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Teaching Scotland's Future:
a critical consideration of salient themes

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Dissertation submitted by Christopher McKee, M.A. (Hons) in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Education.

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Abstract

Despite the promotion of teachers as enquiring professionals in contemporary Scottish educational policy, it seemed that little attention had been paid to the nature of such policies themselves and what ideological purposes they served to promote. Indeed, while *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) had guided developments in Scottish education since its publication (Swinney, 2017a), only three appraisals of the report could be sourced (Kennedy and Doherty, 2012; MacDonald, 2013; Black *et al.*, 2016). This enquiry therefore sought to redress the perceived void in critique surrounding *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) and understand the ideological nature of the document. In order to achieve this aim, the researcher conducted a critical discourse analysis focussing on the aspects of the overview of the report that explicitly covered teachers and their role. Research questions were generated covering how the teaching profession was conceptualised in the overview, how this aligned with wider discourses of social organisation and whether such discourses were compatible with the configuration of teaching put forth in theory and research – all of which provided a sharp focus for the study. Subsequently, data was generated by applying the framework of questions suggested by Fairclough (2015) – supplemented by the work of Janks (2010) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) - to the overview of the document. This was then combined with findings from a thorough literature review in order to arrive at the conclusion that *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) could be viewed as operating in line with a wider global policy discourse of neoliberalism. As such, the study uncovered the possibility that, while aspects of the language used in the overview could be seen to affirm a belief in teacher professionalism and autonomy, its wider grammatical structures could actually be seen to erode traditional understandings of these terms and re-conceptualise them to meet the needs of an economy that required less agency, more passivity and the promotion of homogeneity through strict accountability processes. Therefore, while the study focusses on a small section of the wider report, it nonetheless provides interesting insights for teachers wishing to understand more clearly the context in which they practice, and hopefully empowers them to critically question the policies currently governing their professional lives.

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I would like to thank all of my own teachers whose hard work and advice built the foundations that helped me get to this point. Thanks also to the colleagues who have supported, advised and counselled me during the process. I would particularly like to express immense gratitude to my supervisor, Kathleen Kerrigan, for the encouragement, support and guidance provided at every stage of the project. Finally, I should like to thank my mum, Janet McKee, as well as my aunt, Ann Blyth, simply for being there throughout.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Eileen Blyth and Ellen Hearn, whose love and encouragement helped forge the path that led to its creation.

Abbreviations

BERA	British Ethical Research Association
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
COPAC	Code of Professionalism and Conduct
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
EU	European Union
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCEL	Scottish College of Educational Leadership
SERA	Scottish Educational Research Association

List of Diagrams

Diagram 2.1 – Fairclough’s framework for lexical analysis Part A

Diagram 2.2 – Fairclough’s framework for lexical analysis Part B

List of Appendices

Appendix one: search results

Table of contents

	Page
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Dedication	iii
Abbreviations	iv
List of Diagrams	v
List of Appendices	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Nature, aims and approach of the study	2
1.3 Research questions	3
1.4 Organisation of chapters	3
Chapter 2: Methodology and Methods	4
2.1 Introduction	4
2.2 Ontology and Epistemology	4
2.3 Research Methodology	4
2.4 Research Questions	5
2.5 Research Design	6
2.6 Ethical Considerations	12
2.7 Research Evaluation	13
2.8 Summary	14
Chapter 3: Literature Review	15
3.1 Introduction	15
3.2 Ideology and Power	16
3.3 Neoliberalism and Marketisation	16
3.4 Teacher Professionalism	18
3.5 Teacher Agency and Autonomy	21
3.6 Teacher Accountability	22
3.7 Conclusion	24
Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion	26
4.1 Introduction	26
4.2 Setting the scene – creating context in <i>Teaching Scotland's Future</i>	26
4.3 The teaching profession	28
4.4 Complicating the context – Curriculum for Excellence and its impact	32
4.5 Curriculum for Excellence and the role of the teacher	34
4.6 Evaluation of research design	36
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations	38
5.1 Synthesis	38
5.2 Conclusions	38
5.3 Reprise of Research Evaluation	41
5.4 Recommendations	41
5.5 Final thoughts	42

References
Appendix

44
54

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: Overview

Much contemporary advice on how to enquire into practice involves identifying a problem as the logical starting point for such enquiry (Buchanan and Redford, 2008; GTCS, no date; Scottish Government, 2013; Scottish Government, 2017a). However, such problems tend to be pedagogical in nature (Jackson and Street, 2005; Campbell and McNamara, 2010; Gilchrist, 2018) which, in turn, often leads to action research methodology being employed as a means of understanding and overcoming the issues identified (Coghlan and Brannick, 2001; Baumfield *et al.*, 2008; McNiff, 2013). At the same time, there also exists the position that the problems requiring investigation by teachers extend beyond issues of practice and into how teaching itself is conceptualised and governed by external policy directives (Rassool, 1999; Clarke and Newman, 2009; Gerwitz *et al.*, 2009; Johnston, 2015). Indeed, despite having reflected against the *Standards for Middle Leadership and Management* (GTCS, 2012), used key drivers from the *National Improvement Framework* in improvement planning (Scottish Government, 2016) and re-designed curricular plans in line with emerging guidance (Scottish Government, 2009; Education Scotland, 2012; 2016), the researcher realised that they had rarely stopped to consider how or why such policies had come into existence. The enquiry therefore took a critical curiosity as its starting point, and subsequently sought to identify policy directives that could be classed as important in the conceptualisation and governance of Scottish education.

Following careful consideration, *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) was chosen as a focus. After all, many developments in Scottish education, including the publication of the suite of professional standards (GTCS, 2012), the introduction of the system of Professional Update (GTCS, 2014) and the establishment of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) either arose as a direct response to, or were clearly inspired by, some of the many suggestions for improvement within that report – a position supported by the government's assurance that all recommendations within the report were accepted (Swinney, 2017a).

However, this acknowledgement of the report's influence had not been met with the response one might have expected given the policy directives it inspired. Indeed, despite the promotion of teachers as enquirers (Donaldson, 2011; GTCS, 2012, Scottish Government, 2016), the researcher could source only three appraisals: one journal article (Kennedy and Doherty,

2012), an editorial from a magazine (MacDonald, 2013) and a government report (Black *et al.*, 2016) concerned with how the review's recommendations were progressing. Therefore, despite the encouragement for teachers to "become consumers and producers of knowledge" (Carroll, 2011: 88) and "hold as problematic the routine cause of their existence" (Murray and Lawrence, 2000: 11), very little critical attention had been paid to the document which, in the years since its publication, was central to moulding that very existence. Thus, a problem had been identified.

As a result of this perceived lack of critical appraisal, this study sought to return to *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) and understand more than just its recommendations. As Scott (2000: 1) states, "educational texts [...] are constructed and ideologically embedded artefacts," and the research therefore sought to clarify the ideological positions that allowed the report to exercise such power over the teaching profession. Having identified the problem, the next step was to look for appropriate ways in which to understand and overcome it.

1.2: Nature, aims and approach of the study

The enquiry presented here investigated the ideological assumptions underpinning the configuration of the teaching profession within *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011), seeking to locate them within wider discourses in national and international policy, theory and research. Through doing so, it aimed to engender greater awareness of what ideological positions had governed teachers' professional lives, and subsequently empower teachers to critically evaluate policy and their position in relation to it.

In order to fulfil the enquiry's aims, a critical discourse analysis was undertaken, with Fairclough's (2015) framework of questions combined with the advice of Janks (2010) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) to uncover how the linguistic character of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) put forth a particular conceptualisation of the teaching profession. This analysis was then cross-referenced with a wide range of literature covering the concepts of professionalism, agency, autonomy and accountability inherent in the source document – an action which helped to establish whether the report accepted or rejected the dominant ideological configurations of teaching evident in literature from across the globe. While the knowledge sought by the study has been uncovered, it is important to recognise that it was generated from a small sample within the wider document itself – the researcher having thus concentrated on the overview chapter of the document in order that the data

generated matched the scope of the dissertation format. Further opportunities for study are thus apparent, details of which are covered both in chapter two and, to a greater extent, in chapter five.

1.3: Research questions

The questions guiding the study presented in this volume are provided below:

- How is the teaching profession conceptualised in *Teaching Scotland's Future*?
- What discourses and ideologies of social organisation underpin such conceptualisation(s)?
- To what extent are these discourses and ideologies compatible with theoretical and research-based conceptualisations of the teaching profession?

The first question relied on the lexical analysis of the source document, while the second and third relied on the findings of the literature being cross-referenced with the lexical analysis. This combination of questions allowed for the aims of the study to be met in full, resulting in a full exploration and analysis of the text's linguistic character and its intertextual relationship with wider discourses. Further details of how the questions were generated, alongside details of the literature informing this process, are provided in chapter two.

1.4: Organisation of chapters

The dissertation captures all steps on the way to capturing the ideological essence of the overview of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011), starting firstly in chapter two with details of the methodology employed to design the research and justification for all choices informing the design process.

Given that the dissertation presents an enquiry without human participants, the literature review plays a substantial role in addressing the research questions and, as per professional convention, is included after the methodology and methods have been outlined and justified (Carroll, no date). The details of the literature review form the basis of chapter three.

Chapter four then outlines the key findings from the analysis, alongside a discussion of how these observations can be seen to accord with many of the positions encountered within the literature.

Finally, the dissertation closes in chapter five with a synthesis of the findings with the relevant research questions, appended with some final thoughts relating to the wider impact on both the researcher and practice more widely.

