where he is faced with the dilemma of having to address a matter in a very subtle way so as not to confront the mentees' non-performance in the following quote:

> 3-169. R: So you make it, make it quite complex that you, I mean it makes the relationship complex just by the client and somebody's got to learn from you?
>
> 170. P: Like a subordinate, in the same sense.
>
> 171. R: Yeah.

172. P: That's right, yes. So, so like I said in a lot of cases it was really we had to keep doing it in a very subtle way. … But we didn't, the mentors that worked with the technical group didn't really confront them directly to say, 'I've given you two weeks to do this thing; why haven't you done anything?' We completely refrain from doing anything along those lines.

173. R: If you think if you could have done it, do you think it would have changed things?

174. P: (.) I'm not too sure. Uhm, what I understood from not talking to some of these guys directly but just, just in general sort of talking with some of the guys in our team, is that there's perhaps another cultural aspect there in terms of criticism, which is not necessarily received well or generally (.) given where it might be due.

Henk sanctions himself by limiting his actions because of the norm against confronting the client. The suggestion that it is a cultural matter that must be considered indicates that Hans might not be fully aware of the impact on his behaviour concerning the norm of treating clients, so that he ascribes blame to the other.

The following quote from the interview with Peter provides a further example of how the norm for treating clients limits his choice of behaviour in relation to his frustration with his mentee. Peter explains that the situation is a delicate one and how he held back expressing his frustration:

8-163. P: … Secondly, my concern would be that they'd go back and get negative feedback because that really at the end of the day determines how we're going to succeed or fail. It's not is the project delivered on time, on budget whatever that's important and we're not doing that nearly well enough and that is having other repercussions but having the guy go home and say 'gee, you know, that Peter character I never want to see him again in my life'. That would be hugely damaging to everything. So I think that's, that's more the concern, we're trying to build a relationship and there were times, there were one or two times that I really wanted to pull my hair out and go and beat the guy over the head say 'just do this!!'. But as I say my concern is, it, it's a delicate thing unfortunately. It's, it's a there is so much cultural baggage that you're not necessarily aware of, plus 'I don't want to be the bad guy, I don't want to be the disciplinarian'. (2) I don't really know.

Peter is saying that he must control his actions toward the client, suggested by “I really wanted to pull my hair out and go and beat the guy over the head say ‘just do this!!”, so that he is perceived as being a good guy, implied with not being the “bad guy” or “disciplinarian” which would be “hugely damaging to everything”, which functions to suggest that this is more important to the success of the project than the actual delivery of the project. Peter’s quote reveals a taken-for-granted view that honest expressions of frustration cannot be shared with clients as they must project a positive view of the consultant-employee in order to ensure continued business. Peter is also managing his position as the good employee who regulates his own behaviour in a manner that will ensure continued economic activity. Sanctioning himself in his feedback to the mentee is in conflict with both the norm of giving the mentee feedback and alternatively providing a fellow employee direct instruction. Peter navigates this conflict by ascribing the requirement to control his behaviour to the other’s “cultural baggage”, which serves to maintain his identity as a nice guy.

In the following excerpt Hans is ascribing the client’s lack of work effort to the Saudi culture and relays an incident where the mentees, implied by “the guys”, told the mentors that, “if we want to have something done we pay somebody to do it”:

> 11-263. P: We had some informal questions and you know jokes about that, and the guys just told us that: ‘You know what, if we want to have something done we pay somebody to do it.’ That was like the honest opinion that the guys gave us.
>
> 264. R: [Yeah].
>
> 265. P: So we joked about that sometimes you know when we had dinner or lunch, and we had some conversations about it, and the guys would just say; ‘You know what in our culture if we want something done we pay somebody to do it’.
>
> 266. R: [To do it].
>
> 267. P: And from their point of view they pay us for a system, to deliver a system.
>
> 268. R: [Hm].
>
> 269. P: uhm And so they don’t realise that that they are also there for mentoring and the learning.
>
> 270. R: [Hm].
>
> 271. P: And, and it’s almost as if that is not that important, so they didn’t feel to contribute a lot. And, again, I’m not generalising because there were some very exceptional engineers amongst them.
>
> 272. R: [Hm].

273. P: But most of the people had the attitude; 'You know what, we've paid you for the system'. So, so we needed to do most of the work on it. So I think it's just a point of view that they maybe have. And, and also they said, in their country that's the way they operate, if they want to, you know, if they needed someone to clean their hotels for them they hire some Philippines.

274. R: [Hm].

275. P: They come over and come and do this work, because they, they are much better at paying somebody else to do their work because they are a wealthy nation. uhm So it's a cultural thing. Definitely.

In this quote the power of the client who "holds the purse" is evident, but it also indicates positioning of Saudi Arabia as a wealthy nation that is able to purchase a workforce and not itself engage in labour, thus constructing those who work as inferior to those who pay for work to be done. The reference to hiring foreigners to clean hotels associates the mentors with cleaners, inferring that they are regarded as holding lower status. The comment that "they are much better at paying someone to do their work" suggests by implication that they are poor workers. This could be an attempt by Hans to resist the inference made in the inferior positioning of those who offer their labour for payment. Hans offers justification by arguing that that learning and development is unimportant to the mentees as they will not engage in work, but merely pay others for the work to be done. What is implied is that Hans's efforts are unimportant. Because Hans is being paid to do the work that the mentee is supposed to be doing and because learning is not important, Hans explains that the mentees feel justified not to have to contribute to the work output. The lack of work ethic is attributed to the mentees' culture. Using the notion of culture to criticise different behaviour functions to makes it more acceptable (Verkuyten, 2003) and indicates an awareness of the norm against criticising the client. Hans claims that he is not making a generalisation, when he is, which he justifies by stating that "there are some exceptional engineers amongst them", which he discounts almost immediately by stating that these would be in the minority as "most of the people had this attitude". Hans is attempting to show that he is not prejudiced but merely stating a position of fact. This extract demonstrates Hans's rejection of being othered as hired labour and countering the objectification implicit by the mentees.

