Students becoming Entrepreneurs, a study of Identity Development of Journalists

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Abstract

Creating a strong identity is important for entrepreneurial journalists as jobs within the media sector are increasingly being replaced by contracts for freelance workers. A clear entrepreneurial identity gives journalists a better chance in getting jobs and creating a successful career. For this, students of journalism need to learn best practices for creating their entrepreneurial identity and be well prepared for their working lives. However, much of the creation of identity of workers in the creative sector, and in particular journalism is not known. To get more insight in this creation process of identity in students of journalism 14 qualitative interviews were conducted at the School of Journalism at the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. The analysis shows that the students struggle with various value tensions, like working for commercial or journalistic employers. At the same time they tend to use their skills in storytelling to present themselves but the students are very mindful to be as authentic as possible. This results in an unplanned, somewhat chaotic process of identity building in which the students look for milestones in their studies to form their identity. At the same time the students seem to lack reflection on their identity work and storytelling abilities. This research concludes that a more plan based curriculum, which integrated opportunities for reflection could aid the students of journalism in creating a more conscious entrepreneurial identity, allowing them to be more successful in the creative industry.

Keywords: Identity; Identity Work; Storytelling; Journalism; Entrepreneurship; Creative Workers

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Introduction

Identity development through the use of digital media is a growing and highly relevant topic (Lindgren, 2017). This is because media are all around us and have a firm grip on our understanding and making sense of the world (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Deuze, 2011). More generally, the growing effect of media on everybody's everyday life is a result of widespread availability of fast internet, mobile smartphones, the emergence of blogs, YouTube and social media plus the growing desires and addictions of the use and gratification associated with the use of media (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Lindgren, 2017). This not only influences the way we see the world around us but also impacts the identities we construct and develop for ourselves, be it personal or professional, as it encourages everybody to use media to show others who we are (Alsos, Clausen, Hytti & Solvoll, 2016). Facebook stories, websites and streams of pictures and other media tools enhance and shape the identity work needed to create a personal and entrepreneurial identity (Alvesson, 2001; Lindgren, 2017). The notion of identity work has been defined as all the processes, both social and internal, that are being undertaken, such as behaviour, social presentation and online representation, through which identities are shaped (Leitch & Harrison, 2016).

This identity creation is also important in the media and creative industries as there is a high rate of individualism in that sector (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Lindgren, 2017). Generally, the creative industry has a strong impact on our current economy (Werthes, Mauer & Brettel, 2017). Journalists are a part of this creative industry, not only in providing news, but also in other media fields as entertainment and marketing (Berg & Hassink, 2014). Especially when journalists start to become entrepreneurs, the boundaries of the created content shift and encompass even more fields than just journalism. Journalism entrepreneurs shape the way media tells stories about the world and ourselves and how we shape our identity (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Deuze, 2011).

However, even though it is highly relevant theoretically, we know very little about how young entrepreneurs in the media and creative industries use digital media for their own identity development (Lewis, 2016), in particular through creating, upholding and forming their identity as an everyday practice of identity work (Alvesson, 2001). For example, journalists use media both to create their products and to present themselves to the world. This is important, because e.g. almost one third of all Dutch journalists are self-employed freelancers (Bakker, 2016) or create small corporations to create journalistic and other media products. Yet, as a freelance journalist they need to present themselves to potential

employers and clients and they create or develop an entrepreneurial identity for that. Without a clear visible entrepreneurial identity, they do not stand out from their peers and they might lose out on jobs and opportunities (Brouwers, 2017). This entrepreneurship is not always voluntary. Most of young starting journalists are being asked to work part-time as freelancers and are thus forced to become entrepreneurs (Albinsson, 2018; Watson, 2009a; Werthes, Mauer & Brettel 2017). This step towards entrepreneurship, voluntary or not, creates a need for identity work, a series of active performances to create and maintain one or multiple identities, to show the world who you are and be able to succeed (Albinsson, 2018; Watson, 2009a; Werthes, Mauer & Brettel 2017). Overall, On the part of the creation of identity there seems to be a gap in the current research, according to Lewis (2016). Her research claims that especially the building, perceiving, collecting and arranging the building blocks of identity is not fully understood. Werthes, Mauer & Brettel (2017) also add that the evolving of identity of entrepreneurs is not fully examined. Furthermore, the narrative development of entrepreneurial identity needs further exploration (Betta, Latham & Jones, 2008). This means, describing how entrepreneurs talk about and narrate their sense of self in relation to digital media.

To better understand these issues, I will focus on students of journalism who are in the process of becoming entrepreneurs and freelancers, while building their identity as journalists. The focus is on their first steps of creation and adoption of identity. These students of journalism are a good case because they have a good grasp of media and storytelling, some of the most important tools of identity creation, making them an interesting group to study (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Furthermore, I, as a teacher of audio-visual media and a journalistic entrepreneur, have access to a cohort of students of journalism who are in the process of becoming entrepreneurs and studying this process of change and development could provide valuable insights. This provides the basis for analysing the first step in the creation of their entrepreneurial identity.

The social and practical relevance of this research comes from a better understanding how do creative workers like journalists create their entrepreneurial identity and in what way is the curriculum of the schools of journalism relevant in this creation. To help create critical and effective journalists who can help provide news and analysis of our society and social and political landscape. If we have a better understanding of the way journalists and other creative workers create their identity, the curricula can be improved to give these students a head-start. This head-start could prove to be invaluable in a mediatized world where the creative worker is becoming the backbone of our culture and economy (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Deuze, 2011). If these creative workers can be taught to be more effective in the creation of identity they will stand out more and have a better chance to be successful entrepreneurs (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas, 2008).

On this basis, the following research question emerges: How do students of journalism construct their entrepreneurial identity?

Theoretical Framework

Word count Theoretical Framework: 3732

Individual Identity

Several definitions of identity exist. Snow (2001) divides this in three factors: Acting towards things and the meaning given to those actions, social interaction and the related meaning and lastly the interpretative process surrounding those meanings. In this research identity is seen as a constructivist concept (Snow, 2001). Hence, identity "can be viewed as our representation of the internalization and incorporation of socially held behavioural expectations. As such, it can have an important impact not only on the way we feel, think and behave (present), but also on what we aim to achieve (future). Further, identity provides us with a frame of reference with which to interpret social situations and potential behaviours and actions in all domains, as it appears to signify who we are in relation to, and how we differ from, others" (Leitch & Harrison, 2016, p 178).

Identity can be linked to a many particular aspects of entrepreneurship, from mergers, motivation, emotions and more. Not only that, the organizations that the entrepreneurs function within have an effect on the construction of individual identity (Oliver, 2015). This research implies that entrepreneurs take inspiration from their environment in creating their own self. Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas (2008) consider identity a temporary context sensitive set of constructions that are evolving and change to different aspects of life and living. They identify three ways to conceive of and to alter identity; technical, practical-hermeneutic and emancipatory. Here technical refers to the aspects of identity that help us control natural and social conditions surrounding ourselves. Practical-hermeneutic concerns how identity is created in regard to others and social setting. Lastly emancipatory takes a more critical view on how identity is developed to ensure agency and a sense of self (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas, 2008).

There are also differences between organizational identity and self-identity. Organizational identity is usually seen as the form how the members of the organization see themselves as a social group in relation to other groups and environments (Alvesson & Empson, 2008; Oliver, 2015). This organizational identity is created through knowledge work, management and membership. The individuals in the organization use these elements to create a common perception on their organization to distinguish is form other organizations (Alvesson & Empson, 2008). Element from this organizational identity influence and help to create self-identities.

Furthermore, organizations influence the individual identities of its members. 'Who are we?' as an organization gives individuals a partial answer to the question 'who am I?'

(Ravasi & Canato, 2013). This effect may differ from context to context. For example some organizations have a much stronger cohesion and identity, enlarging the effect on self-identity. In this context of freelance or entrepreneurial students of journalism a certain amount of self-identification is closely tied to the organizational identity that the students are part of (Ashforth, Rogers & Corley, 2011; Corley & Goia, 2004; Gioia, Price, Hamilton, & Thomas, 2010). Working practices and self-representation vary greatly between diverse media, and are taken on as routines and conformed to. Although losing one's specialism and creativity can be detrimental to self-identity and is something that organizations should refrain from (Mallett & Wapshott, 2012). This new self becomes a part of the collective and influences the whole organizational identity (Ashforth, Rogers & Corley, 2011; Corley & Goia, 2004; Gioia, Price, Hamilton, & Thomas, 2010).

Côté (1997) suggests that there is a temporary suppression of the identity creation of youths. It seems they are waiting for social permission to become mature and form and evolve their identity. This idea could clash with the push of internship and freelance activities from the University of Applied Science and other schools where possibly the social permission to form an entrepreneurial identity is explicitly given. It is relevant to note that workers in the creative industry are mostly quite young and the corresponding identity is not fully formed (Werthes, Mauer & Brettel 2017). From the same research of Werthes, Mauer & Brettel (2017) it is shown that it is quite likely to find that the students of journalism that are being researched are still in 'phase 1'. This first phase is where the creative industry identity is formed but the entrepreneurial identity is still developing. These multiple identities merge in a later point in life in 'phase 2' (Werthes, Mauer & Brettel, 2017).

What Alvesson (2001) clearly states is that identity is closely related to image, roleplay and managing social relationships. These aspects help build a creative worker as a reliable partner to be hired again and again. In this social relationship management, the rise of social media could have a large effect. Managing social media is part of the curriculum of students of journalism, so this roleplay and management of social relationships could be a skill they use in their own identity creation.

Essentially, entrepreneurial activity is full of meaning and an expression of the self (Fauchart & Gruber, 2011). Therefore, the social identity of the students of journalism could affect their entrepreneurial choices. A study by Alsos, Clausen, Hytti & Solvoll (2016) shows that entrepreneurs can be divided in three categories of identities. These are "Darwinians, Communitarians and Missionaries" and have a correlation to their aspirations as an entrepreneur. Fauchart & Gruber (2011) maps out fundamental differences between economic self-interest and concern for others. This social identity theory focuses on three aspects; interaction with others, level of inclusiveness and behavioural choices. They also make a distinction between Darwinian, Communitarian and Missionary identity. Where

Darwinians are focused on a successful profitable business. Communitarians have a strong link with the product and their users. Missionaries believe that their firm can be an agent of social change (Fauchart & Gruber, 2011). This can be a strong case for students of journalism, where these three distinctions can also be seen.

Importantly, identities are often not singular and many entrepreneurs show multiple professional identities that need to be managed. Each identity serves a separate purpose, as many entrepreneurs work in a variety of terrains (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016). In the Netherlands 16% of the creative workers fulfil several roles concurrently compared to 7% of the average Dutch worker (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016). The presence of multiple identities, or facets of identity, need to be managed, upheld and constructed. This points to the importance of identity work.

Because identity is multifaceted and multiple, more and more studies suggest that "identity" is better seen as a flow instead of a static fixture (Coupland & Brown, 2012; Gioia & Patvardhan, 2012, Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013). Instead of addressing enduring aspects of what a person is, the focus shifts towards what people are becoming, what they are doing, and how they are shaping their development (Coupland & Brown, 2012). This relates to general developments in which society and organizations change more and more rapidly, thus leaving commitment and loyalty as less evident (Coupland & Brown, 2012). Identities are less secure and much more open to rapid change, depending on the changing environment and especially depending on the context in which these identities are developed and displayed (Coupland & Brown, 2012; Gioia & Patvardhan, 2012). Therefore, more and more studies are stepping away from an enduring identity proposition to a dynamic identity proposition.

Context plays an important role for the development of individual identities. And if this context is changing quickly, such as the media and creative industries, then this influences the need for adaptation of individuals and their identity work. Hence, the speed and reason for the number of changes an identity goes through needs to be addressed in research (Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013). This underscores the need to research individual identity in all sorts of different contexts within the creative industries as these surroundings impact the flow of identity (Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013; Kroezen & Heugens, 2012; Schultz & Hernes, 2013).

Overall, if identity is not always stable, but in many cases rather a flow, process or development over time, or if identity is multifacetted and complex, it becomes important to examine how this identity is built, mainained and constructed over time. This leads to examining the identity work that entrepreneurs perform.

Identity Work of entrepreneurs (people)

Identity Work is a process through with people build, form and revise an identity for themselves and for the people surrounding them (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas, 2008; Brown, 2015). Identity work uses all sorts of communicative resources from the social setting and context surrounding themselves and creates a somewhat stable narrative about oneself over time (Beech, Gilmore, Cochrane & Greig, 2012). This identity forming and reforming happens through all sorts of social settings and life-events (Nielsen, Norlyk & Christensen, 2018) and is subject to ongoing account-giving, struggling, reflexive questioning and conflict managing (Beech, et al, 2012; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). For example, the process of identity work may include tensions between the need to be creative and the need to be commercially successful (Beech, et al, 2012; Alvesson, 2003). It may include setting strict timelines and creating free spaces for ideas. It may include balancing values between what is right and what is wrong, and acting upon those.

People continuously work on envisioning and communicating about themselves, while comparing themselves to the presentations of others. Their identity needs to fit to their work context and people need to adapt it to what is needed in a specific business of social setting (Leitch & Harrison, 2016). This creates continuous tensions between the current and aspirational self and the struggle to not be dis-identified depending on the social setting and the context (Beech, et al, 2012; Brown & Coupland, 2015).

Watson (2008) makes a distinction between internal 'self-identities' and external 'social-identities' where she sees these social identities as a connection between what is socially acceptable and what is internally desired for one's identity. She goes on to connect this to how organizations influence the personal identity work as their context greatly impacts what can be done to stand apart from one's surroundings (Watson, 2008). This suggests that organizational surroundings provide the tools to construct a personal identity though identity work. This means, students of journalism could very well benefit from exposure to the workplace to ensure they receive the building blocks necessary to construct their own entrepreneurial identity.