Chapter 2: Methodology and Methods

2.1: Introduction

Having noted that Scottish policy intentions for teachers had mostly been realised through investigations into pedagogy and not the policies themselves (as well as accepting their own passivity when enacting the responsibilities deriving from these directives), the researcher then turned their attention into how their own enquiry could best redress this perceived void. Following the selection of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) for consideration, the researcher then had to clarify exactly what it was that they desired to understand about the text, before then putting in place a series of steps that would allow them to do so with focus, clarity and validity. This chapter serves as an explanation of these processes, with each stage of designing the research covered in turn and justification for resulting decisions provided.

2.2: Ontology and Epistemology

Taber (2007: 36) contends that “although it may be possible to do effective research that avoids the terminology [of ontology and epistemology], it is certainly not possible to plan coherent research without taking the issues seriously.” McNiff (2013) extends this position by stating that a research study cannot be constructed without articulating one’s assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge and how it is generated. Given that the project aimed to look for meaning within *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011), and particularly meanings that might not be immediately visible to other readers, the ontological position saw knowledge, particularly when it came to understandings of what things meant, as not fixed and constantly open to interpretation (Barthes, 1968; Fowler, 1974; Barthes, 1981; Rogers, 2011). Alongside this, the researcher’s background as a Teacher of English – a subject whose delivery is grounded in extracting various meanings from language – informed the epistemological position that knowledge (and subsequent understanding of meaning) could be generated through study of language (Bakhtin, 1935; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Gee, 1999). These stances were in polar opposition to the concept of absolute and immutable truth often ascribed to positivism (Giroux, 1997; Taber, 2007) and, accordingly, the researcher worked within the interpretive paradigm.

2.3: Research Methodology

Given that *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) had a formative impact on Scottish education in the years following its publication, it is fair to say that it is powerful. However,

as Woodside-Iron (2011: 155) points out, “it is quite another thing to be able to show how that power is generated.” It was at this point that the purpose of the enquiry started to become clearer. Previously, it had been intended to simply analyse ideology within the document; after this, the notion of being able to situate the document within wider political and social developments gained the researcher’s interest. Indeed, according to Fairclough (2015: 102), in order to completely understand a text, “you need to establish a ‘fit’ between text and world.” Traditional methods of linguistic analysis that look at language alone could not achieve this ambition, and so the research methodology the researcher adopted was one that could: namely, critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fowler, 1974; Halliday, 1985; Fairclough, 1992).

It was important to appreciate, however, the nature of CDA as a contested field: indeed, a homogenous understanding of what specifically constitutes such an analysis does not exist, with many differing frameworks for applying the methodology being in existence (Gee, 1999; Locke, 2004; Fairclough, 2011; Machin and Mayr, 2012; Fairclough, 2015). However, the vast range of approaches were not contradictory but rather complementary, with many articulating the methodology’s ability to unravel underlying intentions that may not be immediately perceptible to the everyday reader - regardless of the framework applied (Gee, 2011; Machin and Mayr, 2012). Namely, Gee (1996, cited in Locke, 2004: 51) contends that CDA functions to “make explicit the discourses [...] embedded in texts which would otherwise remain implicit, invisible and thereby all the more powerful,” which Rogers (2011: 5) notes can “penetrate to the core of domination.” As such, Locke (2004: 5) calls it “a political intervention with its own socially transformative agenda.” Given that the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher already centred on a belief in the ability of language to generate meaning, the possibility of unpicking how such meanings created forms of social organisation and control was an intriguing one, particularly when thinking about *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) and the teaching profession specifically.

2.4: Research Questions

Having decided on the methodology, it was important to then conceptualise exactly what the research would concern. Given the previous acknowledgement that *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) had impacted on the teaching profession, it was considered important to investigate precisely how the profession had been configured throughout the document. This led to the creation of the first research question: how is the teaching

profession conceptualised in *Teaching Scotland's Future*? However, the methodological approach created opportunities for further questions aiming at understanding whether ideologies of social organisation were indeed apparent within the text, as well as investigating whether the text could be seen in isolation from or in collaboration with policy, research and theory covering aspects of teacher's work (Carter and Little, 2007). Consequently, two further questions were formed. In order to address the idea of social organisation, the researcher formed the question "what discourses and ideologies of social organisation underpin such conceptualisation(s) [of teacher professionalism]?" Finally, to situate the text among wider national and international discourses, the researcher formed the question "to what extent are these discourses and ideologies compatible with theoretical and research-based conceptualisations of the teaching profession?"

In summary, the research questions were:

- How is the teaching profession conceptualised in *Teaching Scotland's Future*?
- What discourses and ideologies of social organisation underpin such conceptualisation(s)?
- To what extent are these discourses and ideologies compatible with theoretical and research-based conceptualisations of the teaching profession?

2.5: Research Design

2.5.1: Establishing first steps

The first part of ensuring that the project could successfully meet the needs of its research questions happened through consulting literature on the methodology itself to see to it that the researcher was fully cognisant of the various frameworks available to them. Through such consultation of literature, however, it became apparent that a framework could not be chosen without an understanding of how *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) linked to texts exploring similar themes. Indeed, the vast majority of CDA literature highlighted that, for the analysis to be critical at all, the text being analysed must firstly be situated within its wider interdiscursive context (Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1992, cited in Locke, 2004; Widdowson, 1998, cited in Rogers, 2011; Gee, 1999; O' Halloran, 2003; Fairclough, 2011; Machin and Mayr, 2012; Fairclough, 2015). In order for such context to be established, the researcher followed the advice of Schneider (2013) and returned to *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011), seeking to organise its contents into themes. It was at this point

that the wealth of information within the report posed a challenge, and solutions needed to be found.

2.5.2: Sampling

Teaching Scotland's Future (Donaldson, 2011) comprises seven main chapters and four appendices spread over 122 pages. Had the research been conducted for publication in a doctoral thesis then perhaps full consideration could have been given to the entire document; however, given the scope of this research project, such breadth of coverage was simply not possible. Subsequently, it was decided to apply a sampling strategy. While caution is advised in selecting samples that can be too narrow (Cohen *et al.*, 2017), the researcher was cognisant of the advice of Burton *et al.* (2008: 46) to be purposive and ensure that any sample was “representative of the population from which it [was] drawn.” While this advice was given in the context of action research with human participants, the same principle could be applied to textual sampling, with the first chapter – the overview – being selected as the focus of the CDA. This selection was made because it was felt, by its very nature as an overview, this chapter functioned as a summary of information in the chapters that followed and so would allow for maximum exposure to the central ideas of the report without generating an amount of data that would subsequently prove to be unwieldy.

2.5.3: Constructing themes

Having narrowed the field of study, the researcher returned to the overview and undertook the process of identifying themes relevant to the research questions, as advised by Schneider (2013). The resultant categories were: ‘teacher professionalism,’ ‘teacher agency and autonomy’ and ‘professional standards and accountability.’ Other themes were evident within the text, including topics such as ‘initial teacher education’ and ‘entry to teaching’; however, again due to the scope of the project and the research questions’ focus on the teaching profession and not teaching more generally, the researcher chose to focus on themes with direct relevance to those who were already practising within the profession. Subsequently, the focus of the study narrowed again, covering mainly the first two pages of the overview where these themes were most prominent

2.5.4: Literature search and review

The themes identified from the initial reading of the report then became key search terms in the quest to locate appropriate literature, with specific details of the results from education

databases provided as appendix one. The first search conducted was a search of the University of Glasgow library catalogue, with key terms arising from the themes (*teacher professionalism, teacher agency, teacher autonomy, teacher accountability and teacher professional standards*) used to source relevant books and print journals. In addition, and in order to ensure the widest possible range of relevant literature was consulted, the researcher used the University of Glasgow library website to access educational databases. Subsequently, this led to an electronic search of ProQuest Academic, where the same terms given above were applied in searches for peer-reviewed studies published in the last 20 years (2000-2019). It was felt that applying such an exclusion on the time period would help focus the results, ensure the enquiry was informed by the most contemporary arguments and avoid an over-generation of sources. Although this presents the possibility for seminal works to be overlooked, such a pitfall was avoided through the researcher's scrutiny of reference lists and bibliographies to source works repeatedly cited in the studies initially returned by the searches. Preliminary consultation of the resulting literature revealed a number of concepts that seemed inter-linked with those above, which subsequently resulted in a second search – this time in response to the key terms '*globalisation,*' '*marketisation,*' '*ideology,*' '*neo-liberalism,*' and '*knowledge-based economy.*' The resultant findings were then scrutinised, alongside the initial readings, and subsequently used to develop an appreciation of the wider national and international discourses relating to teacher professionalism – all of which would subsequently be used to inform the critical appraisal of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011). The syntheses of these findings, as well as details of them, are included as chapter three.

2.5.5: Framework for CDA

Upon completion of the literature review, the researcher turned their attention back to *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) and attempted to select a framework to assist in conducting the analysis. However, as noted previously, there is no one single homogenous approach to conducting a CDA. Indeed, Rogers (2011: 15) notes that "it is more common to see hybrids and composites of CDA rather than studies that focus on one approach," and the reality of this required the researcher to revisit the research questions to determine which approach would produce the most relevant results. While Gee (2011) provides a seven-step framework for conducting CDA, it was felt that its particular focus on the wider world at every step of the process would take the analysis too far away from its roots in text – a key focus of all three research questions. This position, coupled with the researcher's

epistemological position that language creates and organises the social world, placed the researcher’s beliefs more in line with Fairclough (1992; 2003; 2011; 2015), whose works reflect the same epistemological stance. While Fairclough (1992; 2003; 2011; 2015) produced a number of different frameworks to assist the process of analysis, it was also important to take account of the position that “it is difficult to imagine what might constitute adequate formal analysis in advance of actually carrying it out” (Bucholtz, 2001: 176). Indeed, this accorded with Gee (1999), who said that differences in approach were not only possible but necessary in order to ensure research was guided by the text in focus and not by a fixation with searching for specific linguistic features.

