HIGH

FASHION

CAPITAL

How to become a fashion intermediary:

The formation, acquiring and mobilization of fashion capital in higher fashion education.

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Abstract

The field of fashion is fast-paced and in constant fluctuation, with fashion intermediaries competing with each other to legitimate value to the products we, as consumers, eventually wear. However, who are the fashion intermediaries, and how are they created? According to Pierre Bourdieu (1993), like any other cultural field, the fashion field is built with hierarchical orders depending on the amount of symbolic capital. However, due to its high pace and ever-changing nature, the field of fashion operates differently than other cultural fields, which asks for a different, revised version of Bourdieu's field theory (1993) and the concept of capital (1989) in the context of fashion. Using field observations at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, I will demonstrate how fashion capital is formed, acquired and mobilized in the context of higher fashion education. Fashion education is chosen for this research as this is where young individuals are prepared to become the next generation of intermediaries within the field of fashion. This research will lead you through Bourdieu's theory and concepts and my argumentation on why they ask for a new take to fit the current fashion industry and field. Furthermore, new definitions of embodied, objectified, and institutionalized capital will be formulated and operationalized. Finally, I will present how I used this newly defined concept to measure and observe how fashion capital is formed, acquired and mobilized in higher fashion education and how new intermediaries are prepared to enter the professional field of fashion.

Keywords: Fashion field, education, fashion capital, Bourdieu, intermediaries

1. Introduction

"Dior launches a new collection in collaboration with Birkenstock, which is perfect for the summer!". This is one of the headlines on the front page of the Dutch Vogue Magazine website (van den Brandt, 2023), including a runway picture of a neon green leather clog. This seemingly innocent headline may hold very little value for those not interested in whether Dior launches a new shoe; however, this little sentence is actually an announcement towards everybody who wears clothes and shoes daily. This headline tells everyone that the value of Birkenstocks, before labelled as shoes for people who prefer comfort over aesthetics, has changed to an upper-class fashion must-have. Nevertheless, who legitimizes this value? Is it Dior or Birkenstock? Is it Vogue that notified everyone of the trends, or was it a fashionable individual who was spotted with the clogs and set a new trend that afterwards was picked up by high fashion designers? Intermediaries, or 'gatekeepers', are those in the fashion field who hold power to influence our taste (Mears, 2008), decide what the trends will be, and what we as consumers are offered when it comes to what we want to wear. Who are those intermediaries, and how do they obtain this kind of power? According to Pierre Bourdieu (1978; 1993), cultural intermediaries are players within the cultural field who possess a high amount of capital, not necessarily financial capital, but cultural, social, or symbolic capital. These forms of capital are distributed and obtained within the field by mastering a particular attitude or behaviour, which is referred to as embodied capital or habitus, by the cultural goods we obtain, your objectified capital, and the knowledge about the field that you can obtain through education and diploma's, the institutionalized form of capital. However, Bourdieu mainly talks about the cultural field and where fashion is placed within that field and has not considered that the fashion industry operates differently than other creative industries. Other scholars, such as Mears (2008; 2012; 2018; 2020) and Entwistle (2006), have researched the specific field of fashion, but there is still a gap in academia where there is a clear definition of the fashion field and fashion capital. Especially what the various forms of fashion capital are, how it is distributed within the field, and how fashion intermediaries are formed.

In this thesis, I will guide you through the field of fashion and the process of creating intermediaries, answering the question, *'How is fashion capital formed, acquired and mobilised within the context of higher fashion education'*. I took fashion education as a starting point, as institutions are critical players in the (un)equal distribution of capital and are a place where young future professionals are prepared to become valuable players in the

professional field of fashion. By demonstrating how capital is distributed in the field of fashion education, how students learn how to behave and what kind of attitude they need to have to position themselves within the field, how they are developing their artistic, creative and entrepreneurial skills, or how they learn to utilise their capital in order to position themselves in the field, I can understand how fashion intermediaries are made. Furthermore, the creation of intermediaries is relevant to understanding how legitimised value is given to fashion goods and how this affects our taste, how we present ourselves, and our perception of others within society.

For this research, I conducted qualitative field observations, where I took the role of an observer as a participant for the duration of 3 weeks at the fashion department of de Willem de Kooning Academy (WdKA) in Rotterdam. During this period, I observed the classes of the first- and last-year students, feedback sessions and end presentations, as well as interactions between students, instructors, and teachers. In addition to the observations, I had various unstructured conversations individually and in group settings. All the collected data is analyzed using discourse analysis, where I analyze what is being said and, equally importantly, what is not being said. This approach is relevant to detect subtle details and nuances related to power dynamics and hierarchy, as well as whether capital is distributed equally or not.

In the following chapters, I will explain how different forms of fashion capital are formed and distributed within higher fashion education. I will start with my theoretic framework in chapter 2, where I explain and define the different forms of fashion capital, embodied or habitus, objectified and institutionalized. I will then argue how they need a different approach compared to Bourdieu's definition of capital, as well as how other scholars, such as Mears (2008; 2011; 2018; 2020), Entwistle (2006) and McRobbie (2007), who previously researched the fashion field or tried to define fashion capital but missed some essential details that explain how this specific form of capital distinguishes from other forms of cultural capital, which is needed in order to operate in the field. Following up, I will clarify how the field of fashion is built based on the amount of capital, actors have in the field and how this is obtained within the field. This concept will be based on the Bourdieusian 'field theory' but will be revisited to apply it in the context of fashion, using the work of Brinkenbereir (1968) and Roccamora (2006; 2012), among other academics. Furthermore, the theory will relate to the context of education and how institutions play their part in the formation, distribution and mobilization of capital, using Kahn's (2012) and Taylor's (2021)

previous studies on privilege and elite schooling and Bill's (2009) take on fashion education, as well as other previous research that relates to both education and fashion.

In Chapter 3, following the theoretical framework, I explain how I operationalised the different forms of fashion capital and the fashion field to measure and compare obtained data. Then, I will demonstrate how I collected empirical data within the educational fashion field. Next, I will explain how I used qualitative field observation as a research method and analysed said data using discourse analysis. In this chapter, I will introduce the field site, the Fashion Department of the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, in more detail. Finally, I will provide my reasoning behind my chosen units of analysis, which are the students and staff of the academy.

In Chapter 4, you can find the results of the analysis. Here I will start with how the fashion department functions as a field on its own, the field of fashion education, with power dynamics and hierarchical order. Next, I will dive deeper into the positioning of actors within this field and how they relate to each other, and how the amount of capital determines the positions. From there, I will go into more detail about said actors, starting with the staff, which includes teachers, instructors, career coaches and the head of the department. The focus lies on both their amount of capital and how they (un)equally distribute capital to prepare students for the professional field of fashion—following up in the next section, where I will show how fashion capital influences the hierarchical order between students and how this is formed and acquired among them, closing off with how the fashion department is mobilizing capital in the context of education.

The last chapter will conclude this research and provides a concrete answer to the research question. I will do this by linking the theory of my theoretical framework to my results. In this conclusion, I will also mention the implications of this research and suggest future research related to the fashion industry, fashion capital and fashion education.

2. Theoretical framework

To understand how the formation and distribution of fashion capital happen within higher fashion education, I will start by explaining the different forms of fashion capital and how the fashion field operates. To do so, I will use Bourdieu's theory on the cultural field and argue why Bourdieu's theories and concepts need to be revised in order to be applicable in the context of fashion. In the following section, I will start by introducing fashion capital and its different forms, embodied, objectified and institutionalized fashion capital.

2.1 Fashion Habitus: Embodied Fashion Capital

Cultural capital, as Bourdieu stated in 1970 defines it, is the 'familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society', meaning that capital is the currency needed to understand what good or bad taste is, what is 'high culture' and what is 'low culture' and is al related to your class position within society. Bourdieu mentioned three different sources to obtain said capital: Objective, through cultural goods, such as art, literature and fashion; embodied, which relates to preferences, way of thinking and manners. This would be someone's habitus. Furthermore, the last source would be institutionalized capital, obtained through education or other institutions. Each specific field comes with its own form of field-specific capital; however, as mentioned earlier, Bourdieu had never really specified the field of fashion in the sense that it is different from the cultural field. The form of capital that is mainly used concerning fashion is cultural capital; however, in the following part, I will argue why we need to have a more field-specific form of capital when it comes to researching power dynamics within fashion.

The first form of fashion capital I will explain is 'embodied capital', which Bourdieu refers to as *habitus*. Habitus, as Bourdieu explains it, embodies the relationship between an individual's dispositions and broader social forces, meaning that a person's individual ideas, opinions or tastes are influenced by their social background and upbringing (Bourdieu, 1989; Joseph, 2020). For example, a person who grew up in an upper-class household and learned how to behave and move within the cultural field will understand the specific language and manners to navigate and position themselves in the field. Bourdieu explains that social class and habitus are linked together due to the social hierarchy between the lower class and the higher class, the elites. This class distinction could indeed be relevant within the cultural field, as there is a distinction between high art and popular art. However, the distinction between

high and low/mass fashion is more blurred compared to other fields, which I will explain in more detail in the later sections of this chapter.

Nevertheless, without a clear distinction between high and low fashion, Bourdieu's definition of habitus and its link between high class and high art or fashion becomes more complicated. This asks for a specific definition of fashion habitus that is specific to the fashion field, as fashion habitus is an essential factor in moving through the fashion field to become an intermediary. Within the context of fashion education, the amount of fashion habitus is relevant in order to be accepted into highly competitive fashion schools (Chan & Cheung, 2020), as a certain level of background familiarity with the manners of the fashion field is needed successfully accepted into a fashion school (Bill, 2012) In the following section; I will explain the concept of fashion habitus and how its importance is relevant in order to understand the fashion field, as well as my argumentation on Bourdieu's definition of habitus in relation to fashion.

Entwistle (2006) explains that in order to perform within the field of fashion, both a person's habitus and the amount of capital are needed; the amount of fashion capital gives someone the skills to think creatively to anticipate the flow of taste and trends, where habitus gives them the ability to use these skills appropriately, both are in a way intertwined and reinforcing each other. Entwistle does mention fashion habitus and its relevance to the field and argues that it is based on one's knowledge of which designers or brands are hot at the moment but is based on the visibility concerning each other, a certain level of confidence and awareness of the permanent exchange of gaze (Entwistle, 2006). However, this definition of habitus is not much different from Bourdieu's habitus. It may be valid to some extent, but knowing the current zeitgeist does not automatically provide a free ticket into the fashion field. Because the fashion field and industry are so fast-paced, there is this back-and-forth between players observing and imitating each other and intertwining hierarchical relationships (Esposito, 2011). As mentioned before, social class may be less relevant compared to Bourdieu's embodied (cultural) capital when it comes to embodied fashion capital or positioning within the field, but this does not mean there is no power or hierarchy within the fashion field. According to Mears (2008), creative abilities and social status among fashion creatives are driving when it comes to positioning in the field of fashion. Kahn (2012), who studies elites and the distribution of capital within the context of elite education, explains that those with power, the 'Elites', use culture and, more specifically, cultural institutions to construct themselves as a class that is defined by rules, values, and taste. This suggests that institutions like, for example, schools are creating a 'cultural hierarchy' to draw symbolic

boundaries to exclude others based on their habitus and other forms of capital. As Kahn (2012) does not explicitly talk about fashion or fashion education, his argument is still applicable if we look at institutions in the fashion field, like fashion education. As the intermediaries in the field of fashion are constantly changing, there are some stable anchors within the field when it comes to the legitimation process (Brans & Kuipers, 2012; Mears, 2011). Institutions, such as fashion education, do have a steady amount of power within the field. Their power does not lay in legitimizing taste for the new fashion trends each season. However, they provide the knowledge and resources needed to become an intermediary in the field. As Kahn (2012) explained, institutions have the means to create cultural, or in this case, fashion hierarchy, and decide what kind of specific habitus is needed to gain access to their resources.

In Sociology of Fashion by Brenninkmeyer (1963), there is a distinction between the 'leaders' and the 'followers' of fashion; as this sounds very simple and straightforward, the concept of leaders and followers in fashion is very complex and nuanced. Everyone can be a leader depending on which social setting therein, and at the same time, be a follower in a different setting. What makes someone a true leader is someone who possesses the power to influence not only others but also someone who understands the current flow of aesthetics and is able to anticipate what will be valued in the future (Brenninkmeyer, 1963). As Brenninkmeyer explained more than half a century ago, this' talent' is still a relevant definition of a tastemaker within the fashion field. Reaching this level of talent or influence starts with mastering or possessing the correct fashion habitus. If we compare this to Bourdieu's definition of habitus or embodied cultural capital, I see the resemblance when it comes to knowing how to move through a specific field. However, the difference, which asks for a field-specific form of embodied capital relevant to fashion, is the understanding of, sometimes invisible and intangible, social dynamics and context, as well as the flexibility to adapt to those is just as important as someone's knowledge of fashion. Referring to Entwistle's (2006) definition of habitus is not necessarily incorrect; however, it lacked the essentials that distinguish fashion habitus from Bourdieu's cultural habitus, as it also asks for a high amount of social skills and artistic and creative thinking. This is where fashion education and institutes become relevant when mastering fashion habitus. Both Kahn (2011), whom I previously mentioned and Taylor (2021), who did ethnographic research on privileged schooling, argue that elite education provides the interactional skills in order to be (mis)recognized as legitimate within the field. This also suggests that institutions such as

schools are contributing to the reproduction of an unequal distribution of skills and resources needed to be a player within the field.