The power effect of the client subject position is evident in the resistance of the mentors to being subjugated as employees. In the following, Bram rejects the criticism received by the client by disregarding it as meaningless:

1-256. P: … But to be able to, to tie up everyone's expectations or at least put everyone's expectations on the table because sometimes the senior

> JTCKSA guys come here, Dr Haam, Dr Mufaka and they say 'you know, these guys, they've spent six months with you. We're not happy with their progress, full stop.' What does that mean? I, I don't know what that means. They don't give constructive or they don't spend enough time to understand the background and context and they quickly make a conclusion (.) and it's not, it doesn't mean anything. I don't know what to do with this.

Bram is asserting a position of authority in the face of criticism from the client by depicting the client as uninformed and providing feedback that has no value. This functions to reject being positioned as inferior.

Lana also rejects the notion of being evaluated by the client and questions their authority to do so based on their lack of technical understanding, the assumption being that the success of the project can only be judged by those who are technically proficient:

> 4-235. P: … And now the other thing is who's evaluating the success of the project? Is it word of mouth that the superiors get? Do they have a technical understanding, (.) you see? …

Both Lana and Bram resist being positioned as other by denying the client's legitimate authority to do so by their portrayal of them as technically lacking.

The resistance to power and how the negotiation of the multiple subjectivities that are offered reveal the dominance of the economic discourse which is privileged. The economic ideology that places productivity and economic achievement as its focus informs the workplace practices and takes hold of the consultant-employees behaviour with regard to the mentees. The acceptance of the norm of treating the client in an expected manner requires navigation of conflicting ideologies, which the mentors do by avoiding practices that could threaten their positions as employees. The impact of the power dynamics that are present due to the differing ideologies results in an inauthentic relationship where each is trying to position the other in order to serve the purposes of maintaining and reclaiming a position of superiority. The relationship is characterised by tentative behaviour that does not allow for meaningful engagement that is necessary for knowledge transfer. Limited knowledge transfer can occur within this context which relies on frictionless communication and intimacy between the parties (Paulin & Suneson, 2015).

Language as a means to communicate is addressed in the following section in which I consider the power effect of English as the accepted language on the knowledge transfer.

4.4.5 Privileging English

The differing meanings attributed to the privileging of English and its power effects are presented in this section.

The analysis showed the workings of power through the taken-for-granted practice of using English language for knowledge transfer. The operation of power is evident in how the theme of English proficiency provided for different experiences for South African and Saudi Arabian participants which had differing effects on self identity. A lack of English proficiency is constructed by the participants as a barrier to knowledge transfer and featured prominently in all the interviews; however, with differing effects. Drawing from a dominant Western discourse, the Saudi Arabians constructed a problematic self arising from the difficulties that they experienced in communicating and disseminating work in English, while the South African participants minimised the effect that English proficiency had on communication, attributing poor English proficiency to a lack of technical ability, which functioned to resource the construction of a problematic other.

The Saudi Arabian participants subjugate themselves to the discourse of the global economy that accepts English as the lingua franca, indicating the normative power of a dominant Western discourse. The identity construction of the Saudi Arabian participants is both as proficient English speaker, within the context of their home country, resourced by their ability to converse at university, and alternatively as poor English speaker where they internalise their ability to engage in English within the South African workplace as inadequate. The subjugation of self by the Saudi Arabian participants with regard to their English proficiency within differing contexts demonstrates an awareness of being positioned as other and how the contradictory experiences inform the self construction.

For the Saudi Arabian participants, the discourse of English as the global language informs their positioning of self within the Western and global discourse. Within the mentorship interaction, the self is depicted as problematic in relation to the expected norms of English proficiency, which limits their possibility for action within the mentorship process, as indicated in the following extracts.

The mentees portray English proficiency as responsible for delaying the learning process and making it more onerous, as shown in the following extracts from Mohammed's interview, who describes how he translates every word in an effort to understand what is being

communicated. Repeating that he must translate “every word” “every sentence” presents the extent to which he will go in order to understand:

> 5-44. P: Yeah, yeah. Maybe the problem for me uh, my English language is not very good, so this makes the learning, is slow, a little bit,
>
> 45. R: Alright.
>
> 46. P: uh because sometimes I can’t understand every word she, she say during the meeting. Uh when I read the papers I face some problem to understand everything
>
> 47. R: Hm-hm.
>
> 48. P: uh, because my English language is not proficient so I need to translate every word.
>
> 49. R: [Oh, okay].
>
> 50. P: And uh, sometimes I need to read every sentence, again when I translate the words, sometimes I can’t understand very well, very well. And uh, especially some papers has academic language which is difficult and it’s not straight sentences. Uh, so, the problem from, is not from Lana, [chuckles] it’s from me.

and

> 5-172. P: … And to improve their English language to make sure they will benefit very well from this project because he will work by English. How can he uh understand very well when his English is not very good?

Mohammed is careful to indicate that the lack of understanding is not caused by the mentor and assumes blame, but in stating that it is “academic language which is difficult and it’s not straight sentences” he is portraying his failure as being reasonable, suggested by “How can he uh understand very well when his English is not very good?”, and justified based on the complexity of the task.

Ali shares the view that his normal learning was affected by his poor English and maintains positive identity construction by highlighting that it was the first time he was required to use the language while applying it in the workplace and for learning in the following excerpt:

> 12-12. P: Sorry my English language was not that good enough that allowed me to learn normally, like we would. But with time it, it was for the first time to use the English language as a language er to learn sorry and to work at the same time.

The impact of English proficiency is explained as not only wasting time by Ibraham in the following quote, but also that it inhibited him from asking questions:

> 17-92. P: ... And me also the Arabic to speak all the English language. I mean I'm just I spoke about the first time or the first six months of my visit to South Africa, I just waste my time. I didn't understand very well when he speak. I can't also ask the question. I want to ask the question and get something but I can't ask the question very well because the language it sometimes help me to ask this question. This is just experiences. Someone, they need to transfer they'll have to make sure to be good at the language to work with the partner.

