Temporary agency workers as outsiders: an application of the established-outsider theory on the social relations between temporary agency and permanent workers

Kim Bosmans¹*, Nele De Cuyper², Stefan Hardonk³ and Christophe Vanroelen¹,⁴
¹Research Group Interface Demography, Department of Sociology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium; ²Research Group Work, Organizational and Personnel Psychology, Catholic University Leuven, Leuven, Belgium; ³Research Group SEIN—Identity, Diversity and Inequality Research, Hasselt University, Hasselt, Belgium; ⁴Health Inequalities Research Group, Employment Conditions Knowledge Network (GREDS/EMCONET), Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain

Abstract
Temporary agency workers are often portrayed as peripheral workers in organisations. Hence, they present a compelling illustration of the established-outsider theory of Elias and Scotson. According to this theory, differences in social cohesion, group charisma, and power of the members of subgroups within social entities can lead to an established-outsider figuration between these subgroups, which is maintained by processes of stigmatisation and exclusion. Applying a narrative approach, we focus on social relations between temporary agency and permanent workers along three routes. First, we show how and why social cohesion, group charisma, and power possession in the established group of permanent workers shape an established-outsider figuration. Second, we discuss how mechanisms such as stigmatisation and exclusion maintain this figuration. Third, we illustrate why temporary agency workers have the feeling of being stuck in their outsider situation. To accomplish our aims, we conducted in-depth interviews with temporary agency workers in Belgium. Our analyses are focused on temporary agency workers who encountered mainly negative experiences regarding temporary agency employment.

Keywords: Employment relations; insiders/outsiders; qualitative research; stigmatisation; temporary agency employment

Responsible Editor: Stig Vinberg, Mid Sweden University, Sweden.

*Correspondence to: Kim Bosmans, Research Group Interface Demography, Department of Sociology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Pleinlaan 2, BE-1050 Brussels, Belgium. Email: Kim.Bosmans@vub.ac.be

© 2015. K. Bosmans et al. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

Citation: Vulnerable Groups & Inclusion. http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/vgi.v6.27848
In industrialised societies, organisations increasingly use temporary agency work as a key strategy to achieve numerical flexibility (Mitlacher, 2008). In temporary work agency (TWA) labour, the temporary agency worker is assigned to a client-employer (the “de facto” employer) on behalf of a temporary employment agency (the “de jure” employer). One of the causes for concern with temporary agency workers in terms of their quality of work is the often problematic relationship with permanent colleagues. This phenomenon has been linked to power differences between these groups (Forde & Slater, 2006; Kirkpatrick & Hoque, 2006; Knox, 2010; Padavic, 2005; Rogers, 1995; Underhill & Quinlan, 2011). Poor relationships at work may lead to poorer health and well-being, as was illustrated in occupational health studies on the role of lack of support (Lewchuk, Clarke, & de Wolff, 2008; Tompa, Scott-Marshall, Dolinschi, Trevithick, & Bhattacharyya, 2007), in research about stigmatisation of temporary workers (Boyce, Ryan, Imus, & Morgeson, 2007), and in previous studies among TWA workers (Bosmans, Hardonk, De Cuyper, & Vanroelen, 2015; Krausz & Brandwein, 1992; Rogers, 1995).

These findings call for a detailed account of how and why problematic employment relationships emerge for temporary agency workers. Our central objective is to investigate the unequal power distribution between temporary agency workers and permanent workers by focussing on social relations and group dynamics. Therefore, we aim to inquire into (1) why poor day-to-day relations and a power imbalance between TWA employees and their permanent colleagues arise on the shop floor, (2) how these poorer relations and this power imbalance are maintained through different mechanisms, and (3) why temporary agency workers in outsider positions find it hard to change this situation. We achieve this aim by adopting insights from the established-outsider theory of Elias and Scotson (1985) on in-depth interviews with TWA employees. The insider–outsider perspective of Elias and Scotson’s theory has been used previously in different contexts (Van Stolk & Wouters, 1987), including labour market studies (e.g. Lindbeck & Snower, 1990; O’Connor & Goodwin, 2012; Van Iterson, Mastenbroek, Newton, & Smith, 2002). Lindbeck and Snower (1990), for example, applied the insider–outsider theory to study the relationship between the employed and the unemployed. They suggested that the insider–outsider distinction is also applicable to other employment-related “social divides”, including the relationship between permanent and temporary workers (Lindbeck & Snower, 2001). Our study corresponds to this suggestion by applying the established-outsider theory on social relations between permanent and TWA workers.

First, we provide an overview of the characteristics of the TWA sector in Belgium and its regulatory environment. Second, we summarise the theory of Elias and Scotson (1985) and explain how this theory is used in our study. Third, we describe what is already known about established-outsider relations in the context of TWA employment. Fourth, our methods are outlined. Then, we present our results and conclude with a discussion detailing the ramifications of our findings.
TEMPORARY AGENCY EMPLOYMENT IN BELGIUM AND ITS REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

During 2013 in Belgium, 515,658 workers (including students with part-time jobs) were, at least for 1 day, employed as TWA employees. In the same year, on a daily basis, on average 2.18% of the total workforce was employed by temporary employment agencies. This is a small proportion of the labour force, but the share of TWA employment is on the increase (except in times of economic crisis) (Federgon, 2015).

Compared to many other countries, TWA employment is highly regulated in Belgium. First, TWA employment is conceived as a specific economic sector with its own collective negotiations and agreements, and only licensed agencies are permitted to operate on the market. Second, TWA employment is allowed only in a limited number of situations: (1) to replace a permanent employee whose employment contract is temporarily suspended (e.g. illness, holiday) or terminated (e.g. dismissal, breach of contract), (2) in case of a temporary increase in the amount of work, (3) to perform exceptional work (e.g. a periodic maintenance), (4) as part of an active labour market programme, and (5) as a selection procedure prior to the direct recruitment of new employees. In all these cases, contracts are of limited duration. Often, they are weekly contracts and to a lesser extent monthly contracts. Daily contracts were relatively common at the time of data collection, but recently stricter rules about the use of daily contracts have been introduced (ABVV Coördinatie Interim, 2012). However, in practice, it is not uncommon for TWA employees to be employed with the same client-company for a longer time (sometimes for more than a year), using a series of subsequent short-term contracts. The exclusively temporary nature of the contracts is, nevertheless, an important difference with some other countries. For example, in Sweden and Germany, TWA employees may have open-ended contracts with the agency (Arrowsmith, 2006). This is not possible in Belgium. Third, Belgian law prescribes that wages, benefits, and working schedules of TWA employees are equal to those of their fellow workers with an open-ended contract, performing the same job in the same company. Fourth, the client-user is obliged to appoint someone who is responsible for the introduction of each new TWA employee in the company. Finally, client-users have to bear the costs for the necessary company uniforms and personal protective equipment (ABVV Coördinatie Interim, 2012). In addition, Belgian law promotes the equal treatment of TWA employees and permanent employees and tries to protect the health and safety of TWA employees (Schömann & Guedes, 2012).

Trade union membership is very high in Belgium (more than half of the employees are members of a trade union) (Van Rie, Marx, & Horemans, 2011). Also many temporary agency workers are trade union members. The trade unions have their representatives on the shop floor in many companies. Those trade union representatives are elected by the employees of their company, and they are expected to defend the interests of all employees on their shop floor (also those of the indirectly hired TWA employees). However, temporary agency employees are not allowed to stand as a candidate, nor to vote
for the elections at the client-company, because formally they belong to another company (the TWA) and even another economic sector because TWA activities constitute their own economic sector.