For this identity work the discourse surrounding one's identity has to be managed. Both the self-identity part and the social identity is managed by discourse and is either actively or passively being worked on (Watson, 2009a). This self-narrative and social narrative has multiple dimensions and interpretations, depending on the social or professional setting. Within the population of students of journalism, the discourse of entrepreneurship should be explored. It is quite possible that the hegemonic enterprise discourse is structuring how the students see themselves and feel they need to present themselves to the outside (Watson, 2009a). Watson (2009a) also noted a resistance against

this assumption that everyone should be an entrepreneur. Here there could be a significant resistance from the Missionary group of professionals that Watson (2009a) identified, against this capitalist assumption. The identity work is not only relevant to the identity that persons want to present, but the work is often quite relevant to the image the person does not want to present (Watson, 2009a). Other research also shows this resistance against being forced to become an entrepreneur. Often, they see entrepreneurship as a necessary evil to externalize and realize their chosen professional identity (Nielsen, Norlyk & Christensen, 2018).

A notable parallel to Jazz musicians can be made. These musicians must balance their own personal motivations with that of the band, similar to the position of journalists (Humphreys, Brown & Hatch, 2003). They also look out for their own position as a reporter or a freelancer one wants to hire, but must also be mindful of the news product as a whole. In this positioning some consideration can be given to being purposefully silent or showing your voice. Sometimes not rocking the boat and remaining silent can be better for your career within an organization. But being known as a silent journalist can be detrimental to the identity of a journalist (Fletcher & Watson, 2007).

Identity of students of journalism can also be affected by their level of passion. Passion is a core aspect of entrepreneurship and can be defined as intense positive feelings by engaging in meaningful roles closely connected to the identity of the entrepreneurs (Cardon, Gregoire, Stevens & Patel, 2013). This passion can be influenced by role-models surrounding the potential entrepreneurs and could be shaping the identity forming process (Bhansing, Hitters, & Wijngaarden, 2018). Passion is a strong motivator for starting a business. Passion is also a motivational construct for the identity of entrepreneurs. Especially concerning the various role identities needed as an entrepreneur (Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016).

This passion connects to the emotional impact of successful and unsuccessful Identity work. As identity is such a personal affair any work put in to maintain or create this identity is an inherent emotional labour. This labour affects social identification, emotional attachment and even detachment (Winkler, 2018). This relationship between emotion and an identity can give insight in some of the problems that occur in developing an entrepreneurial identity. Without knowing the self, the building of a new entrepreneurial self can be an emotionally draining effort (Winkler, 2018).

Furthermore, within this context of students of journalism developing an entrepreneurial identity, it is important to note that not only is their journey to become an entrepreneur relevant, also their journey towards being a journalist has an impact on their identity. This profession carries with it a separate professional identity based on specific attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences (Slay & Smith, 2011). This journalistic

professional identity can also receive certain stigmas, routines and expectations from society, complicating the development of an entrepreneurial identity (Slay & Smith, 2011).

Not only are the roles and identities of entrepreneurs various, they might also be shifting and changing in a process of growth (Fachin & Langley, 2017). Identity is a process over time where strategy, culture, structure, trust, power and leadership can be relevant concepts concerning this change (Fachin & Langley, 2017). All these various elements are being worked by the entrepreneurs, knowingly or not.

Knowledge work has an effect on identity. As Alvesson states: "It is frequently impossible to separate knowledge and 'pure' intellectual skills [...] from flexibility, organizing capacity, a high level of motivation, social skills, less esoteric technical skills, the ability to follow company methods, standardized ways op operating and other elements in knowledge-intensive companies" (Alvesson, 2001, pg 867). All these other skills could be used by workers in the creative industries to shape their identity. These skills could be used as concepts to analyse the interviews further. Notable from Alvesson's (2001) work on knowledge is that in the creative industries like journalism, it is hard to evaluate knowledge intensive work. Is this the best journalistic story possible? Would a complete other approach be better? This uncertainty could very well affect the way journalists and other creative workers see themselves. Are they confident their work is solid, for it is hard to claim otherwise or are they uncertain about their skills for the same reasons? Therefore, in answering these questions, entrepreneurs need to reflect on their development, how they are presenting themselves to their audiences and customers. Not only that, they need to reflect on how the story they tell is an ongoing activity through which their sense of selves is constructed, increasingly so over digital platforms. This points to the importance of storytelling in identity work over digital media platforms.

This storytelling as a form of Identity Work connects to how our society is changing its view towards entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs have a specific presence in our society, which is being formed by more and more media related norms and expectations (Anderson & Warren, 2011). Both the 'what' and the 'who' are shaped by our perceptions of their stories and mediatized narratives (Anderson & Warren, 2011).

More and more identity work for new entrepreneurs is done through the use of a number of diverse channels of digital media (Horst, Järventie-Thesleff & Perez-Latre, 2019). These platforms help to support entrepreneurs in creating a brand or enhance brand loyalty with their customers or clients (Horst, Järventie-Thesleff & Perez-Latre, 2019). This impact of mostly social media is changing the way identity work is being done, but it is as of yet unclear what the impact truly is. It is however clear that identity work is following more and more the rules of a mediatized world and that the impact of storytelling within this context is important (Horst, Järventie-Thesleff & Perez-Latre, 2019).

Storytelling and narrative identity work

Media are malleable, a tool anybody can use to edit, change and shape their lives and possibly their identity as well (Deuze, 2011). This malleability of media makes it very useful to use as a narrative tool for storytelling. This storytelling is an important aspect of identity creating (Downing, 2005). The same research also notes how creating an identity is inherently a social process. Your own story is being shaped by your surroundings and is used to create a sameness and uniqueness against this social surrounding (Downing, 2005). Media are a great tool for this storytelling especially since the world around us is getting more and more mediatized (Couldry & Hepp, 2013). Here it is relevant what media are used for what kind of communication, especially if we try to examine identity work. Also, of note is the use of 'media logic'; a system of rules within media to which non-media actors should conform (Hjarvard, 2008). Journalists could use and have much more knowledge and insight to this 'media logic' and integrate that knowledge in their identity creation (Couldry & Hepp, 2013), especially since now most of this narrative is happening in a digital environment (Horst, Järventie-Thesleff & Perez-Latre, 2019).

A Narrative identity is the result of individuals and groups engaging in back and forth power relations in which multiple socially constructed realities exist in a certain tension (Brown, 2006). These narratives can form a intertextual network that is self-referencing, mobile an can reproduce stories within a certain context (Brown, 2006). These narratives evolve over time and can be directed by external structural or hegemonic influences (Humphreys & Brown, 2002) like for instance an institution as University of Applied Science, Hogeschool Utrecht School voor Journalistiek is in this context.

Identity can be seen as a story, a dynamic narrative presented through actions and presentation, both on- and offline (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). This identity is not fixed, but a dynamic story that needs to be developed through internship, first jobs and the rest of the career. A good self-narrative is needed to get financial means to do business or get hired for possible jobs. Each new situation or experience adds to this narrative, creating an ongoing identity work that sometimes even creates multiple identities needed for the different types of functions the entrepreneur needs (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Anderson & Warren, 2011). Here media has a great impact on this story. As journalists are well-trained in creating stories and narratives through media, this can greatly influence their self-narrative. The identity is created, adapted and reinforced by directly using media and by receiving exposure from that media (Anderson & Warren, 2011). This dynamic story is used to articulate events and make them meaningful and consists of specific language used to make reality surrounding the self versus the outside world (Fachin & Langley, 2017).

The repetition and rehearsal of this story can greatly benefit the impact of it. Not only to the self, as the retelling reaffirms core beliefs, but also to the outside world. Even when outsiders have heard the same narrative or story before entrepreneurship (Dailey & Browning, 2014). Certain strategies can be identified in creating a solid and repeatable story which have to do with certain key words, removing myths surrounding oneself and displaying self-sacrifice in their narrative (Küpers, Mantere & Statler, 2013). A sense of stability can be conveyed when repeating the same narrative, or a positive hint of change can be detected, which can also be perceived as an advantage, as the person is progressing in life and entrepreneurship (Dailey & Browning, 2014). This narrative can also provide a handhold in organizational change and strategy of entrepreneurship, where a narrative analysis of the act of doing business can provide insights into and beyond entrepreneurial identity (Vaara, Sonenshein & Boje, 2016).

This story is a social construct and thus influenced by culture and society around us. Here the differences in gender can be part of this social construct and can be of note within the different identity creations (Hamilton, 2014). The construction of identity could be closely related or associated to the social construction of gender (Hamilton, 2014). Within the practices of entrepreneurship or journalism, the masculine norm can still be dominant. Even as the profession and the student population are starting to be much more of a female dominated field.

As Achterhagen (2017) shows in her work, media and media entrepreneurship could use more research to develop more theories on how the disruptive changes in media affect the business itself, not only society around it. She also gives insight in the role of educators in the field of media and how they can show their students how the rules of media affect their entrepreneurial choices, whether to be aggressive, attentive or dispersive in their self-narrative (Achterhagen, 2017). But whether a changing narrative can truly change the organization it is a part of, even if it is a one person freelance organization is questionable (Sonenshein, 2010). Agency of change is truly difficult in a media infused structure, especially for students at a point where they are just developing their entrepreneurial identity (Sonenshein, 2010).

Connecting to the educators I agree with the ideas of Brouwers (2017) where she states that failure in creating the right story or making the right choice in entrepreneurship should be stimulated by educators. Furthermore, this failure can be seen as a reference for further growth and could contrast against waiting for perfection or permission from the outside work to start becoming an entrepreneur (Brouwers, 2017). This failure also connects to fluidity seen in identity development, especially connected to changing stories.
Overall, this provides the basis on which to frame, understand and later analyse the identity work of the journalism entrepreneurs.

Methodology

To be able to understand how students of journalism create their entrepreneurial identity and to what extent they perform identity work, this study employs a qualitative methodology. The qualitative approach allows for a deep understanding of the themes of identity, identity work and storytelling (Boeije, 2009). Within media studies qualitative research strives to understand traditions, contexts, use and meanings of words, ideas and concepts (Brennen, 2017). This understanding fits the desire to answer the research question concerning the development of identity as an entrepreneur. Especially the ability to understand the meanings and uses of the specific words that are being used concerning identity and identity work is a reason to choose a qualitative approach for this research as it allows for a back and forth between the respondents and the researcher.

Qualitative research is looking for ways to explain the 'how' of a phenomenon, instead of the 'how much' that could be gathered with quantitative research. Quantitative research would not be feasible considering the amount of data and parameters would be needed to research a complex aspect like identity. The knowledge of what aspects influence the process of identity development are lacking, so a survey or other data gathering method would have to look at an enormous multitude of options and variables. This would be too much to gain any insights in this highly personal behaviour of the students.

There are five broader approaches to qualitative research: ethnography, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory and case study (Boeije, 2009). These are now considered. For example, ethnography would not be the right method as it relies on experiencing the phenomenon to be researched. Identity development cannot be experienced by an outside source. A narrative approach is not feasible as there is not one single set of events or story that can be researched. The identity building happens in different persons at different speed and times (Watson, 2008; Gioia & Patvardhan, 2012). Phenomenological would only be applicable if there was a significant change in for instance the curriculum or other parts of identity development. There is no specific event that is related to a particular change in the theory surrounding identity development. For that same reason, case study is not a valid approach to this research. This would require a particular event or circumstance as well, which is not the case with individual identity development (Gioia & Patvardhan, 2012). At the same time, grounded theory might be a well-suitable approach of this research. There are some very broad tendencies and rather wide theoretical constructs available from current research, which explain some of the parts of identity development. They are supportive of framing the study, but cannot give any details

into what we can expect. Essentially, some fine-grained and detailed aspects of identify development are not yet fully understood. This shows that grounded theory can be used to approach identity work in a distinct setting and let the data show what distinct patterns may emerge in this context. As a general approach it allows finding and exploring themes and other starting points to help develop new insights.

The analytical methods that can be used within these broader approaches in qualitative research are interviews, focus groups, observational methods and document analysis (Boeije, 2009). For example, document analysis can been used to analyse the various online posts on social media to see how students are developing an entrepreneurial identity. However, it would be quite a leap of understanding to interpret social media posts on a deeply personal issue like identity building (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003; Horst et al., 2019). Many of the posts or other documentation could serve a completely different purpose in the minds of the students, so this method was deemed unusable. Observational methods suffer from a similar drawback. It would be very difficult to interpret the behaviour of students on the impact it has on their development of identity. By observing we can only see the part of identity that they portray in this particular situation to the outside world. Much of identity building happens within a person and cannot be outwardly observed (Ravasi & Canato, 2013). There is some observational method used during the interviews and by the researcher being a part of their school environment. These few observations have been employed during the interviews to verify or clarify certain observed behaviour. Employing focus groups as a method for this research was considered and rejected. Identity building is such a personal activity that it was decided to only interview the respondents in a one on one setting. However, creating an identity is partly a social process so researching the communication that a group would have about this process, might provide insights in future research. Interviews was seen as a valid method for exploring the ways student develop their entrepreneurial identity. Here clarification can be extracted on subtle aspects of the internal decisions and actions the students take, or do not take, to develop their identity.

Furthermore, interviews allow exploring themes and finding answers to parts of the research question that the students to be interviewed themselves do not realize they possess. This is important because identity development is not always a conscious process (Coupland & Brown, 2012) and many aspects of this process happen without the persons noticing the changes they have lived through. Therefore, an interview allows respondents to reflect on and look at themselves from the outside, and think of changes and processes they have experienced, as well as to verbalize these reflection within the interview setting. Interview data allows creating reflections on their own behaviour and highlighting thought processes which can reveal valuable aspects of the internal processes of identity work to an interviewer (Alvesson, 2001; Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003)

Qualitative research assumes people have an active role in the construction of their social reality (Boeije, 2009). This is extremely relevant to the research question which seeks to explore the construction of identity as an entrepreneur. Not only that but, qualitative method assumes that the actions that people take are meaningful (Boeije, 2009). This connects strongly to the theory on identity work where it is seen that people act and do certain things to develop their own identity. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to look for common themes and regularities (Boeije, 2009). These themes and regularities can provide insights and starting points for further research in the field of identity research.

Unfortunately, there are some negative aspects of qualitative research. The interviewer has a certain influence on the process. He is there during all the interviews with his own views and ideas on the respondents in question and the theory surrounding identity development. To counter this, the interviewer has tried to be as neutral as possible and has allowed for the students to explain their identity development as detailed as possible.

Next to that, qualitative research is hard to quantify. There has been some attempt in counting how many respondents experience similar aspects, but this can have no real impact or insight on the entire population. Therefore, the results are themes and similarities which are a little bit harder to use to say something definite on the development of entrepreneurial identities.