If I apply these findings to elite education in fashion, I do see many similarities. As mentioned earlier, for a lot of young people, being selected into a fashion school feels like an honour and a privilege due to the extreme competitiveness of fashion education and the glamourized idea of being a player within the fashion field (Bill, 2012). Bill (2012), who studied the well-being of fashion design students in Australia, explains that education in fashion functions like an ideological fiction where aspiring fashion designers are subjecting the reality of the fashion industry. The focus is not on technical or creative skills but on skills to survive in a capitalistic creative industry (Bill, 2012). Bourdieu (1993) mentioned something similar to cultural work and exploitation packed within 'charismatic ideologies'.

However, it is not really a secret that making a profit in the fashion industry is essential; in fact, it is part of the game. Fashion students are taught to commodify themselves as an important part of their performance within the field (Bill, 2002). Students who enter fashion schools are, in fact, taught how to master fashion habitus to fit in the field. They do not only learn how to technically make wearable objects or learn the creative and artistic process of designing fashion, which both are a part of fashion habitus, but they also learn how to navigate and stay relevant within the field and industry. Those who already come in with a fashion habitus are already privileged compared to those who do not. They already understand how to interact and communicate with their teachers and how they position themselves towards their peers; they know the rules of the field and understand the flow of taste; education can only help them master their already existing skill set. Those who come in with a different habitus will have a more challenging time understanding teachers and assignments, as they operate by the specific rules of the fashion field; they are less privileged compared to those with a higher amount of embodied fashion capital when it comes to identifying the resources that fashion education is distributing as not all necessary tools are noticed and seen as helpful due to their lack of understanding the field. Zhao et al. (2018) mentioned something similar when explaining the relevance between creativity and innovation in fashion and fashion entrepreneurship within the context of fashion education. A particular set of personality and social traits are needed in order to become a successful player within the professional field (Zhao et al., 2018), both in order to understand the flow of taste within the field, which is necessary to be innovative, and to convince others to follow your taste. The personality traits mentioned by Zhao et al. (2018), outgoing, open-minded, hardworking, and socially skilled, all come from the embodied form of the fashion capital. Together with

Entwistle's (2006) definition of fashion habitus, which refers to mastering the proper knowledge about fashion designers and trends, it makes up for the parts missing in Bourdieu's concept of habitus.

This does not mean that without fashion habitus, students cannot learn or accomplish anything in their education career. It takes more patience and effort from the students with less embodied fashion capital. However, as Bill (2012) mentioned, fashion schooling mainly prepares students to become actors in the fashion field and is not just preparing them to become fashion designers. Meaning that they do provide the resources in order to master fashion habitus to be prepared to function in the fashion field; however, what those resources are and how equally they are provided depends on the institution and what they classify as legitimate.

As mentioned in this section, embodied fashion capital, or fashion habitus, is a specific form of fashion capital formed due to a person's background and needs to navigate within a field, which is similar to Bourdieu's concept of cultural habitus. What makes fashion habitus different from Bourdieu's habitus is that next to familiarity with fashion, social and entrepreneurial skills are essential if a person wants to become a significant player in the fashion field. Within the field of fashion education, the amount of fashion habitus the students have when they enter fashion school varies; those with a higher amount are more privileged as they can detect the resources to increase their fashion capital easier compared to their peers with a lower amount of embodied capital. Institutions, like fashion schools, hold power to provide the opportunity for students to master the right fashion habitus and to distribute capital in the forms of *institutionalized* and *objectified* fashion capital. In the next section, I will explain the institutionalized form of fashion capital, what resources are that fashion schools provide to their students, and how they are distributed (un)equally.

2.2 Fashion Capital: Institutionalized and Objectified

Embodied fashion capital, or rather the amount of embodied fashion capital, determines whether a player within the fashion field is able to navigate easily throughout the field (Bourdieu, 1989; Entwistle, 2006; Zhao et al., 2018). However, to become a legitimate player with a powerful position in the fashion field, not only does one have to master their fashion habitus, but owning the right kind of fashion goods and style are just as relevant in order to influence other people's taste (Mears, 2008). Nevertheless, to become a creative professional, the right educational background and credentials validate the credibility of fashion intermediaries (Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009). Both are examples of the objectified and

institutionalized fashion capital. As Bourdieu (1989) explains, objectified capital refers to owning the correct cultural goods, while institutionalized refers to knowledge obtained through educational institutions. As I explained why the embodied form of fashion capital needed to be revised as it is different from Bourdieu's form of embodied capital, I will also re-define the objectified and institutionalized forms as all three forms of fashion capital are connected to each other in a way that the amount of one form could affect the other. Reedifying the embodied form also asks for a new definition of the objectified and institutionalized form of fashion capital within the context of fashion education. In the following section, I will explain the definition and relevance of these forms of fashion capital. I will do so by using Bourdieu's concepts of capital as a starting point, followed by my own argumentation and examples of how these concepts require some adaptation to make them applicable within the field of fashion.

As Brenninkmeyer's (1963) concept of leaders and followers mentioned, a specific forecasting talent is needed to become an intermediary within the field. However, while mastering the right fashion habitus gives you the understanding of how to move and navigate within the field, the mere understanding of how to do so does not automatically give you the skills needed to become an intermediary. Mears (2018) argued that taste formation in fashion is, sometimes unconsciously, a collective and social decision-making process, which refers to the skills that come with a high amount of embodied fashion capital; however, if these decisions are social, how do we decide them or how do they come about? According to Bourdieu (1993), players within fields with high capital tend to have more power and recognition. In the case of the field of fashion, this would be the combination of embodied, objectified, and institutionalized fashion capital. This is actually in line with Bourdieu's (1989) concepts of cultural capital, where he also mentioned that all the forms are connected and reinforce each other. However, the difference lies in the results of having a high amount of capital. For starters, cultural capital refers to the knowledge to legitimize taste and to distinguish high from low culture.

However, we do know that within the field of fashion, high fashion and low fashion are more intertwined, and the distinction is not only related to social class. It is true that coming from a higher social class gives a person the economic and financial power in order to afford luxury items or designer brands. However, the economic value of fashion goods does not automatically equal 'good' taste. For example, if I applied Bourdieu's cultural capital within the context of fashion, fast fashion brands would be considered low-class, and only the elites would wear luxury and couture. However, according to the current fashion trends, the

most wanted handbag in 2023 is a $20 bag from Uniqlo, dethroning Gucci and Prada from the rankings on Lyst.com (Business Insider, 2023). This means that familiarity with high and low culture does not apply the same way when it comes to fashion and the fashion field. However, both fashion capital and cultural capital revere the ability to legitimate the value given to cultural goods; the only difference is where this legitimization comes from.

Entwistle (2006) refers to fashion capital as a combination of cultural, economic, social and symbolic capital. She mainly explains how networking and connection, due to the amount of these forms of capital, can grant access to the fashion field. Godart and Mears (2009) mention that network-specific meanings shape taste within the fashion field and that social status plays a role in legitimizing value. This means that social class does play a role, as a particular social class could provide access to the field, but it is not the primary or sole reason. Referring to the example of the Uniqlo bag earlier, even without the economic means or when coming from a lower social class, it is still possible to become successful within the fashion field, as long as you can legitimize fashion goods. The same goes for the example of the collaboration between Dior and Birckenstocks; there are certain fashion intermediaries within the field that made Birckenstocks 'cool' again, which resulted in getting them picked up by the high fashion couture house, turning these orthopaedic clogs into high-class luxury items and are now perceived as a high class by the general public. However, it was not Dior themselves that set the trend for fall 2023, as 'cool' and 'fashionable' influencers were already wearing the original and less expensive shoes years ago (Telegraph, 2020).

The examples of the Dior x Birkenstock collab and the viral 20$ Uniqlo bag show that owning certain fashion goods provides you with fashion capital, as it shows you know the trends. This refers to the obtained form of the fashion capital. However, this could still be tricky, as owning the bag a few months too late will have the opposite effect as trends in the fashion field change fast, and something that went viral could become 'old news' within a few weeks. So having the right items at the right time, or even better, before it gets trendy, increases your fashion capital and legitimacy as an intermediary. Again, this shows that you are able to understand the flow of taste, trends and zeitgeist. Changing, adapting, and setting trends suggest you need to have the economic means to keep up with the fast pace of fashion trends, which is correct to a certain extent. However, the economic means needed are lower compared to other cultural fields, such as the art field, for example. According to Amatulli et al. (2016), due to the overlap between luxury and fast fashion, there is less distinction between their consumers, and they are often competing for a shared clientele. This means the value of the fashion goods obtained from fast or mass fashion brands could hold the same

value as higher and more expensive designer brands. Mixing fast and luxury fashion represents a cultural and economic shift where the price tag hanging from a pair of shoes has less symbolic value to consumers. The elements of variety-seeking and personal style add the same kind of value to fashion as money does (Amatulli et al., 2016); however, to have the correct personal style to add legitimate value to goods, a person must have mastered their fashion habitus, which means that objectified fashion capital is enforced by the embodied form of fashion capital. Ratner and Kahn (2002) explain that individuals that consume a wide variety of cultural goods, such as fashion, are perceived as more interesting, creative, and open-minded by their peers. This shows that the obtained forms of fashion capital are just as influential on the embodied fashion capital as the other way around. As I mentioned before, like cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1989), the various forms of fashion capital are tied together, and the amount of each form affects another form, which is relevant when positioning oneself in the fashion field. In order to understand how embodied and objectified capital relates to fashion education, I will explain and define the final form of fashion capital, which is the institutionalized form.

An example of institutionalized fashion capital would be what is taught through fashion (design) education. Education distributes fashion capital through what they teach their students, for example, the creative process needed to design fashion that holds legitimate value. To a leader, intermediary, or gatekeeper within the field, creative and artistic abilities are just as relevant as they are to fashion designers. For example, to understand the formation of trends, you do not have actually to design the clothes, but you do need to have the forecasting talent to predict what would be designed in the future. Institutionalized fashion capital provides this artistic and creative thinking through education or other institutes. According to Abu Bedor (2021), institutions are responsible for equipping students with tools to achieve higher creative abilities as well as cultural appreciation and awareness to prepare them for the professional field of fashion.

Nevertheless, as the fashion industry is changing at such a fast pace, the curriculum of fashion schools must be flexible with their courses. In order to remain relevant as an institution in the fashion field, fashion education should provide as many new forms of skills (Lam et al., 2020) to keep the institutionalized form of fashion capital valuable. These skills go beyond tailoring and styling clothes but also include emotional intelligence, analytical skills, innovation and the ability to adapt to the constant fluctuation of consumer behaviour and attitude (Business of Fashion, 2015; Lam et al., 2020). Both Bill (2012) and Lam et al. (2020) mention that within fashion education, students who are learning to become creatives

in the field are involved in the 'intense hermeneutical processing of the self', meaning that through various techniques, students learn how to represent their own thoughts and creative processes. However, Lam et al. (2020) also argue that the current fashion education system still handles a top-down approach, where teachers provide the information they find relevant to the students who are seen as passive recipients. This results in the expectation that students acquire the skills in the form of institutionalized fashion capital that is pre-set by the industry. The risk with this approach is that students stay passive recipients when entering the professional field of fashion, with a lack of creative abilities. This shows the importance of institutionalized fashion capital and how it is reproduced and distributed. With a lack of this capital form, junior professionals could find themselves in a challenging position when entering the fashion field, as they remain passive recipients of instruction instead of leaders (Lam et al., 2020).

As demonstrated above, embodied, objectified, and institutionalised fashion capital are all equally relevant in order to become a successful fashion intermediary, and the amount, or lack of, either one of these forms affects the amount of the other. In short, embodied fashion capital gives you the ability to navigate through the field with a matching attitude and to understand the norms and language of the field, objectified fashion capital lets you use fashion goods as legitimate status symbols and show that you are indeed knowledgeable enough about current and future trends. Lastly, institutionalised capital gives you the artistic and creative ability and the knowledge and experience that is needed in order to operate within the field professionally; it gives you the tools to mobilise the other forms of capital, the knowledge about hierarchy and how to stand your own in this hierarchy (embodied) as well as knowledge about the current affairs in the industry and field and the flow of taste (objectified). In the following section, I will explain how the fashion field operates and the main differences compared to other cultural fields. From there, I will show the similarities between en professional field of fashion and the educational field of fashion in order to understand the formation, distribution and mobilisation of the fashion capital.

2.3 The (Professional) Field of Fashion (Education)

In order to think through the processes that underpin the formation, distribution and mobilization of fashion capital in the field of fashion education, it is essential first to conceptualize the field of fashion itself. I will do so by first explaining Bourdieu's field theory (1993), followed by my own argumentation on why Bourdieu's theory should be redefined in order to apply this theory in the context of fashion (education). To do so, I will use examples

of fashion fields, as well as previously done research done by scholars who have already touched upon this subject of field theory within the context of fashion.