THE ESTABLISHED AND THE OUTSIDERS

In “The established and the outsiders”, Elias and Scotson (1985) explain the implications of differences in power and rank on the relations between members of different social groups in a small English community with three neighbourhoods: the middle class neighbourhood, the old working class neighbourhood (the village), and the new working class neighbourhood (the estate). They describe how a “figuration of established and outsiders” became enacted between the members of the middle class neighbourhood and the village on the one hand, and the estate on the other hand. They argued that human individuals can only be understood in their interdependencies with each other, as part of networks of social relations, that is, they exist in and through their relations with others. This is what Elias referred to as “figurations” (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Hogenstijn, Van Middelkoop, & Terlouw, 2008). According to Elias and Scotson, the configuration of day-to-day social relationships between members of social groups, and not simply the specific characteristics of these groups, can explain the dynamics of domination and power (Loyal, 2011). Furthermore, Elias and Scotson argued that groups that form a figuration are “trapped in a double bind”, which means that they fulfil a need for each other (Elias & Scotson, 1985). However, critics have argued that the “double bind” is not obvious in the established-outsider figuration described by Elias and Scotson (Hogenstijn et al., 2008). Three steps are important in the dynamic of an established-outsider figuration: the process of development of a figuration, its maintenance over time, and the factors making it difficult to breach a once-established dynamic underlying a figuration.

In the study by Elias and Scotson, it is shown how members of the village monopolised sources of power. The established group derived its possession of power from their long-lasting connection to the community. The outsiders on the other hand, being new inhabitants, had only met each other recently. So it was their “social oldness” that rendered group charisma and status to the old group from the village, whereas the newcomers were characterised with group disgrace (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Hogenstijn et al., 2008; Van Iterson et al., 2002). Note that group charisma refers to a strong feeling of positive group-identity, whereas group disgrace refers to the opposite. Because of its power position and its desire for status, the established group developed an idealised self-image of being superior to the new inhabitants. They also formed a highly cohesive group, which refers to the strength of the connections between group members. This cohesion was reaffirmed by their common way of life and shared customs, which received the status of social norms. Social relations in the new group, by contrast, were not cohesive enough to develop and project a similar charismatic group identity (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Hogenstijn et al., 2008; Loyal, 2011; Van Iterson et al., 2002).

The established group maintained its higher status by means of stigmatisation and exclusion of the new inhabitants.
Stigmatisation can be described as acts of unjustly disapproving or condemning someone or a group. In the community studied by Elias and Scotson, stigmatisation was enacted in several ways. First, the inhabitants of the estate were the subjects of prejudices, that is, negative preconceptions, reflecting their inferior status, spread by the established group. The new inhabitants were blamed as a group for deviant behaviour, even if only a minority of its members had performed such behaviour. Second, the members of the village acted with contempt and disdain in face of the members of the estate. Third, the members of the estate were stigmatised through the use of “blame-gossip”, that is, the spread of rumours with a negative undertone (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Loyal, 2011; Van Iterson et al., 2002). Through blame-gossip examples of “bad behaviour” by a minority of the outsiders were portrayed as general characteristics of the behaviour of the whole group. This type of gossip is the opposite of “praise-gossip”, which exemplifies positive behaviour of individual group members as a general group characteristic with the intention of strengthening group charisma and the internal ties within the group. Blame-gossip and praise-gossip are mechanisms that help maintain and even exacerbate the gap between the established group and the outsiders. Another mechanism is “exclusion”: the members of the estate were excluded from all non-work activities. Here, exclusion points at the established group setting boundaries regarding access to rights and resources for the outsiders (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Loyal, 2011; Van Iterson et al., 2002). Additionally, Elias and Scotson pointed at the inability of a “closed” established group to perceive the situation from the other group’s point of view. From their egocentric short-sightedness, the established group sets paradoxical demands on the other group: on one hand, they disdained the others as a group of outsiders, and their slanderous gossip prevented the outsiders from integrating into the established community, whereas on the other hand, the outsiders were accused of not participating or integrating with the established group (Elias & Scotson, 1985, p. 136).

The outsiders remained powerless against these mechanisms because they did not form a close network amongst themselves and were excluded from key positions within the community because of their lack of power. The stigmatisation led the outsiders to develop an inferior self-image. Some of them even started to behave in a deviant way as a consequence of being stigmatised, which strengthened the inferior image of the estate as a group (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Loyal, 2011), a finding that is also apparent from labelling theory (Willis, 1981). Eventually, the members of the estate had the feeling that they could not escape from their inferior position (Elias & Scotson, 1985; Loyal, 2011).

According to Elias and Scotson (1985), the established-outsider figuration is a universal human theme. It is a figuration that takes place in different contexts (e.g. between members of groups, villages, countries, and continents). “The insider-outsider theory of employment and unemployment” of Lindbeck and Snower (1990), for example, can be seen as a variant of the established-outsider theory in the labour market context. The focus of Lindbeck and Snower is on how labour market “insiders” (incumbent employees whose jobs are protected by various labour turnover costs) get market power,
how they apply that power in maintaining their privileged positions, and how their activities adversely affect the situation of the “outsiders”, who are either unemployed or working in the informal sector. Although Lindbeck and Snower’s theory is largely economic in perspective, the social-relational issues (e.g. the role of cohesion, power imbalances, and mechanisms of discrimination) discussed in their approach clearly match with Elias and Scotson’s established-outsider theory.

Our study focuses on social relations, in line with Elias and Scotson (1985), while placing this approach within the dual labour market context as drawn by Lindbeck and Snower (1990). In particular we focus on social relations and group dynamics to reveal why permanent workers situate and maintain themselves in a superior position towards TWA workers. Attention is paid to the way interpersonal-level mechanisms of power that shape day-to-day employment relations are applied in the context of TWA employment, and on the reasons why TWA employees in outsider positions find it hard to escape from their inferior position. As such, insights (the role of cohesion, group charisma, and power possession) and mechanisms (stigmatisation, prejudices, contempt, gossip, and exclusion) advanced in “The established and the outsiders” are applied to relations between TWA employees and their permanent colleagues on the shop floor.