Also, doing qualitative research with interviews is time-consuming and creates quite a lot of data. The process of coding and interpreting that data is also quite time-consuming and shows insight in this particular group of students. It is an insight that is only valid for that particular timestamp. Identity is developing, so a new interview a year later with the same respondent would provide some other data.

Still these shortcomings outweigh the shortcomings of any of the other methods. The themes and similarities of this timestamp can still provide a lot of handholds and insights in identity development, usable for further research.

The context

The research took place at the University of Applied Science, Hogeschool Utrecht, School of Journalism in Utrecht, the Netherlands. This is a 4-year bachelor study with approximately 500 Dutch students. The school is part of the Institute for Media which also contains the Communication and Media Design school. Some parts of the curriculum are done together with the two schools, but most of the curriculum is separate.

The first year is split in two semesters where the students focus on writing news stories in one semester and the other semester is focused on creating audio-visual stories.

This curriculum is complemented with theory courses detailing on law, ethics and economics and a series of research related courses

	Periode A		Periode B	Periode C		Periode D
D01 D02 D03 D04 D05 D06 D07	Journalistieke verhalen in AV JJO-JOUVAV.1V-17		Crossmediaal werken in AV JJO-CROSAV.1V-17	Journalistieke verhalen in Tekst JJO-JOUTXT.1V-17		Crossmediaal werken in Tekst JJO-CROTXT.1V-17
	Humanities JJO-HUMA.1V-16	Praktijkgericht Onderzoek JJO-PRAOND.1V-17	Media-ethiek JJO-MEDETH.1V-16	Publieks-interactie JJO-PUBINT.1V-16	Ontwerpgericht Onderzoek JJO-ONTOND.1V-16	Creativity JJO-CREA.1V-17

	Periode A		Periode B	Periode C		Periode D
D10 D11 D12 D13 D14 D15 D16	Journalistieke verhalen in Tekst JJO-JOUTXT.1V-17		Crossmediaal werken in Tekst JJO-CROTXT.1V-17	Journalistieke verhalen in AV JJO-JOUVAV.1V-17		Crossmediaal werken in AV JJO-CROSAV.1V-17
	Publieks-interactie JJO-PUBINT.1V-16	Ontwerpgericht Onderzoek JJO-ONTOND.1V-16	Creativity JJO-CREA.1V-17	Humanities JJO-HUMA.1V-16	Praktijkgericht Onderzoek JJO-PRAOND.1V-17	Media-ethiek JJO-MEDETH.1V-16

SLB Propedeuse
JJO-SLBP-18

(Journalistiek Jaar 1, 2019)

The second year is also split in two semesters. One is focused on fast news and uses mainly audio-visual media to teach the students to work closely together on a series of news shows. The other semester teaches the students to write longer stories, mainly in magazines and other print. These main courses are complemented with courses on factchecking, technology and entrepreneurship.

	Periode A	Periode B	Periode C	Periode D
B02 B03	Verdieping 1 JJO-VERD1.2V-17	Verdieping 2 JJO-VERD2.2V-17	Generation YOU JJO-YOU.2V-17	Generation YOU Live JJO-LIVE.2V-17
			Onderzoek naar het nieuws JJO-OND.2V-17	Duiding & Fact-checking JJO-FACT.2V-17
	Freelance 1: Markt verkennen JJO-MARKTV.2V-18	Freelance 2: Markt betreden JJO-MARKTB.2V-18	Technology JJO-TECH.2V-17	Entrepeneurship JJO-ENTREP.2V-17

	Periode A	Periode B	Periode C	Periode D
B04 B05 B06	Generation YOU JJO-YOU.2V-17	Generation YOU Live JJO-LIVE.2V-17	Verdieping 1 JJO-VERD1.2V-17	Verdieping 2 JJO-VERD2.2V-17
	Onderzoek naar het nieuws JJO-OND.2V-17	Duiding & Fact-checking JJO-FACT.2V-17		
	Technology JJO-TECH.2V-17	Entrepeneurship JJO-ENTREP.2V-17	Freelance 1: Markt verkennen JJO-MARKTV.2V-18	Freelance 2: Markt betreden JJO-MARKTB.2V-18

SLB Hoofdfase
JJO-SLBH-18

(Journalistiek Jaar 2, 2019).

The third and fourth year of the bachelor education at the school of journalism comprises of 4 semesters that can be taken in various sequences, with a graduation semester at the end. One of the semesters has an elective subject, but otherwise contains similar types of courses like innovation and multimedia production. The subject of the elective semesters is

either art, hard news or foreign affairs. The other two semesters are to be filled with a minor at any institution the student desires and a 'praktijk' - freelance semester where the students go on an internship.

	Periode A	Periode B	Periode C	Periode D
Specialisatie Kunst, Cultuur & Lifestyle	Kunst, Cultuur & Lifestyle - Inhoud *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Kunst, Cultuur & Lifestyle - Research *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Kunst, Cultuur & Lifestyle - Inhoud *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Kunst, Cultuur & Lifestyle - Research *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*
	Workshops - Portfolio *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Crossmediale redactie *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Workshops - Portfolio *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Crossmediale redactie *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*
	Innovaties ontwerpen *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Innovaties creëren *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Innovaties ontwerpen *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*	Innovaties creëren *JJO-KUNSTCL-18*
Specialisatie Crossborder Journalism	Crossborder Journalism - Inhoud *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*	Crossborder Journalism - Research *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*		
	Workshops - Portfolio *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*	Crossmediale redactie *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*		
	Innovaties ontwerpen *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*	Innovaties creëren *JJO-CROSSBJ-19*		
Specialisatie Burger, Politiek & Maatschappij			Burger, Politiek & Maatschappij - Inhoud *JJO-BURGERPM-18*	Burger, Politiek & Maatschappij - Research *JJO-BURGERPM-18*
			Workshops - Portfolio *JJO-BURGERPM-18*	Crossmediale redactie *JJO-BURGERPM-18*
			Innovaties ontwerpen *JJO-BURGERPM-18*	Innovaties creëren *JJO-BURGERPM-18*
Praktijk-semester	Praktijksemester *JJO-PRAKTS-18*		Praktijksemester *JJO-PRAKTS-18*	
Afstudeer-semester	Afstudeersemester *JJO-AFSTUDSEM-19*		Afstudeersemester *JJO-AFSTUDSEM-19*	
Profilering	Profileringsruimte		Profileringsruimte	
	SLB Hoofdfase *JJO-SLBH-18*			

(Journalistiek Jaar 3, 2019).

Within this setting of the School of Journalism, the students can adapt the program to their own interests and skills to a certain point. All of them get classes in multimedia storytelling skills, research, entrepreneurship and general knowledge on how society functions. The final 2 years really allow for students to specialize further and to go on internships in various media companies. This leads to a diverse body of knowledge after the four years of the bachelor education for the School of Journalism. Some go out and find a job at a news desk at a regional broadcaster or printed newspaper. Others go to start their own business, either as a freelance copywriter, videographer, audio specialist or to truly create a new journalistic product. For this research the numerous attentions to freelance and entrepreneurship is relevant. During all classes, some level of freelance and entrepreneurship is stimulated as contracted jobs get more and more scarce in the industry (Albinsson, 2018; Watson, 2009a; Werthes, Mauer & Brettel 2017).

The researcher, Toon Brouwers, is not only a student at the Erasmus University but also a teacher at this Hogeschool Utrecht, University of Applied Science, School of Journalism. He mainly teaches courses on audio-visual media at year 1 and year 3/4 of the

education. But he is also active as a 'SLB' - 'Studieloopbaan begeleider' - Study progress councillor. Next to that he teaches the courses of entrepreneurship and freelance. Toon Brouwers attended this same school of journalism as a student as well. He was enrolled there between 2002-2006 and graduated at this school. After that he started his own media production company together with a classmate. After a few years he continued this media company on his own and started to teach at the School of Journalism as a freelancer. Toon Brouwers was also a freelancer at RTL News, a national broadcaster, and several other journalistic programs. As such he is experienced with the curriculum the researched population follows and with the freelance or entrepreneurial path they might follow during or after their studies.

Data gathering

The study uses interview material as the primary source of empirical data. The aim of these interviews was to get extensive descriptions of the developing mindset of the relatively young cohort. In these interviews the students could fully express all the different aspects concerning the creation of identity and the concerning identity work and storytelling process (Boeije, 2009). Other forms of research, like surveys or other quantitative tools, would not be able to provide data on the core of the multifaceted inner workings of the self that are prevalent with the study of identity. One of the focuses of this study is on this storytelling process and the related use of media. How do the students of journalism use media to create and display their identity? This is especially relevant as this cohort is very knowledgeable in using media to tell stories.

The data collection was done between April and June of 2019. A total of 14 interviews of 35 to 65 minutes were held with students from the upper level (2nd year and above) of the University of Applied Science, Hogeschool Utrecht, School of Journalism. The interviews were all recorded at the Hogeschool Utrecht on a voice recorder. In July of 2019 a script was created to use Google cloud's speech to text service. All interviews were transcribed using this online digital method and were later manually checked and appended to make sure the output was a verbatim representation of the interviews. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner using a list of questions (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003). This question list was adapted after the first three interviews and can be found in the appendix. The respondents were asked to provide consent verbally and this consent was recorded at the start of each of the interviews and is part of each of the transcripts. Before the start of the recording the full extent of the data-collection, data-analysis and reporting was explained to the respondents to make sure they made an informed decision on granting consent (Boeije, 2009). Furthermore, the students were instructed that I, the

researcher, was purely acting as a student at the Erasmus University and no part of the interview would have any bearing on my standing as their teacher at the Hogeschool Utrecht. It was also made clear that the students were free to stop the interview at any time should they feel any reason to do so, but none of the respondents made use of this opportunity.

The full set of interview data was built over different stages. At first, a convenience sample was taken to start for the first few (2-4) interviews. Here the focus was on students that have displayed a certain level of entrepreneurship and have chosen to be an entrepreneur instead of being forced to become one. The purpose of these interviews was to refine the questions and to start to collect data on the most important themes of identity, identity work and storytelling. Access to these students was done through my network as a teacher at the University of Applied Science, Hogeschool Utrecht, School of Journalism. The first sample consisted of former students of mine and other students that I am familiar with from extra-curricular work and regular teaching (Marshall, 1996).

Second, the data was expanded by including a broader selection of 2nd year (or higher) students at the same school. Here there was no distinction made between willing entrepreneurs of journalism or unwilling entrepreneur or even students who displayed only interest in direct employment. This was the bulk of the dataset. The purpose of these interviews (5-9) was to get full descriptions of the various identities, identity work and storytelling processes within the population. The original question guide was used, albeit adapted from the results from the first batch of interviews (Marshall, 1996).

Finally, several interviewees were invited to participate from the network of the students themselves – friends of friends basically. The students helped providing further contacts to similar people who were somewhat or very active as entrepreneurs. These interviews used the same questions established after the second batch of samples and the data was used to fill in the gaps, if any, in the data obtained (Marshall, 1996).

Of course, ethical considerations are important for the reflective appreciation of doing qualitative research and working in respectful manner with interviews (Amis & Silk, 2008) and increasingly also on digital media (Murthy, 2013). A concern was the power dynamic. I am a 45-year old teacher, and this might result in a social power dynamic with 20-year old students. While there is no direct solution for this ethical dilemma, becoming conscious of this beforehand enabled me to remain natural and appreciative of the interview conduct. Therefore, I do not believe that the interviews suffered from the power dynamic, and instead were a surface to talk dialogically about processes of identity development and shared meanings that arise from becoming a journalist at our school.

Furthermore, the interviews were held in English, not Dutch. This caused some loss and confusion of meaning. This was countered by sometimes letting the students use Dutch

terms and letting me translate them. Also, more detailed explanation was asked for in the interviews to counter the loss of meaning. The interviews were being held in English on the request of the Thesis Supervisor and served the purpose of global relevance of the research and better cooperation between the supervisor and the researcher (Miller, Birch, Mauthner & Jessop, 2012). A clear benefit of doing the interviews in English was that it saved work. The thesis needs to be presented in English and doing the interviews in English saved me from performing the large job of translating the data.

Table 1: Overview of the students of journalism being interviewed

Name	Age	Year	Specialism	Note
Andres	22	3rd	Radio	
Anna	22	2nd	Podcast	Active as an entrepreneur
Dennis H	23	6th	Documentary	Working on graduation
Dennis J	24	5th	Documentary	
Georgia	20	3rd	Writing	English / Dutch Very active as freelancer
Hannah	23	5th	Television	
Imke	22	4th	Television	
Iris	24	4th	Documentary	
Jeroen	22	3rd	Writing	Very active as freelancer
Lauren	22	4th	Online TV	
Lotte	22	4th	Online TV	
Mark	24	4th	Television	Very active as freelancer
Mila-Marie	24	4th	Podcasting	Very active as entrepreneur
Sophie	23	3rd	Writing	Very active as freelancer

Operationalization of theoretical concepts into questions

To find an answer to the development of the entrepreneurial identity of students of journalism, a set of questions is needed. These questions were operationalized from the theory that was researched. From the theoretical framework three main categories were derived, "Identity", "Identity Work" and "Storytelling". Firstly, the concept of "Identity" was divided in how a person sees himself and how a person sees himself in relation to others. To find how a person sees himself a series of questions about personal attributes and the position of the student within the studies were created. To find out more about The relation

to others a series of questions were created that detail the experiences of the students and the roles they perform towards others. "Identity Work" has an active component and thus a series of questions were developed to examine the physical work the students perform to create an identity. To compliment that the aspects of passion and branding of "Identity Work" was to be examined with a series of questions. Lastly the concept of "Storytelling" was divided in questions surrounding self-narrative and questions surrounding networking where the students use their storytelling skills to represent themselves. The concepts and focusses and the questions derived thereof are detailed below:

Table 2: Theoretical concepts, focusses within and associated questions.