In light of the freedom – and indeed encouragement – afforded by the literature on CDA, the researcher opted to use Fairclough’s framework of questions (provided as diagrams 2.1 and 2.2) to assist in uncovering formal lexical features of the text. This framework was supplemented with the list of key linguistic features provided by Janks (2010: 74 – 77) in order to further appraise the text and allow its wider lexical features to be uncovered and analysed. Finally, given that many analysts (including Fairclough and Janks) use the guidelines developed by Halliday to describe and explain the function of grammatical aspects of language, the researcher consulted *Halliday’s Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) to provide a means of understanding and explaining the grammatical structures in *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011).

Diagram 2.1 – Fairclough’s framework for lexical analysis Part A.

A. Vocabulary
1. What <i>experiential</i> values do words have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What classification schemes are drawn upon? • Are there words which are ideologically contested? • Is there <i>rewording</i> or <i>overwording</i>? • What ideologically significant meaning relations are there between words?
2. What <i>relational</i> values do words have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there euphemistic expressions? • Are there markedly formal or informal words?
3. What <i>expressive</i> values do words have?
4. What metaphors are used?
(Fairclough, 2015: 129)

Diagram 2.2 – Fairclough’s framework for lexical analysis Part B.

B. Grammar
5. What experiential values do grammatical features have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of <i>process</i> and <i>participant</i> predominate? • Is agency unclear? • Are processes what they seem? • Are <i>nominalisations</i> used? • Are sentences active or passive? • Are sentences positive or negative?
6. What relational values do grammatical features have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What <i>modes</i> are used (<i>declarative, grammatical, question, imperative</i>)? • Are there important features of <i>relational modality</i>? • Are the pronouns <i>we</i> and <i>you</i> used and if so how?
7. What expressive values do grammatical features have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the important features of <i>expressive modality</i>?
8. How are (simple) sentences linked together? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What logical connectors are used? • Are complex sentences characterised by <i>coordination</i> or <i>subordination</i>? • What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?
C. Textual Structures
9. What interactional conventions are used? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others?
10. What larger-scale structures does the text have?
(Fairclough, 2015: 130)

However, it was important to note that dogmatic adherence to the Fairclough framework – given the extensiveness of its questions – ran the risk of compartmentalising the text so much that the totality of meaning throughout the text as a whole became lost and was reduced to individual analyses of single words and sentences. Indeed, applying all ten questions to every line of the text would result in an abundance of data that would ultimately be of little use in uncovering the wider assumptions and discourses throughout (France, 2010). Such micro-analysis was therefore neither useful nor desirable. Furthermore, such an approach could potentially prevent an understanding of how the structure of the overview and the order of points presented contributed to discourses of teacher professionalism. Cognisance of this potential limitation therefore led the researcher to decide how the findings of the study would be presented.

2.5.6: Analysis of findings

Beyond the guidance on how to identify lexical features in the text, Fairclough ascribes the researcher relative freedom in how they then connect these features to the wider local, national and international discourses, saying “they may draw upon different interpretative procedures” (Fairclough, 2015: 171). In order to help arrive at an understanding of how the overview within *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) conceptualised the teaching profession through discourse and ideology, as well as whether this was in line or divergent from trends in policy, theory and research, the researcher here opted to first of all re-read the section, this time underlining and annotating aspects of language that matched descriptors by Janks (2010), Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) and Fairclough (2015). The relevant questions from diagrams 2.1 and 2.2 were asked at appropriate stages, while the explanations of effect given by Janks (2010: 74 – 77) were used to supplement and strengthen interpretations of these observations. The findings were kept in a notepad, which was then used to match the lexical analyses to related discourses from the results of the literature review. This allowed the researcher to develop more detailed interpretations and explanations which, in line with the principles of CDA, situated the lexis of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) within wider interdiscursive and social relations and, subsequently, helped meet the demands of the three research questions.

2.5.7: Presentation of findings

Rogers *et al.* (2005) identify a trend in critics of CDA to say “researchers search their data for examples of what they are trying to prove, instead of letting the data ‘speak’,” and this subsequently informed the researcher’s decision on how to present the findings. In order to avoid such criticism being levied at this project, the researcher chose not to split the findings and discussion into themes but rather to present the observations in the order that they occurred within the text itself. Indeed, it was also felt that, in doing so, the researcher could attend to matters of the structure of the text and reveal how certain discourses were not only revealed, but reaffirmed and reinforced throughout the text – something which is a key concern of several advocates of CDA (Locke, 2004; Fairclough, 2011; Gee, 2011; Woodside-Iron, 2011; Fairclough, 2015).

The resulting product of this research design is included in chapter four: findings and discussion.

2.6: Ethical Considerations

Given that this research project would not directly engage with human participants, there was no requirement to undertake a formal application for ethical approval. Despite this, however, due regard was paid to the recommendations set forth by the Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) (2005) and the British Ethical Research Association (BERA) (2011). Indeed, the need to ensure that the researcher outlined alternative methodologies and methods and justified the approaches taken has (it is hoped) been overtaken by the content of this chapter.

However, there is another issue that, given the selection of methodology, must be covered in order that the project remain ethical. Machin and Mayr (2012: 1) describe CDA as integral to revealing “how speakers and authors use language to create meaning,” while Janks (2010: 36) goes on to state that such meaning can occur “below the level of consciousness.” While this is true, it stands to reason that, if one accepts meanings the reader extracts from a text are not always generated consciously, then the author of the same text must also be afforded this presumption when we consider how language has been crafted to create said meanings. Accordingly, although the analysis seeks to unearth ideology, it must be stated that this cannot cast any aspersions on the conscious intentions of Donaldson (2011) when writing the report. To ignore this point could, in fact, be considered a subjugation of the ethical principle of not causing harm – harm in this case being situated in harm to the author’s reputation. Indeed, Barthes (1968) claimed that interpretations of texts were always outside of individual authors’ control, and for this reason the researcher has consciously ensured that the discussion of the findings clearly marks out the meanings as potential and not definitive, as is the case in any interpretive enterprise. Furthermore, caution must be exercised when considering the policy directives that followed the recommendations within *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011), as it may well be the case that – in line with CDA advocates’ acknowledgement that ideologies in texts are often hidden - those who enacted such directives were just as unaware of the potential ideological underpinnings attached as many readers are assumed to be (Farrell and Tann, 2016).

Of course, while the nature of the study presents challenges to be overcome, it also presents a wealth of opportunities for positive change in society. Indeed, CDA is a methodology “committed to political intervention and social change” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258) with potential for “helping people develop agency” (Rogers and Wetzel, 2014: 4) over the

conditions which have sought to direct and control them (Althusser, 1970). In this sense, the project's aims to uncover the conceptualisation of the teaching profession and its alignment with wider discourses could, in fact, be considered profoundly ethical in its efforts to afford teachers a clear understanding of how policy is framed by wider international directives (Freire, 1972; Giroux, 1997; Mockler, 2005; Groundwater-Smith and Mockler, 2007). This could, in turn, liberate teachers from being positioned as technicians who alter their practice in light of policy and transform them into active agents of change whose awareness of global context (and subsequent ability to position themselves in agreement with or opposition to it) empowers them to question, criticise and influence how policy is enacted at local level (Bates *et al.*, 2011; Zeichner and Listin, 2014). In this sense, through the design and execution of the project, the researcher may be seen as discharging the expectation that they act as an "active partner in the communities in which [they] work" (GTCS, 2012: 11).

2.7: Research Evaluation

In ascertaining whether research can be judged as valid, Carr and Kemmis (1986: 91) contend that it "must be coherent"; that is, the research questions should be matched with appropriate choice of data collection, analysis and ways of drawing conclusions. Taber (2007) clarifies this further with the position that the research questions being answered is not an important criteria for validity, instead situating this in the ability of the researcher to ensure that the planning of the study creates conditions in which appropriate data related to such questions can be gathered. Given that each step of research was carefully considered and fully justified, as well as the fact that data allowing the researcher to answer all questions (see chapter five) was generated, it is fair to say that the study's validity is sound. Furthermore, the sampling strategy applied ensured that the amount of data generated was sufficient for the scope of the study and the specific areas of interest articulated through the research questions.

As well as being judged as valid, the research study could also be classed as reliable in that the findings have been produced following precise frameworks and criteria (Rogers *et al.*, 2005). It must be noted, however, that the interpretive nature of the study, as well as its reliance on the researcher's epistemological orientation, could allow for different results to be generated by different people dependent on their own orientations and interpretations of language. Accordingly, Locke (2004: 36) cautions that "researchers need to acknowledge the provisionality of their findings." However, such differences in orientation would not make this study less reliable, but simply different. In the same way that this study could be seen to

complement and extend further the findings of Kennedy and Doherty (2012) and MacDonald (2013), so too could further studies with slightly different results prove useful in allowing teachers to arrive at more informed critical appraisals of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011). Furthermore, while the sample size prohibits the findings from being generalisable to the whole document, it does not stop the findings that were unearthed from being relatable and relevant to the teachers currently practising in Scotland.

In terms of limitations of the study, the most obvious observation would be that the overall scope has been limited by the project focussing mainly on the first two pages of the overview – a decision that was made due to the relatively limited scope for discussion afforded by the word limits to which a dissertation must adhere. However, this need not be viewed as a negative quality. Indeed, acknowledgement of the scope allows the researcher to outline further opportunities for future research, details of which are provided as recommendations in chapter five.