ESTABLISHED-OUTSIDER RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF TEMPORARY AGENCY EMPLOYMENT

During the last four decades, the relation between employers and employees has changed fundamentally in Western capitalist societies (Bosch, 2004; Kalleberg, 2009). The “standard employment relationship” of full-time and permanent employment has declined and employment has become more flexible and destandardised, increasingly resulting in labour market “dualisation” (Fernandez-Macias, 2012; Goos, Manning, & Salomons, 2009; Rubery & Grimshaw, 2003). Within many organisations, the distinction between core and periphery jobs tends to become clearer and often gets depicted in a distinction between permanent and various types of temporary employment, including TWA employment (Jessop, 1994; Kalleberg, 2003; Rubery & Grimshaw, 2003; Standing, 2009). In Belgium, for example, 515,658 workers were, at least for 1 day, employed as a TWA employee in 2013, compared to 31,000 workers in 1980 (Denys, 2015; Federgon, 2015). The strategically important core jobs, characterised by higher pay, higher status, job security, more advantageous working conditions, and career opportunities, are consequently almost becoming formally distinguished from peripheral jobs by means of contractual forms (Jessop, 1994; Kalleberg, 2003; Rubery & Grimshaw, 2003; Standing, 2009). Workers who (have to) accept peripheral jobs may face “job discrimination” in the sense that they get trapped in peripheral jobs, although they desire to work in core jobs (Elcioglu, 2010). TWA employment presents an exemplary case of peripheral employment: high job insecurity (Håkansson, Isidorsson, & Kantelius, 2012; Hall, 2006; Olofsdotter, 2012; Silla, Gracia, & Peiro, 2005), low wages and few benefits (Elcioglu, 2010; Jahn & Pozzoli, 2013; Kojima, 2015), unpredictable or irregular schedules
(Aletraris, 2010; Håkansson, Isidorsson, & Strauss-Raats, 2013; Kalleberg, Reskin, & Hudson, 2000), little training and poor employability (Håkansson et al., 2013; Knox, 2010), and poor social relations at work (Forde & Slater, 2006; Gundert & Hohendanner, 2014; Winkler & Mahmood, 2015). Moreover, a general characteristic that increases the vulnerability of TWA workers is the triadic employment relationship: they have to deal with both a “de jure” employer (the temporary employment agency) and a “de facto” employer (the client-company), whereas other employees are only bound to one single employer (Aletraris, 2010; Underhill & Quinlan, 2011). Still, a minority of TWA workers is positive about TWA employment, and does not feel being stuck in an outsider position. In such cases, TWA employment is associated with experiences of freedom, flexibility, motivation, and opportunities for learning and acquiring experience. TWA employment then often serves as a stepping-stone into permanent employment (Bosmans et al., 2015; De Cuypers et al., 2008; De Witte et al., 2001). This type of TWA employment can hardly be seen as making part of the peripheral labour market. An important factor that contributes to positive experiences regarding TWA employment is the extent of control over the employment situation and career that is experienced, which is manifested in the ability to consciously choose TWA employment, or to pick and refuse jobs according to own preferences. Often, such high control is informed by the valuable skills some workers have at their disposal (Bosmans et al., 2015; Bosmans, De Cuypers, Vanroelen, & De Witte, 2015). We can expect that social relations at work are more positive for workers who are generally positive about TWA employment. However, in line with the clear majority of the literature presenting TWA employment as peripheral employment, this study is focused on TWA employees in outsider positions. We assume that employees in core jobs, in turn, can generally be considered as the established group. This assumed established-outsider figuration finds support in current research.

Power imbalances between TWA employees and their permanent colleagues constitute a first issue in the development of an established-outsider figuration. Compared to permanent workers, TWA employees often experience difficulties in standing up for their rights (Bosmans et al., 2015; Padavic, 2005) and are less likely to have a say at their workplace, both individually (Hall, 2006; Kirkpatrick & Hoque, 2006; Winkler & Mahmood, 2015) or through union representation (Bartkiw, 2012; Byoung-Hoon & Frenkel, 2004). Second, there is evidence that permanent workers use stigmatisation practices because they sometimes perceive temporary agency workers as a threat to their own positions (Boyce et al., 2007; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). De Cuypers, Sora, De Witte, Caballer, and Peiro (2009) advanced the existence of a relationship between the percentage of temporary workers and a climate of job insecurity among permanent workers. Moreover, Olsen (2006) established that the core workers in her study complained about the TWA employees being “too integrated”. Furthermore, stigmatisation does occur more frequently in cases where core workers perceive the TWA employees to be responsible for their inferior position and when stigmatising characteristics are
more visible (e.g. when TWA employees need to wear different work suits) (Boyce et al., 2007; Crocker et al., 1998).

Also mechanisms promoting maintenance of the established-outsider relations are highlighted in the literature. A good example is TWA employees’ impression of getting unfairly blamed by supervisors or permanent colleagues when things go wrong, as is seen in the studies of Kirkpatrick & Hoque (2006) and Rogers (1995). Furthermore, temporary (agency) employees often feel that permanent employees, supervisors, and managers treat them differently: as outsiders, or not as a “real members” of the organisation (Kirkpatrick & Hoque, 2006; Knox, 2010; Padavic, 2005; Winkler & Mahmood, 2015). This exclusion is expressed through mechanisms of discrimination, such as not being invited to social events (Byoung-Hoon & Frenkel, 2004; Knox, 2010; Padavic, 2005; Winkler & Mahmood, 2015). Moreover, processes of stigmatisation have also been highlighted in the literature, including being depicted as inferior, low-skilled, incompetent, less intelligent, or as having a weak work ethic (Boyce et al., 2007; Kojima, 2015; Rogers, 1995). Such stigmatising processes, conscious or not, can even be materialised, for example, through the obligatory wearing of different uniforms, affirming the difference between contingent and permanent workers (Byoung-Hoon & Frenkel, 2004).

Stigmatisation and exclusion can foster a negative cycle that is difficult to breach, leaving TWA employees with few possibilities for changing their situation. Moreover, fear of job loss makes it difficult to raise voice over perceived injustice. In many cases permanent employees have a degree of authority over the work of TWA employees. Employers often instruct permanent employees to keep an eye on TWA employees. In some cases permanent colleagues have some decision-authority over contract extensions for TWA workers. As a consequence, TWA employees often feel obliged to be obedient, for example, by accepting dull and dangerous tasks transferred to them by permanent workers (Bosmans et al., 2015). Moreover, Byoung-Hoon and Frenkel (2004) and Winkler and Mahmood (2015) showed how management tends to collude with regular workers in various discriminative practices, reaffirming the lower status of temporary workers.

Although previous research supports the existence of an established-outsider figuration in the context of TWA employment and gives some clues about the underlying dynamics establishing and maintaining this figuration, our understanding regarding the underlying dynamics is still scattered and limited. In response, this study aims to make an original contribution by giving a deeper understanding of the underlying dynamics of the established-outsider figuration in the context of TWA employment. Using a narrative approach, we present a coherent story that focuses on workplace social relations and inter-group dynamics to reveal how and why temporary agency workers can become and remain outsiders struggling with problematic employment relations. Special attention is paid to insights from the established-outsider theory (e.g. the role played by cohesion and group charisma of permanent employees) that have not yet been advanced in the literature about TWA employment.
METHODS

Sample

The data used for this study come from 10 in-depth interviews with Flemish (the Dutch-speaking population of Belgium) workers who had more than 1 year of experience with TWA employment and/or who had done at least four different TWA jobs during the 2 years before the interview. The interviewees were sampled in a targeted way, driven by a theory-based sampling method. This means that researchers sample people on the basis of their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs (Patton, 2002). In our case, we only selected information-rich interviewees who were not in TWA employment as a deliberate choice, but rather preferred to be in a permanent job. This choice was deliberate and informed by the specific research objective, that is, to demonstrate the origin and maintenance of established-outsider figurations in the context of TWA employment. The focus of this study does not preclude the fact that TWA employees can have positive employment experiences as well, as has been documented elsewhere (Bosmans et al., 2015). The characteristics of our interviewees are presented in Table I.