In the following Fahad explains that the problem was not the ability to understand English or the ability to understand technical issues working directly with the mentor, but as with Ibraham, he inhibited himself from sharing his thoughts in meetings due to the pressure to express himself without making a mistake:

> 14-67. P: Yes. In the technical things the English was not that problem. No, I didn't have any problem in the listening, in the beginning. So I was able to understand English easily. But the problem I had was how to describe things and (.) so (.) And some technical processes wasn't er especially for you when you speak with your mentor direct, the problem was minimal. The problem was more when you had the meetings, and you weren't too sure how to discuss that with them then.
>
> 68. R: [Hm].
>
> 69. P: And other people. And other people are just listening, so your worrying with making a mistake is more so. You couldn't speak freely.
>
> 70. R: Yeah.
>
> 71. P: So.
>
> 72. R: So, if I understand you correctly, in the meeting context, you were worrying that you were making mistakes, so you don't speak freely?
>
> 73. P: Yes. Yes, so sometimes you didn't even say what you wanted to say because you don't want to say something and in the language you know you probably make mistakes.
>
> 74. R: [Hm].
>
> 75. P: So you keep it for yourself and you didn't describe it in the meeting. Just for the lack of speaking capability.
>
> 76. R: Yes. No I understand. And was that different when you were just alone with your mentor?

77. P: Yeah, when she was around it was fine.

78. R: Okay.

79. P: You don't feel the pressure it's okay to make mistakes.

In the following extract between myself and Achlam, I explored the question of whether the use of organisational jargon was different and thus problematic for him. Achlam rejected the notion, highlighting that there is no difference and that it is "easy because if we are talking the and technical it's easy to learn". In doing so, Achlam portrays his ability to acquire technical knowledge easily, suggesting that engineering concepts are the same regardless of language which functions to maintain a positive self identity:

7-128. R: In terms of the language and I don't mean the English language in terms of the language that South Africa uses, the engineering concepts that we, the words that we use for the engineering concepts and the words that you learnt at school, is there a big difference?

129. P: No, because the English technical the same.

130. R: Is it the same?

131. P: Yes, the same.

132. R: Alright. So there's no problems in terms of,

133. P: No, no problem.

134. R: Of common ground almost?

135. P: Hm.

136. R: Nothing?

137. P: Nothing.

138. R: Okay, so it's easy? It's,

139. P: It's easy because if we are talking the and technical it's easy to learn.

Poor proficiency in English was viewed as a barrier to knowledge transfer by the participants; however, where this featured prominently in the interviews of the Saudi Arabian participants, this was not the case in the South African participants' interviews. How it was viewed also differed and the effect that it had was minimised, and the difficulty in communication was attributed to a lack of technical ability of the Saudi Arabian participants by the South African participants. The analysis indicates that the South African participants drew from a dominant Western discourse in taking for granted that English is the language of preference within the workplace.

The South African participants minimised the effect of English by disregarding that it is an issue and by drawing a comparison with the self as second language users of English, and thus inferring that because they do not struggle, this should hold true for the mentees, as demonstrated in the following extracts.

In the following, Bram is replying to a question regarding communication in English being a problem:

> 1-116. P: Er, it depends on the person. It depends how much background they have to English. Some of them might have gone to overseas on courses uhm and studied overseas and those people there's no problems. But some of the guys really struggle. But I think that's only like 10/20% of them.
>
> 117. R: Okay.
>
> 118. P: So I think the majority, that's not the major problem. Uhm, a small percentage that could be a problem.

Here Bram draws on a discourse of global English to argue that only a few of the mentees struggle with English. Bram is making an assumption that the mentees who have studied or trained "overseas" are proficient in English. There is no suggestion regarding the language spoken in the country travelled to overseas, indicating the assumption that English is a universal language. By implication Bram accepts the norm of English as the international or global language. The suggestion being made is that if the mentees have received previous training outside of their home country, they would be sufficiently proficient within the South African workplace.

In the following two quotes from Charl's interview he is minimising the extent of English being a language barrier by stating that the mentees have "sufficient understanding" to communicate easily. His statement that English is not "as big a factor as I think people make" implies that language as barrier has been made more of an issue than it actually is:

> 6-20. P: … Yes, English is a factor but I don't think it's as, the, the language barrier isn't as big a factor as I think people make it out.
>
> and
>
> 6-114. P: That's right uhm although that's my impression that it's not the English it might, might still be but uhm the guys I've worked with had got, had a sufficient understanding I think to be able to, to communicate uhm easily.

The, the problem in my opinion is it was rather the underlying technical knowledge, the technical terms.

Charl dismisses English language as a problem and states that “the problem” is “technical knowledge”. What is being argued is that there is a communication problem and that this relates to a lack of technical knowledge or understanding of technical terms. This functions to resource a construction of the other as lacking in engineering ability.

Similarly, when I check with Antony that the reason why the participants struggle with writing reports is not one of language, he dismisses the possibility in favour of their difficulty being as a result of a lack of technical report-writing skills, which he attributes to poor education on the part of the mentees. The following extract shows Antony’s dismissal of language as an issue with regard to report writing:

13-64. R: And it’s not about the language that they struggle with?

65. P: No that is not a language thing. That is like a um just like a principle of reporting.

Antony portrays the mentees as lacking in knowledge of engineering principles and therefore other, without consideration for an alternative possibility that the mentees struggle to express themselves in written English. The argument is that it is not language proficiency that causes the barriers in the knowledge transfer but the mentees’ lack of technical experience and knowledge.

The South African mentors minimising of the impact of English proficiency is also achieved by drawing attention to the self being second-language English speakers and by implication in a similar position as the mentees with regard to their ability to communicate within the workplace. In the following, Dirk dismisses the possibility of language being an issue and constructs himself as not being “that fluent in English”:

10-215. R: Hm. Did you find that there were any Uhm was language an issue? Was,

216. P: No, not really. I think, I don’t think language at all was an issue. They … Well, not that I’m also all that fluent in English. So we both had English as our second languages. So it was, it was as good as it could be.

Dirk is suggesting that there is a similar level of English proficiency by virtue of it being both his and the mentees’ second language. With the reference to it being as “good as it could be”, the implication is that the mentee is as “disadvantaged” as he in terms of communication within

the workplace. English as a second language for self and other functions to portray the self as superior along the lines of highlighting it as unproblematic for self and devalues the possibility of an alternative experience for the Saudi Arabian participants by dehumanising the other by not considering the complexity of their context.