2.8: Summary

In summary, the researcher undertook extensive planning and preparation to ensure a study that was valid, reliable and relatable. Through careful consideration of the information sought, the CDA methodology was selected as the most appropriate which, in turn, led to the generation of research questions that provided a sharp focus for study. At the same time, extensive consultation of literature alongside deployment of frameworks for lexical analysis allowed for the investigation to be situated in local, national and international contexts – all of which therefore ensured the required depth of understanding in addressing the research questions was achieved.

The following chapter outlines the key findings from the literature review conducted as part of the study which, in turn, were used to ground the analysis of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) in its interdiscursive context.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1: Introduction

As outlined in chapter two, a literature review was conducted in order to provide the researcher with an in-depth appreciation of how the themes identified from a first reading of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) had been conceptualised in wider bodies of policy, theory and research. Such a review was fundamental in understanding the interdiscursivity surrounding the contents of the document (Fairclough, 1992; Schneider, 2013), as well as in assisting the researcher to address the demands of the third research question, which sought to ascertain whether *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) accorded (or was discordant) with the conceptualisation of the teaching profession in its textual relatives.

In the process of conducting the review, consulting the findings and synthesising and cross-referencing the arguments within, the researcher came to detect an apparent tension between discourses of teacher professionalism, teacher agency and autonomy and teacher accountability within official policy documents and the wider body of theory and research – something that subsequently provided the opportunity for the critical discourse analysis (CDA) to situate the overview of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) as aligning more closely with one position than the other. The precise nature of the disconnect, as well as the ideological imperatives that can be seen to inform each discrete configuration of the key terms outlined, can be found within the discussion that follows.

The review commences with some general context before narrowing the field and increasing the specificity of its focus as it moves towards its conclusion. Accordingly, the umbrella term of ideology and power is given immediate consideration, before moving on to the specific ideology of neoliberalism that so much of the literature reviewed identified as what Althusser (1970: 1287) would call the “ruling ideology” in the policy context of education. Having covered these broad concepts, discussion then moves to how the concept of teacher professionalism has come to be configured in various discourses, followed by an appraisal of the perceived implications for teacher agency and autonomy. The review comes to a close with consideration of the impact of accountability processes on the teaching profession – a section that places the discussion firmly back in the local context and appraises the suite of professional standards published by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) in

light of arguments considering their own unique contribution to the discourse of teacher professionalism in Scotland.

3.2: Ideology and Power

Given the emphasis on ideology and power in CDA (Fairclough, 1992; Locke, 2004, Rogers, 2011), as well as the fact that any framework employed in such analysis aims to “reveal buried ideology” (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 1), attention to what this might mean forms a natural starting point. Locke (2004: 33) defines ideology as “an elaborate story told about the ideal construct of some aspect of human affairs,” while Althusser (1970: 1300) calls it “the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.” In light of these positions, ideology could be viewed as a narrative that seeks to create conceptions of the world that do not always correlate with reality – a position that accords with Apple’s (2004: 18) definition of the term as “a form of false consciousness which distorts one’s picture of social reality and serves the interests of the dominant classes.” As well as distorting understandings of the world, ideology has also been classed as a means of effacing individuality and promoting homogenous identities (Althusser, 1970; Gramsci, 1971, cited in Giroux, 1997), separating and segregating humans from one another (Bakhtin, 1935), regulating behaviour (Ball, 2008) and maintaining control between different social classes (Marx and Engels, 1848; Fairclough, 2013). Considering these functions, it would be fair to situate ideology’s power in its ability to impact how people view various aspects of their existence, including the world and their place within it. This is particularly interesting given that Althusser (1970: 1291) identifies education as an “ideological state apparatus”: a system the state uses to exercise power over people in the ways detailed previously. If one accepts this position, then one accepts that education policy documents are operating to promote ideological power and position their recipients in certain ways. However, others point to the ability of texts outside the control of the state to do the same thing. Indeed, Janks (2010: 96) observes that “all texts are positioned and positioning,” a viewpoint that therefore esteems theory and research literature as being equally liable to promoting (or challenging) certain ideologies. Given that much of the literature consulted for this review could be classed as broadly accepting or effusively rejecting neoliberal ideology, this concept is explored in the following section.

3.3: Neoliberalism and marketisation

Harvey (2005: 1775) defines neoliberalism as “a theory of political economic practices [...] characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade,” subscription to

which involves the promotion of individualism (Mulderrig, 2008), a focus on ensuring public services strengthen contribution to economic markets (Jessop, 2008) and the encouragement of people seeing themselves and each other as generators of economic capital (Rose, 1999). The development of such ideological principles is attributed, in part, to countries searching for solutions to the decline of industry and a replacement for the principles of Fordism that could no longer secure economic prosperity (Harvey, 2005; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008; Jessop, 2008). While this may, at first, seem far removed from the province of education in schools in Scotland, further study unearths the widespread position that neoliberalism has, in fact, been the guiding principle for education policy reform worldwide since Fordism's decline (Bell, 1999; Ball, 2008; Clarke and Newman, 2009; Priestley *et al.*, 2015), with Dale (2009: 26) terming it the "master discourse". Indeed, many argue that countries have come to view the cultivation of knowledge in its citizens as key to economic success, thus establishing a "knowledge-based economy" (Godin, 2006; Jessop, 2008; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008). It seems, then, that these authors agree with Althusser (1970) that education is an "ideological state apparatus" (Althusser, 1970: 1291), and more specifically one that is shaping the education system in order to foster economic competitiveness between nations (Ozga and Lingard, 2006). Indeed, these arguments become more compelling when considered alongside key documents from education policy discourse.

Hartmann (2008) situates contemporary development of the knowledge-based economy firmly in the context of the European Union (EU). Indeed, the EU's own policy documents show an alignment with the neoliberal philosophy previously described:

the Union has today set itself a new strategic goal for the next decade: to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth... (European Council, 2000: no page).

It would appear, from this evidence, that refocussing education policy to promote a culture of competitiveness is not just seen as desirable, but necessary in fulfilling the EU's policy intentions. This notion is furthered by Godin (2004: 682), who believes that the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) subsequently re-focussed its "statistics towards more economic issues" in an effort to become the "main promoter" of the EU's strategy for education (2006: 17). Again, this position transitions from assertion to observation upon perusal of many of the OECD's own publications. Indeed, a document published a year after the EU's strategy announcement affirms that "education and training [...] foster the development of human capital needed for economic growth" (OECD, 2001:

9), later clarifying that “knowledge and skills are a significant factor” in realising such growth (OECD, 2001: 61). Later publications then focus attention on teachers, with one document stating “one of the main challenges for policy makers facing the demands of a knowledge society is how to sustain teacher quality” (OECD, 2005: 10), and this position is revisited in many subsequent publications (OECD, 2007; OECD, 2010; OECD, 2015). It could therefore be concluded that, in efforts to cultivate a knowledge-based economy, the OECD has sought to direct international policy development to focus on teachers.

In addition, further reading goes on to show Scotland being influenced by this global trajectory, with a report into Scottish education stating the following as its rationale:

the Scottish authorities were particularly interested in receiving advice about the adequacy of recent reforms in view of the experience of several ‘comparator countries’ facing similar challenges (OECD, 2007: 13).

The guiding principle of comparison with other countries evident here could suggest that Scotland, too, subscribes to the neoliberal ideology of economic competitiveness.

Furthermore, the reliance on the OECD to provide information could demonstrate that the country accords the OECD a high status in helping shape national policy. Such observations are strengthened when noting that another OECD review of Scottish education was commissioned in 2015, this time critically evaluating the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (OECD, 2015).

Given CDA’s focus on situating the text in its wider context (Fairclough, 2015), this economic context is important for a full appraisal of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011), particularly when situating the document as in line with or divergent from the neoliberal principles underpinning national and international discourse. Having established a perceived trend in neoliberal policy formation, as well as the resultant focus on teachers and teaching, the literature in the following sections will address themes identified in the overview of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) and ascertain whether these discrete aspects of teaching have been affected by such a trend.

3.4: Teacher Professionalism

Habermas (1980: 1507) views professionalism as an ideological tool to demarcate those in positions of social privilege from those who are not. Furthermore, despite its exclusionary nature, being accorded the status of a professional could also be seen as affording the individual “social power and collective autonomy” (Gerwitz *et al.*, 2009: 4), thus equating

professionalism with the ability – and allowance – to govern oneself and one’s work (Evetts, 2009; Friedson, 1994, cited in Priestley *et al.*, 2015).

A review of relevant Scottish education policy to discover whether contemporary reality matches tradition suggests that professionalism – and its accorded status – are in evidence, with many documents affirming teachers as being accorded professional status. Indeed, the *Code of Professionalism and Conduct (COPAC)* (GTCS, 2012) clearly defines teaching as a professional role, and the concept of professionalism recurs regularly throughout the suite of professional standards designed to inform and guide the role of the teacher (GTCS, 2012). Furthermore, the *2019 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan* (Scottish Government, 2018: 23) lists “teacher professionalism” as a key driver for continuous improvement, while the Deputy First Minister has explicitly stated that teacher professional judgement is the most important – and desirable - tool for assessing children’s progress (Swinney, 2018). It initially seems, therefore, that the status associated with traditional professionalism is in evidence.