The TWA employees were selected through different recruitment sources. The first source (two respondents) was a primary health care non-governmental organisation (NGO) situated in working class neighbourhoods. Their regularly subscribed patient population consists of both healthy and unhealthy persons. The general practitioners of this NGO contacted members who met the selection criteria of the researchers and convinced them to participate in the study. In case of consent, the researcher contacted them. Our second recruitment source was a trade union. Here, selection was based on anonymous testimonials of TWA employees who had recently shared their experiences with TWA employment through a call on a trade union website. A staff member of the trade union asked the employees for consent to participate in our study after selecting them on the basis of their testimonial (six respondents). These testimonials were only used to select TWA employees for an interview. All information on these respondents included in the current paper is derived from the in-depth interviews that were conducted afterwards.

Table I. Characteristics of the interviewees.

| Pseudonym interviewee | Sex   | Highest educational level          | Age  | Occupational class   |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------------------|------|----------------------|
| Sally                 | Woman | Secondary education               | 57   | Blue-collar          |
| An                    | Woman | Secondary education               | 50   | Blue-collar          |
| Angela                | Woman | Secondary education               | 37   | Blue-collar          |
| Olivia                | Woman | Secondary education               | 51   | White-collar         |
| Emma                  | Woman | Tertiary education                | 35   | White-collar         |
| Mia                   | Woman | Secondary education               | 49   | Blue-collar          |
| Jason                 | Man   | Secondary education               | 23   | Blue-collar          |
| Patrick               | Man   | Secondary education               | 49   | Blue-collar          |
| Marc                  | Man   | Lower than secondary education    | 40   | Blue-collar          |
| Debby                 | Woman | Lower than secondary education    | 24   | Blue-collar          |
An open call for an interview using the communication channels of the same trade union rendered us one additional respondent. Our third partner was an organisation helping hard-to-employ people with their job search. Also in this case, the staff selected and contacted one worker to participate in our study.

**Analytical procedure**

A narrative perspective was applied to the data. Narrative studies depart from a phenomenological emphasis on understanding lived experiences and perceptions of experiences (Creswell, 2007). This allowed us to use personal narratives as windows into the lived experience of the narrators and to achieve empathic understanding of that experience. Here, the object of the study is the experience of the person telling a story, not just the story itself (Russell & Ryan, 2010). The narrative perspective focuses on the coherence of the story and the role of different actors and their meanings in the interactions (Andrews et al., 2013). Such a perspective is particularly interesting for two reasons: First, our study focuses on social relations in the dynamic of the established-outsider figuration between TWA employees and permanent employees, that is, development, maintenance, and difficulties in breaching this dynamic. Second, we focus on the role of different actors on the shop floor, that is, TWA employees, permanent employees, supervisors, and managers. For this purpose, we looked at the stories of TWA employees and focused on how they perceive their employment relations.

In line with the requirements of the narrative approach, we used semi-structured in-depth interviews based on a topic list (Butler-Kisber, 2010). The topic list had a general focus on the quality of employment of TWA employees. One of the main broad topics with specific interest to this study was the employment relationship of TWA employees with permanent colleagues and other TWA employees. To address the different topics during the interviews, the interviewer departed from two stories: (1) a perspective emphasizing the previous professional career of the employee, and (2) the structure of a typical working day. Throughout the stories, the interviewer probed into the various topics related to the quality of employment in TWA employment. This way of interviewing allowed us to analyse the interviews from a narrative perspective focussing on the dynamic of the established-outsider figuration. The interviews were conducted between April 2012 and November 2013 in the interviewee’s home or in another quiet place chosen by the respondent. The length of the interviews varied between 62 and 160 minutes. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim and subsequently reread several times.

To analyse the transcripts, we first coded them with reference to insights and mechanisms inspired by the established-outsider theory (e.g. gossip, inferiority, group charisma, stigmatisation, exclusion, and self-image) in the context of TWA employment. After coding the transcripts, we searched for the dynamic of the established-outsider figuration. In particular, in line with our narrative approach, we focused on how and why the figuration arises, how it is maintained, and why TWA employees in outsider positions have difficulties to breach the dynamic. By repeatedly reading the coded transcripts, we also identified
the role of the different actors, that is, TWA employees, permanent employees, supervisors, and managers, in the interactions occurring on the shop floor, although always perceived from the perspective of the TWA employees.

RESULTS

The results are ordered following the dynamic underlying the established-outsider configuration, that is, development, maintenance, and hindrances for breaching the configuration once it is settled. Three different groups of actors are important in the stories of the TWA employees:

- the “established” permanent workers, who have generally been working for a long time in the organisation;
- the TWA employees who can be seen as “the outsiders” are new employees who, in most cases, do not stay in the organisation for a long time; and
- supervisors and managers of client-companies, who are the “de jure” and “de facto” employers of the permanent employees and only the “de facto” employers of the TWA employees.

How and why the established-outsider configuration arises: cohesion, group charisma, and power differences

Regarding cohesion and group charisma, in many cases permanent employees form a close community within the organisation, because they have known each other for a longer time. They can be labelled as the “old” group, as defined by Elias and Scotson (1985). They form a cohesive group, characterised by group charisma, which means that they have an idealised image of their own group. Exacerbating the contrast with TWA employees strengthens this cohesion. TWA employees testified that they were blamed for being anomic in terms of not complying with the norms and habits of permanent workers, but these norms and habits were often not made explicit. This is similar to the situation where the members of the estate were blamed for not participating in the community, whereas the gossip and stigmatisation by the established group restrained them from doing so. For example, An, a 50-year-old single woman, wanted to do her work tasks as was asked by the client-employer but differently from the way the job was done by the permanent workers. Her permanent colleagues often frowned upon her behaviour, but she was often not told how to perform her job in line with the requirements of these permanent colleagues. Her interpretation of this confusing situation was that permanent workers were afraid the supervisor would prefer the temporary agency workers’ working methods, and that permanent workers may feel threatened when temporary agency workers become competitors for permanent jobs:

They’re also scared that you’re going to do the job exactly as it should be done, while they don’t bother about this. And then they tell you that they’ve done it like that for ages: ‘Normally it should be done like this, but I do it like this’. And if you insist on following the correct procedure, they don’t like you. You have to understand that when we enter a company, we don’t know any better. If they teach us how to do the job correctly, we’ll carry it out like that. But people who’ve worked there for ages have
worked out their own strategies, because they think the job is done quicker that way, but in fact, it's not the way it should be done. The regular workers think you’re going to spoil everything and this causes friction in the workplace.³

They’re thinking, ‘Oh no, not another temporary agency worker . . . Oh no, now I have to explain things all over again!’; which really doesn’t feel nice. So they give you only half an explanation or none at all.

TWA employees experience difficulties becoming attached to each other for different reasons. First of all, they are newcomers who do not know each other. In addition, because they regularly work in different places, they get discouraged by always having to make social ties in every new workplace. An explains:

A lot of temporary agency workers develop the fear of becoming attached. You’re in a company now, but for how long? Why build up relationships with co-workers if you’ll probably be working somewhere else next month? You have to get used to new people and new machines over and over again, and after a while you start wondering why you bother.

Moreover, TWA employees are often competitors for permanent jobs at the client-companies. Emma, a highly skilled single mother, observed that client-companies emphasize TWA employees’ “personal performances” when having to choose a TWA employee for a permanent contract.

Regarding power differences, the greater cohesion among permanent workers enables them to reserve powerful positions for their members, and to exclude TWA employees, which in turn strengthens the cohesion of the established group. This is illustrated in different ways.