A Western system of meaning is constructed through the workplace discourse and this positions those proficient in English centrally and marginalises those who are not (Woodend et al., 2019). Ideologically, the Western norms that dominate the workplace discourse privilege English proficiency and establish it as a norm that established positions for individuals within social interaction. English functions as a form of power within the mentorship relationship through which the Saudi Arabian participants subjectify the self as inadequate and the South African participants are able to dismiss the marginalising effect that English has within the mentorship relationship. The material impact on knowledge transfer efficiency is that the mentees withhold their participation to resist being othered. In the context where it is expected of the good engineer to engage productively within meetings, silence is regarded as deviant or indicative of laziness and a lack of motivation, which functions to position the mentees as other. According to Rouse (2005), closing down the possibilities for participation indicates the functioning of power in the relationship that creates asymmetrical power relations. Ascribing communication problems to a lack of technical knowledge without consideration of an alternative possibility further functions to position the Saudi Arabians as other and maintains an unequal power relation.

English as an established workplace practice for the South African participants privileges them over the Saudi Arabian participants, not only in terms of their ease of engagement, but because it is taken for granted by the mentors that the Saudi Arabian participants engage with the same ease that allows them to be positioned as other, and also legitimises the South Africans construction as superior self. In this way English is more than a means of sharing meaning; it is also implicated in the network of power relations drawn from a dominant discourse of Western ideology. The privileging of one language over others positions certain groups as 'other' within the system of organizational power relations which has the effect of marginalizing these groups (Mumby & Stohl, 1991). Language as a barrier legitimises social inequality and as such has a power effect (Rowe & Goodman, 2014).

4.4.6 Summary

The outcome of the analysis considers the operation of power relating to barriers in knowledge transfer. The asymmetry of the power relation is evident in organisational practices that

legitimise the authority of the mentor to control what knowledge is disseminated, and to form the desired subject or mentee. The barrier to knowledge transfer implicit in subjectification is that it leads to othering and practices that are resisted. Making the mentee the object of evaluation and scrutiny maintains their position as inferior while affirming the self-superiority. Taking up subjectivities provides conflicting subjectivities which are resisted. The operation of power revealed the privileging of the dominant economic discourse where Western workplace expectations variably constructed the subjectivities of the participants. Conflicting subjectivities are managed to privilege the self within the social interactions.

4.5 Conclusion

In considering the research objective of identifying power in the mentorship relationships relating to barriers in knowledge transfer and the effect of power within the broader analysis addressed in this chapter showed the dominance of a Western ideology where power is evidenced in the acceptance of a Western discourse that sets up unequal power relations and offers subjectivities that are resisted. The analysis showed that the participants subjugate themselves to Western workplace principles that seek to privilege the interests of the economic achievement of the organisation and foreground workplace norms over those concerned with knowledge development, thus marginalising the knowledge recipient as other.

Chapter 5: The Construction of Self and Other Impacts Knowledge Transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African Engineers – Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the general outcomes, conclusions and implications arising from this study. I will also present identified limitations of the research, which will be followed by recommendations for future research. Finally, the main conclusion of this research will be presented.

The aim of this research study was to show what is happening within the mentorship interaction between participants engaged in knowledge transfer. Based on the assumption that discourse produces social practices and individual identities within social, historical and cultural contexts, the research sought to determine the ways in which identities are constructed in a mentorship interaction aimed at knowledge transfer, and to determine the effect of this on individual experience and the social and material practice of the knowledge transfer. Attending to the research objectives, which aimed to address the research question of how individuals in a mentorship relationship for the purposes of knowledge transfer construct the self and the other, and how this impacts the practice of knowledge transfer, the analysis found that the construction of self and other does have an impact on knowledge transfer between Saudi Arabian and South African engineers.

In the following section I present the most significant outcomes in relation to the research question.

5.1 Outcomes

The overall purpose of the study was to reveal what is happening within a mentorship relationship aimed at knowledge transfer by describing the discourses, subjectivities, power and resistance produced by power relations present in the social interaction.

The analysis showed that the identity constructions of both the South African and Saudi Arabian participants within the knowledge transfer relationship entail the systematic setting up of self and other within unequal power relations that favour the self as superior to the other, through continual positioning, resistance to and negotiation of subject positions made available in the discourses from which the participants drew to provide meaning to their experience of knowledge transfer.

Othering was evidenced in the analysis by a focus on difference (Dervin, 2012) and the identification of desirable characteristics for the self and of undesirable characteristics for the other (Brons, 2015) to resource the construction of self and other. The positioning as superior and subordinate brought forth by othering (Johnson et al., 2004) was resisted through the construction of alternative subject positions that functioned to protect the sense of self and resist marginalisation (Johnson et al., 2004) within the social conditions and practices of knowledge transfer.

The study showed that the participants who are located in divergent contexts gave rise to differing meaning systems, which indicates a shared meaning system within participating groups but not between the groups, and points to the impact of differing social and historical contexts. The variable construction of knowledge transfer determined the particular ways of being for the participants and the analysis identified multiple identities and their functioning.

Conflicting subjectivities had to be negotiated due to competing practices and oscillations between the different subject positions (Edley, 2001). Conflicting subjectivities impacted identity in terms of belonging and legitimacy within the workplace.

Knowledge transfer is variably constructed by the participants where the South African participants' construction of knowledge transfer functioned to locate knowledge transfer outside of the economic workplace through the subject positions made available and through othering that justified the exclusion the mentees from participation and inclusion in workplace activities. The self was positioned as authority, which legitimised practices of domination aimed at control of the other. The effect of normative power in privileging a Western discourse was evident in the South African resisting mentorship as they negotiated conflicting subjectivities. The construction of knowledge transfer by the Saudi Arabian participants located knowledge transfer within an economic discourse and functioned to justify their inclusion in the workplace as contributing team members. Positioning the self as professional contributor worked to establish rights and entitlements for the self as the same as those belonging to a Western workplace and to achieve acceptance. The effect of power was seen in the Saudi Arabian participants' resistance to being constructed as other.

A dominant discourse of the Western workplace was privileged, indicating the operation of power which informed a Western view of taken-for-granted knowledge regarding expected behaviour and adherence to certain practices. For the Saudi Arabian participants, self identity related to belonging within a Western economy and the rejection of being othered, while for

the South African participants superior self identity resulted in the marginalisation of the Saudi Arabian participants as other, that justified their exclusion from the Western workplace.

The material effect of othering was evident in closing down possibilities for action for the other and the justification by the self of exclusionary behaviour within the practice of knowledge transfer based on the perceived negative attributes of the other (Khawaja & Mørck, 2009).