The Field of Fashion is where everything and everyone related to fashion and the fashion industry operates and where the distribution of power takes place. In Bourdieu's (1993) field theory, he explains fields as the social contexts in which actors, or 'players', compete for different kinds of rewards that are specific within each respective field, such as money, power, recognition, or prestige. The players of each field bring different kinds and amounts of capital, determining the amount of power a player has in the field. Economic capital, for example, gives players financial power, and social capital gives them a social network relevant to the field. A field is a time and context-specific social space essential to understand certain social phenomena (Alexander, 2021; Bourdieu, 1993). According to Bourdieu (1993), each field contains one big field, the field of power, and smaller sub-fields embedded within their larger frame. The Field of Fashion, specifically, has been researched by Bourdieu himself as 'the field of high fashion" as well as by other academic scholars such as Entwistle (1997-2023). Entwistle (2006), who studied the field of fashion during London Fashion Week in 2006, recognises that the field of fashion is a specific field with its own set of players and boundaries. However, she does not entirely detail the exact differences and only mentions similarities between fashion and other fields, like the art and the economic field, for instance. This asks for a specific definition or explanation of how this field operates and is built on its own terms.

Generally, existent research (Aspers & Godart, 2013; Entwistle, 2006; Godart, 2008; Mears; 2008; Petkova, 2016; Rocamora, 2012) either defines the field of fashion as a specific field within the field of culture, with the same kind of positions and actors, but just with a different name, or as a combination of different fields, such as the economic and the artistic field. However, as the researchers mentioned earlier acknowledge that the field of fashion operates differently than other cultural fields, it needs to be clarified how the distribution and reproduction of fashion capital relate to their definitions.

Certainly, if I adopt a field theory perspective in the context of fashion, there are many similarities with other cultural fields such as art, design, or literature. Artistic mediators within these fields, such as museums, institutions or publishers, are responsible for the distribution of artistic products, which makes them the gatekeepers of what people consider 'good' or 'bad' taste, deciding the amount of economic and symbolic value a product has (Alexander, 2021). In fashion, we could see fashion magazines, stylists, influencers, and institutions like fashion colleges, as mediators in the field. However, just like in any other

artistic or cultural field, objectively measuring a product's symbolic or artistic worth is nearly impossible. According to Mears (2018), decisions on taste in fashion are made collectively and are part of a social process. It is not 'the elites of fashion' deciding what would be 'in fashion' next season. However, rather the networking, imitating and spreading of trends between high and mass consumers adds value to a piece of clothing (Mears, 2018). This refers to the amount of embodied fashion capital, knowing how to behave and talk to other players within the field, combined with objectified fashion capital, which gives you the knowledge of which trend you should adapt (imitate) and how to set new ones (spreading of trends). Brans and Kuipers (2023), who did a study on cultural intermediaries within the fashion field, explain that in the field of fashion, the tension between the economic and aesthetic values is much higher compared to other cultural fields; these tensions are due to the role of intermediaries who are responsible for framing, legitimisation and brokering culture. This is a skill that depends on a player's amount of institutionalised fashion capital, where creative and entrepreneurial skills learned through education come in handy, as well as knowing how to position yourself with the culture of the field. The amount of fashion capital determines a player's position within the fashion field, which is the same as any other field in Bourdieu's field theory. However, because the fashion industry is constantly changing, players, hierarchies, relationships, and boundaries are constantly fluctuating. This results in the formation, distribution, and mobilisation of fashion capital simultaneously changing as well (Brans, 2023). For example, in a study done by Brans (2023) on transparency fashion apps, apps that show who, where and how clothes are made in order to gain transparency on the ethical and environmental impact of the production chain of fashion brands are shown that even digital apps can be intermediaries in the fashion field. He explains that due to the positive change in attitude towards sustainable and ethical fashion among consumers, these transparency apps are deciding what is 'good' and 'bad' fashion.

Brans (2023) also explains that these apps are different from typical fashion intermediaries, which mainly use a combination of economics and aesthetics in order to add value to goods. He calls these transparency apps' politicising cultural intermediaries' as the app highlights political and material-technical qualities over aesthetics (Brans, 2023). Fashion intermediaries are positioned between the consumers and producers of the fashion field and legitimise taste and trends. This legitimisation process influences consumers' engagement with fashion goods and shapes the hierarchy of taste (Brans, 2023; Maguire & Matthews, 2014). However, digitalisation significantly impacts the fashion field and its intermediaries and their role or position within the field (Rocamora, 2016). For example, the number of

followers on social media could make a single individual the next intermediary. This also works the other way around, where one misinterpreted picture or tweet could get a whole brand cancelled, like what happened to Balenciaga's in 2022 (fashionmagazine.com, December 2022).

The examples mentioned earlier show that the field of fashion and the field of culture do indeed have similarities, mainly when it comes to intermediaries and the legitimation of value. However, the difference that separates these fields is how this legitimation process works and how this influences the hierarchy within the field. Where in the artistic field, the value depends on the aesthetic value intermediaries are giving goods; these intermediaries are more or less set within their position in the field (however, the rise of digitalization and self-publishing in the cultural industry could affect this as well). In the field of fashion, intermediaries are changing at the same high speed as the field to keep up with constant fluctuations. This also means that fashion capital keeps changing, specifically how and where it is distributed or formed in the field. This also goes for the formation and distribution of fashion capital within fashion education, as fashion education operates as a field where intermediaries and hierarchies are constantly shifting (Lam et al., 2020).

As mentioned earlier, fashion education *used* to have a top-down approach, where teachers and instructors are the dominant force that distributes knowledge and information, and students are the passive recipients. I put the emphasis on *what used to have a top-down approach,* as this pedagogical mindset is changing in art and design collages (Lam et al., 2020). According to Lam et al. (2020), higher fashion education is starting to recognize the benefits of knowledge co-creating, where teachers, students and professionals jointly contribute to the learning process in order to prepare the students to be self-efficient when it comes to long-term success in the professional field of fashion. This collaborative way of learning is similar to how the field of fashion operates, where the power relationships and hierarchy are constantly shifting. Other benefits of this educational approach are, for example, how students learn to become more autonomous learners (Lam et al., 2020), which is a necessary skill to adapt to the current zeitgeist of the fashion industry and anticipate future trends. This change in fashion education is not only due to the professional fashion field, but students themselves play a role in this development as well. Over a decade ago, Pasricha (2009) explained that the millennial generation, the majority of college fashion students at that time, were the actors of change due to the rise of access to the internet and the information these students had. For that generation, gaining knowledge about the fashion field from other sources outside their educational courses becomes easier, giving them more power

to argue with the knowledge their teachers distribute. This also demonstrates that the changes within education, due to a change in the mindset of the students, the formation and distribution of embodied fashion capital changed with them, as the millennial generation showed that they now have the means (Pasrica, 2009) to master their fashion habitus. Zhao et al. (2018) mentioned something similar, due to the rise of a more autonomous mindset of fashion students, a whole new type of competition is simulated among students. This means that, like the competing intermediaries within the professional field of fashion (Brans, 2023; Rocamora, 2012), students are competing to legitimize the value of taste and goods as well, meaning that the educational fashion field and the professional fashion field have a similar legitimization process.

In conclusion of this section, Bourdieu's field theory and definition of the cultural field are similar to the field of fashion. Both have players and hierarchies, and the amount of power a player has depends on the amount of capital. The three forms of capital reinforce and affect each other, which applies to fashion capital and other forms of cultural capital. Those with the most power within a field are able to legitimize value to goods and taste. The difference between the field of fashion and Bourdieu's cultural fields is the legitimization process and the formation and distribution of capital. Due to the fast pace and constant fluxion of the fashion industry, the field and its players, hierarchy, relationship, norms, and values are changing fast. One day the head of a fashion magazine could be the most powerful tastemaker, to be overthrown the next day by a teenager who went viral on social media. The same fast pace applies to the field of fashion education, which is operating in the same way as the professional field, where the hierarchy between teacher, instructors and students are in constant movement as well.

In the following chapters, I will explain which observation methods I used to conduct and analyze my research and the results of my observations. I will also demonstrate how the formation, distribution and mobilizing of fashion capital happen within the context of higher fashion education.

3. Methods

To understand how fashion capital is acquired, formed and mobilized within the context of education in fashion, I choose to take a qualitative approach, qualitative field observations. As fashion capital is often lumped together with cultural capital and is placed within the field of arts and culture and design, it is necessary to take a qualitative approach to understand and define the meaning of this field-specific capital in more nuance. As the difference between fashion and cultural capital is small but significant, small nuances could be easily overlooked. This chapter will explain my reasoning behind using qualitative field observations. I will start by explaining the field site I will observe and why I chose this specific location and context. This will be followed by my units of analysis, referring to whom I observed and had conversations with and why those individuals are relevant to my research. After my units of analysis, I will explain how I operationalized the concepts of fashion capital and its various forms and the fashion field—followed by my reasoning behind my chosen method and role as an observing participant and the relevance of using discourse analysis.

3.1 The site: Willem de Kooning Academy - Fashion Department

In order to understand how fashion capital is formed and distributed, as well as mobilized within education, I chose an educational site with a similar pedagogical approach as Lam et al. (2020) mentioned in the previous chapter. Here they explained how co-creating between students, teachers and professionals in the fashion field is building students' self-efficacy, which is preparing them to become professionals and intermediaries in the field of fashion. I used a site that uses these same values, as I expected they would demonstrate how fashion capital is formed, acquired and mobilized, similar to the professional field of fashion. The Willem de Kooning Academy (WdKA) fits these criteria and is my chosen field of observation.

As an alumnus of this academy, where I graduated in Fashion Design in 2017, I have a network and relevant contacts relevant to this research. Other than that, sharing the same kind of habitus and having a contextual understanding within the field site benefits me as a researcher to put specific actions made by my participants and respondents into the proper context. According to Cousins et al. (2018), having a personal background in -or a relation with- the field site positively contributes to gaining the players' trust within the field. The combination of being an alumnus and the WdKA's specific curriculum and approach makes

this academy a relevant site to answer my research question. I will explain the relevance of WdKA's mindset and how this relates to fashion capital and the fashion field.

The WdKA has a multidisciplinary approach, meaning that within a specific program, students are free and encouraged to combine other art and design disciplines in their work. It could encourage students to think outside of the box and expand their creative thinking abilities (Pasricha, 2009); however, it could also create misconceptions about the field, depending on how the (power) relationships are between teachers and students (Lam et al., 2020). This multidisciplinary approach is shown through the freedom students get with their own work. In contrast, in most fashion schools, students get assignments where the results are (semi)fixed, for example, when students are required to make trousers, a dress or a suit. The WdKA leaves the choice to create what they think will fit the assignment, meaning that if they choose to make an illustration instead of sewing garments, it is up to the students to create something that fits their interpretation of the assignment. This amount of freedom could have positive and negative effects on students (Johnson & LaBelle, 2020), depending on the amount of embodied fashion capital they already have when starting this fashion design course. As demonstrated in the literature, in order to get accepted into a higher fashion design course, a certain amount of capital is already needed (Zhao et al., 2018); this also means that some students may possess a higher amount compared to others which are giving them a head start (Kahn, 2012; Taylor, 2021).

The distribution of resources to develop all different forms of fashion capital in students is therefore interesting to research at the WdKA, as the students are required to have a certain amount of capital to handle this kind of freedom, as embodied, objective and institutionalized capital are affected by each other (Bourdieu, 1989) and specifically by the amount, or lack thereof. This all depends on the students and teachers observed; in the following section, I will go into more detail while explaining my units of analysis.

3.2. Units of analysis

In order to understand how and by whom fashion capital is formed and distributed in the educational fashion field, I choose to observe both the receivers and distributors of capital at the WdKA. In this context, the reviews would be the students, and the teachers are referred to as the distributors. In this section, I will detail the various students and staff members that will be observed and their relevance to my research question.

The Fashion Departments of the Willem de Kooning Academy consist of fashion design students spread over four years of education, instructors of the fabric station, which is

the communal workshop space for everything textile or fashion related, teachers, study career coaches and the head of the department. The units of analysis for this research are the first and last-year fashion design students, fabric station instructors and teachers of the Fashion Department, and the department's study career coach and head. To observe dynamics and hierarchical order, a broad range of variety within the department is needed to compare particular behaviour, level of creativity, relationships, backgrounds and positioning of individuals. I specifically limit myself to the first and last-year students for two reasons. Firstly, I needed to measure the embodied form of fashion capital within the first years to gain empirical data on how their amount of capital affects the formation of the other forms of fashion capital. Second, I observed fourth-year students to compare their amount of capital and how they are mobilizing their capital throughout their educational career in order to prepare themselves for the professional field of education. It would have been beneficial to add the second and third-year students to my observations to gain more data on the four-year process of capital formation, distribution and mobilization. However, the second and third-year students are omitted; this is due to how the study is set up; the second-year students are required to have an external semester, which means they are not present in the department during this time period. However, some second-year students still sporadically socialize or use machines in the fabric station; these interactions do not have the main focus but are included in the observations as they add context to some dynamics or conversations. The third-year students are not included in a logistic issue as well, as during these terms, all third years are away for their internships.