First, the positions of “trade union representative” are assigned to permanent employees. TWA employees cannot claim these positions legally, and even if they could, the majority of permanent workers would never elect them. Moreover, TWA employees do not have the right to participate in the union elections, which is experienced as highly unfair by Patrick, an older employee who used to be a union representative himself:

There were trade union elections but temporary agency workers aren’t allowed to participate. Why? Especially in companies where people have worked for years, temporary agency workers too are part of the firm, aren’t they? But they’re not allowed to vote. Temporary agency workers have many duties, but few rights.

This structural power difference between permanent employees and TWA employees has consequences for the social relations on the shop floor. From the perspective of our interviewees, trade union representatives tend to defend the rights of members from their own group. Many TWA employees complained that the trade union representatives on the shop floor were not or were less concerned about the issues faced by TWA employees, as illustrated in a quote of Patrick on the practice of employing TWA employees for several years in a row:

Like you’re a travelling passer-by, that’s how they [the trade union representatives] look at you. At company X it was the same thing. There I told one of the trade union representatives that they should stand on their authority. After six months, let’s say, a decision should
be made: if the company is satisfied with the temporary agency worker, he can stay, if they’re not, he should go. But they shouldn’t let this go on for years. I don’t understand that the union representatives take part in this game.

The lack of support by trade union representatives is also shown by the example of Emma, who contacted a trade union representative because she did not get a day off which she was entitled to:

All she did was see whether she could get some information – she’s just an employee, of course – and for the rest she reasoned ‘what’s mine is mine, the rest is for the rest’. She’s not going to endanger her position or risk her neck. This is the feeling she gave me as a representative.

Second, due to power advantages, it is easier for permanent workers to claim better positions and related work tasks, so that the stupid, dull, tough, dirty, or less interesting jobs are assigned to TWA employees, as illustrated by Angela: “You are working like a fool and the regulars are doing the pleasant jobs. Agency workers are treated in a totally different way”. This obviously creates tension and raises feelings of envy and injustice among TWA workers. A quote from Jason, a young TWA employee, illustrates this mechanism:

So only the temporary agency workers were tying up and the regulars were driving. And I used to tell them: ‘This is not right, I’ve been working here for six months and I also want to drive the forklift truck once in a while and not always have to do the tying up’. But it’s impossible to go against them.

Third, according to the TWA employees, dismissal is very arbitrary in many cases, and in that way reflects their powerless position. One negative remark can be a reason for dismissal, even if this remark was not verified. This power distinction can affect the social relations among TWA workers and permanent workers because the TWA workers can envy the permanent workers. In the following quote, Jason explains the power differences between permanent workers and TWA workers that are reflected in their relations with the employer:

I used to go against them [permanent employees], but now I don’t even bother anymore. They are always right, aren’t they? As a temporary agency worker you don’t have many rights, while regular workers find themselves in a more powerful position. They are working for the company, while you’re only working for an agency. They [client-company] can make one phone call to the agency and you’re out. From one day to the next they can tell temporary agency workers not to come back tomorrow, while if they want to get rid of a regular worker, they first have to send them a written warning, and a letter saying this and that, et cetera.

Mechanisms maintaining the established-outsider figuration: stigmatisation and exclusion

The established group tends to think of itself as the superior group. This self-image is maintained through mechanisms of stigmatisation (spreading prejudices, contempt and gossip) and exclusion. These are fearsome weapons by which the established group maintains its superior identity and keeps the others in their inferior position (Elias and Scotson, 1985). In the
following paragraphs, we show how stigmatisation and exclusion are manifested in the context of TWA employment.

TWA workers are stigmatised in several ways.

First, they feel that (some) permanent employees have prejudices about them, including labels of incompetence, unreliability, and laziness.

Second, TWA employees have the feeling that many permanent employees and client-employers treat them with contempt and consequently consider them as inferior. This gets manifested in name-giving and in a lack of appreciation and respect for TWA employees’ work. For example, Mia was regularly referred to as “the temp”, which reaffirmed her inferior status. An also complained about a lack of rewards and appreciation:

Yes, I’ve had to find counselling in order to process the whole thing. Because in such a situation you don’t feel well. Everyone likes to receive a pat on the back or likes being told that they’ve done a good job, to get a reward, but you never get a reward. Your reward is your weekly or monthly pay check. And you never know whether you’ll get a reward next month as well. It’s possible the government will have to reward you with unemployment pay [sarcastic].

Moreover, TWA employees claim that supervisors and managers of client-companies also affirm their inferior position. When we asked Debby, a young blue-collar worker, to talk about rewards that TWA workers did not receive in contrast to the regulars, she mentioned “respect” in a very convinced way. Debby meant that supervisors treat TWA employees with less respect than permanent employees. Furthermore, sometimes it is openly said that permanent employees are given priority in some regards, which highlights the superior power position of permanent employees. Being allowed to take holidays provides a good example. Taking holidays can be difficult for TWA employees, because the permanent employees are often given priority. Another example comes from Marc: he had to do afternoon shifts all the time because regular workers preferred to do the morning shifts.

As a third mechanism, blame-gossip was often used to spread and reaffirm prejudices. Jason, for example, had a dispute with a permanent worker. In response, the permanent worker lied to their superior about Jason to seek revenge on him. As a consequence, Jason lost his job:

Had this permanent colleague gone up to tell the boss that he had seen me using my cell phone, I would’ve been fired immediately, on the spot. Just because I confronted him! [Actually Jason did not get a new daily contract anymore at the client-company, but perceived this as getting fired]

Jason gave also another example:

Usually they can use little things against you in order to finish you off. For example, there are always some regulars who keep an eye on the temporary agency workers. If they want, they can go tell the team leader that the temporary agency worker has been driving around carelessly with the fork-lift truck. And then you have to go explain yourself to the team leader. The team leader might even agree that he hasn’t seen you make any mistakes. But still, you understand, that’s where it ends. Even if the team leader didn’t see anything for himself, it’s still considered to be
your first warning. They believe
the regulars more than they believe
the temporary agency workers. If
something does come to their at-
tention, then it’s your tough luck.

Such practices put a great deal of power
in the hands of permanent workers, who
are, according to the TWA employees,
fully aware of their decisive impact on
the continuation of the TWA workers’
employment. Moreover, Debby testified
that regular workers were sabotaging the
work of agency workers to make them
look incompetent.

Additionally, exclusionary mechan-
isms against TWA employees take differ-
ent shapes. TWA employees may not be
considered “real” members of the team
or organisation. Too much contact with
TWA workers from the part of a perma-
nent worker may be seen as diminishing
the superior identity or social status of
this permanent worker in the eyes of
other permanent colleagues. Therefore,
permanent workers may try to avoid con-
tact with the TWA employees. Some-
times TWA employees are only accepted
within the well-described context of the
work task, but not during breaks or after-
work social activities:

The others threw parties and you
would hear rumours about them.
Or they would go out for dinner
together without you. And of
course on Monday they would be
talking about what had happened
that weekend, even with the bosses.
[...] I felt unaccepted, or at least,
‘less’ than them. They know you
work there but you’re just a tem-
porary worker, a bit like a disposable
product. (Mia)

When there’s a staff party or they go
out for bowling and dinner for some
or other occasion, the temporary
agency workers aren’t invited. You
just can’t sign up. They hand out a
piece of paper to write your name
on, but this piece of paper is just not
handed to you. (Patrick)

When we asked Patrick how he felt about
that, he answered the following:

Well, there were ten people work-
ing at my department and eight of
them went bowling, and someone
else and I just weren’t allowed to
join in. You’re being excluded, or
at least that’s how it feels.