The impact of self other construction on the material practice of knowledge transfer was evidenced by the setting up of self-other boundaries impacting the depth of interaction necessary for knowledge sharing and the exclusion of the mentees in meaningful engagement in engineering practice required for knowledge transfer.

5.2 Consideration of Current Literature

The prevailing literature regards knowledge transfer as difficult to achieve and is primarily focused on the factors that hinder its success, looking to causal relational factors between the participants and not the reflexive effects of what is happening within the relationship and the qualities of knowledge transfer participants, particularly those of the knowledge receivers.

Unlike the prevailing literature, this study shows the working of performative function of reflexive self other construction and the operations of power in relations, in this regard arguing for considerations of knowledge transfer as a systematic whole that encompasses contextual factors. Whereas the relationship between the parties participating in the knowledge transfer process has been found to be an important factor for successful knowledge transfer (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016; Chen et al., 2010; Duan et al., 2010; Goh, 2002; Jensen, 2011; Lin, 2008; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008.; Szulanski, 1996; Yakhlef, 2007), the output of this study shows the importance of considering the operation of power as productive and performative (Jensen, 2011) in that it constructs the relationship through the participants' discursive actions. Issues of power that position participants within the relations and bring to the fore resistance move beyond determining the importance of relationship and talk to what is happening within the relationship. In this regard this study agrees with research that highlights the importance of social interaction and what is happening between participants engaged in knowledge transfer for its success (Bigabwa et al., 2015; Gergen, 2011; Gertler, 2003) to the extent that social interaction provides for inclusion and belonging. This research concurs with the view that shared meaning systems are important for successful knowledge transfer (Thomas et al., 2014); however, meaning systems are derived from institutional power and shared context, so that a focus on shared meaning systems within the knowledge transfer research without

regard for the power implicit in the contexts that create these meanings reinforces a focus on difference. Knowledge transfer is characterised by divergent contexts, and therefore different meaning systems, so that stating that knowledge transfer relies on shared meanings sets up asymmetrical power relations that favour a particular meaning system, as evidenced in this research. Arguing that knowledge transfer requires shared meanings ignores difference as something that must be overcome, which has implications with regard to acknowledging normative power and resistance to its power effect.

The outcomes of this study do not support the findings of research that looks to the issues with the knowledge recipients (Chen, Chang et al., 2012; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Ringberg & Reihlen, 2008; Szulanski, 1996), and/or issues with the knowledge senders (Mu et al., 2010), as these are overly simplistic and do not consider how these come to be. “Issues” or the particular characteristics that are highlighted in the research literature were found to be related to othering that differentiates the self and creates the inferior other. The focus on desirable or undesirable characteristics of parties does not consider that these might be constructed to serve particular functions and perhaps explains that despite the extensive research focus on this aspect of knowledge transfer within the literature, no single conclusive list of characterises has been produced. This study has shown that constructing the other in certain ways functions to maintain self identity and practices that maintain the status quo, and as such, the characteristics that are constructed as lacking in the other reflect the contextual status quo. This study showed that the characteristics and qualities attributed to the other for successful knowledge transfer were premised on a reflection of a constructed desired self and showed that the participants disregarded evidence that countered their view of the constructed shortcomings of the other in order to maintain the integrity of the self. In addition, if the role of mentorship is to address shortcomings, it would be important to acknowledge the role of knowledge transfer to assess and address these and not merely attribute them as problematic in the other. Attributing behaviour that is not normative to character flaws of the other is evidence of othering, as this study has shown, and fails to consider the role that knowledge transfer plays in creating new norms.

This study supports the findings of authors who have found cultural factors and language to hinder successful transfer, particularly within multinational knowledge transfer (Al-Thawwad, 2008; Chen et al., 2010; Kuada, 2006a; Perrin et al., 2007; Tey & Idris, 2012). It also supports the findings that similarity in national cultures and of organisational status increases interaction between parties to knowledge transfer (Makela et al., 2007). This study, however, suggests that attributing culture to issues with knowledge transfer does not consider the implications thereof, specifically to the impact of normative power, and in doing so, this study’s research

findings agree with Park (2005), that othering differentiates groups, making them minorities that are marginalised from the norm. The study also agrees with Argote et al. (2000) that issues of culture are conflated with the individual characteristics of the participants within knowledge transfer research. This study supports an argument that attributing culture to the success or a lack thereof of knowledge transfer is overly simplistic as it does not consider the power dynamics operational within the notion of difference and sameness.

5.3 Contribution

This study contributes to the current body of knowledge by offering an alternative theoretical perspective to the knowledge transfer literature and considerations for practice at the individual/organisational level. These and considerations for future research are addressed in this section.

5.3.1 Theoretical Perspective – Constructionist and Qualitative

This study is significant in that it addresses the lack of poststructural perspectives on knowledge transfer, and as such, offers an opportunity to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and practices that have a marginalising effect in its practice. An understanding of this process from an alternative perspective stimulates new ideas about the function of a problematised knowledge transfer discourse. In providing a social constructionist perspective, this study addresses the limited knowledge transfer research available from a social constructionist perspective, as knowledge transfer research is primarily based on a positivistic paradigm. Discourse analysis offers an alternative to research that relies on the surveys or questionnaires to explore the ways in which inequalities are created and influence identities. It therefore contributes to the field of discursive research about identity construction, especially related to the impact of the historical contexts that inform and maintain dominant discourses by looking at the participants engaged in knowledge transfer within their various contexts which inform them, and not in isolation as separate components. It addresses the need for studies regarding social identity construction from a qualitative perspective (Brown, 2019, as cited in Skovgaard-Smith et al., 2019) and for qualitative research regarding knowledge owner and receiver (Perrin et al., 2007), providing greater insight into the topic of knowledge transfer and identity by showing the effect of power in relations within the knowledge transfer relationship.

5.3.2 Knowledge Transfer Literature

This study addresses the need expressed by authors for more research in knowledge transfer as an emerging concept (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016). It contributes to the knowledge transfer literature by providing a social constructionist perspective with an analytic focus on discursive constructions. Previous research examined the determinants that inhibit successful knowledge transfer, primarily from a positivistic paradigm that focus on barriers to its success, without considering what is happening within the relationship. The study addresses the need identified in the literature for more research to be conducted on the dynamics and complexity of knowledge transfer (Martinkenaite, 2011), specifically related to cultural factors, identity construction and the dynamic of power (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Although researchers have identified the significance of the social interaction in the knowledge transfer process (Yakhlef, 2007), there has been little analytic attention paid to the effect of power in relations. It offers an alternative view to the prevailing literature that is focused on barriers to knowledge transfer (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Martinkenaite, 2011; Perrin et al., 2007) by providing insight into broader power dynamics that are involved within knowledge transfer, giving a deeper understanding of the topic. A constructionist view moves the discussion away from mere differences that make up the discourses on culture toward considerations of the power within historical contexts that inform prevailing norms, addressing the need for research on how this affect knowledge transfer (Argote & Ingram, 2000, Gordon & Grant, 2004).