The observations occur during the first- and fourth-year classes on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, as well as individual feedback and peer reviewing sessions, midterm presentations and the graduation presentations and peer reviewing sessions of the fourth years. The first-year class consist of 24 students and the last year of 12 students. During the remaining time, I located myself in the 'Fabric Station', the communal workspace for textiles. I choose this place as most students from all years work here on their projects, and there is much social interaction between students, instructors, and teachers. This is important to understand the participants' various (power) relationships. This is also a space where I can have conversations with students and staff in a more relaxed and spontaneous manner while they are working. During my time between classes in the fabric station, I spoke to six first-year students, two third-year students and four last-year students of the fashion department. In addition, I also spoke to two students from the Illustration course who happened to work in the fabric station, two fabric station instructors, three fashion design teachers, the head of the

fashion department and the study career coach. All these conservations were semi-unstructured and mainly came out spontaneously, either out of my own curiosity about what is was observing or curiosity from the participant who asked what I was doing or who already knew why I was there and approached me to give an update on how things were going.

As I primarily observed students and teachers, I also added the instructors of the fabric stations to the observations and conservations to get another semi-outside perspective. The instructors of the fabric station are not teachers; however, some do teach in specific technical classes; they do not interfere with the student's creativity other than providing them with the technical skills required to realize the students' ideas. The relationship between the instructors and the students is also more casual, and they usually do not grade or access them or their work. As the instructors are most of the time present in the fabric station alongside students and teachers, they can observe the development and change of students during their studies, which means that their semi-outside perspective of being close to both students and teachers, without fully participating in the student-teacher dynamics, is a valuable source to my research for topics that are impossible for me to research during this time frame.

The teachers, study career coach and head of the department are necessary, if not vital, to this research. They are perceived as the most influential actors within this field of fashion education, therefore preparing young professionals with a set of norms and values and a certain amount of capital in the field of fashion. Decisions they make determine the future and position in the field students,

The importance of covering this wide variety of participants in my observation is needed to detect where and how fashion capital is formed and acquired and by whom it is distributed and mobilized. In the following section, I will explain how fashion capital and its different forms are operationalized in order to measure them correctly during my observations.

3.3 Operationalization

The operationalization of embodied, objectified and institutionalized fashion capital is needed to measure the amount of capital among my participants and detect how it is formed and acquired, who is responsible for the distribution of capital and how it is mobilized. In this section, I will share how I made these concepts of fashion capital measurable; I will start with the embodied form, followed by the objectified and the institutionalized. By the end of this section, it should be clear how I can use this concept during my field observations.

Embodied fashion capital, or habitus, allows an individual to navigate through the field by using the right langue and behaviour and having the correct attitude. This will be shown by a certain level of confidence in how the participants talk and behave, as well as their knowledge of fashion. Within students, their attitudes towards others, such as their peers and teachers, will also be taking account. For example, having a more passive attitude show a lower amount of embodied capital, and a more confident approach shows a higher amount. I will also take their work into account, as well as their attitude during work. A student with more safe and less daring work, who asks a lot of confirmation from others and who follows the instructions correctly, has less amount of embodied capital. Students with more innovative and daring work who rather spar with others instead of asking for confirmation are those with a higher amount of embodied fashion capital.

Objectified fashion capital refers to the goods the participants possess. I will measure this by their appearance and how they dress. This goes hand in hand with the embodied form of capital, as not only what they wear but also how confidently they wear it. I will also look at imitation to detect who is a follower and a leader. Knowledge about current fashion trends and designers is also relevant to the objectified form of the fashion capital.

Lastly, institutionalized fashion capital will be measured by how well students understand the curriculum and classes and how they process critique or feedback from teachers and instructors. I will look at the interactions in class between students and teachers, as well as in between classes, to see how students apply freshly obtained knowledge to their work.

When all different forms of fashion capital are detected and measured, I can understand how it is formed, acquired and mobilized within this context of fashion education. This all relies on external factors like peers and teachers and how they affect the students' creative process. What factors are adding to their creativity and what gives them more influential power, and most importantly, who or what is distributing these resources? These are all essential to understanding fashion capital, how fashion education forms and mobilises this, and how they distribute the recourses. In the next part, I will explain the observing method I used to measure and detect these concepts.

3.4 Qualitative field observations

In order to collect all the data needed to answer my research question, I conducted field observations at the WdKA, for a duration of three weeks, as a participant observer. This included observations as well as some semi-unstructured conversations. Qualitative field

observations allow exploring the justification and motivation behind specific actions of the participants that otherwise are hidden from the outside world, which is especially relevant while researching power dynamics and hierarchy (Cousin et al., 2018) within the field of fashion. In the following part, I will explain why this method is most suited for this research and within the context of capital formation and fashion education

I took the role of participant observer, meaning that I engaged with my units of analysis and participated in some of the activities. All participants were aware of my role as a researcher and my research topics. As I was present in the fashion department over the course of three weeks, most participants were comfortable with me observing and talking to them; where I often get approached by students themselves to tell me about their feedback or to show me their work; this happened on occasions when I engaged with the students before. Being an alumnus of the WdKA's fashion department gave me an advantage when it came to gaining the trust of everyone in the department very quickly. However, this also had a downside, especially with the first-year students, as they often asked me to give them feedback or to help them with their assignments which sometimes interfered with my observation duties. In order to stay focused on observing fashion capital, I used various guides specific to each situation and group (see appendix). One for the first and last year classes, one for the first and last years feedback and peer reviewing sessions, one for observing interaction in the fabric station, and guides for conversations I held with students, teachers, instructors, the department head and the study career coach. These guides were used to stay on the right track but did not limit any spontaneous or unexpected turns in any conversations, as I took an open approach during these conversations. The guides that were used were based on the theoretical framework, as well as the observations themselves. For example, in some cases during my observations in class, I could not ask any questions; in order to get clarification on certain subjects, I added some additional questions to the conversation guides.

To understand how fashion capital is formed, acquired and mobilized, it is necessary to understand the power dynamics within the fashion department and how this relates to the field of fashion, as fashion capital is specific to the field. The amount of power someone has is primarily shown in their behaviour towards others, how they communicate and how others behave around them (Mears, 2020); in this case, observations of the dynamics within the department where the participants are in their natural environment give a more reliable amount of data.

The same goes when studying the different forms of the fashion capital. For example, according to Bourdieu's definition of embodied capital, a person's upbringing that forms their

current behaviour and way of thinking cannot be 'faked' by using the same ways of behaving, and a person's 'true' habitus always shows. However, Bourdieu mainly links habitus to social and economic class (Victoria, 2021), while in fashion, habitus does not necessarily relate to a person's social class in society but rather to their position within the fashion field. By observing bodily habitus, such as how students talk, move and behave, as well as their dress choices and confidence, I can clearly distinguish the types of students and how they position themselves. Adding conversations with students and staff will give background information about their reasoning and decision-making, which is relevant to see what is explicitly giving a person a certain amount of capital. According to Entwistle and Rocamora (2006), fashion capital can be mastered, even with a different kind of capital; however, as Entwistle and Rocamora (2006) mainly focus on etiquette within the fashion industry and knowledge about designers, which is indeed possible to learn, it is yet to be discovered if fashion habitus in the sense of the ability to creative thinking could be mastered or not. Therefore, I will compare data acquired through the observations, conservations, and interviews between first-year and last-year students.

The choice to observe during these moments is because the interaction between the students and the teachers is the most valuable and meaningful towards the students' creative process. Observing which students get more or less attention, how students deal with feedback and how teachers deal with students who disagree. In the upcoming section, I will describe how I analyzed all the collected data using discourse analysis. In addition, I will explain why I choose this analysis method and why it is relevant in the context of fashion education and fashion capital.

3.5 Discord analysis and coding

In this part of the method section, I will guide you through my analysis of the data I collected during my field observations and the conversation I had on-site. The data was collected with field notes and reference guidelines; I used discourse analysis to analyse these. This method is suited because it allows me to analyse what is being said and what is not being said by participants and respondents. It allows me to understand how a specific statement exists within a specific context. This could be the context of the location of the conversation, the person itself, or whether others are present or not. As I am researching power dynamics within the field of fashion, as well as the formation, distribution and mobilisation of fashion capital, identifying the speech act of both verbal and non-verbal communication is required to detect a certain hierarchical order. A speech act refers to the speech act theory by J.L. Austin

(1955), where communicating through language has a performative function that is distinguished by the intention of the speaker, meaning that there is the act of saying something, what the speaker does while saying it, such as tone or body language, and how the speaker is affecting their audience. Social interactions observed during my observations at the WdKA allow me to recognise the speakers' attitudes and attitudes towards others; this is particularly relevant when it comes to understanding someone's embodied form of fashion capital, for example. The confidence, or lack thereof, which they speak with, shows whether they have knowledge and understanding of the field and how they position themselves within this field, as well as how they position themselves compared to others. How participants speak and communicate with others is a way of performing to reach a desired effect to meet specific field-specific criteria, or 'felicity conditions' (Austin et al. l., 1976). According to J.L. Austin (1955), felicity conditions are required for a speech act to achieve a desirable outcome for those involved. In other words, the norms and rules of communicating within a specific context. In this case, the felicity conditions of interactions are the rules of the fashion field. Knowing how to speak, which tone and words are used to describe certain events or while discussing their work, as well as the level of confidence, is relevant to understand the dynamics of the field and the dynamics within the Fashion Department. To analyse the data, I am using codes to detect specific themes and topics that are relevant in order to answer my research question. These themes are based on patterns in language, tone and emotions and behaviour. I will briefly explain how I formulated my codes, including some examples.

To start, I took some of the topics of the observation and conversation guides mentioned earlier; these included topics such as knowledge of fashion, expectations about the fashion and design course, perception of self, perception of peers, relationship with teachers and ambitions in fashion, among other themes (theses can be found in the appendix). These codes provide context to the observed situations and conversations. After these themed-based codes, I made codes based on the behaviour I encountered during my observations; examples of these codes are passive listening, engaging in conversations, defensive, hijacking conversations, active listening, and socializing. These codes are relevant in order to add nuances to situations, as well as to add a certain emotion or mood. In addition to the coding, I also made thick descriptions that add situational context to what is happening. Adding these think descriptions are also providing me to formulate my results as clearly as possible, as a conversation being done in a quiet space could affect the participant's behaviour compared to a conversation done in a more lively space.

In conclusion, discourse analysis allows me to understand particular behaviour that refers to how fashion capital is formed, acquired and mobilized within the fashion department of the WdKA. Discourse analysis allows me to focus on both what is said, what is meant, and what is not being said and how that relates to a certain attitude of manners. In the following chapter, I will share the results of the analyzed data obtained through observations and conversations in the fashion department.

4. Results

This research aims to find out how fashion capital is formed, acquired, and mobilized within the context of fashion education. Fashion education is an essential player in the field of fashion as they are responsible for the distribution of institutionalized fashion capital. In this following chapter, I will explain how the dynamics within the Willem de Kooning Academy's Fashion department are built to position the various actors and understand the hierarchical order. These dynamics can shift depending on the context, such as the dynamics between students, instructors, and teachers, between staff members or among students themselves. Following this, I will focus on locating embodied fashion capital, or habitus, among students, as this relates to their positioning in the field and their relationship with teachers and instructors. Lastly, I will explain how the dynamics within the department and fashion habitus relate to the distribution of fashion capital, how both objectified and institutionalized fashion capital is distributed, and how these forms of capital are acquired and mobilized by students.

4.1. The WdKA Fashion Department as a Field.

The Fashion Department is a separate department within the Willem de Kooning Academy, the institute for higher education in art and design. The fashion department offers four years of a BA course in Fashion Design. Like all other 14 BA courses offered at the academy, it has a specific and unique curriculum applied to all the courses, which means that all disciplines have the same aim, an interdisciplinary approach to art, design and culture. I will explain how this shows throughout the courses.

To start with how the building is designed, the departments do not have a specific designate area where they teach classes, but they have 'stations'. Stations are workshop spaces designed for the use of specific materials and are located on each floor; they have a graphic, wood, metal, ceramics and synthetics, digitalization, interaction, research and fabric station. They are separated 'classic' classrooms as well. Nevertheless, most classes are held within the stations, where even during classes, others can work on their projects simultaneously. However, even if there is no designated space for each department, the fashion department operates mainly in the fabric station, which is a logical choice as all the tools needed are located there. During my observations, I mistakenly called it the' fashion station' once, and I was quickly corrected because not only the fashion department operates in the fabric station, or are only students that are interested in working with textiles, calling it the' fashion station' will imply that other disciplines are excluded. Meaning that even if the

main population of the fabric station are people from the fashion department, it is not uncommon to see students or staff from different department here, and the same rule applies to the other station; fashion student and staff are often scattered throughout the building exploring and expanding their scope when it comes to fashion design.