Concept	Focus within phenomenon	Associated questions
Identity	Representation of self	• What is your age, gender, etc. • What is your study progress, quick overview, specialism, etc. • What is your experience with internship and being self-employed? • Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur/journalist/creative worker/other?
	Social standing, relation to others	• How do you experience being an entrepreneur/journalist? Could you describe that? • How do you see yourself most of the time? (Role(s), attitude, etc.) • In what way does this image of yourself alter in various (work) situations? • Do you sometimes have to perform different roles? • Do you feel differently in different situations? • How has this image of yourself changed the last few years? (Life events?) • What made you become aware that something was changing? • What has prompted this change? (Agency & Structure)
Identity work	Active forms of representation	• How do you react to these changes? • How do you present yourself? (Online and offline)

		• What media or social media tools do you use for your presentation? • In what way does this representation of yourself change in various (work) settings?
	Passion and drive	• How do you feel about "putting yourself out there" and becoming a "brand"? (Tools?) • How do you feel about your education towards being an entrepreneur? • Does this help you to be more prepared to what you are facing now? • Could you describe the skills you need as an entrepreneur?
Storytelling	Self-narrative	• Are there particular goals that you work towards? • How do you want to reach these goals? • What stories do you present about yourself? (Where and how?) • Have these stories changed over time? • How did this story evolve? (Agency & Structure) What is different now? • What prompted these ways of seeing/presenting/changing yourself?
	Networking	• How are you learning to present yourself? • How successful are these representations? (Experiences, successes, failures) • What is the feedback that you get from others? • What do you need to become a successful entrepreneur? • How do you see your future? (as a journalist, as entrepreneur and your identity) • What do you need to do to reach that? • What do you think is the role of networking?

Data analysis

The collected data was analysed using thematic content analysis. The theory has provided numerous concepts which were used to label and sort the collected data. To get to this point, firstly, during the manual check of the digitally speech to text results each interview was summarized in natural language. From these summaries open codes or first order observations were generated, which provided a multitude of labels. This long list was then sorted, appended and some items were deleted in order to try and find common themes. This process also involved checking and refining ideas, discussing these ideas with the Thesis Supervisor, colleagues at Hogeschool Utrecht and befriended freelance journalists, and summarizing elements from the data. This interpretation led to axial codes or second order observations, which created a better overview of the collected data. Here there was a process of refinement of the abstractions, fine-tuning the labels and double-checking the coding quality. From these second order observations the outcome was three themes that provide insights and handholds in an attempt to answer the research question (Schreier, 2012; Boeije, 2009). Special attention was given to the aspects that operationalize the main concepts of identity, identity work and storytelling. With identity most operationalization came from stories about who the respondents feel they are, and how they portray themselves within their entrepreneurial activities. For identity work the operationalization looked into all conscious and unconscious actions the respondents take in developing and adapting their identity. To operationalize the storytelling the analysis focused on the ways the respondents write or publish about themselves on social media, internet and applications for jobs.

The generated coding tree including the first and second order observations is inserted here in Table 1.

Table 3: Coding tree containing First & Second order observations with themes

First-order observations	Second-order categories (abstracted patterns & grouping)	Themes of identity work (Theoretical abstraction)
Outside forces, and especially HU, push students into entrepreneurship (7)	Reasons for becoming an entrepreneur	The social process of becoming an entrepreneur
Being a freelancer feels like the norm in the industry Students feel independent and free because of their entrepreneurship (4)		
Certain goals entice students to be entrepreneurs		
Some starting entrepreneurs seem risk averse and prefer (a mix of) fixed contracts for stability (7)	Ambiguities of becoming an entrepreneur	
Entrepreneurship is seen as risky and stressful (3)		
School teaches some entrepreneurial skills, but not enough, pricing, negotiating, representing and admin should be taught (12)		
External work experience, portfolio building is seen as valuable for students (6)	Experience is important for becoming an entrepreneur	

Internship (and entrepreneurship) provides students with many insights on their future plans (2) Students feel they need to be an expert in some field instead of being generalists (2)			
Entrepreneurship is seen as doing explorative work Freelancers are seen as doing exploitative work Entrepreneurship is seen as time-consuming (6) Students have an image and a number of qualities in mind about entrepreneurs: Courage, Social, passion, stubborn Students have an image on what entrepreneurs should behave like and find it hard to fulfil that image Students show a lot of enthusiasm to become entrepreneurs (2) Entrepreneurship is used to challenge oneself (2)	What does it mean to be an entrepreneur?	Finding your place in entrepreneurship	
Students are aware of their own image and the impact of this image (4) Students have a strong need to be authentic and professional in presentations of self (6+5) Students have multiple roles: Student / journalist / entrepreneur (10) Students feel they have a split identity: one for commercial, one for journalistic work (4) Students do not want to become a brand (6) Being a brand is seen as important to be an entrepreneur (2)	Building a coherent identity as freelancer / entrepreneur is key		
Reluctance to accept 'journalist' as a role (4) Other established journalists are seen as role models (2) Students want to feel like they belong to the group of professional journalists Students lack faith in their own abilities (2) Students are looked down upon because they are perceived to be young and inexperienced (3) Standing out as a journalist is hard, because other so the same work, following fixed rules (2) Students seek out peers to do some reflection on their entrepreneurship (2) Peers greatly impact how students see and behave themselves (3)	Self-positioning as a brand and finding role-models		
Milestones, such as certain courses, the graduation process, first job or first pay check, give students various levels of confidence to go out and be entrepreneurs (9) Graduation and registering at the Chamber of Commerce is an important milestone (5) Students are looking for milestones to feel confident (3)	Achieving and setting milestones	Achieving milestones and gaining confidence	Practices of identity work (process of being self)
Students are not very reflective on their entrepreneurial activities (7) Some students who are almost done with the studies do reflect on their entrepreneurship (2) Students rarely have a plan on strategic parts of entrepreneurship (9) The interview enabled students to reflect on their position regarding entrepreneurship (6)	being Reflective and planning		
Commercial jobs should not compromise their journalistic position (4) Commercial work is easy (or easier) (6) There is a tension between doing commercial and journalistic work (4) Commercial work is sometimes hidden from online profiles (4) Being a journalist entails certain ethical standards	Balancing value tensions		
Students use a storytelling in their communication to represent themselves (5)			

Students claim to have no conscious story about themselves (2) Storytelling skills are helpful in entrepreneurship, networking and self-representation (7)	Storytelling about their self	Image building	
Networking is seen as very important for getting jobs and contracts (13) Working extremely hard at a trial job / internship is necessary for getting a foot in the door / getting noticed	Networking as opportunity building		
Networking is seen as having to become fake Students have a specific identity or role when performing networking activities			
Getting good journalistic jobs as an entrepreneur is hard (2) Networking is seen to be an energy draining activity (2)			
Students show an aversion to having to perform on social media as a whole (5) Student show a hate for the fakeness and pressure of social media (5)	ambivalent relationship with social media		
Social media (Instagram) is needed to build a good image (4) Students are very active on social media and use Instagram to build an image (3) Social media profiles should be updated (3) Students did not have a plan for an online representation of their identity (2)			
Some social media, like personal Facebook, is set to private Social media is cleaned up to show a professional image Students are very conscious of how they use social media (3)			

Quality criteria and their use in a qualitative methodology

The initial coding tree above is used as an interpretive framework for the analysis of the interview. Directly after and during the interviews and fieldnotes were created. These fieldnotes often do not contain direct references to concepts per se, but in some cases they did. Mostly the fieldnotes refer to an overarching interpretation of the interview with the researcher. An example is shown here:

"The interview with Jeroen was quite long. He really had a lot to say on his own exploits as an entrepreneur. Long answers. I think there is a lot of material to work with, but also a lot that does not really have anything to do with the research [question]. He is also quite bitter and negative towards the education. He does seem very eager to start a professional career. I do not think he will become an entrepreneur for a long time. But his answers do indicate he thinks about his own identity and the way he is perceived. I think he pushes this too much, too much worry about his reputation. Search for keywords on peers and perception, how they think they see him." – Toon Brouwers. Fieldnote created on May 15th 2019

As can be seen in the fieldnote I referred to concepts of identity. Other keywords that are not directly concepts like 'peers' and 'perception' are mentioned. These fieldnotes were reread just before the transcription process to get in a similar mindset as when the interviews were held. They also helped to focus on the keywords or global themes already noted after a particular interview.

During the transcribing of the interviews the interview was listened to in full again. This was done to check the speech-to-text algorithm and improve and add that text. Also during this process the First Order Observation was created. This was done in a systematic manner where every time during the interview the concepts "Identity", "Identity Work" and "Storytelling" were mentioned, a note was made, or a full sentence of interpretation was added to the First Order Observations.

Not only these main concepts were used to add lines of text to the First Order Observations. Other recurring themes from the questionnaire were triggers to interpret the interview and add text to the observations. Below is a list of trigger words that prompted interpretation and a notation in the First Order Observations.

Table 4: List of trigger words prompting interpretation.

(work) experience	Skills
Feel / act as journalist / entrepreneur / student	Networking
Any mention of role	Feedback (from any source)
Risk	Fitting in / place in organizations
Competition	Challenges in finding / doing work
Image or other related terms	Reflection
Use of social media (Identity work)	Planning of self / work / future
Milestones	Ideas on curriculum
Storytelling	Portfolio
Chamber of Commerce	Internship
Branding (of self)	Role models

This list of keywords evolved during transcription and the interpretation process. When one of the keywords was found a short sentence of interpretation of the surrounding narrative in the interview was added. Special care was taken to try to get the meaning of the interviews in relation to the theoretical concepts of the research. Because the interviews were both transcribed and performed by myself, the interpretation was as close to the meaning as is possible. This similarity of interpretation and meaning could have been

improved with feedback sessions, letting the interviewed review the interpretation. This was not done because of time and organizational restraints.

Results

Word count Results: 8899

The social process of becoming an entrepreneur

From the analysis of the qualitative interviews it becomes clear that there is a certain consensus and set of stories surrounding the steps that students think they need to take for becoming an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is seen as a far-away goal for some, but not for all of the students of journalism. The shared understanding which emerged from the analysis shows that the students feel that to become an entrepreneur they have to be a freelancer first.

An entrepreneur active in the field is seen as a person who owns a business, has a plan, a product to push and usually has some persons working for them. A freelancer is seen as a journalist or media producer who is taking on small jobs for different employers and lacks a plan, or a specific product and usually works alone.

Within the broader process of becoming an entrepreneur through first being a freelancer the student talk about three distinct aspects of this social development process. The reasons to become an entrepreneur, the ambiguities of becoming an entrepreneur and how experience is important in becoming an entrepreneur.

Reasons for becoming an entrepreneur

The students describe several reasons why anyone would want to become an entrepreneur. The main reason are outside forces which pushes them to become entrepreneurs. Especially the University of Applied Science - Hogeschool Utrecht that they all attend seems to push them in the direction of entrepreneurship through distinct structural features. For example, the Hogeschool Utrecht gives the students a series of mandatory courses to follow. A course like 'entrepreneurship' details on the inner workings of creating a product and demands of the student to think of a plan of an explorative media product. Other courses like 'markt verkennen' (explore the market) ask students to make inquiries about the journalistic work field and is tested with an exam. 'Markt betreden' (enter the market) require that the students go out and perform 40 hours of freelance journalistic jobs that can be paid or unpaid. But these structural features are not the same for all the students. Some of the students followed the older curriculum where the course 'freelance' was mandatory. Here the students were required to perform 200 hours of paid or unpaid journalistic work for outside employers. This push from the Hogeschool Utrecht creates a strong frame which pushes the students towards freelance work and becoming an entrepreneur.

This 'structure' of either courses or curriculum provided by the Hogeschool Utrecht is seen as a big 'push' to go out and become self-employed. This feeling of being 'pushed' or 'influenced' is noted by several students and is exemplified by the following quote:

'I think it's necessary that they [teach] us the skills and let us talk to a lot of people on how it is to be a freelancer but they're sometimes pushing it too much in a way that this is the only thing you can do. You should be a freelancer when you leave the school and that's a bit too much in my opinion' - Dennis J, 24 years old, 5th year student.

To add to the structure and push provided by the Hogeschool another reason given by the students that forces them to become freelancers and entrepreneurs is that it feels like the norm in the industry to be self-employed. Within journalism in the Netherlands and media production as a whole the students feel that short contracts and temporary jobs are the only types of employment available. A full-time contract without any limits seems to be the holy grail for the respondents. The added benefit of freedom and independence is seen as a great counterbalance to the short contracts and norm of freelance work. One of the students notes:

'you have a thing that you have a contract for a year and after a year contract you have to get out for half a year and then you [can] come back. So you're like, you have a job for three years and then you have to go out, go away for half a year and then you can come back' - Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student

Here Lauren is detailing some of the practices in the industry where there are restrictions on the length of a contract and on the number of times a contract for a year can be given out. So, she and many of her peers feel they have to become freelancers:

'I know it's being realistic to be a freelancer, because most of us are not going to get contracts. it's not going to happen. So, you have to get yourself out there as a freelancer ' - Lauren 22 years old, 4th year student.

Another reason for becoming an entrepreneur that is given is that some students experience some form of enticement to become self-employed. Especially the freedom and independence is luring the students toward becoming entrepreneurs. One of the students who was already doing some entrepreneurial work explains how it gives her a lot of energy:

>*'it gives me a lot of energy to be an entrepreneur. I think setting little goals, working on finance for nights.... yeah, the small details, the contact with people, you need other people, you need to work together. It all gives me a lot of energy, you know'* - Mila-Marie, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

The stories the students tell are filled with dualities. All sorts of structure from the context of the Hogeschool Utrecht and the industry that is challenging the agency of the students.

Ambiguities of becoming an entrepreneur

Next to all these reasons to become an entrepreneur, the students mentioned a lot of ambiguities on becoming freelancers and entrepreneurs. Especially the risk part of starting a business for oneself is seen as quite a hurdle to overcome. Many students mentioned being risk averse and seeking a mix of freelance jobs and fixed contracts for stability. One of the students explains what sort of contract he would prefer:

>*'I do think that I want steady income, next to the part of the risk which is also really something.... [...] But of course, if you could take a bit of the challenge out by creating a job for you about 18 or 24 hours or something, that would be something that I would really prefer'* - Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

The entire operation of having to fight for jobs and to be unsure of your next pay check or payment is daunting for the students. They tell stories on how being an entrepreneur is challenging, stressful and risky. For example:

>*'Stressful I guess. This the first thing that comes up. I think it's asks a lot for your mental health, especially because you have to make a lot of choices. There's a lot of time going in that business and it's your free time, so beside your study, beside your social life, besides your family life, besides your sporty life [...] There is the business and most of the time, it gets on place number one'* - Anna, 22 years old, 2nd year student.