This study addresses these aspects and builds on work regarding the dynamics of knowledge transfer within the context of national boundaries in considering the impact of culturalisation. It further addresses the need for more research that considers the factors that characterise cross-border knowledge transfer and the influence of culture (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Chen et al., 2010) and context (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Perrin et al., 2007; Zaidman & Brock, 2009), on knowledge transfer specifically in developing countries (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016; Syed-Ikhsan & Rowland, 2004; Tey & Idris, 2012) and Arabic countries (Al-Thawwad, 2008). In revealing what is happening within the knowledge transfer interaction, the research addressed the need for research regarding the relational aspects of knowledge transfer (Lucas, 2005), relating to individuals within relationships (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2016), and the dynamics at play that influence knowledge transfer regarding knowledge recipients moving into new organisational sites who can be regarded as minorities within the context of the majority (Argote & Ingram, 2000). The conclusions of this study add to considerations of the impact of global economic ideology on knowledge transfer, specifically that knowledge transfer involves encounters between different groups.

5.3.3 Considerations for Practice at the Individual/Organisational Level

The study has several implications for practice. This study shows that the perceived failure of knowledge transfer does not lie in the flaws of either the knowledge owner or the knowledge recipient, their relationship or their differences. The success of knowledge transfer lies within the relational context that is created for those who share their knowledge and that allows for belonging and inclusion. Organisations have a responsibility to set the context in terms of structures and practices to ensure that issues of belonging and inclusion are addressed.

Differing meaning systems result in expectations linked to dominant discourses that are largely unarticulated within the context of what is regarded as the prevailing norms. There therefore needs to be an awareness of what is taken for granted in terms of norms and expectations within the knowledge transfer context so that these can be challenged and give way to more inclusive practices. It is recommended that more time is spent regarding the impact of normative “expectations” at each level person to person, group to group, and organisation, to acknowledge differences and to address assumptions prior to and during the commencement of knowledge transfer. The importance of dialogue to provide space for conversation that allows for multiple voices to be heard in order to bring forth new perspectives and possibilities must be stressed.

Privileging a Western economic discourse has revealed accepted (but unexamined) practices that have resulted in the marginalisation of those intended to benefit from the experience. Highlighting taken-for-granted norms allows for consideration of the impact of the power effects of these norms, for example questioning the acceptance of English as the language of communication in a multinational context allows us to consider the impact of communicating in an unfamiliar language, not in terms of language that blames, but in terms of practices that facilitate. An alternative consideration allows for practices to be questioned and considers the effect of the taken-for-granted to open up the possibility for alternative approaches that do not result in opportunity for othering, such as to address communication flow in the example of English as norm. A potential intervention is that consideration should be given to alternative means to communicate and, for example, the use of interpreters within the workspace.

In addition, the impact of negotiating multiple subjectivities deserves consideration that should be addressed by examining expectations and clearly articulating these in knowledge transfer initiatives from various perspectives. Consideration should particularly be given to the multiple expectations of the role players and the impact of privileging one over the other. Claims of insufficient capability for proper mentorship interactions, including a lack of mentorship skills,

serve discursive functions for maintaining and constructing self identity; however, also reflect competing subjectivities which should be dealt with by considering which dominant discourses are bought into and their normative effects. Considering the impact of conflicting responsibilities of participants allows for knowledge sharing activities to be prioritised and given legitimacy. Knowledge transfer interventions must be well considered in terms of competing demands that open the possibility for resistance such as being both responsible for productivity and for the mentorship on another without regard for the time that these require. Organisational considerations include making time and addressing the multiple subjectivities that impede knowledge transfer which demonstrate that mentorship is a priority. In addition, this must be supported by ensuring access to resources and integration into the workplace. Mentees need to be given the opportunity so that they can be viewed as resources by attending to their capacity needs in a manner that enables their contribution and that will allow for alternative positioning that constructs their identities as not based on assumptions of their knowledge as deficit, but as knowledgeable in their own right.

Knowing that othering is at play in knowledge transfer is an important consideration, so that we consider the effects portraying individuals in certain ways given that knowledge transfer requires active involvement and not passive dissemination of information by doing and engaging in knowledge creation activities and social engagement. Maintaining categorical boundaries, knowledge owner/knowledge recipient, western and foreign create social meanings that manifest in workplace actions that affect our practices and result in exclusion. Knowledge transfer occurs in interaction and does not flow only in one direction; a mentee can be constructed as less experienced yet not less valued, and there needs to be active consideration for the impact of portraying someone as inferior. Categorising and labelling should bear conscious consideration of the power effects that these hold as they create separation. Reflection of the function and reasons for positioning the knowledge owners and knowledge receivers as separate or as opposite others rather than on a spectrum bear consideration regarding the maintenance of power and the status quo. New and inclusive discourses need to be created that consider that we all harbour knowledge that is worth sharing. Individuals are constantly sharing knowledge and categorising them as knowledge owners and knowledge receivers does not recognise this, whereas “knowledge partners” allows for more inclusive discourses.