However, this is at odds with the theoretical position regarding how teachers’ professionalism has been affected by global neoliberal discourses. For instance, Apple (2009: 3) refers to the concept as having been “radically transformed,” with many authors agreeing that, in direct contrast to the traditional view of individual governance, the term is utilised when teachers’ individual control is restricted and their practice subjected to restrictive state regulation (Apple, 2009; Evetts, 2009; Gerwitz *et al.*, 2009; Lipman, 2009). Such observations match that of Lawn (1996, cited in Hilferty, 2008: 53) who contends that professionalism in teaching is now “an ideological concept to change, manage or control the nature of teachers’ work.” It therefore appears that, instead of a concept allowing teachers to control the nature of their work from within, professionalism has been demarcated in such a way that teachers are now subject to control from external sources (Servage, 2009), a conclusion that concurs with Menter’s (2009: 221) belief that:

the deep irony of these processes of curtailing the independence and autonomy of teachers is that they are usually presented within a discourse of ‘professionalization’.

Given this evidence, it seems that many have come to view ‘professionalism’ as an ideological term that, rather than affording power to teachers, has power in and of itself to position teachers as powerless technicians expected to implement rather than generate change (Sachs, 2000; Menter, 2009; Reeves, 2009; Zeicher and Listin, 2014).

In light of these observations, the specific policy context in Scotland takes on a different hue. While the statement affirming the importance of teacher professional judgement (Swinney, 2018) could, at first, seem to indicate autonomy, many have noted the perceived irony between a rhetoric of professional freedom and the context of a curriculum which features performance targets for numbers of children achieving certain levels by certain milestones (Priestley and Minty, 2013; Priestley *et al.*, 2015; Scottish Government, no date). It would seem, therefore, that while teacher professional judgement is stated as important, it is subject to an expectation that such judgements will align with the targets expected for each curricular level: in other words, professional judgement is expected to align with a measure of performativity – something which is very much in line with how teacher professionalism has been perceived across the world (Ball, 1999, cited in Klette, 2002; Gronn, 2000, cited in Forde *et al.*, 2015; Lingard, 2010, cited in Fransson *et al.*, 2018; Priestley *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, even though ‘teacher professionalism’ is noted as a key driver for improvement, it has a number of key performance measures attached to it (Scottish Government, 2018: 40 – 42), something which, once again, could strengthen the argument that the profession is being controlled and measured by external forces. It therefore appears that, while policy highlights and promotes teacher professionalism as a term, the wider academic community view this as an underhand ideological promotion of neoliberal ideals that actually disempowers teachers and curtails their freedom (Trushell, 1999; Hilferty, 2008; Whitty, 2008). Consequently, it appears that policy – in both the Scottish and wider international context – embraces a neoliberal conception of professionalism while theory and research reject it, instead seeking to expose the deceitful nature of the term’s use. This is particularly interesting given the third research question of the study, as it is now clear that the compatibility of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) with theory and research depends entirely on how it can be seen to converge with or diverge from neoliberal ideology.

Given the widespread view that teacher professionalism has undergone transition, many have expressed concern over the resultant impact on the role of the teacher. Indeed, Servage (2009) warns that new teachers might perceive their sole purpose as being able to meet measurable, externally-imposed targets, which Menter (2009: 217) articulates as teachers becoming “servants [...] of the global economy” and “tightly constrained by an externally imposed framework which [set] out the key elements of professional activity” (Menter, 2009: 220). Such conceptualisations are apparent in the Scottish context also, with Reeves

(2009: 107) labelling teachers as “compliant operatives” in light of policy directives. As a result, Bates *et al.* (2011: 142) caution that, unless such a trajectory is stopped, a generation of teachers “may be incapable of defining their own role and may, in fact, accept their new status as merely that of ‘technician’.”

Therefore, on the basis of this evidence, it appears that the configuration of teacher professionalism in contemporary times positions teachers as professional workers who, ironically, given the traditional understandings of the term, have little control over the governance of their own work, with subsequent consequences for how members of the profession come to define their own role. Sachs (2000) reacts to this discourse by proposing that teachers take back control and fight for greater decision-making ability, but the realisation of such a discourse would require the exercise of agency and autonomy – concepts which, like teacher professionalism, seem to have undergone a process of erosion over time.

3.5: Teacher agency and autonomy

Larson (1977, cited in Costello and Costello, 2016: 837) identifies “autonomy as a crucial criterion of professionalism.” However, given the more recent iteration of teacher professionalism, the erosion of autonomy features prominently within both theory and research. Indeed, according to Johnston (2015: 313), despite claims linking regulated teacher professionalism to improvements in pupil learning, the only phenomena evidenced by such reforms are the “key elements of autonomy and agency [being] diminished.” However, ascertaining the truth of this matter requires a clearer definition of such concepts. Priestley *et al.* (2015: 22) define agency as “the potential or ability to act,” which accords with Zembylas *et al.* (2006: 353) who associate agency with “options for actions.” Given that many of the options now available to teachers have been acknowledged as limited due to regulatory frameworks generated outside of, rather than within, the profession itself (Pickle, 1990; Campbell Wilcox and Lawson, 2018), it appears that contemporary discourse of teacher professionalism has birthed a new concept of agency – a concept providing the option to do only what policy allows one to (Anderson, 2010). This is keenly observed in the Scottish context, with Priestley *et al.* (2015: 4) contending that the only freedom teachers now have is “freedom to execute other people’s educational agendas,” particularly when it comes to the design and implementation of formal curricular programmes.

Indeed, the promotion of teacher agency within curricular documentation is held as another problematic facet of neoliberal discourse, with Phelan and Hansen (2018: 129) noting:

the irony [...] that teachers are fed a fantasy of their own centrality to student learning while being held accountable for a prescribed set of outcomes and results.

This irony is also observed within the Scottish CfE, which Priestley *et al.* (2015: 11) note is configured as “an open curricular framework [...] embedded in rather strict accountability practices.” A seeming contradiction can also be viewed within individual documents, with *CfE Briefing 1* (Education Scotland, 2012: 2), outlining the “tremendous scope” for teacher agency on the same page as an outline of very thorough expectations regarding how learning should be planned and the expected numbers of students achieving certain levels as a result. Therefore, while policy documentation related to CfE in Scotland places emphasis on agency, it is clear that this particular type of agency is highly configured and delineated to ensure that teachers may only choose their actions from a number of prescribed options – something which has also been noted as extending to the systems for accountability that govern the profession itself (Tuinamuana, 2011; Krise, 2016).

3.6 Teacher accountability

The neoliberal iteration of teacher professionalism has been called a “steering mechanism” (Klette, 2002: 265) directed by the establishment of professional standards across the globe (Berryhill *et al.*, 2009; Fransson *et al.*, 2018). It is therefore interesting that these standards have clearly traceable precedents in OECD policy directives (2005; 2010). Indeed, the OECD once stated that “enhancing the role of teachers requires setting clear standards of practice,” an utterance that reaffirms the focus on teachers previously noted in section 3.3. Such a focus, it has been argued, seeks to normalise and homogenise teachers in order to try to exercise control over schools and, subsequently, ensure they contribute effectively to the creation of the knowledge-based economy through their teaching (Reeves, 2009; Leonard, 2015). This position is further clarified by Graham (1999: 93), who notes:

Schools are presented as so fundamental to the development of human capital on which the prosperity of the economy is based, that the state must regulate rigorously to guarantee the performance of the system.

Accordingly, the view of professional standards as serving an economic agenda through strict control and regulation is widespread (Berryhill *et al.*, 2009; Evetts, 2009; Rassool, 1999; Mockler, 2013; Krise, 2016; Fransson *et al.*, 2018) and one which can be detected in early

policy formation when noting The Scottish Office's (1992, cited in Tomlinson, 1999: 5) statement that, without the GTCS, "the retention of [...] control would be extremely difficult and standards in Scottish education would be at risk." Such an admission is highly unusual, with Taubman (2009, cited in Krise, 2016: 24) noting that the ideological underpinnings of professional standards tend to be far from explicit and that the "desire for money [is] disguised by the altruism of standards and accountability."

Interestingly, such an assertion of altruism can be seen in both the suite of professional standards governing Scottish education (GTCS, 2012) and the *Code of Professionalism and Conduct* (COPAC) (2012), although their altruistic intentions focus on the overall good that teachers can contribute to society. Specifically, the *Standard for Full Registration* (GTCS, 2012: 6) affirms that they operate to help teachers "act and behave in ways that develop a culture of trust and respect." The concept of trust is also covered in the COPAC (2012: 4) which states that it exists "so that public trust in teaching can be maintained." However, while these standards and the code of conduct focus on trust between the public and teachers, they have, ironically, been viewed as a means of eroding trust between teachers and central government (Mockler, 2005; Evetts, 2009; Kennedy, 2014; Priestley *et al.*, 2015; Ainscow, 2016). Indeed, it has been recognised that "standards have increasingly become tools for compliance" (Forde *et al.*, 2015: 23), something which has seen teachers themselves articulate the view that such standards are "challenging the building blocks of their professional status" (Pizmony-Levy and Woolsey, 2017: 23). Furthermore, while Weber and Johnsen (2012: 5) contend "research suggests standards have a positive effect on professional competence," Johnston (2015: 303) directly challenges this, noting that "articulating how having a set of professional standards for teachers will effect improvements [...] is left unstated. It would therefore appear, given the weight of the evidence, that professional standards and the attached notions of accountability are promoted as ways of improving pupil learning and altruistically contributing to strengthening society's perception of teachers. Despite this promotion, however, teachers, researchers and theorists argue they serve a purpose that, at once, diminishes the autonomy of the teacher and seeks to prescribe their behaviour – a position that, again, fully accords with the neoliberal development of global education policy (Jessop, 2008; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008; Mockler, 2013).