A lot of ambiguity comes from the fact that the students feel that their school forces them to become entrepreneurs, teaches them some skills for that, but leaves out too much information to fully function as an entrepreneur. The curriculum is lacking according to the stories the students tell. Lots of things could be improved according to the interviews, like more information on pricing, negotiating and doing administration. All of these skills are part

of the current and the old curriculum, but still the students bring this lack of knowledge up in almost all the interviews. Like Dennis H, a 6th year student:

'The teaching I got wasn't completely adequate. I've heard about the changes in the program I think that's way more adequate. We only got some tricks and some tips. It's not really very thorough understanding of what freelancing is. [...] It's a lot of responsibility in terms of taxes and insurance and all that stuff and I wasn't really told that. Maybe in 10 min in some paragraph of my book, that's it' - Dennis H, 23 years old, 6th year student.

Risk and lack of information leaves the students weary of taking their first steps as entrepreneurs. Many of the students choose a safer option and desire a mix of contracts and entrepreneurship.

Experience is important for becoming an entrepreneur

Within the path of becoming an entrepreneur through first doing freelancing work, students speak very clearly on the importance of experience and portfolio building. Their focus is very much on having a personal website or a YouTube channel filled with good examples of their work. Many of the students mentioned how portfolio building should be greatly encouraged by the Hogeschool Utrecht. Mark explains:

'At the school we had three months of freelance, [...] but for me if such a thing could be a whole year, I will also do it. Just because I know, [...], how important it is for a young journalist to just make and make stuff. So he could show it. And at this school we're making a lot and of course sometimes it gets on RTV Utrecht, but I think when you're really thrown in to the deep and you really have to make things for big platforms, [...] it is something I've got way more out of than a course on culture or something' - Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

Next to portfolio building the students detail and elaborate that their internships have a very big impact on the way they look at themselves, but also on how the look at their future as entrepreneurs. An example is 24-year-old Iris and how she views her internships:

'I'm almost definitely sure that those internships make or break your journalism experience in this study. Because you can get so much from it. I mean that's the real world. Here in school in the [classes] you can learn the basics and you can learn

theory. But in the real world, that's where you discover what you want and who you are' - Iris, 24 years old, 4th year student.

The internships at the University of Applied Science used to be two sets of three months internship at different media companies in the old curriculum, and have now been changed to 5 months of internship where the student can select if they want to do the internship at one or at multiple media companies. The experienced gained at the internships informed some of the students on the need to be specialists instead of generalists, as they feel that specialism can give them a head start as entrepreneurs. Both Jeroen and Sophie exemplify this need to be an expert:

'I think I need an expertise or something. I feel like that is so crucial nowadays' - Jeroen, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

'I would like be more of an expert on a certain topic, because I would like to get to know more about something like that as well. And maybe use that to get more work as a journalist as well' - Sophie, 23 years old, 2nd year student.

The students seem to have some ideas on the path they feel they need to follow. The steps they think they need to take to transform from being a student into becoming a freelance journalist and then possibly advance towards being a journalistic entrepreneur. But what it means for them personally and internally to become an entrepreneur is detailed in the next theme.

Finding your place in entrepreneurship

To start of the theme of finding your personal place within entrepreneurship is also subtitled the ambivalent nature of identity work. This theme is multifaceted and full of struggles, dualities and questions that the students experience.

What does it mean to be an entrepreneur?

The answer to the question what it means to be an entrepreneur for the students of journalism is a hard one. They start mainly by doing detailed descriptions of the type of work the students assume entrepreneurs perform. Here Andres details the differences between a freelancer and an entrepreneur:

'I think the difference between an entrepreneur is that you invent really things that that you want to build and a journalist is just making a story. [A]nd I think the difference is pretty clear because [...] being an entrepreneur must be so much harder, because you're building stuff with nothing and if you're a journalist the basics of your story is already in your head and everyone can check if the facts are wrong or right' - Andres, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

This shows that entrepreneurship is about doing explorative work, while freelance work is seen as exploitative. Being an entrepreneur means working on your trajectory and ideas all the time; you are working on most of the week and that this is very time-consuming. As a freelancer, it is shorter, more project-based. This means, for both you need different skills. For example, the students have all kind of qualities that they attach to entrepreneurship and being an entrepreneur:

'I think courage is the first thing' - Anna, 22 years old, 2nd year student.

'I feel like you should be 'eigenwijs' you should be so stubborn to pursue whatever you think is best for you' - Jeroen, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

But the students find it very hard to live up to these standards and qualities that they imagine an entrepreneur need. They struggle to balance their private life, school and their first steps as entrepreneurs or freelancers. Although some of the students show a lot of enthusiasm to become entrepreneurs and use the entrepreneurship as a challenge to push themselves.

'I want it because I want to know if I'm capable to do it. I want to challenge myself' - Anna, 22 years old, 2nd year student.

'I would say it has a really positive effect on the way I'm seeing myself and the way I'm working. I'm taking myself more serious' - Georgia, 20 years old, 3rd year student.

The students interviewed have this ideal idea of a courageous, stubborn, passionate entrepreneur and strive to be this person, but find it very hard to fill that role to their own satisfaction.

Building a coherent identity as freelancer / entrepreneur is key

To get to the position of being an entrepreneur, the students talk about building a coherent identity for themselves. This coherence is often lacking, but the students wish, hope and desire this coherence, but lack a solid strategy to create an identity for themselves. They are very aware of their own image and the impact of that image. As this example shows:

> ' *I have to leave a good first impression, a good impression. because otherwise they're not going to ask me again*' - Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student.

> ' *I always wanted to work, and I've always wanted to be taken seriously. I never want people to see me as a little girl. And I never want people to see me as a student*' - Georgia 20 years old, 3rd year student.

The students also have a strong desire to be seen as authentic and to be as authentic as they can be. In many of the interviews the students keep on stressing that they want to act in a way that shows who they really are and that they will not compromise their integrity for work, be it as a freelancer or entrepreneur. The students could not answer whether they succeed in remaining authentic or what 'being authentic' really means. To them in remains some form of being themselves as these examples illustrate:

> *'Yeah, I'm just... I'm just myself. Yeah. So yeah, I presented myself in an interview or in a conversation just like I am and it's kind of ... it's kind of hard to explain that'* - Dennis J, 24 years old, 5th year student.

> *'It's real and people say, 'how is that possible?'. Because Instagram you know you only post your best photos. I don't do that. I post everything. [...] I think I'm getting a pretty real image of myself out there*' - Andres, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

Next to trying to be authentic the students talk about how they have multiple roles and how they struggle in shifting between these roles. For most of the students these multiple roles are 'student', 'journalist' and 'entrepreneur / freelancer'. The struggle the students experience is when to use which role and what happens to them when the other party misjudges them and places them in another role. These examples illustrate that the students switch their roles regularly:

'We have to talk in our research with a lot of hunters and activists and companies so then we present ourselves maybe as journalists or entrepreneurs, not as students'- Iris, 24 years old, 4th year student.

'When you're talking about money, you're more an entrepreneur and when you're making a video then you're more the journalist' - Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student.

Even more important to some of the students is the difference between doing journalistic or commercial work. They all study journalism, but the skills they obtain, making stories in text and video, can also be used in a commercial fashion. Yet there is a common understanding that journalists should serve the interest of the public and not purely that of their own. Ethics are being weighed and measured and jobs are being taken on or rejected based on these considerations. And during all this the students ask themselves the question, am I a commercial worker or am I a journalist? Plus, the students worry on how possible employers view them in this commercial / journalistic light and how this affects their future with these employers. Some of the students worry about the fact that they do commercial work as can be seen by the remarks of Dennis and Mark:

'*I think it's okay as long as it doesn't collide with each other. So at this case [...] with the potato farmer, if I am at his farm making this video and two days later I think I'm going to make a story for the AD about potato farmers in the north of the Netherlands and I'm going to tell how badly something is that I saw over there. If I do that, I am really colliding those two worlds. I would really prefer if the journalistic part would be bigger, bigger, bigger. But yeah on the other hand I still want to make sure that I could pay my rent'* - Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

'I think when I'm doing commercial work, I shut down my ethics sometimes. That's a very bold expression and when I'm a journalist I'm very aware of some responsibility' - Dennis H, 23 years old, 6th year student.

A part of creating a coherent identity as an entrepreneur could be presenting yourself as a brand. Some students see becoming a brand as an important part of entrepreneurship. Others are incredibly opposed to becoming a brand and do not want this to happen at all. There is a lot of ambiguity here in how they know being a brand might help the students, but they feel the need to not sell out and remain authentic. Andres explains:

'I'm not a brand! I'm a person I'm not going to be a brand. No! Never!' – Andres, 22 years old, 3rd years student.

But others think being or becoming a brand is essential and could help them a great deal in becoming successful entrepreneurs, like this student explains:

'*I would like to become a brand and have my own thing. and if people search me for my website, they would see okay this guy worked for this and this. This is what he is capable of and this is […] what we can get from him or something. […] It is really nice to be a brand because if some company was saying: "okay, we need a [specialist] and everybody would say: "that's Mark"'* – Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

This ambiguity on becoming a brand extends to many other aspects of struggles the students experience in their mind. Especially when considering the final role they will play, which is most likely to become a journalist, as they are studying journalism. But this role of being a journalist is not crystal clear for the students. Some of the students are very reluctant to accept this role and do not want to identify as journalists because of all sorts of associated obligations and structures they imagine surrounding these roles. This is exemplified by Lauren who remarks on a controversy surrounding a story about Feyenoord:

'Suddenly there was a lot of arguments and discussions about the whole Feyenoord city and the whole topic and especially men were trying to stop me and were saying to me: "I don't think you can do this. I don't think you need to do this because a lot of Feyenoord supporters are going to hate you." [...] Suddenly I was very conscious about [myself] as a journalist, me as a person' - Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student.

So much struggle seems to go on within the minds and hearts of the students. They want to be themselves but see the need to become a brand. Yet they fight this notion. All the while struggling whether they should work commercially or focus on pure journalistic work. A single goal is desired, but hard to find.

Self-positioning as a brand and finding role-models

Not all the students share this reluctance to accept the role of journalist. Others are longing to become part of the group of professional journalists. They want to become household names like other established journalists. They look at the famous or notorious

journalists as role models and hope to one day be a part of that establishment. One of the students, Anna, really illustrates this desire:

> *'[I am] Not intimidated, I think inspired that's the good word because for example Joris Luijendijk and Frenk van der Linde. I've read two books by each of them and I think that knowledge that they have it is so worthy. And at one day I want to know as much as them about the world and things that I'm doing with my specialism*' - Anna, 22 years old, 2nd year student.

The struggles surrounding the perceptions around journalism continue when the students examine their own abilities. There is some insight that they provide when probed on their skills. They feel they mostly lack faith in their own abilities, not only as an entrepreneur, but as a filmmaker, copywriter, journalist or any other role. Some students feel that they are also looked down upon by members of the established journalism. They are perceived as young and inexperienced and thus underpaid and undervalued by the industry surrounding them.

> *'When you do the study journalism, people look at you like you're still a child. So it's like okay, I'm not going to pay you for this job and maybe if you have a business card you become a bit more adult and more serious about what you're doing'* - Imke, 22 years old, 4th year student.

Next to that some students see that it is hard to stand out as a journalist. The workflow is so similar, abiding rules and routines, that their work is unremarkable in comparison with the work of others. To them, news stories are created in the same way, the who, what, where, when and how. They feel news in print has similar structures in a lead, headline and the body of text. To them, video productions of news also follow set steps, like opening with an action shot, showing what the news means to the common man, let politicians respond. Within these rules and routines some students find it hard to 'break out' and get noticed and get that next chance they feel they need to get ahead in the industry. The students say that to be allowed to break from the rules and routines, you must be an established journalist first. But to get to that point you need to be create a distinction to others by doing things differently. A good example of this frustration is:

> *' Especially in journalism there is a very specific way of doing things [...] When I try to stand out I think... in any field that I'm able to stand out, there is too much competition. So I'm trying to focus right now on some data journalism stuff because I*

really like that and I think it's very interesting and not very much people are trying to do that' - Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

To help them find their place within journalism, some of the students go out and reflect with their peers. They reflect about their position and skills as a journalist, but also on their skills and ideas about freelancing and entrepreneurship. Usually these peers the students consult with are a few years older, have just finished getting their degree or are doing their own first steps in journalism or entrepreneurship. The conversations some of the students have about themselves are quite impactful on their own behaviour as a journalist or budding entrepreneur or on the way the students look at themselves. This impact of peers is discussed by Hannah:

'There are a couple of people who are bit more experienced than I am, who I do talk about [entrepreneurship] a lot. One is Marleen Stooker. She is a very good friend of mine but I work a lot with her especially on the Hogeschool Utrecht videos. [...] She is really motivating in [the entrepreneurial] aspect' - Hannah, 23 years old, 5th year student.

Considering these conversations surrounding how students see entrepreneurship, look at building a coherent identity and how they struggle with their perceptions of their profession of journalist, it becomes clear that the students are quite ambivalent on finding their place within this structure they perceive. They look up to their role-models and try to become one of them. They need to follow their footsteps about what works well, but also do things differently to be remembered. Therefore, their identity work that they perform to advance themselves within this perceived structure is also ambiguous. They lack a fixed plan on constructing their identity because they lack a clear vision of their end-goal. This lack of vision is detailed by Lauren:

'In a year I'm going to be a journalist. Like I am going to leave school, so I have to make money. [...] I don't want to.... I dunno, I love working in the [service industry] I work in a restaurant as a server. I love working there but I'm not going to do it when I'm graduated as a journalist. I want to work as a journalist and I don't want to ... of course if I have to I have to. But so I'm thinking about, okay you need to think: 'What are you going to do next? What are your next plans? Where are you going to get a job?' Maybe it's good to think what's my final internship going to be and can I work there after I'm done with school' - Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student.

The student look up to established journalists and their peers that are successful but they lack the insights in what route to take to get there. They want to stand out, but not too much because the faith in their abilities is still not yet strong enough.

Practices of identity work for becoming themselves

After all this confusion about their own place within journalism and entrepreneurship, the students are still active in working on their identity. This identity work can be divided in several separate topics: achieving milestones and gaining confidence, balancing value tensions and image building.