Exclusion is also affirmed in the relation
between TWA employees and the man-
agement. Again, the fact of not being a
“real member” of the organisation is
highlighted and the superior position of
the established group gets reinforced
through certain management practices:

Company Y, which is a world-wide
company by now, handed out a
little truck for Christmas which
had a chocolate figure in it and
three chocolate coins. They prob-
ably buy these by the hundred
thousands, so for them the cost is
minimal. There were signs saying
that everyone could go collect their
present, but the temporary agency
workers had to keep working. It
was decided higher-up that the pre-
sents weren’t for temporary agency
workers. (Patrick)

TWA employees also testified that client-
employers excluded them from access to
information, perpetuating their inferior
position:

Whenever there was an announce-
ment, we had to continue working;
we weren’t allowed to know what
the announcement was about. [...] They
were about [little] things like
production, or about a complaint
that had come in. The first time
they actually said so explicitly.
During the break they had said that an announcement was to be made, and when it came in I followed the others to go listen. But they told us that we had to continue working, that we didn’t have to know what the announcement was about. (Patrick)

**Why temporary agency workers are stuck in their outsider position**

According to the interviews, it appears that TWA employees are often not able to escape from their inferior position for several reasons. In the stories of the TWA employees four reasons emerged.

First, the self-image of TWA employees is negatively affected by experiences of stigmatisation and exclusion, whereas self-esteem is a critical condition for change. For example, Mia developed doubts about her capacities as a worker: “Am I not good enough for you? Do you think I’m inferior?”. Second, TWA employees sometimes misbehave in response to stigmatisation and social exclusion, which then gives permanent workers further reasons for stigmatizing and excluding them. In this way, the stigma becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. This mechanism explains misbehaviour, but also discouragement among TWA workers. An provides us with a good example: as a consequence of her disappointments, she could no longer motivate herself to be flexible:

I’ve become unable to make efforts for a company to be flexible. I used to give a 150% when I was working for a company, but now I just can’t do it anymore. I’ve stopped believing that I will get a permanent contract. I’ve experienced so many disappointments. Yesterday I was talking to some colleagues who were complaining they were so tired, because after New Year they had to go find a new job and start all over again. The exhaustion really weighs on you mentally.

Third, it also became clear from the accounts of TWA employees in our study how their attempts to diminish power imbalances with permanent workers tend to only increase stigmatisation. For example, Jason stood up against a permanent colleague because the permanent colleague had treated him with disrespect (see p.14). The personal consequences of Jason’s action were severe: he lost his job. As a consequence, most TWA employees obey the permanent employees, managers, and supervisors that discriminate them, as illustrated by Olivia:

To be honest, I used to demand that they should treat me correctly, but if you’ve been unemployed and have been working as an agency worker, you’re more alert about possible consequences; you learn to keep your complaints to yourself.

Moreover, an important motive for organisations to engage TWA employees is to create a kind of “labour buffer”, protecting the permanent employees against dismissal because of market fluctuations. This creates a contradictory situation: on the one hand, the established group is excluding TWA employees for not being “real colleagues”, while on the other hand, it is precisely the TWA employees that provide for the permanent employees’ guarantee of employment continuation. The same holds with regard to the performance of flexible and unsocial work hours. These are often taken up by TWA employees, exempting the permanent workers from these less preferable
working hours. From the perspective of the permanent workers and trade union representatives, these are reasons to maintain the inferior position of TWA employees. As a consequence, these situations can be considered a cause of the inferior position of TWA employees, but also a reason why they remain stuck in their position.

Finally, the inferior position of TWA employees is also manifested outside the shop floor. TWA employees are sometimes stigmatised as unreliable or lazy workers, or as workers who are unable to keep stable employment. Marc for example, a TWA employee who is frequently unemployed because he is not able to find stable employment, is often stigmatised by acquaintances. People ask him "why he is unemployed again", while claiming that he is lazy. Such a stigmatisation causes a vicious circle preventing TWA employees from being contracted in permanent employment and enabling them to escape from their inferior position:

Sometimes they tell you that your CV is 'instable'. But then help it become stable [cynical laughter]! These are the kinds of stupid arguments they use against you. (Emma)

DISCUSSION

This article illustrates the relevance of the established-outsider theory for the study of employment relations between TWA and permanent employees. By adopting this theoretical framework, our study gives an innovative perspective on employment relations as experienced by TWA employees. The established-outsider theory can be regarded as a helpful tool in providing an in-depth understanding of how and why problematic relations appear in the context of TWA employment, how they are maintained, and why temporary agency workers in outsider positions have the feeling of not being able to improve their situation. We believe our paper provides new insights to the established-outsider theory in a labour market context.

First, Elias and Scotson (1985) stress the "double bind" in figurations, but they fail to demonstrate this in their own case study (Hogenstijn et al., 2008). In our results, this "double bind" holds a critical position. It is reflected in the way TWA employees obey the permanent employees because permanent employees may influence decisions on contract renewal or future permanent positions for TWA employees. In turn, permanent employees depend on TWA employees, primarily because this group provides them with a buffer against dismissal and takes up the least preferred tasks and working hours.

Second, Elias and Scotson focused on relations between groups at the micro level in their established-outsider theory. We went one step further, in line with critics of the established-outsider theory (Hogenstijn et al., 2008). Although relational aspects were our main focus, we showed that structural factors determining the context of interpersonal interactions cannot be disregarded. For example, permanent workers have a stronger power position than TWA employees because they are protected from dismissal by job security regulations. This shows how the (regulatory) environment plays a critical role in the development of an established-outsider figuration. The established workers can abuse their power because structural factors allow them to...
do so. As a consequence, TWA employees may feel powerless and feel obliged to be obedient towards the established group. Moreover, permanent employees can protect their secure position by not accepting the TWA employees, that is, they may harass TWA employees or refuse to explain working methods, because TWA employees may be seen as competitors for their permanent, secure jobs. Accordingly, to investigate the importance of structural factors, an interesting route for future research would be to probe into TWA employment relations in different labour market contexts. We can expect that discrimination of TWA employees is more prevalent in labour markets with strong dual employment regulation, resulting in clear differences in legal rights and protection of permanent and TWA (or other temporary) employees. By contrast, discrimination can be expected to be less prevalent in labour markets where non-discrimination legislation regarding TWA employment is enforced and controlled.

Third, Elias and Scotson’s analysis has been criticized for being too static (Hogenstijn et al., 2008). In response to that criticism, we highlighted the dynamics behind the figuration. First, we discovered a negative dynamic showing that attempts to breach the figuration can lead to more stigmatisation. Second, some TWA employees testified that the established group often more readily accepted them when they had worked in the organisation for a longer time. Angela, for example, mentioned: “If someone is your colleague for three years, he does not look to you as a temporary agency worker anymore”. This finding is in line with literature that argues that contact of sufficient frequency and duration can serve to reduce stereotypical conceptions of a stigmatised group (Boyce et al., 2007). Moreover, not all TWA employees encounter problematic employment relations. Therefore, an interesting issue for future research is to further explore, for example, by means of large-scale survey methods, in which circumstances problematic employment relations between temporary agency workers and permanent workers tend to arise, and in which circumstances they tend to be absent. Our study points already at some interesting factors of possible importance in that regard, namely the social status of the established group (e.g. level of power and group charisma), the level of cohesion in the established group, and whether temporary agency workers are seen as a threat to job security by permanent workers. We also assume that characteristics of the TWA employees themselves are important in this regard: for example, we can expect that a TWA employee who enters an organisation as an expert to help the established workers with specific tasks will most likely not be stigmatised.