Menter (2009: 222) considers the Scottish standards to be different from their international counterparts, however, noting them as "an example where there is an apparent balance

between performativity and enhanced professionalism.” In contrast, Fransson *et al.* (2018: 252) take the opposite view, observing that:

Scotland’s standards document is the most extensive, with 1942 words organised in 23 different sections.[...] Thus, the Scottish standards are double the length of the Australian standards and more than four times as extensive as Sweden’s.

Evidently, this study views Scottish standards as operating in line with international discourse, stating that they suggest “how a teacher should operate, rather than provide autonomy and discretion in how to practice” (Fransson *et al.*, 2018: 259), and this can be detected in the language of the documents comprising the Scottish suite of professional standards. For example, the *Standard for Full Registration* (GTCS, 2012: 2) identifies itself as “the gateway to the profession and the benchmark of teacher competence for all teachers,” a statement that refers quite explicitly to the standards being used not only to guide but also to review, appraise and, ultimately, judge the work of the teacher according to the criteria presented inside. Alongside this, the *Standard for Career-long Professional Learning* (GTCS, 2012: 3) states that the categories within will “[develop] the professionalism of the teacher and [lead] to appropriate professional growth and action.” The very concept of appropriate professional growth is an intriguing one: such wording implies that there might be such a thing as inappropriate professional growth, and this statement could therefore implicitly qualify the argument that standards function to promote homogeneity through prescribed behaviours (Berryhill *et al.*, 2009; Evetts, 2009; Rassool, 1999; Mockler, 2013; Krise, 2016; Fransson *et al.*, 2018).

3.7: Conclusion

From a final appraisal of the literature consulted to inform this chapter, there would appear to be a clear contention that concepts of teacher’s professionalism agency, autonomy and accountability have undergone alteration to fit the goals of a global agenda promoting economic competitiveness. Such contention is notably absent within official policy, however, with documents drawn from this genre often stating belief in and promotion of the very concepts that theory and research believe them to be eroding (GTCS, 2012; Education Scotland, 2016; Scottish Government, 2018). There is subsequently a dichotomy between theorists’ and researchers’ desired social organisation of teachers as empowered and agentic professionals (Sachs, 2000; Reeves, 2009) and the perceived reality of teachers as disempowered quasi-professionals who can only operate within externally-imposed

frameworks (Mockler, 2013; Costello and Costello, 2016; Fransson *et al.*, 2018). Such reality has been stated as the underlying intention of national and international policies, with the organisation and regulation of teachers being central to fulfilling the desired outcomes of a competitive knowledge-based economy (Godin, 2004; Jessop, 2008; Hartmann, 2008; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008).

Following the literature review, it was clear that a fertile tension between policy, theory and research existed, and it was therefore compelling to understand whether the conceptions of the terms explored here would be affirmed or challenged within *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011). Such an understanding has hopefully been achieved by the completed CDA – findings and discussion of which now follow.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.1: Introduction

Given that analysis is a central component of the critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodology, it is not possible to neatly delineate linguistic findings from their potential wider social impact. Indeed, many advocates of CDA contend that description of the linguistic properties of the text must be matched both with interpretation of textual and social significance as well as an explanation of how this interpretation shapes social processes (Fairclough, 1992, Gee, 1999; Janks: 2010). In light of this, the chapter takes a sequential tour through the relevant sections of the overview of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) so that the data may reveal itself and avoid any suggestion of the researcher being selective in their account (Rogers *et al.*, 2005). Such sequencing presents the opportunity for certain conceptualisations and structures to repeat themselves; however, it was felt that allowing them to do so would preserve the authenticity of the text and further avoid any suggestion of the data having been curated.

4.2: Setting the scene – creating context in *Teaching Scotland's Future*

The overview opens in the indicative declarative mood with the statement:

Over the last 50 years, school education has become one of the most important policy areas for government across the world (Donaldson, 2011: 1).

The choice of opening the first sentence of the chapter with a preposition (“over”) linked to the passage of time is an interesting lexical choice. Indeed, Halliday and Matthiessen (2014: 89) refer to the opening unit of any clause as the theme, and note that “the message thus unfolds from thematic prominence – the part that the speaker has chosen to highlight as the starting point for the addressee – to thematic non-prominence.” Thus, opening the report with a temporal preposition ensures that arguments to follow are framed by the reader’s awareness that they emerged after a long period of consideration – an awareness that could make the information seem more credible as a result. It is interesting, also, that the time stated situates the starting point of education policy’s transition to importance at the same time as Fordism was moving towards decline (Harvey, 2005; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008; Jessop, 2008) – a point in history that many sources attribute to the rise of neoliberalism and consequent marketisation of education (Bell, 1999; Ball, 2008; Clarke and Newman, 2009; Priestley *et al.*, 2015). It could therefore be inferred that Donaldson has situated the overview in the

context of neoliberal economic developments, implicitly suggesting this as the reason for school education's increasing importance in global policy.

However, while the opening of the review hints at neoliberal antecedents, the second sentence all but confirms it: "human capital in the form of a highly educated population is now accepted as a key determinant of economic success" (Donaldson, 2011: 1). Here, "human capital" is chosen as the theme of the clause and, therefore, this concept is highlighted as the most important in the sentence. Furthermore, given that this immediately follows a sentence about the importance of education to policy, what Fairclough (2011: 163) terms "lexical cohesion" creates the inference that the concept of "human capital" is a crucial aspect of education policy development. Considering that "capital" relates to generation of money and wealth, the lexis of "human capital" positions humans as economic constructs and, accordingly, highlights this as an important purpose of education policy. It is perhaps prudent to note that this very same term was used nine years previously when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2001: 9) published a document asserting that "education and training [...] foster the development of human capital needed for economic growth." Such lexical similarity could therefore signal that the overview to *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) mirrors the agenda of the OECD – an agenda that, importantly, Godin (2004; 2006) contended had been instrumental in creating, guiding and maintaining the neoliberal knowledge-based economy. Consequently, within the first two sentences, hints of the wider neoliberal organisation of education are evident, but the impact on teachers remains unstated.

Nevertheless, when looking at the construction of the second sentence, underlying implications about general power and autonomy may be detected. Indeed, an explicit statement of the person or thing accepting human capital as important is missing from the sentence, and so the reader is unaware of precisely who is guiding this discourse. However, the verb tense chosen could seek to highlight the certainty that no one has the power to refute or question the claim. Indeed, the use of the present tense in "is now accepted" conveys a sense of timelessness: it does not matter when the reader encounters the report because the acceptance will always stand, which would not be the case had the author used the past tense of the same verb ("was accepted"). Furthermore, the declarative nature of the statement is clearly telling the reader what the position is and that it is definite and unchanging, while the interjection of "now" further strengthens the sense that, like the first sentence, the position has been arrived at after quite some time and therefore is legitimate.

However, whereas the second sentence implies where power does not lie, the sentence that follows goes on to clarify exactly where power can be located. In it, Donaldson (2011: 1) writes “this has led countries to search for interventions which will lead to continuous improvement and to instigate major programmes of transformational change.” Here, the acceptance of human capital’s importance to economic prosperity (represented by “this”) is figured as the active agent of the sentence, described as leading countries. Interestingly, leaders of countries are often conceptualised as figures of authority such as heads of state. Here, through the grammatical composition of this sentence, Donaldson (2011: 1) implicitly acknowledges that the “search for interventions” is not led by people but by economic determiners and market forces. Therefore, power is subsequently located in market economics – an observation that at once places the review in alignment with the policy directives of the European Union (EU) and the OECD (European Council, 2000; OECD, 2001; OECD, 2005) and at odds with theorists wishing to locate power in the hands of teachers themselves (Sachs, 2000; Reeves, 2009).

Having scrutinised the lexical choice, positioning of the reader, mood, thematisation and grammatical sentence construction, it is clear that the first seven lines of the overview can be seen to locate the report – and the teaching profession - in the context of international neoliberal policy developments that attribute power to market economics. What is less clear, however, is how such a dynamic directly affects teachers themselves, and this is subsequently covered in the following section.

4.3: The teaching profession

After the period of contextualisation, the overview goes on to make direct comment on the teaching profession and the people within it. Interestingly, while the statement “the foundations of successful education lie in the quality of teachers and their leadership” (Donaldson, 2011: 1) could be read, semantically, as conveying teachers as powerful, the grammatical construction of the sentence would suggest otherwise. Here, teachers and their leadership are positioned as the objects of the sentence – items having the action of the verb done to them (Fairclough, 2015). Therefore, despite the semantic acknowledgement that teachers and their leadership have power, the sentence structure configures them to be the least powerful actors, with the structural integrity of the system (a system driven by neoliberal market economics) being placed in the most powerful position.

The previous observation accords with an appraisal of the following sentence which, at first glance, appears to be both positive and flattering, making the contention that “high quality people achieve high quality outcomes for children” (Donaldson, 2011: 1). The nature of the sentence as a declarative indicative creates a sense of unquestionability – what is stated within is simply a matter of fact – while the lack of past tense or participles remove any sense of time from the statement, subsequently positioning it as a universal truth. In this case, what is unquestionable is the cause and effect relationship between a person judged to be “high quality” and the impact they can have on children – but this is arguably a euphemism disguising a deeper, less flattering configuration of teachers. Indeed, whenever one judges quality, it is often as a result of applying a set of criteria and judging how closely matched to the criteria the object being judged is: here, we have the first implication that, in order to be an effective teacher, one must closely adhere to a set of prescribed standards. Therefore, Donaldson potentially situates teacher effectiveness within the performativity discourse that has permeated neoliberal developments internationally (Berryhill *et al.*, 2009; Evetts, 2009; Rassool, 1999; Mockler, 2013; Krise, 2016; Fransson *et al.*, 2018). It is also interesting to note that, by the end of the opening paragraph to the overview to a report on the future of Scotland’s teachers and teaching more generally, at no point have teachers occupied a position of power in the grammatical construction of it.