Achieving milestones and gaining confidence

One of the most revealing aspects that came out from the analysis is the setting and achieving of milestones. Milestones act as reference points in achieving a particular status and advancing towards becoming entrepreneurs.

This is evident in students feeling that certain milestones give them various levels of confidence to go out there and be entrepreneurs. These milestones vary per student but include similar things like finishing a particularly relevant course, extending the scope of their portfolio, finishing a particular job for a new client or even just their first job. This is illustrated in the following small interview excerpt between Anna and me:

'Toon: What needs to change for you to make you feel to be an entrepreneur?

Anna: Good question. I think when I'm starting to earn money. [...] Now I am only spending money on the business. I'm not really feeling that there are a lot of positive reactions and feedback from people I like and people are random. I don't know, so it's a positive fight but I'm not earning the money I should or something [...] so if that gets further then I feel like I'm an entrepreneur.

Toon: So, the first pay check would be some sort of a milestone maybe?

Anna: I think so, yes' - Anna, 22 years old, 2nd year student.

Especially the registration at the Chamber of Commerce is seen as an important milestone. This is the part where the students feel they really crossed a line and truly make a step towards becoming an entrepreneur. This point makes it real for them, as exemplified by Georgia:

'The moment that I became an entrepreneur, [is when] I really went to the [...] Chambers [of Commerce] you know and then signed up and [now] I can send people

invoices. And then I really felt like you're working with me and are not seeing me as some student who still has to learn so much' - Georgia, 20 years old, 2nd year student.

Not only are the students experiencing these milestones, they are also actively looking for milestones in the future. Many students are looking forward to internship or specific courses as the milestone that can build their confidence to try out entrepreneurship. They need that next step, that external validation to be able to advance in their own journey. Iris explains this quite well:

'I've learned so much [...] through those internships, I'm almost definitely sure that those internships make or break your journalism experience in this study. [Because] you can get so much from it. I mean that's the real world. Here in school in the [...] college you can learn the basics and you can learn theory, but in real word that's where you discover what you want and who you are' - Iris, 24 years old, 4th year student.

Some students that look forward to these milestones seem to use these points to guide themselves along the path from student to entrepreneur. They seem to use the existing structure of the University of Applied Science to highlight their path. They do not seem to have a plan of their own. Many students also comment that they lack a plan. That they just start doing and see what comes of it. Chaos is a big part of their strategy as explained by Lotte:

'I do see myself as like a filmmaker, that's something I really think I am. but... I don't know. A lot of times I don't really know what I'm doing, but I like what I'm doing. But I don't know if I would label it. Like I don't know if this doesn't make any sense. I would call myself a journalist and filmmaker, but I am an entrepreneur, right? I would call myself that, but now... I don't even think I can use the term because I'm not serious. Well I'm serious but I'm not doing it enough' - Lotte, 22 years old, 4th year student.

Some students, usually the more advanced older students do some self-reflection on this lack of structure and this attitude of laissez-faire. But these seem to be the exception. When prompted on whether the students reflect upon their journey through the School of Journalism, many students reply that they do not do that at all. They just stumble along without a care or a reflection as seen in this example:

'It's the first time, I've really thought about [my identity] right now' - Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

'I don't know we don't really talk about...[entrepreneurship]. I don't think we talked about this that much' - Andres, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

The students are quite capable of reflection upon themselves but simply never stand still to consider this. Doing the qualitative interviews for this research gave them a pause to look at their situation, to really think about their decisions and accomplishments and whether they have a solid plan for their future. Most of the students remarked that for them it was a good opportunity to reflect with me, because I experienced the same study of journalism and was a media entrepreneur. During and after the interview many of the students commented that they were very pleased to have participated in the interview and mentioned that this experience really helped them to reflect upon themselves Sophie gives a good example of this reflection:

'Because a lot of these question, I didn't really think about it like ever I think. So I think it's good to just like get a moment like this to get like okay maybe I do have to think about this because ... well not like it's pushed on me but like I do think it's a good thing to think about this more' - Sophie, 23 years old, 3rd year student.

Milestones seem to be very important for the students. It seems to give them confidence and builds their identity as a journalist or freelancer or entrepreneur. At the same time the students are well aware of their lack of planning and self-reflection, even when that reflection could help them in their identity work.

Balancing value tensions

Being a journalist in the Netherlands is for the most part a job that is being performed for the common good. But the skills taught to journalists can easily be used in producing media texts that are not only for the common good but can serve commercial goals. The students struggle with having to make a choice between the two modes op operating. Some students feel that doing commercial work can ruin their journalistic reputation. They feel it can compromise their integrity as seen in this example:

'*I feel most comfortable being a journalist. I feel like I'm doing the right thing. I'm helping people maybe [that is] idealistic. I'm not always comfortable to create an image [for] a company. For example a few weeks ago I had to promote this new*

sports drink right and on the package it said it's vegan, it's all natural and only natural sugars. But sugars are always natural and a drink is the most of the time vegan so it was really bullshit. But I had to convince people to buy it and I'm not really comfortable, but it pays more' - Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

So, the students sometimes hide their commercial work. They leave these jobs out of their Instagram posts and don't talk about these jobs to peers. They sometimes talk about feeling 'dirty' or ashamed of doing commercial work. A small excerpt from the conversation I had with one of the students about ignoring their own ethics on commercial jobs:

Toon: Are you ashamed of this?

Dennis H:. Sometimes. Sometimes yeah, because I can be very idealistic to people. [About] journalism and know your ethics and stuff and I get paid better and then I just think I just have to let it go. [...] I'm not proud of it. [...] With promoting stuff that isn't really good that feels dirty. Especially when you're also a journalist who should filter that promotion. That's really weird' - Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

Georgia also adds to this with a great example of her feelings and the responsibility the students feel about being a journalist:

'I kind of felt like I sold my soul. Well I'll never write something that is untrue, so I never write "well McDonalds is really good for your health. You just go there right now". But there is always this unspoken [rule] that says that you can't really do copywriting as a journalist. I mean that's what I have been taught here at school. So, when I started doing it I did feel a little bad about it' - Georgia, 20 years old, 3rd year student.

But then the students interviewed talk about how it is much easier to acquire commercial work and that it is much easier to excel in it. They get much more freedom and lose all rules and routines associated with journalistic work. This makes is easier for them to show off their skills to employers and get new jobs in the future. An example is given by Dennis H.:

'*In commercial jobs you have to sell, really sell yourself and that is [pause]. Sometimes it can be quite easy actually. I almost got the feeling with some*

companies that they will believe anything I say' – Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

Students also mention that they need the commercial jobs because they pay so much better than journalistic work. So, they mention how they try to balance these value tensions. Sometimes students take on easy jobs to make some money, and then later do some more meaningful journalistic work to feel like a journalist again. They also feel they need to make a choice at some point in the future. They talk about how they think they will be either a journalist or a commercial media worker. But for now, they do not make this distinction, they take on whatever job they can find, be it journalistic, commercial or out of their normal field of expertise. Mark explains this further:

'*I do different kind of stuff. So, the most things I do are commercial. […] It is not particularly journalism, it's more companies that call me for videos. And on the other hand, I work at the Persgroep. So that is the biggest, one of the biggest media groups in Netherlands and Belgium and I write for sport news'* – Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

The students are very divided on the issues of commercial and journalistic work. They are quite aware of the title of journalist and quite protective of it. At the same time the students struggle whether or not they fit that title. They worry about their image, also in regards on working on commercial or journalistic jobs.

Image building

Image building is another core practice of identity work. Image building is a central aspect of identity work through digital media because it highlights the communication and interaction with their audiences over digital media. It underscores that the student-journalists are enacting their sense of self through communication on various platforms and occasions. It is perpetually in motion and continues like an unfolding narrative in which they describe and discover what they can be. This is now discussed in three aspects, which concern storytelling, networking and social media.

Storytelling about their self

In the conversations the students interviewed mention how they use storytelling in their communication to represent themselves. Many have some sort of self-narrative that

they update about themselves whenever they introduce themselves to others. Some of the students feel a solid representation of oneself is needed to be able to get jobs or get noticed. An example is given by Iris:

'I think you need a good story. first a good solid story or brand or something you can sell. and you sell yourself, so you have to make sure you have a great story' – Iris, 24 years old, 4ᵗʰ year student.

Other students claim they have no conscious story about themselves. That they make up a representation on the spot. This relates to the need for being authentic and highlights the emergent, unplanned nature of the students' identity. This is shown in an example of a student who cannot really explain why or how a story about himself emerges:

'But I'm not really occupied with [my story] lately and when I have a job interview or interview for an internship, we're actually just talking like this.[...] I'm just myself, so I presented myself in an interview or in a conversation just like I am and it's kind [...] of hard to explain that' - Dennis J., 24 years old, 5th year student.

In the school of journalism, the students are taught certain storytelling skills. The students do mention that these skills in storytelling are helpful in their networking and entrepreneurial representations of self. But many feel they do not have a lot of advantages on other media entrepreneurs who have done studies without a lack of focus on storytelling. Still, they talk about being trained to be able to tell a coherent story and find that very useful. Hannah exemplifies this:

'Maybe I do. I have never thought about it, but perhaps that's not a strange idea. I guess while making this documentary you also have to frame people in a certain way or show them who they really are so maybe unconsciously I do look at how I sort of present myself. I guess my skills that I learned here do help with that' - Hannah, 23 years old, 5th year student.

The students seem to underestimate their ability and skills in storytelling and at some point fail to use it to effectively work on their identity. A lot more conscious effort could assist them in building stronger stories about themselves.

Networking as opportunity building

Networking is of prime importance for getting jobs and contracts. It is essential for becoming an entrepreneur, and few appear to disagree. This becomes remarkably clear in how the students talk about networking:

Toon*: 'how important do you think networking is?*

Hannah*: I think very important. That's basically how I got most of my jobs until now. Getting in touch with the right people and making sure they know what you do'* – Hannah, 23 years old, 5th year student.

'*That is super important. My friends have always told me: "it's not about what you know, it's about who you know". That's incredibly important. One of the reasons I got accepted for the NOS is because my boss knows Suze van Kleef, who is one of the correspondents that I'm actually going to be working with, so that's how I got in there. That's super super important and a perfect example*' – Jeroen, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

Not only networking at events or talking to potential employers or peers is seen as important by the student. They also mention that working hard at internships or any trial job is essential in getting noticed. Many feel that the few opportunities they get to working in a big or well-known media company should be exploited to the maximum potential. So, some of the students mention that they work extremely hard just to get noticed. Jeroen explains this perfectly on an opportunity he got to be an intern for one week:

'*[The employer said:] "by the end of that week we're going to have a look whether to hire you as a freelancer or have a little bit of patience and do it in a year". So, I worked my ass off that week. I had to start at nine and I was already there around seven-thirty. I had to leave the office around 5 but I left at 10. Like it was insane! It was probably one of the hardest weeks of my life but at the end of the day on Friday she was so impressed by my working skills, my drive and what I wanted to accomplish. I made the shit ton of mistakes, don't get me wrong, I was terrible, but I was enthusiastic. I worked harder than anybody else and I was just so eager and willing to learn. That that was the main reason for her to hire me*' – Jeroen, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

But not all aspects of networking are seen as a clear-cut opportunity to get jobs or contacts. The students talk about how their networking feels forced and fake and a lot of work to keep up. Yet others flourish in this social activity and love talking to people and thus maintain their network.

'*The funny thing is, it's not something I do on purpose or something. It's just that I like being with people. I like talking to people. I like getting updates of people's lives, of people's work. And it's something that's going pretty smooth. I know people that are like "okay I need to network; I need to send this email". I'm never thinking about that. It's going in a natural way, and I think it's a kind of power I have for my company. Because it's not that I think I need to do this, but I really like to do it*' – Mila-Marie, 22 years old, 3rd year student.

Some even claim to have a specific personality that they show at network meetings, that they act the part of interested and interesting media worker. Lauren mentions having this "fake" persona at the ready:

'*I acted a lot and now I noticed that I'm very good at [...] creating another persona or another narrative, I'm good at that. So, networking I'm good at just pretending I'm this very confident ambitious girl*' – Lauren, 22 years old, 4th year student.

And thus, networking is seen as a draining job by some. The student talk about how they must be mindful all the time in their self-representation because a job or opportunity could be everywhere. They talk about how it is a chore to keep up what everybody around them is working on, or even how their private lives are going. Also, some complaints are heard in the interviews how networking takes a lot of time outside of regular business hours. A good example of this feeling that networking is energy draining is by Dennis H.:

'*Constantly being aware of people in your network, what they are doing right now and if they're successful or not. You have to call them and stay in touch even if you are doing a project for half a year and you're not seeing them. Because people forget [...] you otherwise. That's what I feel and I'm not really [that kind of guy]. I feel "slijmerig" [slimy] what's the word in English*' - Dennis H., 23 years old, 6th year student.

Networking triggers the students desire to be authentic. Some of them seem to think a fake persona is needed to effectively get contracts through their network. But all the students

agree that networking is important and a way to get ahead in freelancing or entrepreneurship.

Ambivalent relationship with social media

The students interviewed showed a complex relationship with social media. To put it bluntly, they seem to hate it. They talk about how they hate having to perform on social media, how they must show the world all the work they are doing in journalism and entrepreneurship. Not only that, they display a general hate for the fakeness of social media and pressures it puts on them. A few examples:

'There's no added value on social media because people who really like you, you see them on a daily basis, and you see them in the weekends. And the people who are interested in you, they will know how to find [you]. But the Instagram part nowadays is such bullshit, that there are these companies who contact and send emails like […] "hey we are looking for influencers do you want to become an influencer?" And I was like: what the fuck? No, I don't want that! I hate social media, yeah! I really do. I don't follow any of the people who has any influential part in there. I don't like that at all' – Andres, 22-year-old, 3rd year student.

'I don't want to thousands of followers. I don't want thousands of people commenting on my work. That will only give me stress. I hate social media. So, I'm really not working towards that' – Georgia, 20 years old, 3rd year student.

However, some of the students see that they do need to be visible on social media, especially Instagram, and build a good image there. A good image means to them to show you being active with various jobs and associate yourself with all the brands you work for. Mark exemplifies this:

'*Companies really want to know who they're working with and that's an important part, but I think they're more interested in what can I do for them, in what can I make. So, I think with all the video's that I'm posting, on my YouTube channel that is linked with the website and everything, […] if people search me for my website they would see okay this guy worked for this this, this is what he is capable of and this is what we can get from him*' – Mark, 24 years old, 4th year student.