This approach is also seen in the slogan on the webpage of the fashion department, "We aim to prepare our fashion design students for a future in the continuously changing profession field of fashion", meaning that they prepare students to be flexible and open-minded, alongside training their artistic and creative abilities. Even if this may be just a promotional slogan to lure in new students, it does show that the department is aware of how the current field of fashion operates and that being a good fashion designer is not your primary key to success. As Rocamora (2002) and Brans & Kuiper (2023) explain, the field of fashion and the intermediaries in the field are constantly changing. This preparation for the fashion field is also present in the curriculum, which is applied towards all the BA courses of the academy. Students are required to work together with students from other disciplines during the so-called 'practices'. Starting in the first year, where students are mainly focusing on their fashion design major, as they are learning basic technical and creative skills, knowledge of fashion, and the attitude that is required to be a player in the field of fashion, they are also introduced to the practices during their second term. These practices are the interdisciplinary profiles where the students can eventually graduate, varying from a commercial, social or autonomous perspective. These practices are elective projects in order to explore other creative fields and how to apply those newly learned skills to their own work. As Lam et al. (2020) explained, a joint co-learning approach provides fashion students with a less passive, more self-efficient, and autonomy vital to navigating the fast-paced and fluctuating fashion field. A multidisciplinary pedagogical approach in higher fashion education equips students with more valuable skills other than producing quality designs, as it also provides short-term operational efficiency, as well as adaptability skills that will prepare students for various roles in the fashion industry (Lam et al., 2020)   In other words, students can obtain forms of the institutionalized fashion capital, from other departments at the WdKA as well, based on the fact that the knowledge they take away from these practices is directly related to their ability in being innovative, creative thinking, observational skills, adaptability and flexibility in order to navigate throughout the fashion field. Due to these practices, the WdKA provides a broader perspective, starting in the first and second year, where they get introduced to these practices and can discover which direction is most suited for their own personal way of working; this could be social, commercial or autonomous.

During the third year, fashion students must make their definitive choice on the graduation profile, which they have explored during their practices. The social, commercial, and autonomous profiles are another aspect that shows how students are prepared for the professional fashion field. The academy's take on fashion is that they do not particularly see garments, but they see them as cultural goods that could have different functions. Within their commercial profile, students learn how to navigate through the fashion field and how to give their goods economic value. This is in line with Rocamora (2002) and her argument about the fashion field's blurry lines between high and low fashion. The autonomous profile prepares the students who see fashion as an artistic good, are more steered towards the field of art, and gain resources and access to other artistic fields. This could be beneficial in the same way as Lam et al. (2020) mentioned above, how a multidisciplinary approach stimulates students to think outside of the fashion field and detect unpredictable trends. Where in the social profile, students learn how the function of fashion affects social and societal problems. All these profiles are for the students to form and increase their fashion capital, depending on which direction they want to take when they enter the professional fashion field. Their capital is increased by networking with other like-minded students from different departments who are simultaneously prepared to enter the professional field as fashion students. Students also develop their embodied capital while learning how to move and behave outside of their comfort zone, which teaches them to be flexible in the fashion field and how to anticipant changes in the field. These examples are all from what students learn outside, or in addition to, their fashion design major and how these electives and minors already play a significant role in the formation and distribution of fashion capital and how it is mobilized. I will clarify how the main course contributes to how students form and acquire their capital and how the fashion department itself mobilizes this capital.

I will start painting a clear picture of how students and staff are positioned within the fashion department, as during the observations, I learned that the department itself functioned as a smaller field within the field of fashion. Most of my observations were done in the fabric station, where most students and staff were present, as well as it being the place where classes and feedback sessions were held. The fabric station is a big open space divided into different areas for various textile processing practices, such as sewing, weaving, spinning, tufting and automatic knitting. As the fabric station is an open space, multiple students can work there simultaneously; students work individually or in groups, and next to work, there are also students socializing with each other. During my observations, there was always a very focused mood, and there was a faint feeling of stress due to students working on deadlines;

even when students are casually chatting, the topic of school always comes up. However, there is also a feeling of collectiveness, everyone is in the same kind of situation, and the pressure of expectations brings everyone closer together. For example, the day when the first-year students had their midterms, many of them were still working on the pieces they had to present, accompanied by classmates who were already finished and were encouraging them; at the same time, students who just finished presenting their work came back and were immediately welcomed by their peers where they could blow off their steam. Amanda Bill (2012) saw something similar while studying the well-being of fashion students. He mentioned the 'paradox of creative work' (p. 58), explaining that creativity is both a painful process and brings happiness simultaneously. This happiness comes while creating something only you can create, the feeling that your creativity is inaccessible and threatening towards others (Bill, 2012). While the first-year students eventually successfully presented their work, this simultaneous feeling of joy and relief filled the fabric station. This form of collectiveness not only creates a form of effervescence among students but also relates to the communal nature of the taste decision-making process (Godart & Mears, 2008). Godart and Mears (2008) explain that due to the fashion industry's uncertainty, the intermediaries' positions are based on imitation and observed symbols among each other. The togetherness of the students in the fabric station serves as both stress relief (Bill, 2012) and the contextual situation where fashion capital is being formed, as preparation to become an intermediary in the fashion field (Godart & Mears, 2008). This formation occurs among students due to social interactions, observations and imitation. However, other members of the fashion department contribute to the formation of capital, such as the instructors and teachers.

To demonstrate how other staff members are involved in capital formation, I will first introduce the fabric station instructors, who work simultaneously with the students in the fabric station. They are not teachers officially. However, some of them do teach some technical classes. The instructors are basically the *Guardians of the Fabric Station*, as I like to call them. They have specific expertise related to textiles, like sewing, patternmaking or weaving. Their role is to help everyone in the fabric station with their projects and who are struggling with technical issues. They do not serve the same role as the teachers, so their relationship with the students is casual, and they appear approachable. If no students are present who need help, I often spot the instructors working on their own projects alongside students. At first, I did not realize some instructors were part of the staff, as they blended in perfectly with the students due to their calm, almost passive behaviour. When observing moments when they provide help to students, there is clearly a hierarchy between the

instructor and the students. This hierarchy is based on the knowledge and expertise of the instructors, as well as their passion, which is visible in all the instructors I encountered during my observations. One student, who was on the verge of tears, was quickly spotted by 'Dave, ' one of the instructors, but also the head of the fabric station, who, without hesitation, walked over and asked how he could help. The conversation went as follows:

Student:	Dave, please help me, I was looking for you and now you are finally here!
Dave:	I'm always here for you! Show me what you are struggling with.
Student:	Well, I am very good at making pants, but I just don't understand how to make a top… (…)
	(This goes on for a few minutes, while Dave is listening patiently)
Dace:	Okay, calm down Mellissa, come on, scoot over
	(Dave grabs a chair and squeezes himself next to the girl)

Dave starts explaining how to make a top in the calmest and most patient way without interfering with her design or giving any comments on her sketch unrelated to the technical aspect. The student listens and tries whatever Dave tells her to do; she also does not question his suggestions and only asks whether she is doing it correctly; she sometimes does ask his opinion on her choices and changes them when Dave tells her so. The dominance of the instructor comes from their authenticity, which is rewarded with respect from the students.

According to Johnson and LaBelle (2017), an authentic teacher, meaning one that is approachable, attentive, passionate, and knowledgeable, positively affects students by increasing the students self-esteem and gaining trust and respect. This is also seen in the instructors of the fabric station and how they interact with students. With the knowledge and skills the instructors are sharing, they are forming and distributing fashion capital in the institutionalized form, as they teach students technical skills that are relevant to the artistic and creative abilities of the students and their ability to be innovative. With the knowledge of how fashion goods are made, intermediaries can add value to products (Brans, 2023). Learning technical skills is therefore relevant for future fashion designers and other functions within the fashion field. Institutionalized fashion capital is partly formed due to the skills and knowledge that the instructors share with the students. Another source of institutionalized fashion capital is the teachers, who, next to the institutionalized form, also form the other

variations of the fashion capital, embodied and objectified. I will elaborate on the difference between the teachers and instructors, accompanied by examples from my field observations.

The difference between teachers and instructors is immediately visible when teachers walk into the fabric station; it is always clear that they are part of the teaching staff, whereas the instructor is sometimes mistaken as a student. Contrarily, with the fabric station instructors, the presence of the teachers is intimidating, almost like royalty, with a clear distinction between them and the other people present in the station. Where the students and instructors often socialize with each other, the teachers mostly keep to themselves and only give a nod or a faint smile when you have eye contact with them. The interactions they have with students also vary; where with some students, they do have discussions where both the teacher and students have room to voice their opinion; with other students, the teachers are the only ones talking and providing feedback, while the students passively listen and agree with everything. This is similar to what Lam et al. (2020) explained earlier, where fashion education is traditionally a one-way knowledge-transferring process (p. 420). This could also be due to the fact that they assess the student's creativity, which depends on personal taste and preference. In contrast, the instructors provide feedback on technique, which is more factual.

Teachers of the fashion department are not just grading students' work based on their preference for aesthetics; they are teaching their students how to detect legitimate value in their creations. The teachers are, specifically within this small field of fashion education, the intermediaries with the most dominant power during the legitimization process. By doing so, the teachers are forming the student's fashion capital. First, in the form of embodied capital, where students learn how to communicate within the field. They learn what kind of attitude they need in the field and understand the language used during to process of legitimizing their work. Kahn (2021) explains that these hierarchies are needed within education as they teach students to negotiate between these power dynamics; Kahn refers to this negotiation as an interactive skill related to Bourdieu's definition of embodied capital. At the same time, they are distributing institutionalized fashion capital in order to prepare students to become the next generation of intermediaries. They give feedback on improving their work and stimulate their creative, innovative and artistic abilities based on the teacher's experiences as fashion professionals and their experiences in the fashion field.

The fashion department has a hierarchal order, where the teachers have the dominant power and could be seen as the elites of the field of fashion education. Students are at the bottom of the ladder. The positioning of students, instructors and teachers as players in the field of fashion education is important to consider when it comes to capital formation and

how it is acquired and mobilized. To understand the players positioning, I can detect who the distributers of capital are and who the recipients are. The power dynamics within fashion education are also relevant to add context and explain how these forms of capital are flowing through the field of fashion education. In the following section, I will explain how teachers play the role of distributors of fashion capital and how this forms the student's capital. In addition, I will show how students acquire capital from the teachers and the hierarchical order within the fashion department affects the students and their preparation for the professional field of fashion.

4.2. The Elite and the distribution of fashion capital

Teachers are one of the distributors of fashion capital when it comes to forming, acquiring and mobilizing fashion capital within the context of fashion education. During this section, I will go into more depth on how teachers provided the resources needed and what those resources are. During the first year of fashion education, students come into the department from different economic, social and educational backgrounds. Nevertheless, the thing they all have in common is that they are talented enough to be accepted into the highly competitive fashion design course. Even though some of the first-year students may be more gifted than others, they all have a limited amount of knowledge of the 'real' fashion field, meaning that they do possess enough fashion capital that shows their potential. However, it is not enough to become a player in the field. At this point, education is one of the few places they have access to form and acquire relevant fashion capital for the professional field. As Taylor (2021) explained, education, especially elite education like fashion colleges, where not everyone gets accepted, plays a significant role in forming and reproducing specific skills that could potentially be converted into a powerful form of capital. This form of capital could be economic, cultural or social capital, as well as fashion capital if we put this theory in the context of fashion education and the fashion field. In my fieldwork, I observed interactions and relationships between teachers, first-year students, and last year's students. Here I saw a big contrast between how teachers and students communicate and how the hierarchy is built between them. Therefore, I will start by explaining how this hierarchy is relevant to the formation of capital, followed by the relationship between the teachers and the students in general and ending with the dynamics between teachers and last-year graduating students and the hierarchy between them.

I will start with the dynamics between the teachers and the first years. As I mentioned above, first-year students already possess fashion capital, which is required to get accepted

into the course. However, this amount is limited to what they could have acquired before starting their studies. It is the teachers' task to distribute capital and to provide the resources needed in order to increase said capital equally. During my observations, I noticed several ways these recourses are presented to students. First is during classes, where the students learn primarily technical skills and develop their creative and artistic abilities. This may seem very straightforward. However, the students do not get served fashion capital on a platter, which brings us to the second way. The way these recourses in classes are presented is only noticeable to those who already have a higher amount of embodied fashion capital than their peers and are overlooked by those with less fashion capital. Meaning that not only what is offered but also how it is offered is relevant when it comes to the distribution and formation of capital.

One student did not understand why they had to learn about other art forms and practices and did not see the link between fashion and technology. This led to a minor conflict between the student and teachers, where the student was treated unfairly, as they did not get any help or explanation on why they had to learn something they had no interest in. However, from a teacher's perspective, the students are challenged to step outside their comfort zone and expand their knowledge outside the traditional fashion field. This out-of-the-box thinking expected from the students is more difficult with less fashion capital, as fashion capital allows you to think outside of the current fashion norm. This relates to Lam et al. (2020) approach to the multidisciplinary teaching and learning approach within fashion education, as it prepares students to adapt to the constantly changing fashion industry. The reason teachers make it 'hard' for the first years is that it is uncomfortable to step into unknown territory, which in the field of fashion is a highly needed skill in order to become an intermediary; the first years need to overcome that fear of making mistakes or receiving critique. As an outsider and from a student's perspective, this *looks* very harsh, and it seems like teachers are playing favourites towards the more 'talented' students. However, talking to some teachers, they all mentioned that they provide the exact same tools towards students and that it is up to the students whether and how they use them. When it comes to first-year students, most have unrealistic ideas about fashion, the industry and how the field operates, which makes learning new things not always seen as a way to help them, but as a reminder that they are incorrect on some subjects, which could come across as criticism or a harsh reality check. The first year is also the year with the highest drop-out rate, where students fail to acknowledge the resources they are given or where they do see it but realize the fashion field is not what they expected and choose another career path. This depends on the type of student, which I will explain more

about in the last section of this analysis. However, I will explain how the dynamics between teachers and students affect how capital is formed and acquired.