Othering indicates a preoccupation with difference and an implication of having less knowledge of other people is that it is easier to interpret their behaviour with presupposed characteristics as simplifications and in stereotypes (Ålund, 1999, in Creutz-Kämppi, 2008). As a practical recommendation for addressing the marginalising effects of othering would be considerations of a focus on difference that functions to protect the self through the

differentiation of the self from the other (Dervin, 2012). Organisations should put in place interventions where difference is not be viewed as something that must be overcome, but as something to be tolerated and respected to ensure that participants experience that they are welcome and included. The focus should be on inclusion in the workplace in a manner that talks to belonging and acceptance in order to foster authentic relationship building with opportunity for social engagement, which will encourage the flow of knowledge. Inclusive workplace structures and practices, such as open spaces for both mentor and mentee to work together in a meaningful manner as an intervention to avoid the material impact of othering, identified in this study, which was that of exclusion from and the need to belong within the workplace. Knowledge transfer is concerned in the main with assimilation and creating new norms, which suggest removing difference; however, the effect of this raises issues of resistance. It is recommended that practices are put in place that move toward inclusion and creating a sense of belongingness, where difference is respected and actively understood at the individual and group level. These initiatives should focus on individual interaction and not at a collective level that considers individuals as cultural objects. Those engaging in knowledge transfer that form the minority group, the knowledge receivers, must experience a sense of belonging. The focus on inclusion in the workplace addresses belonging and entails acceptance (Wangler, 2012). Belonging considers identification with the in-group that entitles individuals to share in interaction and access to the same rights and privileges as those of the larger group (Wangler, 2012). To overcome the effects of othering takes a commitment to tolerate and respect difference, but most importantly to ensure that participants experience that they are welcome and feel that they belong and ultimately the creation of new inclusive discourses, identities, and structures.

5.4 Limitations and Opportunities for Refinement

The outcome of this study should be considered in the light of several limitations. This study focused specifically on knowledge transfer within an engineering research and development context; this calls into consideration a specific type of knowledge or regime of truth regulated by a body of knowledge or the engineering profession. The study focused on knowledge transfer and did not offer a theoretical grounding in mentorship research. Furthermore, the scope of the study was limited to participants from South Africa and Saudi Arabia. I have not considered the effect of power relations within national boundaries that are located in similar social or economic contexts. These limitations offer considerations for further research that specifically considers the theory and practice of mentorship and that of contexts and cultures other than Islam and South Africans.

A lack of prior research studies on knowledge transfer from a constructionist perspective required that I rely on literature primarily from a positivist perspective. Although the topic of learning and teaching has been explored more extensively from a constructivist perspective, and as such was consulted and provided value, I had to exercise caution not to overly rely on these studies due to their limited value in terms of application to the view of power in relations. While this study adds to the limited research on knowledge transfer from a constructionist perspective, further study from this perspective is needed to contribute to the depth of understanding of the topic.

Opportunities for improving the study concern the data collection and the analytic process. In terms of access to the participants, I had not considered the practical constraints of having participants moving between South African and Saudi Arabia that impacted the availability of participants, resulting in delays between interviews. The study generated an extensive amount of text that allowed for a broad exploration of the topic. I regret not having a more structured approach to the interviews as this could have helped to address the volume of data to be analysed. Future studies of this nature should consider the value of a structured approach to the interviews that would perhaps generate less text and more directed input as opposed to the breadth of free-flowing information.

I was initially concerned about using English as the medium to conduct the interviews and the fact that the amount of text generated by the Saudi Arabian participants was significantly less than that of the South Africans indicates that this was a factor; however, in considering my interaction with the Saudi Arabian participants, I found that being regarded as situated within the same context as the mentors resulted in resistance and counter-resistance within our interaction, involving positioning of the self as same (both myself and the interviewee) in an attempt to establish rapport that resulted in me directing the interviews in a manner that was subtly different from my engagement with the South African interviewees. Issues of my own bias with regard to my own in-group out-group situatedness resulted in active and ongoing conscious reflection which, while reviewing the data, appeared to make me overall cautious in the interviews. I am aware of the possibility that this has affected the flow of information within the interviews. Although overall it assisted me that I was immersed in the research setting; further researchers should consider the power effect of participants from both groups positioning the researcher as either “one of them” or as other so that there is a greater awareness of this dynamic during the interview process.

The ontology of this study is that there are multiple realities due to the different individual experiences of their social contexts (Stead, 2004) that have implication in terms of the

generalisability of the outcomes to other contexts. This study both considers and is cognisant of the multiple factors that are at play within a knowledge transfer endeavour, and although I believe that my conclusions offer an alternative view, it does not purport to be of greater importance than other considerations.

5.5 Conclusion

The function of knowledge transfer is to replicate knowledge and know-how in pursuit of economic competitiveness and entails the enactment of power through the replication/enforcement of norms and behaviour that occur through the access to knowledge and meaningful participation in work processes. This study has revealed what is happening within power relations between individuals, located in divergent contexts, engaged in knowledge transfer. As such the significance of this study is that it provides an alternative view on the topic of knowledge transfer that demonstrates the reflexive and productive role of the participants in constructing their knowledge transfer experience. The study suggests that deeper consideration should be given to the effects of othering and power present in social interactions between individuals located in divergent contexts, such as those that characterise knowledge transfer.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

The impact of the construction of self and other on knowledge transfer across cultures

The purpose of the study:

In terms of the agreement entered into which, in part, is aimed at technology transfer. In order to affect this agreement members have been identified to enter a “mentorship pairing”. This study aims to describe the mentorship relationship in order to gain a greater understanding of the knowledge transfer process. The research will contribute to the improvement of an effective programme to facilitate the knowledge transfer within the programme. The research will be utilised for the doctoral studies of the researcher.

The process:

The one-on-one qualitative interview will be an unstructured exploration of the participant’s experience of the mentorship relationship. The interview will be recorded in order to be transcribed for analysis. Each interview will last approximately one hour. Recordings and transcripts will be kept securely on the researcher’s computer which is password protected. The contents of the interview will be treated as confidential in that the participant’s name of identifying information will not be published.

The intention is to contribute to the improvement of the mentoring programme and in no manner will information that could be regarded as sensitive or that could identify a certain participant be shared with any other participant or the management of the programme.
The research will be conducted by Monique Woodborne who was the HR Manager of the unit, now part of the organisations central HR and a Doctoral student at UNISA in Consulting Psychology, reference number 2012-31233074. She can be contacted at 0128413768. She is bound by the ethical procedures of UNISA, the organisation and the Health Professional Council of South Africa. You are encouraged to contact her with any concerns that you might have relating to your participation of the research and may withdraw from the study at any stage without fear of any negative recourse. Your participation is entirely voluntary. A copy of the research findings can be requested from the researcher at the conclusion of the study.