Despite saying they hate social media, students are still very active on it. Not only posting but also checking out what their peers and role models are doing on social media.

Here again the focus is on Instagram. Facebook seems to be abandoned by the students, Twitter is sometimes mentioned, but not many other outlets. LinkedIn is seen purely as a professional network tool that hosts their resume and requires hardly any attention. However other online representations of the students, like personal websites and the LinkedIn profile are in dire need of updating, according to how they talk about it. An example:

'I have a website, but it's not really updated, so I have to [do that] soon. But at least there is a website and I have LinkedIn, but […] that also says like what I do now. Facebook, I don't use it for work-related things, so that's really private' – Sophie, 23 years old, 3ʳᵈ year student.

Again, the students display no clear online strategy. Some keep their private profiles hidden, others do not. None seem to have a plan on how to build their image or what to mention on social media. Just being there and show what you are doing seems to be enough for most of them. An example of this casual attitude towards their image is:

'*I do have a LinkedIn page that covers most of my work, […] and I actually did get a patent on JeroenBoschmedia.com but I never actually launched the website. For example, I don't know, I just think I was [pause] at the time that I was working on that I just, I just postpone it in and postpone it. I think I never really have gotten back to it because I have worked ever since'* – Jeroen, 22 years old, 3ʳᵈ year student.

In a few interviews the cleaning up of their online profiles was discussed. As stated before, some parts of their profiles are set to private. Other students talk about cleaning up some parts of their profile, removing certain party pictures. Mostly the interviewees were already for years very mindful of not posting beer and bikini photo's on social media. Many of the students are very aware that the internet does not forget, and they are very conscious and careful in how they use social media. Dennis J. shows an example of this.

'*So, I have a bio that describes a little bit what I do when I do journalists work. That is making mostly personal stories and profiles of people. But that's there so if people need me and they Google me, and they find that LinkedIn page then it's there. But I'm not actively using that now to get assignments. A lot of things I have on private, so only my friends can see the content. And yes, I think since a year year-and-a-half I'm more conscious about that, putting things in private spaces online, so not every possible clients or employers can see everything. Also, my sources go Googling me and then I think it's good to have quite a professional presentation online. So, when*

there are talking to you that they take you seriously and not just thinking "oh that's a guy that is only drinking beer on his socials" – Dennis J, 24 years old, 5th year student.

Some of the students mention that they want a professional social media presence. But when prompted what a professional social media presence is, they found it very hard to explain. The ambivalent relationship with social media emerges from these interviews. They want to use is to build their image, but lack a clear strategy and a clear end goal.

Discussion

The theoretical framework builds on our current understanding of 'individual Identity', 'Identity work of entrepreneurs' and 'Storytelling (narrative identity work)' provide significant lenses, but yet do not seem to cover the entirety of the results from the interviews. In fact, from the analysis of the interview data, we can learn much more and greater details than we currently know about the ways of a journalist becoming a student entrepreneur. Based on this, we can derive several theoretical and practical contributions of this study, which are explained and discussed below.

Identity

Identity can be seen as our representation of socially held behavioural expectations and impact how we perform roles, but also on what we aim to achieve (Leitch & Harrison, 2016) Out of many of the conversations the outcome is that students of journalism are well aware of behavioural expectation and how they perform roles and have an idea what they aim for. Many are indeed living according to the structure they perceive from society and their context, particularly the University of Applied Science, Utrecht as shown in the results.

This connects to how their entrepreneurial identity also seems to be influenced by the organizations that the students function in. Milestones like their internship truly seem to shape their ideas about entrepreneurship and their ideas about working freelance or aspiring for a fixed contract. This is in line with the theories of Oliver (2015) and Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas (2008). Who state that entrepreneurs take inspiration from their environment to construct their identity. However, the impact of these milestones that the students pursue also connect to the idea that they are waiting for permission from the outside world to start to define themselves (Cote, 1997). It is true that the University of Applied Science Utrecht gives this permission to go out and start an entrepreneurship or an internship, but still the students interviewed showed hesitation and seem to always look for the next milestone that would allow them to identify as a true journalist or entrepreneur.

The concept of organizational identity doesn't work well for understanding for how and what the students are becoming. In this context, a larger shared identity did not appear to be shaping their internships and freelance work at various news outlets affects their growth as entrepreneurs. Not to say that the previews numerous researches on how organizations affect personal identity is not valid, there is evidence to be found that the students of journalism mirror themselves to peers and use practices from organizations to

add to their own skills (Ashforth, Rogers & Corley, 2011; Corley & Goia, 2004; Gioia, Price, Hamilton, & Thomas, 2010).

This research also confirms the ideas that entrepreneurs, or students who are striving to become entrepreneurs (Nielsen & Gartner, 2017), have multiple identities that they use for different purposes (Bhansing, Hitters, & Wijngaarden, 2018; Brydges & Sjöholm, 2018; Horst et al., 2019). The work of freelance journalists puts them in various roles, in multiple different news rooms, in interview settings, in network meetings and in their own workspace developing their stories. For many of these separate work environments, and especially for the different news rooms some journalist function in, they create a different identity or a partly different identity, like the work of Hennekam & Bennet (2016) predicted.

Also, Clausen, Hytti & Solvoll (2016) describe, based on their context, that entrepreneurs can be divided in three identities, Darwinians, Communitarian and Missionaries. In other words, they hold that entrepreneurs might be characterized on the basis of these three idiosyncratic labels. These ideas and labels do not hold true within the results and specifically the context of this research. Instead, the results show similarities but also strong differences. For example, none of the students show a lot of eagerness to be as commercial and successful in business as possible. Many show an aversion to commercial work, or have at least an ambivalent idea about it. In other words, the students here do not seem to be well classified as "Darwinians". However, many students can be seen to show aspects of the frame "Communitarians". This is shown in that the journalism students had a strong connection to their product, for instance text or video. Furthermore, most of the interviewees felt a desire to go out and produce, for production sake. This shows, they had an intrinsic motivation, which connects well with the idea of communitarians. At the same time, some students displayed aspects of the label of "Missionaries". they aspired that their journalistic work becomes a social agent of change. This is seen in the example of Dennis H. who displayed a lot of desire to uncover the truth and protect consumers with his journalistic and entrepreneurial work. At the same time, this attitude did not surface that often. A reason for this could be that showing traits of a missionary needs a strong conviction of identity, which was not found in most students. A case could be made for a fourth label, the "Entertainer". Many of the students, like for instance Lotte, had a strong desire to make products that people love to consume. A strong desire to please the consumer as an "Entertainer" could be an interesting label to examine other parts of the creative industry.

The processual nature of identity is an underlying theme, which is exemplified in the steps and milestones that the students work towards. However, the research focused less on tracing distinct people over time, but on reflecting at one on their history and current trajectory. This means, the focus was less on comparing their flowing identity or multiple forms of identity over time. Nevertheless, Coupland & Brown's (2018) research did have

some relevance during the interviews. They state that identities are open to change in this constant changing environment. Here I had a great advantage in the context of being the teacher of some of the students for some years now. I did see an altered presentation of self, for instance in Hannah, who I have taught years before. The speed and reason for these changes was found to be highly dependent on the personal context and personal journey of the students, fitting with the existing literature (Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013; Kroezen & Heugens, 2012; Schultz & Hernes, 2013).

We can conclude from this comparison that students acted in complex ways that were highly context dependent. This underscores that labels concerning identities of entrepreneurs might rather not have a universal relevance, but are instead much more local and depend greatly on the individual path the student is taking in their journey to entrepreneurship. This relates to current progress in entrepreneurship research which accentuates that entrepreneurship is a highly contextual endeavour (Karatas-Ozkan, Anderson, Fayolle, Howells, & Condor, 2014; Zahra, 2007; Zahra, Wright, & Abdelgawad, 2014). This study supports this trend and shows how entrepreneurship needs to be appreciated with a strong sensitivity for context. For example, I could only make certain interpretations because I knew the context very well – being a teacher in that institution and knowing the students for a longer period of time. Not having had that closeness would have hindered me to understand the richness of their behaviour and appreciate the differences in their behaviour and processes of identity development than explained in other studies.

Identity Work

Identity work is a struggle of becoming yourself. This can be tiresome and full of tensions and ambiguities. Indeed, identity work, seen as a forming and reforming of identity in social settings and through life-events, is an important aspect of entrepreneurial development (Leitch & Harrison, 2016; Nielsen & Gartner, 2017; Nielsen, Norlyk, & Christensen, 2018; Watson, 2008, 2009a). It seems in this case that how the students recognize that they are changing through life-events and milestones and through their social settings. They see this as a natural part of their entrepreneurial development. In contradiction to this understanding of their development, they show a lot of resistance to this change at the same time. For example, they display a strong need to remain authentic and to remain true to oneself. The more experience students had, the more reflective they were working and developing themselves, the more they showed signs of fluidity and willingness to change and adapt to their surroundings, especially those that have done an internship or were active in news rooms. This indicates and supports that identity is rather fluid in nature

and that identity work is naturally a context depending practice, which needs to be adapted to specific social or business settings supporting the research of Leitch & Harrison (2016).

Another finding that matches Watson's (2009a) theory is the idea that there is a resistance against the assumption that everyone should be an entrepreneur. This resistance came up several times in the interviews, were the students felt pushed by the School of Journalism and society in general. They felt this was the only option for them, to become freelancers or entrepreneurs, a strong correlation to the viewpoint of it being a necessary evil (Nielsen, Norlyk & Christensen, 2018). Some had such a strong aversion to becoming an entrepreneur that they used their identity work to completely disconnect from entrepreneurship. They created an identity and a situation for themselves where a fixed contract, even outside of journalism, is their only option.

The parallel to jazz musicians and there balancing of personal motivations compared to the motivations of the band did not come up in the interviews of this study (Humphreys, Brown & Hatch, 2003). There was no real mindfulness of the budding journalists and their own position on the news floor and the news room in general.

Role-models played a big part in the mind of the students interviewed, similar to the research of Bhansing, Hitters & Wijngaarden (2018). They found that passion of other peer surrounding entrepreneurs could inspire a great deal. There is an strong influence of role-models on the identity forming process but passion did not directly come up in the data gathering, nor the passion of others surrounding them. Strangely the students only used the role-models end position as an inspiration and not the path or passion these role-models display as a guiding tool.

Passion did not come up in the interviews. Not to say that the students are not passionate about their projects and their progress at the University of Applied Science, because that they certainly are. But their wording was not directly linked to passion. Some liked being an entrepreneur or freelance journalist but to say that passion was a direct motivator like Cardon, Gregorie, Stevens & Patel (2013) define, that was not the case. The interviewees were more passionate about their product. The act of writing, filming or making radio productions was closely related to passion. Thus, their identity work was very closely related to their product and portfolio building. The students strongly feel that their products should speak for themselves. The student did however, have a strong connection to the social identification of the role of journalist, as predicted by Winkler (2018). There was some emotional linking to the impact of the profession and their own professional identity development to be seen. This connected to the balancing of value tension, that came up in a lot of the interviews, also seen by Slay & Smith (2011) who identify the impact of stigmas, routines and expectations. These structural burdens were felt by many students, like Georgia, who felt the need to follow the unwritten journalistic code as good as possible.

Alvesson's (2001) work where he connects knowledge to identity came up in some interviews. How the students feel inadequate on knowledge on freelancing and entrepreneurship. Somehow, they feel their school does not give them enough handholds to plan and think about their future. This is remarkable when looking at the curriculum where a lot of attention is given to exploring the market for journalists and that they are also forced to enter this market, albeit only for a small period of time.

Another part of knowledge connecting to identity work is the know-how of the students on the workings of storytelling and social media. The storytelling aspect will be detailed below, but their knowledge on the working of social media was expected to impact their identity work on social media platforms. Surprisingly they showed a lot of negativity and even hatred towards social media. The students feel a lot of pressure from social media and choose not to participate for the most part in using Facebook, Twitter or Instagram for their identity work. While at the same time acknowledging that a good Instagram profile is very helpful in getting jobs. This discrepancy between having knowledge of a viable method for identity work and yet not implementing it is surprising and could be closely connected to their desire to be authentic. To not show a dishonest, commercialized version of themselves. The resistance to become a brand, even though medias channels allow for this to happen as detailed by Horst et al, (2019), is strong among the students of journalism. This might be ingrained in the journalistic hegemonic discourse of attempting to unveil the truth, be as impartial as possible and serving the public. This aspect can be connected to the Dutch media system and could be very different if this research was performed in another country with another media system or other form of government and role for journalists (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Storytelling

Storytelling needs reflexivity of oneself and how one develops over time. This relates to narrative identity work, in which the importance of storytelling and conscious use of stories and narrative fragments about peoples' development to share something about themselves is key (Downing, 2005; Horst et al., 2019; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; LaPointe, 2010; Mallett & Wapshott, 2012; Soreide, 2006; Watson, 2009b; Ybema et al., 2009). In this research, it is also very important to the students of journalism to use media for telling a story or telling their own story. They fully acknowledge that they could have an advantage in storytelling over other professionals in the creative industries. And yet the most remarkable aspect is that the students do not seem to use this advantage in any form of identity building. This supports other finding that the students are not as reflective as they think about using their skillset to develop their entrepreneurial self-identity in conscious manner. At the same time, it

might suggest that students have very little time to engage in constructing their story in conscious manner. This lack of reflection might contribute to why they struggle towards becoming entrepreneurs, and why they perceive tensions between different demands placed on them. This connects with existing literature that highlights the difficulties in tackling these challenges for student entrepreneurs (Nielsen & Gartner, 2017; Nielsen et al., 2018).