Indeed, this sense of powerlessness is further developed throughout the bullet points that follow the opening paragraph. The first of these points is again, declarative, and reveals further potential value judgements about teachers and their leadership:

The two most important and achievable ways in which school education can realise the high aspirations Scotland has for its young people are through supporting and strengthening, firstly, the quality of teaching, and secondly, the quality of leadership.

(Donaldson, 2011: 1)

The use of the active verbs “supporting and strengthening” to describe what the education system must do are useful in both positioning teachers and the social authority of the government. Firstly, both verbs are actions that are taken in response to some form of flaw. For example, to support something connotes lifting it up or balancing it when unable to do so itself, while strengthening is a direct causal relative of weakness. Therefore, the use of these verbs implies that the status quo of teaching in Scotland at the time of the review’s publication, at least in terms of the quality of teaching and leadership, was weak. Furthermore, modality is used to create social authority on behalf of the education system,

with the reader being told that it “can” make its ambitions a reality. “Can” is an important modal verb here, as it is less certain than alternatives the author could have chosen such as “will,” or “is going to.” Therefore, the reader is positioned in such a way that makes the argument more compelling: it posits, through modality, that changes need to be made to teachers and their leadership or else there is the possibility of the “high aspirations” not coming to fruition. Subsequently, teachers are positioned as weak and in need of state intervention, and the type of intervention is subsequently clarified in the next bullet point of the overview.

Indeed, the response to the suggested weaknesses further reflect the neoliberal desire for performativity when Donaldson (2011: 1) contends that “teaching should be recognised as both complex and challenging, requiring the highest standards of professional competence and commitment.” Again, the lexical cohesion of the sentence conveys a cause and effect relationship; in this case, complexity and challenge is answered by competence and commitment. This is in direct contrast to the previous statement and could therefore be viewed as an example of conflation in order to make the reader think that performativity measures are a means of support and strength. Furthermore, the modality of this sentence is quite different, with the more intent and forceful “should” (as opposed to “can”) not only covering how readers must view the challenges of teaching but also implying that there are no alternative means to respond to these challenges other than through attention to competence and individual teachers’ dedication. In addition, the lexical structure of the sentence once again denies teachers power. For instance, the same idea could have been expressed using the structure “teachers should be competent and committed,” but this would therefore involve teachers being figured as active agents. Indeed, nominalisation is used to refer to “teaching” rather than teachers when both mean the same thing. The main difference is that constructing “teachers” as the subject of the sentence would provide agency whereas “teaching” does not. It is interesting to note that, in a review where teachers are called upon to be “agents of change,” (Donaldson, 2011: 18), the linguistic construction of the overview figures them as not having any – a dichotomy that was noted as being a by-product of neoliberal ideology present in global policy and curricular documentation (Priestley *et al.*, 2015; Phelan and Hansen, 2018).

As well as relexicalising prior concepts to promote the notion of competence and commitment, Donaldson (2011: 1) then clarifies exactly how such notions can – and should - be exemplified when he states that “leadership is based on fundamental values and habits of

mind which must be acquired and fostered from entry into the teaching profession.” Here, the entire sentence is written in the indicative mood, with the second clause (“which must be acquired and fostered from entry into the teaching profession”) being an imperative. The modal certainty of the imperative implies that leadership must now be exercised by all members of the profession at all stages of their career. It logically follows that, if leadership is a necessity from entry to the profession and, if it requires certain “values and habits of mind,” then these values and habits of mind are also necessary components of all entrants to the teaching profession. This is further strengthened by using the adjective “fundamental” to describe these qualities; if something is fundamental, then it is absolutely vital. There is therefore the implication that all teachers must hold the same principles and thoughts in order to be thought of as competent and committed: a position that promotes homogeneity and, again, negates individual agency.

Conceptualisations of the teaching profession in the overview are therefore paradoxical. At the level of individual word choice and semantics, teachers are often figured in ways that could make them seem valued, powerful and important; however, when appraised in light of concepts of grammar, cohesion and lexicalisation, it appears that the overview positions teachers as lacking the very characteristics of professionalism, agency and autonomy that its words would often purport to acknowledge and support. Given that such demarcations are implicit within the wider structure of the text, it would be a fair summation to say that, thus far, the overview has operated within the parameters of ideological apparatus (Althusser, 1970) – an apparatus that has positioned teachers as homogenous beings whose options for agency should be defined within the parameters of what the state will allow. Therefore, once again, its position aligns closely with what has been deemed the “neoliberal desire to catalogue and standardise practice” (Mockler, 2013: 37). At the same time, these observations also accord with what Apple (2004: 4) calls hegemony – a means of conceptualising reality “so that the educational, economic and social world we see becomes the world *tout court*, the only world.” In defining so clearly the qualities of an effective teacher, Donaldson (2011) could be seen as seeking to shape teacher’s own conceptions of what they should be and create the impression that any divergence must be corrected – a hegemonic means, therefore, of maintaining state power over teachers through aiming to infiltrate and influence the thoughts of teachers themselves in order to implicitly serve the neoliberal agenda.

4.4: Complicating the context – Curriculum for Excellence and its impact

Donaldson (2011: 2), having previously affirmed the context of the review as being that of international market forces and competitiveness, changes things somewhat from the second page of the overview:

The immediate context for the Review is Curriculum for Excellence with the opportunities it offers and the challenges it poses for teachers, schools and the wider education system.

On the first page, Donaldson (2011: 1) asserted “it is in this context that I have undertaken the review,” the context in the case being the economic necessity of change and importance of market forces in education. Here, he now explicitly states that the context for change is Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Unless the author deliberately sought to contradict his previous position, it appears that relexicalisation is being deployed again to conflate the curriculum with the neoliberal desire for economic competitiveness. This could therefore suggest that CfE, rather than being a curriculum that seeks to empower teachers (Education Scotland, 2016; Swinney, 2017b), exists to help further economic competitiveness under the guise of teachers being empowered when they are, in reality, far from it (Ball, 2008). Indeed, yet again, teachers are placed at the end of this sentence with CfE being figured as the active generator of opportunities and challenges. This is furthered in the next sentence:

Curriculum for Excellence is much more than a reform of curriculum and assessment. It is predicated on a model of sustained change which sees schools and teachers as co-creators of the curriculum. In that respect it is different from previous reforms which have worked more directly through the central development of guidance and resources (Donaldson, 2011: 2).

Once again, grammatical composition could be perceived as at odds with the semantic inference of the words themselves. Indeed, “schools and teachers as co-creators of the curriculum” could be viewed as an empowering and liberating enterprise. However, within the wider sentence itself, this expression is a subordinate clause – the main clause being “[CfE] is predicated on a model of sustained change” (Donaldson, 2011: 2). The agency of the sentence resides within the curriculum and not within those whose role it is to realise it in everyday practice. Thus, schools and teachers, therefore, while being semantically affirmed as agentic through the word choice of “co-creators,” are grammatically figured as passive. The composition of the sentence could suggest that they are agents of change not because they have voiced their desire to be, but rather because this curriculum requires it of

them. If this is framed within the original observation of the curriculum itself being conflated with change for economic success and competitiveness, then this could be seen as a discourse practice that positions teachers as “calculating agents” (Ball, 2008) whose main task is to implement the curriculum and meet its targets in order to ensure economic success (Reeves, 2009; Zeichner and Listin, 2014; Priestley *et al.*, 2015). This configuration of agency has been linked to the neoliberal agenda for teacher professionalism and accountability (Apple, 2001, cited in Krise, 2016; Tuinamuana, 2011) which, once again, suggests that *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) aligns comfortably with the global agendas of the EU and the OECD (Godin, 2004; Godin, 2006; Hartmann, 2008).

After recontextualising CfE, Donaldson (2011: 2) goes on to outline the professional actions he believes are necessary to make it a success when he states:

it is critically dependent on quality of leadership at all levels
and the ability and the willingness of teachers to respond to the
opportunities it offers.

The use of the adverb “critically” to qualify the nature of CfE’s dependence potentially ensures the reader sees such actions as vitally important. There is the suggestion that, if teachers do not respond to the opportunities, then the curriculum will fail and, given previous connotations of curriculum with economy, our economic progress will be stilted. Furthermore, the first thing the author attributes CfE’s dependence to is “the quality of leadership at all levels,” a phrase which harks back to “the quality of teachers and their leadership” (Donaldson, 2011: 1) and posits that leadership alone is not enough: there must be a particular standard at which such leadership functions. Furthermore, “ability and willingness” positions the two qualities in a relationship of equivalence, even though the two are not actually equivalent at all: one can be willing but unable, and vice-versa. This therefore furthers the idea that only certain types of people can fulfil the intentions of the review, thus potentially signalling, once more, a desire for homogeneity in the teaching profession. Interestingly, the sentence preceding this one referred to “the opportunities it offers and the challenges it poses.” Here, however, and indeed in the rest of the paragraph, there is no clarity around what the challenges are, or what the best way for teachers to use their ability and willingness to respond to them would be. Instead, any notion of challenge relating to CfE is absent from this point onwards – a choice which, at once, relexicalizes it in positive terms and ensures that teachers are denied a chance to engage with its

disadvantages. Such attention is couched within a subsequent link between teachers' conditions of service and their performance.

Returning to the concepts of ability and willingness mentioned earlier in the review, Donaldson (2011: 2) suggests that teachers should be demonstrating these qualities due to their conditions of service:

The Teachers' Agreement in 2001 laid the foundations for this kind of twenty-first century professionalism but the impact of this agreement on children's learning has yet to be fully realised.