- I agree to take part in a one-to-one interview for the “The Impact of the Construction of Self and Other on Knowledge Transfer Between Saudi Arabian and South African Engineers” study.
- I agree to the interview being recorded and transcribed and understand that the recordings and transcripts will be treated as confidential and securely stored at all times and that only members of the research team will have access to them. I understand that part of the recordings could be included in the thesis document but that these will in no manner or form reveal your identity.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without having to provide any reason.

Name: Date:

Signature:

Appendix B: Confidentiality Agreement for Transcriptionist

The impact of the construction of self and other on knowledge transfer across cultures

As a researcher, one of my priorities is to uphold and protect the confidentiality of the participants in my study. The nature of the information in the audiotapes/transcripts may be personal and sensitive and must be kept confidential in order to protect the privacy of the participant. By signing this agreement, the transcriptionist acknowledges the importance of protecting the participant's confidentiality and agrees to protect the information contained in the audiotapes/transcripts, including the identity of the participants. The limits of confidentiality extend throughout the duration of the study and even when the study is completed.

I Name, have accepted the responsibilities of the transcribing the audiotapes for Monique Woodborne's research project. I understand that these audiotapes contain personal and confidential information. I have been trained on the manner in which the recordings will be received and returned to and from the above named researcher. I understand the importance of keeping the audiotapes, transcripts, and the information contained in these documents confidential. I will not release these tapes and transcripts to anyone other than the researcher, Monique Woodborne. I have read the terms and conditions of confidentiality listed in this document. By signing this agreement, I agree to protect the identity of the participants in this study. I also agree to keep all documents, audiotapes, and transcripts confidential and agree to protect the personal and sensitive information contained in these materials.

_____

Transcriptionist, please print name

_____ _____

Transcriptionist's Signature Date

_____

Researcher, please print name

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature Date

Appendix C: Sample Analysis

'this is what he's really asking so I must give him this.' I I sort of didn't know that's what they were asking. That's what they wanted. Now I know. *Uhm*, in that meeting as well to set out a very rough project plan. All the all the JTCKSA Engineers have a strong tendency to work according to a project plan. But I can tell you the SAJTC guys, they don't work to a project plan. The project plan is only meant to go and develop the proposal. After that we'll probably we go lock it up in the drawer, we do our own thing. We don't work with a project plan but they want a project plan. So we need to give them something. And if we're not strong in doing that I think we need to work together with them, tell them 'yes, this is important for you' because that feeds into their processes and their project management. Say, 'yes, it's important for you so we can work together to get this in place'. It's not only the SAJTC mentor's responsibility to draw it up and give it to you. I can spend some time with the board or whatever but you can go and write it up. If it's so important to you, which it is important, you can help to get to that. Not sit back and say there's no plan, I don't what do.

25. R: Why is project planning so important to them?

26. P: *Uhm*, from the project manager's point of view, from their side *uhm*, if they have each person on their system and what task they're doing they can check up okay, now it's been three months into the project. They expect this deliverable.

27. R: Okay.

28. P: They're going to ask the guy 'has this stuff been done?' No, then they can go re-adjust certain things. I don't why. I don't know how that will impact anything on their side. I think they just want to have a closer tab on what's happening. By just leaving the guy there they feel they don't have that and this is one way that they feel that they can measure progress or measure knowledge transfer or measure something along the line. And this is the one way that they're doing that. I, I ja, I believe they can do better than that.

29. R: Okay. How do you touched now a little bit how they might experience the relationship when you described now about that it took you a while to realize what they wanted out of it.

30. P: Mmmm.

31. R: How would you describe how do you think that they've experienced the relationship? You said just now about them being considering you guys' experts and you don't know the answers, elaborate just a little bit more on that?

Interview number 13

DKD

Constructions – How is the discursive object portrayed – instances of reference)	**Discourses** – the different/various constructions within a broader discourse	**Action Orientation** – when is the discourse used and to what purpose/what is gained
Self – learner & mentor, "we are in different worlds" – learners, cultural problems, open to trying to understand diff cultures, have to write reports for them, questions, have got their degrees, would request to do work and try to help them, need to steer them, uncertain their schooling is poor, must make people into engineers, handles multiple mentors, complete their work.	Problem solving is very natural to him, Surprised that those with PhD don't understand principles, led to design work, very experienced mentor, Christian, wants to understand one another, avoid possibility of conflict for fear of being fired, colleagues religious scriptures, discussion religion, Class Religious imperialist to him – will not be convinced, stuck into an white way of life	Preconceived ideas, Many imperialist, not matter on how should manner, – not a sinner, Differences make feel less comfortable with each other
Other – just vanishes, very different – culturally + religiously, degreed, not keen on working, want write a report – don't have the skills/knowledge –		
Want to leave the work for the mentor, need to be released, keen to learn, keen in general but at technical level (work with things) – not to analyse or design, work with hands more, lacking in education, quickly get bored, all over the place, some promising, their culture denies them decision-making – not allowed to think for themselves,		

Subject Positioning – rights and duties being ascribed to the different subjects	**Practice** – what can be said and done from these positions	**Subjectivity** – what can be thought felt and experienced from these positions
can't be mentalised, Don't stay with ambitionless, lack passion, don't care what happens to them, a servant to the king, learn many quickly, language, religious + cultural bane, Muslim, Perceive Christians to be sinner, think Christian are humble people	something to complain, Religious practice the proper way important, Sit mentees – go learn faster + easier	(Woman afraid to say anything)
Organisation – not focused on, contradicting, not understanding	families second don't speak of	
believe West is fallen + their people disobedient + sinnful		
Want speak to women, women are treated in stalls, than animals		
Shy intimidated of women + won't speak, Empty vessels, love Mad's	Reason	
Surprised when one asked for more work, – exception to have an attitude to want to know more / take the lead = not running (go-getter)		

Trust when to have it for themselves, Not allowed to think for themselves because

Religious conformists

Appendix D: Nationality and Names provided for each Interview

Interview Number	Name	Participating group
1	Bram	South African
2	Aaquil	Saudi Arabian
3	Henk	South African
4	Lana	South African
5	Mohammed	Saudi Arabian
6	Charl	South African
7	Achlam	Saudi Arabian
8	Peter	South African
10	Dirk	South African
11	Hans	South African
12	Ali	Saudi Arabian
13	Antony	South African
14	Fahad	Saudi Arabian
15	Bhaumik	South African
16	Omar	Saudi Arabian
17	Ibraham	Saudi Arabian
18	Achmat	Saudi Arabian