The distribution and formation of fashion capital start from the moment students walk into the academy on the first day. During the four years of their fashion design course, they learn how to mobilize their fashion capital and position themselves within the professional field of fashion. The interaction and hierarchy between students and teachers have completely changed by the time they graduate during their last year. As there is still a hierarchy in how the teachers decide who passes and who fails, the students hold much more power when it comes to legitimizing their work. Whereas in the lower years, the teachers are the ones who are putting a value on what students make. The teachers are there to distribute institutionalized fashion capital by sharing their knowledge of the fashion industry, as all teachers are professionals in the field and teach the students how the creative process of creating fashion works. They also increase the students embodied fashion capital, as the students learn how to possess positive and negative feedback, how to understand the language that is used in the fashion field and what kind of attitude they need in order to stand their ground, which are all essential if you want a position in the field of fashion. Kahn (2012) explained that when it comes to elite education, learning how to navigate in a world of elites and specifically when it comes to education, knowing how to understand those with power and knowing how to communicate with them gives students a privileged position when it comes to obtaining capital. Entwistle (2006) mentioned something similar when talking about the fashion industry, where mastering the habitus, meaning having the right attitude and knowledge about designers, gives you already a specific higher position in the field, even when you lack the artistic skills to become a fashion designer. However, there are differences between the first-year students and the last-years graduating. This is mainly because the graduating students already formed and acquired a certain amount of capital that gives them a more powerful position within the field of fashion education. They learned how to process and give feedback as their embodied form of capital is formed and prepped for the professional field of fashion. Their creative and technical skills are on a professional level due to the institutionalized capital acquired during their classes by teachers and from the fabric station instructors. However, how these forms of capital are mobilized is shown in their work.

When I joined the final graduation presentation, I secretly expected to see a polished and maybe even monotone line of student work, as almost all graduation shows of fashion academies I attended presented similar kinds of work between the students. Nevertheless, I admit I was wrong and was surprised to see a wide variation of work made by the students.

During my observations during the first-year classes, it seemed like teachers were trying to break old habits and turn the students into perfect copies of what is expected from a young fashion professional. However, the graduates learned to value their creativity instead of changing their creative work. For example, there was still a distinction between the students who probably started their studies with a lower amount of (embodied) fashion capital compared to their classmates, as their work was slightly less innovative and creative, it was still exceptionally well made and qualitatively very strong, but it was still safe and what I would expect from a graduate student. However, the big difference between the first years and last year's students with a lower amount of capital is that the last years know how to sell their work to their audience. They are aware that some of their peers may have more interesting final products.

Nevertheless, these students also know it is up to them to add legitimized value to their work. According to the teachers, during their four years of the fashion design course, students learn that taste is subjective and that aesthetics is not necessarily what adds value to fashion goods but rather who and how these goods are presented to their audience. This is in line with Bran's (2023) explanation of intermediaries and how the value of a product does not lie in its aesthetics but in what the intermediary legitimizes as value. "We cannot argue with a student whether their work is aesthetically pleasing or not; what we can argue about is the way they convince us that it is aesthetically pleasing", is what one of the fashion design teachers told me when I asked how they decide which works are good or bad. This is precisely what both Rocamora (2002) and Brans & Kuipers (2023) explained regarding fashion intermediaries. The constant competition between players within the field legitimizes their own tastes and convinces others of their preferences. According to Mears and Godart (2006), this notion of back-and-forth-ness between fashion creatives is how collective taste is created, both between players in the field and consumers who are affected by their decisions. It is up to the teachers to provide the students with the skills to have enough capital to compete with other intermediaries within the professional fashion field. The way teachers distribute, form, and mobilize capital is not only by teaching their students how to be creatives in the fashion industry but also how students must validate their own work, artistic and creative process and taste. Being creative is, of course, important when it comes to setting trends and influencing the flow of taste, but knowing how to mobilize this creative ability is most important if you want to compete against other fashion intermediaries. The hierarchy between teachers and students fades away during these four years due to the students gaining more skills and confidence to convince teachers of what they believe are the next trends in fashion.

However, there is not only a hierarchy between students and teachers during the four years of the fashion design course but also a hierarchical order among students. As I mentioned earlier, Mears and Godart (2006) explained that creatives within the fashion industry share a collective taste, which is due to the power dynamics between intermediaries themselves. During the field observations, I saw something similar, which would add more context to answer how fashion capital is acquired and formed outside of the resources distributed by the teachers and is equally relevant to my research question. In the following section, I will explain how embodied fashion capital, or habitus, creates power dynamics between students and how it affects acquiring objectified and institutionalized fashion capital inside and outside the classroom.

4.2. The Elementals, the Artists, and the Stars

The formation of capital and where and how it is acquired happens partly due to the resources teachers and instructors distribute to the students. However, I also noticed that students themselves play a role in how capital is formed and acquired. In this section, I will explain the relevance of relationships and interactions between students when it comes to forming, acquiring and mobilising fashion capital, as well as how different kinds of students form and acquire their own fashion capital. To do so I will introduce different kind of students. During my conversations with various students and observations of interactions between students and between students and staff, I noticed a distinction between three types of students. I named them the Elementals, the Artists, and the Stars, and their differences lay not only in their work but in how they talk, dress, their level of confidence and their attitude. These are all aspects related to their embodied and objectified capital, and by observing these different student types, I see that they possess the capital distributed towards them differently, depending on the amount of capital they already possess. Both Kahn (2012; 2021) and Taylor (2021) mentioned that privileged students possess a certain amount of embodied skill that often is recognised or misrecognised as legitimate. This is also noticeable within the context of the fashion department. Not only are the students with a higher amount of embodied fashion capital being recognised by the teachers, but their peers also notice their legitimacy. It creates a hierarchy among the students, which affects the formation and acquisition of capital. I will start by explaining each student type and how the amount of capital they possess influences their relationship with teachers, their positioning in the field to form capital, and how their amount of capital influences how they acquire capital. Starting with the Elemental

type, followed by the Artist and concluding with the Stars. By the end of the chapter, I should be clear about why defining and analysing these types is relevant to this research

The Elementals

       I will start to describe the Elementals. The first day I started my field observation, I had a conversation with the fashion department's study career coach. As she had planned one-on-one sessions with the first-year students, we agreed that when she had her talks with the students, she would send them to me for a small interview. However, the students did not show up. This gave me some time to talk with the study career coach, who I personally knew as she was also my coach during my studies, and I admitted that as a student, the individual sessions with the career coach were always put on the lowest priority. Even as I said this as a joke, she agreed and mentioned that only a handful of students attend her class or sessions and that they are almost always the same. To prove her point, she showed me the list of the class names and pointed out some of them, 'these kids never show, these kids only show up when they are unhappy about something, and these are always present; I bet that they forgot the time and are probably working in the fabric station'. When we walked into the fabric station, her predictions were correct, and students she knew would be there were indeed present. While she had her sessions individually with the students, I had the opportunity to converse with the students in the fabric station.

       This is where I met the Elemental type. The Elementals are hardworking students; they follow all the rules and are present when needed. They come across as passive and timid; they do not dress extravagantly, but they also clearly think about their appearance and manage to stand out around non-fashion people but blend in perfectly with fashionable people. They follow the trends but do not necessarily set them; they own the right kind of items and brands. When approaching these Elementals, they always seem slightly intimidated by me, but they warm up once they notice I will not judge their work. The main thing that the Elementals have in common is how they follow assignments. They constantly check all the boxes and follow the criteria perfectly, nothing more or nothing less. Their feedback sessions with teachers are also very one-sided; the teacher provides feedback, and the student agrees; there is no back-and-forth sparring between them. I wanted to know if a common factor among these students makes their creative possess so safe. I found out that these students do possess knowledge about the field of fashion, most of them had a course in fashion before they started this BA, or they did some internship related to fashion. They understand the commercial side of the fashion field, and most already have above-average technical skills due to their previous

experience. However, they are missing artistic and creative ability, as well as knowing how to behave and navigate throughout the field. When asked about previous experiences, none of them was really familiar with arts and culture other than fashion or was the only one in their environment that is doing a creative study. Their lack of field-specific capital affects their confidence in their own creative decision-making. Corciolani (2020), as well as Entwistle (2006), explains that newcomers to a specific artistic field first need to master all the rules, which includes making questionable choices and mistakes, which could be scary, especially to first-year students. According to Corciolani (2020), newcomers in the field often tend just to follow the rules, while those who already have a high enough amount of capital rather play with the rules. A lower amount of capital results in a more logical way of thinking, which contrasts with players with a high amount of capital, who are more likely to challenge the field's logic (Corciolani, 2020). The Elemental student's lack of capital shows in their interaction with teachers. They overlook the resources that are presented to them in order to form their capital. Their passiveness results in a more one-sided knowledge-sharing process between them and the teachers, where they might miss the essential skills needed in the professional field (Lam et al., 2020). They have a hard time adapting to uncertainty and unfamiliarity and, most of the time, seek validation from others, such as their classmates.

An example of a typical Elemental is 'Britt', a 22-year-old first-year student. She was making a toile of a pair of pants that she had to present during her midterm presentation the following day. I asked her about her design choices and process as well as the requirements of the assignment; she admitted that she instead stayed close to those requirements even though the students got a lot of freedom. Britt explains that she really struggles with the freedom of assignment and has a feeling she must stick as close as possible to the assignment in order to avoid mistakes. If she goes off-road, there is a chance that she might misinterpret the assignment and fail, and she mentions she already has a hard time understanding the assignment itself, so she is happy to check all the required boxes. Britt has a background in fashion, as she did a technical fashion-related study before coming to the academy, which is obvious, looking at how neat and well-made her toile is. However, she is the only one in her family doing something art related; she never really went to museums or learned how to appreciate art. I understand this could be not easy, seeing the multidisciplinary approach of the WdKA. Britt confirms this when she talks about the elective 'practices' she was required to do last term. 'To be honest, I really hated it… I just did not understand how this could help me become a designer or how this even relates to fashion". Britt also told me that the students from other disciplines in her elective class during the practice made her insecure and aware

that she lacked an artistic background. Because of this, she even feels more obligated to stick as close to the assignments as possible as she knows what her weak points are. According to Brit, students in the fashion department measure and compare themselves towards each other; she does not necessarily call it a negative thing; it happens mostly unconsciously, and it is up to her how she deals with it. 'When I have not worked at the academy for a while, I notice that my work is more 'safe', when I later see what my classmates made, I think "wow… okay, I could've been more daring".' Britt explains that her classmates both inspire her to step outside of her comfort zone, but at the same time make her more insecure about her own creative abilities, they always make her wonder 'How do they come up with this kind of stuff?'.

The example of Britt shows various things. First, it shows that Brit, as an Elementals, has a lower amount of embodied fashion capital and is relatively new to the field. They know the rules, but they will not question them. The WdKA is providing them with knowledge and experience in other artistic disciplines, offering them an amount of institutionalized fashion capital and the opportunity to form other forms of fashion capital as well; however, due to the lack of embodied capital, or habitus, they often do not realize the amount of value these resources hold that are presented to them. They value and opinions of their peers and are easily influenced by them, which is where they form their capital, and not necessarily due to teachers alone. As her classmates are less intimidating than teachers and speak the same language, capital is more easily acquired from them. It is the formation mainly happening among students. This relates to Godart and Mears's (2008) explanation of how decisions are made among fashion intermediaries due to imitation and collectiveness. As the Elementals seek validation in the other student types, the Artists and the Stars. In the following section, I will go into more detail about these types and how they contribute to the formation and distribution of fashion capital.