Implications

This research may inspire several policy recommendations. In the legislation in different European countries (e.g. Belgium) the equal treatment of TWA employees and permanent employees (e.g. regarding wages, benefits, and working hour regulations) and the health and safety protection of TWA employees are promoted (Schömann & Guedes, 2012). However, TWA employees experience that compliance with this legislation is often weak,
because control over its application and sanctioning is rather poorly developed (Bosmans et al., 2015). This ties in with research findings that show that non-discrimination regulation is not sufficient when appropriate control and sanctioning are absent (Nienhuëser & Matiaske, 2006). Better enforcement of legal standards could strengthen the powerless position of TWA employees.

However, many of the problems associated with the employment relations of TWA employees (e.g. harassment and stigmatisation) cannot be solved by legislation alone and should be seen in interaction with relational factors. For example, Elias and Scotson (1985) pointed at the inability of a “closed” group to show empathy towards the other group. This suggests paying more attention to creating awareness among permanent employees (and managers and supervisors) about the negative impact of their discriminatory, harassing, and stigmatising behaviour on TWA employees (e.g. in terms of their mental well-being). This could be pursued by means of consciousness-raising campaigns. Trade unions could play an important role here. In general, trade union representatives should be made aware of the consequences of discriminatory behaviour on the shop floor and should get incentives to defend TWA employees, because they are expected to defend all workers in an organisation and not only those who are in permanent employment. Moreover, organisations can suspend acts (e.g. not giving presents to TWA employees) and get rid of symbols (e.g. different clothing) that make TWA employees’ different status more visible. By contrast, they should invest effort in better integrating TWA employees among their permanent workforce.

**CONCLUSION**

This study, adopting a narrative approach using in-depth interviews, enabled us to get insight into the dynamic of the established-outsider figuration in the context of TWA employment. We revealed how cohesion, group charisma, and power possession in the group of the permanent employees, and a lack of these resources among temporary agency workers, can shape an established-outsider figuration between these groups. We also showed how the mechanisms of stigmatisation and exclusion maintain this figuration. Furthermore, we illustrated how a lack of power, low self-esteem, and a loss of motivation keep the temporary agency workers in outsider positions in their inferior position.

Moreover, the established-outsider dynamic should be seen as a negative cycle in which the phases (development, maintenance, and difficulties to breach the dynamic) can overlap and strengthen each other. For example, stigmatisation and exclusion are mechanisms helping to maintain the figuration, but can also be seen as triggers informing further stigmatisation. Such a cycle can prove difficult to breach. As another example, TWA employees form a labour buffer to protect permanent employees from dismissal and from doing less interesting tasks and less desirable working hours. This can be considered as a cause of the inferior position of TWA employees, but also a reason for keeping them in an underprivileged position.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The authors thank the temporary agency employees and the contact persons of the organisations that helped them in finding these workers for their participation in this scientific research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING
The authors declare that there are no competing interests/conflicts of interest regarding this article based on the ICMJE statement on conflicts of interest. This work was supported by a research grant (FWO1.1.B13.12N) that was assigned to the first author by the Research Foundation Flanders.

Notes
1. Wet betreffende de sociale verkiezingen [Law concerning the social elections]. http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=C30&la=C30&cn=2007120430&table_name=wet
2. Temporary employment agencies, which are the “de juro” employers of TWA employees are excluded from the analysis since the analysis focuses on employment relations on the shop floor.
3. The quotes are all translations from Dutch to English.

REFERENCES
ABVV Coördinatie Interim. (2012). Uitzendarbeid: Sectorale gids 2011–2012. [Temporary agency employment: Sectorial guide 2011–2012.] Retrieved from http://issuu.com/abvv/docs/abvv_interim_sectorale_gids?e=1432543/2680505
Alétraris, L. (2010). How satisfied are they and why? A study of job satisfaction, job rewards, gender and temporary agency workers in Australia. Human Relations, 63(8), 1129–1155.
Andrews, M., Squire, C., & Tamboukou, M. (2013). Doing narrative research. London: Sage.
Arrowsmith, J. (2006). Temporary agency work in an enlarged European Union. Eurofound report. Dublin: Eurofound.
Bartkiw, T.J. (2012). Unions and temporary help agency employment. Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations, 67(3), 453–476.
Bosmans, K., De Cuyper, N., Vanroelen, C., & De Witte, H. (2015). Is uitzendarbeid een valkuil of een toegangspoort? [Is temporary agency employment a trap or a stepping-stone?] In J. Denys (Ed.), Uitzendwerk 360° Handboek. [Temporary agency work 360° Handbook.] (pp. 109–118). Leuven: Randstad & LannooCampus.
Bosmans, K., Hardonk, S., De Cuyper, N., & Vanroelen, C. (2015). Explaining the relation between precarious employment and mental well-being. A qualitative study among temporary agency workers. Work. A Journal of Prevention Assessment & Rehabilitation. doi: 10.3233/WOR-152136 [In Press].
Bosch, G. (2004). Towards a new standard employment relationship in Western Europe. British Journal of Industrial Relations, 42(4), 617–636.
Boyce, A.S., Ryan, A.M., Imus, A.L., & Morgeson, F.P. (2007). ‘Temporary worker, permanent loser?’ A model of the stigmatization of temporary workers. Journal of Management, 33(1), 5–29.
Butler-Kisber, L. (2010). Qualitative inquiry. Thematic, narrative and arts-informed perspectives. London: Sage.
Byoung-Hoon, L., & Frenkel, S.J. (2004). Divided workers: Social relations between contract and regular workers in a Korean auto company. Work Employment & Society, 18(3), 507–530.
Creswell, J.W. (2007). Qualitative inquiry & research design. Choosing among five approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Crocker, J., Major, B., & Steele, C. (1998). Social stigma. In D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), The handbook of social psychology (pp. 504–553). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
De Cuyper, N., De Jong, J., De Witte, H., Isaksson, K., Rigotti, T., & Schalk, R. (2008). Literature review of theory
and research on the psychological impact of temporary employment: Towards a conceptual model. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 10*(1), 25–51.

De Cuyper, N., Sora, B., De Witte, H., Caballer, A., & Peiro, J.M. (2009). Organizations’ use of temporary employment and a climate of job insecurity among Belgian and Spanish permanent workers. *Economic and Industrial Democracy, 30*(4), 564–591.

Denys, J. (2015). *Uitzendwerk 360° Handboek.* [Temporary agency work 360° Handbook]. Leuven: Randstad & LannooCampus.

De Witte, H., Vander Steene, T., Dejonckheere, J., Forrier, A., Sels, L., & Van Hootegem, G. (2001). Contractuele flexibiliteit: bewuste leefstijl of bij gebrek aan beter? [Contractual flexibility: Conscious lifestyle or due to a lack of anything better?] *Over.Werk. Tijdschrift van het Steunpunt WAT, 11*(4). Leuven: Steunpunt Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Vorming/Uitgeverij Acco.