However, working with tensions and balancing creative and economic demands is nothing entirely new to identity work (Betta, Latham, & Jones, 2008; Fletcher & Watson, 2007; Navis & Glynn, 2011; Nielsen et al., 2018; Watson, 2008) and has been noted to a significant part of identity work in the creative industries (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016; Manto, Constantine, Marianne, & Amy, 2010; Round & Styhre, 2017; Schediwy, Bhansing, & Loots, 2018). Journalist often experience numerous tensions, juggling various roles and identities, managing unstable income and career choices. Musicians experience very similar tensions, especially unstable income and career choice and create their own story surrounding these tensions (Manto, Constantine, Marianne, & Amy, 2010). This means that most of the workers in the creative industries find a way to balance these tensions depending on their own context (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016 ;Marianne, & Amy, 2010; Round & Styhre, 2017; Schediwy, Bhansing, & Loots, 2018). However, in this research this means that the School of Journalism provides something of a structure, just like the various employers and internship providers. This structure, the curriculum and the focus on being storytellers creates a solid base for their various tensions on which the students of journalism can expand and grow their story regarding their entrepreneurial identity. It might be a good idea to expand this safeguarding and to provide the students with access to meaningful milestones, chances of reflection and risk averse behaviour and use these elements in a narrative to support and create their professional identity (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016; Manto, Constantine, Marianne, & Amy, 2010; Round & Styhre, 2017; Schediwy, Bhansing, & Loots, 2018).

The ideas of Ibarra & Barbalescu (2010) on how identity is a dynamic story presented through actions both on- and offline is supported in this study by the data. The students even understand that they could use their storytelling skills to enhance the way they are seen by the outside world. And yet only a few of them use this skill and only in certain specific surroundings. One of these is networking where some prepare a story for themselves whenever they have to present themselves to others. But mostly they want their work to speak for themselves and they again hesitate to paint a falsified or glorified picture of themselves. Being authentic, and not commercializing themselves seems to stop them from using storytelling skills in their identity building.

New findings

Surprisingly, these students of journalism talk about different reasons for becoming an entrepreneur, but the main reasons are still outside forces. There is not a lot of internal motivation for them to go out and start their own business. There are some goals, like pursuing freedom and flexibility, that entice them to start an enterprise, but they are starkly contrasted with entrepreneurship being seen as risky. The overall impression is that there are many ambiguities to wanting to become an entrepreneur and they relate to their identity and identity work (cf. Alsos, Clausen, Hyytti & Solvoll, 2016). On the whole it can be concluded that the students feel that to become an entrepreneur, they first have to become a freelancer. Here they clearly identify doing odd jobs here and there as a student to be a step in the process of becoming a full-fledged entrepreneur after graduating.

These stepping stones of freelance to entrepreneurship connect to the findings of the importance of milestones. The students set milestones for themselves which they need to build confidence in the trajectory of freelance to entrepreneurship. These milestones vary from person to person, but are closely related to school courses. Internship and certain key courses give them confidence in taking steps in the process of becoming an entrepreneur and help build their identity. A great example is the course of CampusDoc in which they learn to make a documentary. Only after completing this milestone, the students feel they can label themselves documentary makers.

These stepping stones and milestones also connect to their general desire in finding their place within the field of journalism. The School of Journalism pushes them to make plans to finding their place, but the students do not behave in any planned manner. This clashes with their focus on milestones, which gives them a sense of structure and order in their open and emergent development. This clash can be closely related to their ability and desire on being reflective. Many of the students used the interviews of this research as one of the first times to closely examine themselves and to look at their plan during and after their education. Certainly, some role-models or dreams were present, but the day to day experience of studying and working in journalism makes them overlook the need to self-reflect. This results in chaotic unplanned behaviour and clashes with Alvesson's (2001) theories on identity work. This could be explained that when examining a fully formed entrepreneurial identity is it possible to identify the steps of identity work that have been taken to get there. But during this process the journey is muddled and obscure (Coupland & Brown, 2012; Gioia & Patvardhan, 2012). It is prone to changes and iterations. Especially the milestones that the students set for themselves on internships and important courses tend to change their path to entrepreneurship.

Students really struggled with commercial aspects of becoming entrepreneurs and what impact this could have on their journalistic career. These value tensions are being balanced in different ways. Some develop multiple identities, one for the journalistic work, one for the commercial work, in line with the theory of Yitshaki & Kropp (2016). They state that various situations require various identities, which the students clearly display. Other students solve this balance tension by hiding their commercial work, especially on social media. On the whole they agree that being a journalist comes with certain ethical standards that are ingrained in their identity. Remarkably they do report that doing commercial work is easier as it gives them more freedom and this freedom allows them to show off their unique skills and thus allow them to build their identity.

Contributions to practice

First, increase reflection and reflexivity in the curriculum. From these findings it is advisable that the curriculum of the School of Journalism should try to address the lack of planning on the part of the students. Which is in itself quite remarkable. The curriculum already provides in many handholds to start a planning of a career in the field of journalism. The University of Applied Science allows the students to select their preferences in medium to publish in and allows for some knowledge specialization through for instance minors. So, the question arises how the students could be helped to plan even more. Looking at role-models is also already a part of the curriculum. The school invites many young journalists and allows for the students to ask many questions on how their career was built. Possibly the students do plan some sort of career path but get surprised by their experiences at the milestone courses and internships. A possibility to have a reflective conversation with the students after these milestones could fix this (Alvesson, 2010).

This reflection is also one of the most lacking factors in their development towards entrepreneurship. During the interviews and also from informal conversations with older established journalists it becomes apparent that it takes time to be able to reflectively look at yourself and your career. Not only time in aging, but also time in standing still and create a moment of reflection. When examining the curriculum of the School of Journalism, there are lots of assignments that require the students to be reflective. But their young age and lack of theory on how to be truly reflective might negatively affect these assignments. During the interviews the students were asked quite personal and difficult questions on their identity and identity development. The open setting of those interviews might hold the key in getting the students to truly look at themselves. If a reflection should be performed for an assignment for school, the students tend to paint a rosy picture of themselves to get a passing grade. In these interviews, grading was not relevant, so it allowed them to express themselves freer

and more open. Adding similar interviews without any grading requirement to the curriculum could solve these challenges.

Second, clearly address how to identify and manage value-tensions. The value tension between commercial and journalistic work is also part of the curriculum, but many teachers have very different views of this topic. Some are very focused on holding high standards to journalistic work and display these values in class and in assignments. Other teachers hold a laxer attitude towards commercial work and push students to exploit their skills to generate income. No wonder the value tension is mentioned in the interviews if teachers hold these different views. But, these different viewpoints have not been properly researched, just examined from a personal stance. A solid explorative research would be advisable. From these results the discrepancies between the teachers could be mapped and a common strategy could be devised and implemented within the curriculum and among the teachers (Hennekam & Bennett, 2016 ;Marianne, & Amy, 2010; Round & Styhre, 2017; Schediwy, Bhansing, & Loots, 2018).

Limitations of the study

Studying identity development struggles with subjectivity. Identity is a very personal concept that is experienced and talked about in a great variety of ways. Not everybody talks about identity in the same terms and each and everyone understands the basic concept in a different manner. 'I' and 'me' are used in different context, can be very personal or culturally driven. This study was done with Dutch students residing in and around Utrecht, the Netherlands. But even here there was no homogenized culture. One student is part Surinam, another is part British, for starters. This varied cultural background made for a more complete and varied set of results, but the various cultural background could also affect the way the students spoke about entrepreneurship and their identity development.

Furthermore, identities can be made up, can be created just because this research asks the subjects about it. All the attributes given to the identity could be presented at will during the interview and are incredibly hard to verify. Of course, this was attempted by thorough questioning of the subjects, but this can also prompt further instant creation of identities, instead of probing the 'real' identity. To remedy this, the students were reminded during the interview that they could speak freely and did not need to please me, the researcher, in any way.

Next to that, identity, identity work and storytelling, are constructs of memory. Memory that can and will be distorted by time, place and cultural surrounding. The interviews prompted the research subject to delve in their memory for aspects that were not even thought about in great deal, as is evident from the results, so the chance that the results

from the interview would differ from a similar interview on another day, in another place or in another surrounding is quite serious. Qualitative research has this flaw in almost all its research. It is a given that this is the result of these 14 interviews, taken at this time, in this place, within this cultural surrounding.

The role of the researcher might have had an impact on the results acquired. I am a teacher at the institution of the School of Journalism, where the interviews were held. I was familiar with several of the students interviewed. Some I had had in class before or after these interviews. There is a possibility that they gave socially acceptable answers because they were trying to do me a favour, or were working to get good grades in the future from me. One interviewee even asked multiple times '*is this all right*' to verify she was doing a good job for me. All the interviews were started with an explanation that the research was done for the Erasmus University in my capacity as a student and that it would have no bearing whatsoever on my function as a teacher at the school. But some might still have selected to please me in whatever way they saw fit.

Another part of my role as a researcher in the interviews is my own background in entrepreneurship, journalism and at the School of Journalism. During the interviews the students referred to entrepreneurial choices, journalistic practices and businesses and to courses at the school. I knew, or assumed I knew, what they were talking about and did not question in great detail these remarks. There might have been a loss of meaning in some aspects of the conversations where I did not question complex aspects of entrepreneurship, journalism or the curriculum.

The interviews were conducted in English at the request of the thesis supervisor so this research could more easily be included in other identity research that the thesis supervisor is conducting. All the students but one were Dutch native speakers. This made for situations where the student interviewed did know the word in English they wanted to use to convey their thoughts. I sometimes provided an English word where they used a Dutch word and they accepted that translation, but that might not have been the word they would select on their own. In other circumstances the interviewees were left to find an English word but struggled to do so and they described the phenomenon they were discussing. In all these circumstances there could be a loss or confusion of meaning. The alternative in doing the interviews in Dutch and then later translating them to English would have similar problems, where a translator would pick the English words they feel would best cover the meaning, also possibly misinterpreting the data.

Further studies

Another method to examine the entrepreneurial identity development of students of journalism would be to observe their behaviour. Doing ethnographical research by following the students during their work as freelancers, entrepreneurs and at internships could provide insight in their identity work. Through observations of their representations offline in these situations certain extrapolations to the theory could be made. This process would be very time consuming, however.

Other methods to research identity work could be done by analysing the online behaviour of the students of journalism. This qualitative content analysis of Facebook or Instagram posts could provide insight in how the students represent themselves. An advantage could be that this could be done for older posts as well, but the students might have cleaned up their old posts, denying this insight. This method would be feasible and could provide a lot of data. It could also be aimed at the actual representation the students make of themselves instead of how they think they represent themselves. This content analysis could grant useful tools for upcoming entrepreneurs to tailor their online identity working posts to greater effect.

It would also be advisable to do similar research in other countries at other institutions. The media system at the University of Applied Science in Utrecht in the Netherlands is a Democratic Corporate model, according to the classifications of Hallin & Mancini (2004). The other two classifications, the Polarized Pluralist and Liberal model could show vast differences in identity development in students of journalism. As this study is done in English, this gives great opportunity to directly compare the results if the research can be done in other English-speaking countries, which is the case with those two models.

This research has left gaps to explore in other research. For instance, the clear distinction between freelance work and entrepreneurship is at some points unexplored. In many of the cases they are seen as the same, in regards to identity development. There is however a distinction to be made in the structured approach between the two terms. It is quite possible that students who want to be entrepreneurs develop their identity differently than students wanting to be freelancers.

Another gap to explore could be that the students selected were all quite different. Various age groups, different position in their studies, some desired entrepreneurship, some did not, some focused on writing skills, some on audio or video. If the students researched would have been from a homogenized group, their responses could be much more integrated and adding on to each other. Possibly interviewing students right at their graduation, after their final milestone at the School of Journalism would be a great place to research.

Finally, there have been new insights in the field of identity, identity work and storytelling. Chen & Reay (2019) show promising insights in the feedback loop of the professional work and milestones of entrepreneur and the impact is has on creating and refining their identity. Bhansing, Wijngaarden, & Hitters (2020) shed new light on how the context where entrepreneurs work is so important when creating and researching identity creation in the creative sector. These insights were not available at the start of the research and could have been used to update the question lists, the coding tree and other parts of this research.

Conclusion

Students of journalism develop their entrepreneurial identity based on confidence gained through certain milestones within their field of expertise. At the same time, they generally lack planning and a clear strategy for their identity development. This means, their development is often quite chaotic and they do not reflect on themselves while at the same time facing severe and challenging dualistic tensions related to commercial versus journalistic work and remaining authentic and being successful. The way in which they resolve these tensions for themselves contributes to their own development as professional journalists. However, the curriculum at schools of journalism should stimulate students to plan more and reflect more on how to continuously build their entrepreneurial identity. This highlights the need for setting and achieving milestones in strategic manner, developing mentoring and facilitating networking opportunities.

Nevertheless, The insights in this part of identity development of the creative industries cannot be easily transported to all other parts of the creative industries because of the specific commercial and journalistic value tensions. It shows clearly that context is so very important in the building of entrepreneurial identity. This importance of context can also provide insights in other parts of the creative industries that share an aversion to commercial work.

Appendix

Question list (updated, latest version)

Background
Could you please describe yourself a bit:
- What is your age, gender, etc.
- What is your study progress, quick overview, specialism, etc.
- What is your experience with … briefly discuss …
    - internship and freelance experience (both are mandatory parts of curriculum)
    - experience with "being self-employed", working on starting your own business, etc. (entrepreneurship)

Identity
- Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur/journalist/creative worker/other?
- How do you experience being an entrepreneur/journalist? Could you describe that?
- How do you see yourself most of the time? (Role(s), attitude, etc.)
- In what way does this image of yourself alter in various (work) situations?
- Do you sometimes have to perform different roles?
- Do you feel differently in different situations?
- How has this image of yourself changed the last few years? (Life events?)
- What made you become aware that something was changing?
- What has prompted this change? (Agency & Structure)

Identity work
- How do you react to these changes?
- How do you present yourself? (Online and offline)
- What media or social media tools do you use for your presentation?
- In what way does this representation of yourself change in various (work) settings?
- How do you feel about "putting yourself out there" and becoming a "brand"? (Tools?)
- How do you feel about your education towards being an entrepreneur?
- Does this help you to be more prepared to what you are facing now?
- Could you describe the skills you need as an entrepreneur?

Narrative
- Are there particular goals that you work towards?
- How do you want to reach these goals?
- What stories do you present about yourself? (Where and how?)
- Have these stories changed over time?
- How did this story evolve? (Agency & Structure) What is different now?
- What prompted these ways of seeing/presenting/changing yourself?

Future

- How are you learning to present yourself?
- How successful are these representations? (Experiences, successes, failures)
- What is the feedback that you get from others?
- What do you need to become a successful entrepreneur?
- How do you see your future? (as a journalist, as entrepreneur and your identity)
- What do you need to do to reach that?
- What do you think is the role of networking?

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