The Artists

The complete opposite of the Elemental is the Artists. These are the type of students who have a lot of creative and artistic talent but lack any experience or knowledge of the fashion field. Their presence in the fabric station is always noticeable, as they dress extravagantly, are very social and show much confidence. I learned that Artists are a 'hit or miss' regarding the quality of their work. It could be mind-blowing and refreshing, something you have never seen before in fashion, or it could be very outdated in a way that already has been done years ago by other designers. The reason is due to their experience in arts and

culture; they understand how a creative process works; most of them either have family members who are artistic and taught them how to appreciate art, or they have some pre-education in an artistic field. However, they never have real experience in the fashion field and only have their own knowledge of fashion, which is based on their aesthetic taste. They lack the ability to understand the flow of taste and trends as well as the understanding that the fashion field is not the same as other artistic fields and that it has a commercial nature (Rocamora, 2002). Their mind-blowing performances are often coincidental, as they often base their designs on aesthetics or concepts that sometimes, unintentionally, happen to be progressive in the field of fashion. This could lead to problems in the professional field of fashion, according to Rocamora (2017), as intermediaries need to be open-minded to stay relevant and notice the changes in the industry. As the Artists are passionate and confident, failing or critiquing often leads to anger and frustration, as well as conflict with teachers and staff, which shows they lack embodied capital that helps them understand the hierarchy of the field, as well as the language an attitude they need in order to navigate through the field. However, their creative and artistic talents help them with being innovative and problem solving, even if it is not always related to fashion or trends; it is a skill that makes thinking outside of the box easier and is, compared to the elementals, not afraid to seek the boundaries of assignments, whether the outcome is positive or negative. This often leads to conflicts between students and teachers as they sometimes do not understand why some rules or requirements exist as they do not see fashion as commercial but rather as an art form. I will provide the example of Mick, a 21-year-old first-year student, to demonstrate how Artists are relevant in the context of the fashion capital.

I was first introduced to Mick via a video call he had with the career coach; she called me into her office and told me about the student she was talking to virtually, who wanted to participate in my research. I asked to meet them in the fabric station later that day, so they could also show me their work and what they were working on. After this small interaction, the career coach explained that Mick was really hard to manage during the first semesters, as they were stubborn, not open for feedback, and often came into conflict with teachers. However, according to her, they finally 'got it' and are now on the right path. I was curious about what made Mick suddenly change their attitude. However, she did not give a direct answer, but she did say, 'They put their ego aside'.

Later that afternoon, while I was observing at the fabric station, a tall person entered the space, dressed in colourful clothes and carrying multiple bags, while greeting everyone personally. They noticed me within seconds and immediately approached me to introduce

themselves and ask if they could settle in before talking with me. I let them settle in and observe their behaviour at the same time. Before Mick came in, it was quiet in the fabric station; you could only hear some students murmur among each other and the sounds of sewing machines, but now that Mick is here, you can hear laughter and loud talking; students are walking around showing off what they made to each other. It is as of Mick is the glue that brings everyone together. When I started talking to them and asking them to tell me something about their work, they chaotically pulled out random sketches and pieces of fabric; all wrinkled up, while simultaneously eating a sandwich. I must note that 'cleanness' and 'neatness 'are essential when making or designing clothes, as spots or stains can ruin your work; there are multiple signs within the station that food and drinks are prohibited. I hear some of Mick's classmates giggle when they see how messy and chaotic his work is. Mick's work is simple in the technical sense. However, they are the only ones in their class that used a different kind of material than textile; they made a top out of wood that they made in the wood station. Mick's choice of unexpected material, distinguishing them from their peers, is relevant to the power dynamics among the students. Disorder within a field is not just a simple mistake that should be eliminated, explains Esposito (2011), but is necessary and essential to have some order. Rules within a field should be challenged by players in the field (Corciolani, 2020). This is already a big contrast compared to the Elemental-type students, who tend to maintain order and follow the rules.

As Mick's work did show off their creative and artistic ability, I wondered how he performed so poorly in the last two terms of this year, as his career coach mentioned earlier. Mick describes their past terms as 'horrible' and says they had a tough time with the teachers. "They only gave me negative comments, but they never explained why it was bad" They were still frustrated due to the fact that the feedback was never constructive, so they could not improve their work. Specifically, one of their teachers started ignoring them after their first 'bad term', refusing to help them in any way nor giving them the tools to learn and understand how to grow. Mick said it was demoralizing and lonely, as they did not know what they did wrong, and there was nobody to help them. They felt they were judged by their lack of background in the fashion field. After failing again in their second term, this sadness turned to anger, and he dedicated all his time to working extra hard to show them that they did not need any help.

> "Maybe it was a good thing, it really sucked, but it did force me to change
> and step outside of the box. I know I am creative, and the extra pressure was

exactly what I needed. If I only succeeded and had high grades and positive feedback, I would never feel the need to work so hard."

As for now, Mick and the teacher made up and have a normal teacher-student relationship, where they receive constructive feedback and can voice their own views. Johnson and LaBelle (2017) mention that teachers who are inattentive, who fail to communicate correctly and who lack concern and kindness towards students often display favouritism. This is displayed in how Mick felt judged because they did not have a background in fashion and felt punished for not following the rules they were never aware existed in the first place. Even though this is a one-sided narrative from the student's perspective, there are similar stories of students treated the same way; most students with this experience lacked fashion-related capital but had high artistic capital. Mears (2011) and Entwistle (2006) both mentioned that exclusion in the field of fashion is based-on boundaries made by elites who define who or what is considered legitimate. In the context of fashion education, the teachers as elites are in charge of legitimizing the value and meaning of students' work and the legitimization of the student's embodied capital. As Mick mentioned, their background in art was not valid enough.

The Artist type students have both advantages and disadvantages regarding their embodied fashion capital. They possess creativity, which is lacking in the Elemental students, but they struggle to use this artistic and creative thinking within the context of the field of fashion. Without this familiarity with the fashion field, they often clash with teachers as they have not mastered the embodied skill of hierarchical interaction (Taylor, 2021), which is required to understand how to navigate the fashion field. Among the types of students, the Artist do possess an amount of influential power, but this depends on how and by whom their work is legitimized. However, the Artists are less likely to be influenced by other students as they are confident in their own creativity. From what I observed and was told, the Artists are more frustrated when their peers score better, in a way that they do not see their own work as inferior but somewhat misunderstood. They form capital the moment they notice their work gets the validation they seek from teachers. As the example of Mick, once they understood what was required from them, they could use their creative ability in the context of fashion. Artist students perform better using a multidisciplinary approach and a collective learning experience, as it validates their creativity. With a more one-sided transfer of knowledge, they risk missing the resources presented to them, similar to the Elemental types. The main difference between the Artist and the Elementals is the high artistic and creative talent the Artist possesses, which makes them influential players in the field once they have the right

amount of capital. This brings me to the last student type, the Stars, who already show they have the potential to become a successful player in the field of fashion. In this last section, I will explain why the Star students are in possession of this potential and how the way they form and acquire capital is relevant.

The Stars

The last type of student is the *Star*. These students are on top of the hierarchical ladder among students. You will not spot them directly, as they are less extravagant than the Artists; besides, the Star type of student is rare compared to the Elementals, for example. They are quiet but not timid; they are confident and passionate when they start talking about their work. These types of students are few in number because they had the opportunity to already gain a significant amount of embodied capital, for some even a significant amount of objectified capital as well, which is an opportunity only a few young students have. This embodied capital, or habitus, is obtained from a young age for these students, as most mentioned having family members participating in the artistic or cultural field, going to cultural events as a child, and being stimulated artistically and creatively from prior. In addition to that, they also have an understanding of the fashion field and have some experience in it, by either previous education in fashion, internship, or due to their own passion and curiosity in the fashion field. As Entwistle (2006: 740) has yet to really define fashion capital, she did mention a combination of cultural, economic, social, and symbolic capital (p. 740). Their background and upbringing relate to their mastered habitus and have the skill of navigating through- and understanding the dynamics of the fashion field. Some Star-type students also already possess an amount of objectified fashion capital, seen in what they wear and their knowledge of the current zeitgeist.

As mentioned before, they are less extravagant in appearance than the Artist types. However, the Elemental-type students often imitate the style and aesthetics of the Star students, as the Stars appear to be the ones setting the trends in the fashion department. I almost feel like the Star students could not care any less about how they look as their attitude automatically makes it legitimate, as I have seen most of them wear jeans, t-shirts, or sweatsuits. However, the Elementals' imitation always lacks this kind of effortlessness. It is always a bit too perfect, with the right brands feeling like it is copied straight out of a fashion magazine. Fashion is a form of imitation and differentiation (Kawamura, 2019), which relates to how the Stars distinguish themselves with their objectified fashion capital, or legitimized cultural goods, from others. This also shows how the Stars influence taste and preference,

which is one of the earlier mentioned criteria in becoming an intermediary (Brenninkmeyer, 1963; Corciolani et al., 2020) within the field of fashion (Rocamora, 2022).

The power dynamics between the Elemental, Artist and Star students are also present during the class, feedback session, and their relationship with teachers. I will explain this using an example I obtained while observing the first-year classes. Most classes start with a ten-minute introduction on what they will do today, followed by some free time for the students to work on their projects; the teacher summons small groups of 4 or 5 students for a joint feedback session. The feedback sessions are done collectively to give students the opportunities to engage in each other's feedback and to peer review each other's work. An example of a session where the different types of students were shown was in a first-year fashion design class, where they all had to present their progress which was a toile of the item they designed. Students get individual feedback on their work while other students listen; however, during this group session, there is a clear difference among the students' work, which was noticeable when all the toiles were presented next to each other. Some are very safe but technically well done, others were half finished with some pattern pieces not sewn in yet, and another one looks very complex and technical. The students, paired with the safe but steady designs, present their work very timid and insecurely, mainly focusing on how they have met the requirements. The teacher follows up with some suggestions and questions. However, these students have a hard time answering, which results in the teacher giving them more suggestions which the student passively accepts before ending the conversation. The students agree and type down their feedback quietly. These students are the Elementals. Aware of their position, they focused on doing it right and, therefore, sometimes missing valuable resources provided by the teacher to form their fashion capital.

The student with the messy and half-finished design explains their work very conceptually to validate their unfinished work. For one, the teacher has a more challenging time giving feedback because the students keep interrupting her when she makes a suggestion. Two seem to be on different pages; as the teacher tries to understand the students' chaotic explanation, the student does not really answer her questions, and they eventually both give up. The teacher compliments them on what they did good, and the student looks pleased by this validation. This showed an interaction between an Artist type and their teacher, where the lack of understanding of the fashion field clashes with the teachers' feedback. They explain their work as a conceptual artwork, which is hard to legitimize in the fashion field, as it only focuses on aesthetic value but lacks economics (Brans & Kuipers, 2023; Kuipers, 2023). Due

to the misinterpretation and miscommunication from both sides, the teacher cannot share the knowledge needed for the student's formation of the fashion capital.

Other students could have engaged more in each other's feedback during these sessions. However, there was one student who did. He helped the Artist explain his concept better and gave suggestions to the Elemental student. During his own session, he talked very clearly and confidently about his work and his choices during this process. The session between him and his teachers felt like a balanced conversation where the teacher asked questions, and the student could answer them, but also asked questions back or asked for clarification on her suggestions and came up with his own suggestions. There was a clear hierarchy between him and the teacher, and he respected her knowledge and opinion; at the same time, the teacher also respected his point of view and gave him enough space to voice his opinion. There was respect from both the student and the teacher, resulting in them joining the learning process instead of a top-down approach (Lam et al., 2020). The Star student is aware that the teachers are giving them the tools to increase the knowledge they need if they want to enter the professional field. The capital formation process goes quicker among the Stars than the Elementals and the Artist, as they understand how and what to acquire to increase their capital.

As demonstrated in this chapter, the fashion department of the WdKA operates as a field similar to the professional field of fashion, including hierarchy, imitation and competition. On top of the hierarchy are the teachers, who can distribute the resources needed to form and acquire fashion capital. This happens in the form of embodied capital and institutionalized capital. Close to the teachers are the instructors of the fabric station, who, with their technical skills and passion, assist students in forming their institutionalized capital. As the distribution of capital comes from teachers and instructors, it is up to students to acquire and mobilize their obtained fashion capital. The different types of students demonstrate that the amount of embodied fashion capital a student already possesses determines the student's formation, acquisition and mobilization of the fashion capital. In the following chapter, I will present the conclusion of this research, as well as my implications, in order to answer my research question.

5. Conclusion

To answer the question: How is fashion capital formed, acquired and mobilized within the context of fashion education? I started with defining the various forms of capital within the field of fashion, as well as defining this specific field. A clear definition was required, as Bourdieu's concepts of capital, his field theory, and how he relates these to fashion needed to be revised to match the current fashion industry. As Bourdieu saw fashion as a cultural industry, similar to other cultural fields, he did not consider that fashion has its own set of rules regarding the positioning of players in the field, how the value of goods is legitimized and how capital is distributed. It has been acknowledged that fashion is a specific form of culture by scholars such as Mears (xx) and Entwistle (2006). However, fashion capital and the field of fashion never got a precise definition, and the differences between cultural capital were never apparent. After defining these concepts, I could operationalize them and apply them during my observations in the field of fashion education in order to find the answer to my research question.

In my theoretical framework, I explained how the field of fashion operates, as well as defined the different forms of capital and demonstrated in what ways they differ from cultural capital while at the same time highlighting the similarities. The main point of the fashion field that differentiates it from other cultural fields is the distinction between the heteronomous pole and the autonomous pole. In the fashion field, the value of goods is less related to what is considered low and high fashion as it is in the cultural field, as the fashion field has a more commercial nature, meaning good taste in fashion does not necessarily relates to the autonomous pole of the field, but to what fashion intermediaries predict to be the most popular future fashion trends that have economic potential. This also changes the role of intermediaries as gatekeepers of taste. Within the fashion field, trends are constantly fluctuating, resulting in the amount of power and the position of players in the field needing to adapt and compete with each other in this fast-paced industry.