Elcioglu, E.F. (2010). Producing precarity: The temporary staffing agency in the labor market. *Qualitative Sociology, 33*(2), 117–136.

Elias, N., & Scotson, J.L. (1985). *De gevestigden en de buitenstaanders. Een studie van de spanningen en machtsverhoudingen tussen twee arbeidersbuurten* [Translated by Cas Wouters from ‘The established and the outsiders: A sociological enquiry into community problems’ (1965) London: Cass & Company]. Den Haag: Ruward.

Federgon (2015, February 11). *Uitzendarbeid: jaarcijfers 2013.* [Temporary agency employment: annual statistics 2013]. Retrieved from http://www.federgon.be/uitzendarbeid/de-sector-in-cijfers/jaarcijfers-2013/

Fernandez-Macias, E. (2012). Job Polarization in Europe? Changes in the Employment Structure and Job Quality, 1995–2007. *Work and Occupations, 39*(2), 157–182.

Forde, C., & Slater, G. (2006). The nature and experience of agency working in Britain: What are the challenges for human resource management? *Personnel Review, 35*(2), 141–157.

Goos, M., Manning, A., & Salomons, A. (2009). Job polarization in Europe. *American Economic Review, 99*(2), 58–63.

Gundert, S., & Hohendanner, C. (2014). Do fixed-term and temporary agency workers feel socially excluded? Labour market integration and social well-being in Germany. *Acta Sociologica, 57*(2), 135–152.

Håkansson, K., Isidorsson, T., & Kantelius, H. (2012). Temporary agency work as a means of achieving flexicurity? *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies, 2*(4), 153–169.

Håkansson, K., Isidorsson, T., & Strauss-Raats, P. (2013). Work environment for staffing agency workers – The physical and psychosocial work environment of staff provided by employment agencies. *State of Knowledge Report. Stockholm: Swedish Work Environment Authority.*

Hall, R. (2006). Temporary agency work and HRM in Australia: ‘Cooperation, specialisation and satisfaction for the good of all?’. *Personnel Review, 35*(2), 158–174.

Hogenstijn, M., Van Middelkoop, D., & Terlouw, K. (2008). The established, the outsiders and scale strategies: Studying local power conflicts. *The Sociological Review, 56*(1), 144–161.

Jahn, E.J., & Pozzoli, D. (2013). The pay gap of temporary agency workers – Does the temp sector experience pay off? *Labour Economics, 24*, 48–57.

Jessop, B. (1994). The transition to post-fordism and the schumpeterian workplace state. In R. Burrows & B. Loader (Eds.), *Towards a post-fordist welfare state?* (pp. 15–37). London: Routledge.

Kalleberg, A.L. (2003). Flexible firms and labor market segmentation: Effects of workplace restructuring on jobs and workers. *Work and Occupations, 30*(2), 154–175.

Kalleberg, A.L. (2009). Precarious work, insecure workers: Employment relations in transition. *American Sociological Review, 74*(1), 1–22.

Kalleberg, A.L., Reskin, B.F., & Hudson, K. (2000). Bad jobs in America: Standard and nonstandard employment relations.
K. Bosmans et al.

and job quality in the United States. American Sociological Review, 65(2), 256–278.

Kirkpatrick, I., & Hoque, K. (2006). A retreat from permanent employment: Accounting for the rise of professional agency work in UK public services. Work, Employment & Society, 20(4), 649–666.

Knox, A. (2010). ‘Lost in translation’: An analysis of temporary work agency employment in hotels. Work, Employment & Society, 24(3), 449–467.

Kojima, S. (2015). Why do temp workers work as hard as they do?: The commitments and suffering of factory temp workers in Japan. The Sociological Quarterly, 56(2), 355–385.

Krausz, M., & Brandwein, T. (1992). Temporary help employment: The individual employee perspective. The Work Flexibility Review, 3, 75–86.

Lewchuk, W., Clarke, M., & de Wolff, A. (2008). Working without commitments: Precarious employment and health. Work, Employment & Society, 22(3), 387–406.

Lindbeck, A., & Snower, D. (1990). The insider-outsider theory of employment and unemployment. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Lindbeck, A., & Snower, D. (2001). Insiders versus outsiders. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 15(1), 165–188.

Loyal, S. (2011). A land of a hundred thousand welcomes? Understanding established and outsiders relations in Ireland. The Sociological Review, 59(Suppl. 1), 181–201.

Mitlacher, L.W. (2008). Job quality and temporary agency work: Challenges for human resource management in triangular employment relations in Germany. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 19(3), 446–460.

Nienhüser, W., & Matiaske, W. (2006). Effects of the ‘principle of non-discrimination’ on temporary agency work: Compensation and working conditions of temporary agency workers in 15 European countries. Industrial Relations Journal, 37(1), 64–77.

O’Connor, H., & Goodwin, J. (2012). Revisiting Norbert Elias’s sociology of community: Learning from the Leicester re-studies. The Sociological Review, 60(3), 476–497.

Olofsdotter, G. (2012). Workplace flexibility and control in temporary agency work. Vulnerable Groups & Inclusion, 3, 18913, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/vgi.v3i0.18913

Olsen, K.M. (2006). The role of nonstandard workers in client-organizations. Relations Industrielles-Industrial Relations, 61(1), 93–117.

Padavic, I. (2005). Laboring under uncertainty: Identity renegotiation among contingent workers. Symbolic Interaction, 28(1), 111–134.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). Qualitative research & evaluation methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rogers, J.K. (1995). Just a temp: Experience and structure of alienation in temporary clerical employment. Work and Occupations, 22(2), 137–166.

Rubery, J., & Grimshaw, D. (2003). The organization of employment. An international perspective. New York, NY: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Russell, H.B., & Ryan, G.W. (2010). Analyzing qualitative data. Systematic approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schömann, I., & Guedes, C. (2012). Temporary agency work in the European Union. Implementation of Directive 2008/104/EC in the Member States. ETUI report. Brussels: ETUI aisbl.

Silla, I., Gracia, F.J., & Peiro, J.M. (2005). Job insecurity and health-related outcomes among different types of temporary workers. Economic and Industrial Democracy, 26(1), 89–117.

Standing, G. (2009). Work after globalization: Building occupational citizenship. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Tompa, E., Scott-Marshall, H., Dolinschi, R., Trevithick, S., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2007). Precarious employment experiences and their health consequences: Towards a theoretical framework. Work, A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation, 28(3), 209–224.

Underhill, E.M., & Quinlan, M.G. (2011). How precarious employment affects health and safety at work: The case of temporary agency workers. Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations, 66(3), 397–421.
Van Iterson, A., Mastenbroek, W., Newton, T., & Smith, D. (2002). *The civilized organization: Norbert Elias and the future of organization studies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Van Rie, T., Marx, I., & Horemans, J. (2011). Ghent revisited: Unemployment insurance and union membership in Belgium and the Nordic countries. *European Journal of Industrial Relations, 17*(2), 125–139.

Van Stolk, B., & Wouters, C. (1987). Power changes and self-respect: A comparison of two cases of established-outsider relations. *Theory, Culture & Society, 4*(2), 477–488.

Willis, P. (1981). *Learning to labor: How working class kids get working class jobs*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Winkler, I., & Mahmood, K.M. (2015). The liminality of temporary agency work: Exploring the dimensions of Danish temporary agency workers’ liminal experience. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies, 5*(1), 51–68.