Fashion education is an essential player in the fashion field, as they prepare students to become a player in the professional field. During my observations, I noticed that education functions similarly to the professional fashion field, with hierarchical order, various positions and capital formation. At the fashion department of the WdKA, there was a clear distinction of power between teachers, instructors and students. The teachers are on top of the ladder and can distribute fashion capital with knowledge and skills. This distribution of resources is overall done equally. However, these resources are only sometimes equally visible to

students, giving some students more advantage in acquiring capital. This all relates to how students position themselves in the field of fashion education. From my perspective as an observer, the hierarchical order among students is not taken into account, and they are all seen and treated as equal by the teachers. Some students require more resources to form their fashion capital to get to the same position as their peers due to the amount of already exciting capital and their ability to understand how to use the tools provided to them.

The amount of fashion capital and which form of fashion capital students already possess determines how this is further formed, acquired, and mobilized to become a player in the professional field. Both cultural and fashion capital is a form of symbolic currency that gives players in the field the ability to influence taste, resulting in a powerful and dominant position within their specific fields. The amount of capital is directly related to becoming an intermediary. However, the ability to influence taste in fashion requires a more specific skill set than in other cultural fields. The most important one has the ability to not only influence taste but to forecast future tastes and anticipate upcoming trends. This requires both creative and artistic ability and social skills, meaning that you know how to navigate in the field, observe others and detect how taste flows.

Nevertheless, entrepreneurial skills are precious as well, as the fashion industry is more commercial than other creative industries, so knowing which trends are 'sellable' and fit for commercial purposes is just as important as aesthetics. Therefore, different forms of fashion capital are needed to gain this specific skill set—Embodied, which refers to the behavior and attitude needed to navigate the field. Objectified fashion capital means owning or wearing specific fashion goods that suggest your knowledge and taste hold legitimate value. Moreover, institutionalized fashion capital is knowledge and skills distributed by the institutions through education and diplomas.

In the context of fashion education, these forms of fashion capital, or the lack thereof, are already visible among first-year fashion students. I distinguished them into three types: The Elementals, the Artists and the Stars. Elemental students have low embodied fashion capital, higher objective fashion capital and low to moderate institutionalized fashion capital. This lack of capital results in low creative ability and a lack of confidence when positioning themselves in the field. They often miss opportunities to increase their capital due to the lack of knowledge needed to understand the value of the resources presented to them.

On the other hand, Artists have a high amount of embodied capital but lack the other two forms, making them creative and artistic. However, they need to gain the ability to understand the current flow of taste or zeitgeist, as well as a lack of social skills to understand the rules of

the field. The last student type is the Star; as the name suggests, they already have a high amount of all the forms of fashion capital. They understand the rules of the field and the attitude that is needed and have creative, artistic and entrepreneurial skills, which gives them the ability to think about future trends. Among these three student types, the stars are the most privileged when it comes to obtaining capital, as they understand the rules of the field and can navigate within it. They understand the teachers and the language used to detect what and when resources to increase their capital are presented to them. Both the Elementals and the Artist have a more challenging time recognizing them, even when they are presented equally to them as to the Stars.

Within fashion education, the formation of fashion capital and how it is acquired depends on the students themselves. It is not the school that favors one student over the other, as this sometimes does happen. Generally, students are treated equally. This distinction of student types was less visible among graduation students, but they were still present. What stood out the most was not that the types were separated by knowledge or understanding of the fashion field like the first-year student, but they were visible in their work. As all the last years gained confidence in showing and talking about their creations, I could still see that Elementals created a perfect garment collection, exactly what you would expect from a graduating student, neatly presented and complete. Some students presented solid, conceptual art pieces, some without garments made but still related to fashion, clearly the Artist. And then, a few students had a mix of innovative fabrics and garments with a strong concept and unique way of presenting, which belonged to the Stars. This showed that the students were never thought to be equally skilled but were instead thought to strengthen their already exciting skillset, gaining confidence in their own creative and artistic abilities. The main focus of the WdKA fashion department is to prepare students to become players in the fashion field; however, instead of mobilizing fashion capital to become what the fashion field wants, they teach students how to become wanted within the field. They mastered the right attitude to confidentially compete with other fashion intermediaries, not just to become one.

As this study has been done in only one school, this does not imply that different fashion departments operate similarly. It also needs to be determined whether the multidisciplinary approach of the WdKA is genuinely preparing their students for the professional fashion field. As I mentioned in the theory chapter, the fashion field has a specific set of rules, and even with its similarities between other cultural and artistic fields, (future) players need to be prepared for this fast-paced and commercial industry, a good eye for taste and trends is not enough. However, the fashion education field is also changing to

adapt to the industry based on this research, which makes it interesting for further research. The way intermediaries change and power shifts constantly, the role of education or other fashion institutions within the field could also change. Considering that within other cultural fields, players are moving towards different positions as well, which may affect the fashion field.

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6. Appendix

6.1 Observation Guides

First year students:

Category:	Focus on:	Should include:
Interactions with peers	• Who speaks dominantly? • talking turns • hierarchy • confidence	• Are conversations school focused? • do they ask validation? • do they give advice
Interaction with staff	• Position of student • passive/assertive • joint conversations • passive/active recipient • hierarchy • confidence • defensive/cooptative	• How much do they engage in the conversations? • how do they talk about their work? • do they talk differently about their work with their peers
While working alone	• Focused/distracted. • seeking validation • closed off • open to conversations • taking/claiming space,	• Where does the student sit? • how often do they walk around? • do they reach out to others? • are they closed of
Talking to me about their work	• Passionate • Insecure • doubtful about me • how much are they showing	• Why they show this piece specifically? • how do they engage with me? • is there a hierarchy between us?
Talking about school with me	• Openness • positive/negative experiences • prior education/experiences.	• Which kind of students share positive/negative experiences?

Category:	Focus on:	Should include:
		• who is struggling?
		• Link prior experiences to current experience.
Working together with classmates	• Dominance/hierarchy • talking turns • who talks most/less • positioning of students • topics of conversation	• What are they doing while working together? • are they more socializing or working? • Who leads, who follows.

Fourth year students:

Category:	Focus on:	Should include:
Interactions with peers	• Closeness • Competitiveness • who speaks dominantly? • talking turns • hierarchy • seeking validation	• What kind of tone? • who is dominant? • how are these convo's different than the 1st years?
Interaction with staff	• Position of student • passive/assertive • joint conversation • passive/active recipient • hierarchy • confidence • defensive/cooptative	• How much room does the student get to explain their work? • how do students react to feedback? • how are these different than the 1st years?
While working alone	• Focused/distracted. • seeking validation • closed off • open to conversations • taking/claiming space	• Where does the student sit? • how often do they walk around? • do they reach out to others? • are they closed off?

		• how are these different than the 1st years?
Talking to me about their work	• Passionate • Insecure • doubtful about me • how much/what are they showing	• Why they show this piece specifically? • how do they engage with me? • is there a hierarchy between us? • comparing to the 1st years
Talking about school with me	Openness, positive/negative experiences, prior education/experiences.	• Which kind of students share positive/negative experiences? • who is struggling. • Link prior experiences to current experience to their educational career • what have they learned? • have they changed? • what are their perceptions of the future? • what are their ambitions? • do they feel prepared to the field
Working together with classmates	• Dominance/hierarchy • talking turns • who talks most/less? • positioning of students • topics of conversation	• What are they doing while working together? • are they more socializing or working, why (not) • Who leads, who follows?

Teachers and instructors:

Category:	Focus on:	Should include:
Background information / past professional experience (in conversation with me)	• How much do they share • Only fashion related? • Includes other prior experience? • Knowledge of fashion field • hierarchy	• What kind of tone/emotion? • How do they position themselves professionally • How do they position themselves at the WdKA •
Interaction with staff	• Position • passive/assertive • joint conversation • hierarchy • alone or in group	• how do they engage with other staff (teachers and instructors) • non verbal communication • body language
Interaction with students	• dominance • talking turns • open-ness • tone • difference in tone depending on students. • Attentiveness • Relatable • understanding	• what is the nature of the interaction? • is there a clear hierarchy? • how do students react to them? • Non verbal communication

General observation Fabric Station / WdKA

Category:	Focus on:	Should include:
Location and time	• Who is present • What is the mood • What day and what time is it	• What are the spaces used for

		• How do people use these space/position themselves in the space • Is there coloration between time and location and the people present
Players	• Who are present? • Groups and cliques • Relationships	• How do players behave depending on others • Who are close and why > look for similarities? • How do players position themselves? • Leaders and followers depending on who is present

Guidelines / reminders while observing.

Always take into consideration:

Who are you observing?

- Student > gender, age, year
- Teacher > what subject?
- Instructor > which expertise

What are you observing?

- General life in the fabric station
- Classes > which year, what subject
- Interactions > among who, what topic, how many people
- Behaviour > who, what context
- Student work > which year is the student, what is the assignment, why are they showing me this

When are you observing?

- What day > are there classes, during the weekend, is it a holiday etc.
- What time > morning, afternoon, evening

How are you observing?

- Am I engaging in conversations?
- Am I approachable or just observing?
- Can I approach people, is this the appropriate timing?

6.2 Code list

Code	description
Theme:	**Embodied Fashion Capital**
Name dropping	When students drop names or terms related to fashion or the field*
Confidant attitude	When a student talks confidently about their work*
Helpful	Students who explain or help their peers*
Lost	Student who doesn't understand what is happening*
Insecure	Students who are insecure while talking about themselves/their work/fashion field*
Previous education	Previous education in general
Previous education/experience in fashion	What did the student do before starting this study related to fashion
Occupation parents	What kind of work did/do the parents
Sibling influence	Do the students have siblings and do they have an influence
Friends and Family in fashion	Do the students have people in their social circle who are involved or related to fashion
Friends and Family other cultural fields	Do the students have people in their social circle who are involved or related to arts and culture
Moving confidently	Student walks around / moves with confidant*
Moving insecure	Students walks around / moves insecure*
Passive	Students has a passive position*
Aggressive	Student has an aggressive position*
Significant knowledge of fashion	Students demonstrates to have an above average knowledge of fashion
Average knowledge of fashion	Student knows what the major popular trends and new is in the fashion world but is unfamiliar with niece trends or brands.
Low knowledge of fashion	Student is not aware of the current popular trends in fashion
Significant knowledge of arts and culture	Students demonstrates to have an above average knowledge of arts and culture
Average knowledge of arts and culture	Student knows what the major popular trends and new is in the arts and culture world but is unfamiliar with niece trends or brands.
Low knowledge of arts and culture	Student is not aware of the current popular trends in arts and culture
Theme:	**Objectified Fashion Capital**
Knowledge of fashion brands	Students shows they have knowledge of brands and designers
Taking about that they wear	Students describing their fit
Talking what they own	Students talking about the fashion they own
Commenting other people's outfits positively	When someone compliment someone's outfit
Commenting other people's outfits negatively	When someone says something negative about someone's outfit

Confidence wearing	The way somebody moves confidently in what they wear*
Insecurely wearing	The way somebody moves insecurely in what they wear*
Brand sensitive	Is the individual wearing a lot of noticeable brands?
Extravagant dress	When an individual is dressing extravagantly
Fidgeting or fixing appearance	When an individual keeps touching and checking their outfit in order to make sure it still looks good
Does not care about appearance (verbal)	When an individual states they don't care how they look
Does not care about appearances (non-verbal)	When an individual treats their appearance with less awareness (eg. Putting hair up without looking in a mirror, throwing coat or bag in the corner) *
Theme: Institutionalized Capital	
Above average technical skills	When student's technical skills are better compared to their peers
Average technical skills	When student's technical skills are average compared to their peers
Below average technical skills	When student's technical skills are worse compared to their peers
Understanding teachers	When a student shows they understand what the teacher means*
Not understanding teachers	When a student struggles with understanding what teachers mean
Incorporating teachers' feedback	The student is able to apply the feedback given by teachers
Providing technical knowledge	Teacher or instructor gives technical advice
Providing artistic and creative knowledge	Teacher or instructor gives advise related to creativity or aesthetics
Providing theoretical knowledge	Teacher or instructor shares theoretical knowledge (e.g. Fashion history or theory)
Providing behaviour knowledge (verbal)	Teacher or instructor teaches how a student should behave by telling them or giving tips
Providing behaviour knowledge (non-verbal)	Teacher or instructor teaches how a student should behave by treating them a certain way or reacting a certain way*
Theme: Context codes	
While talking to peer	One on one student interaction
While partaking in conversation with peers	Multiple students engaging in conversation
Student to teacher/instructor	When a student talks to a teacher/instructor
Teacher to student(s)	Teachers talking to (a) student(s) as a one-way conversation
Class	When in class setting
Fabric station	When in the fabric station and not in class
Class in fabric station	When class is held in fabric station
Individual observation	When observing an individual
Individual conversation	When I have a conversation with one individual
In conversation with students	When I have a conversation with multiple student
In conversation with players	When I have a conversation with multiple people, includes student and staff

*These codes depend on context, are always paired with the context codes