The term "twenty-first century professionalism" is an interesting noun-phrase due to its implications: namely, it implies that, in accordance with the literature, there are many different modes of professionalism. However, it is also prescriptive, positing that, in order to achieve economic prosperity, there is only room for the kind of professionalism that figures teachers as technically capable and behaviourally willing to "respond to opportunities." The use of the adversative connector "but" is interesting as it infers a relationship between the McCrone agreement and children's learning, implying that there has been a failure on the part of teachers to fulfil a statutory duty. However, this is a puzzling conflation when one turns attention to the report being cited (Scottish Executive, 2001: 21), as the only reference to impact is when it proposes measuring "the impact of additional support on the volume of administrative work undertaken by teachers." This statement in Donaldson is therefore a relexicalisation of intention, as nowhere in the report being referenced does the author state that any specific impacts on children's learning were expected to materialise solely as a result of the changes proposed within.

4.5: Curriculum for Excellence and the role of the teacher

After positioning teachers as requiring improvement through both the quality and the perceived lack of impact following McCrone, Donaldson (2011: 2) then goes on to outline ways in which they – and subsequently their creation and implementation of the curriculum – could improve, saying:

the most successful education systems do more than seek to attain particular standards of competence and to achieve change through prescription. They invest in developing their teachers as reflective, accomplished and enquiring professionals who have the capacity to engage fully with the complexities of education and to be key actors in shaping and leading educational change.

Once again, teachers occupy a subordinate clause within a larger sentence and subsequently have their agency diminished, being configured as objects invested in by the (more powerful) education systems. However, the object of the first sentence is perhaps the most interesting, telling the reader that success lies in doing “more” than standardising and prescribing. While some may read this as a rejection of frameworks ensuring competence and prescription, it is actually an affirmation of them; indeed, Donaldson affirms these as being basic requirements of an education system while proposing further control through a list of characteristics one must be made to develop as a teacher. Such a list could be seen, once again, to promote homogeneity.

While Donaldson (2011) goes on through the remainder of the overview to discuss selection processes to teaching, entry routes, initial teacher education and professional learning, he returns once again to the topic of CfE prior to the document’s conclusion, noting:

the somewhat anxious response of many teachers to Curriculum for Excellence (Glasgow University 2009), particularly in the secondary sector, at least in part reflects a desire for more direct support and training than the Curriculum for Excellence philosophy embodies. Professional review and development (PRD) is at best patchy in its impact and is not fulfilling its intentions (Donaldson, 2011: 9).

The theme of the first clause here is “the somewhat anxious response of many teachers,” which draws the reader’s attention to this and allows the rest of the paragraph to be read and decoded with it in mind. Given that anxiety tends to be associated with negative emotions, its thematisation here could serve to configure teachers’ responses to the curriculum as an emotional, reactive and irrational one rather than the calculated and logical behaviour typically associated with alternatives such as “trepidation” or “hesitance.” Thus, it could be determined that this paragraph seeks to lexicalise the nature of teachers’ responses to CfE as emotionally heightened in order to add weight to the proposals that follow. Such proposals begin with a sentence that is jarring in its lack of logical connection to the previous topic: we move from response to curriculum to a form of professional review and development. As Fairclough (2015) might say, there is no logical connector here. However, this may well be the intention, and Donaldson may not only be lexicalising teachers’ reactions to the curriculum, but subsequently positioning processes of reflection on professional behaviour and standards as a means of the state overcoming and diluting such reactions. Indeed, the rest of the paragraph is used to promote and outline his proposals for a “Standard for Active Registration” which he argues will “set clear expectations about professional growth aligned

to a more consistently effective system of PRD” (Donaldson, 2011: 9). The sequencing of such information in the order of negative emotional response, followed by critique of PRD and then a proposal for such standards could therefore suggest that Donaldson is advocating the use of professional standards to control and regulate the behaviour of teachers, subsequently curtailing their ability to respond to policy and curricular incentives in such a way again. In light of this, the reference to “appropriate professional growth” within *the Standards for Career-long Professional Learning* (GTCS, 2012: 24) takes on a new hue, and could be seen as a direct result of this section of the overview – a section that seems to promote teachers’ development being governed in set ways dictated by the state.

Once again, such implicit attempts at guiding and shaping individual behaviour accord with Apple (2004: 18) who believes that any ideology “distorts one’s picture of social reality and serves the interests of the dominant classes in a society.” In this instance, given the recurring agency afforded to curriculum and economy in the overview, the interests of the knowledge-based economy articulated by the EU and subsequently adopted by the OECD might be seen as being well-served by the overview of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011). Accordingly, the social reality for teachers is conceived as a reality involving homogeneity, compliance and subservience to external regulation – all of which have been said to derive from the power of the state in seeking to fulfil an agenda of economic competitiveness (Menter, 2009; Servage, 2009; Mockler, 2005; Mockler, 2013).

4.6: Evaluation of research design

Overall, the design of the research has allowed the conceptualisation of the teaching profession within *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) to be uncovered. Furthermore, the observations regarding teacher professionalism, agency, autonomy and accountability have been clearly situated within wider discourses in policy, research and theory thanks to the literature search that arose from the initial reading of the text. Due to the fluidity of language as a process, each section of the findings and discussion touches upon each of the three research questions (often at the same time) and so the only limitation at this present juncture is that the material requires to be synthesised. This will be overtaken in chapter five.

In addition, while findings were not compromised in any way, it is important to note that this CDA omitted discussions of verb transitivity due to the researcher’s relative inexperience and lack of confidence in this area. Therefore, the research design could have

been strengthened through consultation and collaboration with a linguist proficient in such analysis which could, in turn, have provided an even wider range of linguistic observations as a starting point for links to social organisation and control.

The findings of the analysis presented here are, nevertheless, hugely significant for contributing to professional understanding of how the teaching profession has been shaped by policy directives while, at the same time, situating those directives within the wider global context proposed by research and theory. Articulation of this understanding, linked closely to each research question in turn, now follows in the contents of chapter five.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1: Synthesis

This chapter brings the process of research to its formal conclusion. Having identified the lack of critical responses to policy as problematic, *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) was chosen as a focus due to its influential role in shaping the policy direction of Scottish education. Having thus selected the document for scrutiny, the process of selecting appropriate methodology and methods that would assist in the act of scrutinising begun. This process led to critical discourse analysis (CDA) being chosen as the best fit for the nature of the problem, as well as the establishment of three research questions that would provide a sharp focus for study. In order that the CDA would achieve its intention to situate *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) within its wider national and international discourses, a thorough literature review focussing on key themes within the original document was undertaken. The observations from this search were combined with observations of linguistic analysis and subsequently combined – a process that has led to the point where the analysis generated can be linked to the research questions to provide deeper understanding of how the original document shaped teachers' practice, as well its potential underlying intentions in doing so.

5.2: Conclusions

5.2.1: How is the teaching profession conceptualised in *Teaching Scotland's Future*?

Based on the evidence available, the teaching profession is contextualised – and therefore conceptualised – within the post-Fordism era. As well as situating its discussion of the profession in the same era as the concept of the knowledge-based economy, the overview firmly conceptualises teachers as fundamental to ensuring that Scotland's children are educated in order to contribute to this, with references to “human capital” and “high quality people [achieving] high quality outcomes” (Donaldson, 2011: 1). Despite the overview's acceptance of teachers' importance, it can (perhaps ironically) be seen to position them in such a way where they lack power to question such an economic agenda – firstly through the use of the present tense to indicate the universality of its importance and subsequently through the numerous incidences whereby teachers are figured as passive, grammatical objects within clauses and sentences. Furthermore, the underlying connotative meanings of verbs indicating required actions such as “strengthening” and “supporting” position the profession, at the time of the report's publication, as weak – with the corresponding sources

of strength and support located within prescribing homogenous characteristics required of an effective teacher and establishing a more thorough system of performance management through professional standards. Indeed, such observations contextualise teachers as lacking agency to control the conditions of their output – something keenly observed through the overview’s situation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) as controlled by economic circumstance and not by the teachers themselves.

5.2.2: What discourses and ideologies of social organisation underpin such conceptualisation(s)?

Given the opening paragraph’s clear situation of the overview within post-Fordism political discourse, it would appear that the overview of *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (Donaldson, 2011) aligns with the neoliberal ideology widely thought to underpin policy developments in this period (Harvey, 2005; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008; Jessop, 2008). Furthermore, the repetition of vocabulary used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in outlining their priorities for economic growth would suggest further alignment with the ideological disposition – a disposition that Godin (2004; 2006) contended was key to contributing to the knowledge-based economy. Consequently, it may be argued that the overview seeks to promote a view of social organisation that would help ensure that the needs of the knowledge-based economy were fulfilled. As such, the overview continually socially organises teachers as subservient to the needs of the state through its grammatical objectification of them. Furthermore, the conflation of strict regulatory methods such as professional standards with concepts of strength and support at once promote teachers being subject to external regulation while simultaneously positioning the reader of the report as likely to support the proposition due its seeming helpfulness. The notion of teachers being subject to external regulation is also seen through the relexicalisation of CfE as a main driver of economic competitiveness while allowing it to occupy the position of active agent in sentences – something which, again, organises teachers as subservient to the needs of the economy. Such subservience is very much in line with neoliberal economic agendas, and this leads nicely into an appraisal of the report’s positioning in comparison with theory and research.

5.2.3: To what extent are these discourses and ideologies compatible with theoretical and research-based conceptualisations of the teaching profession?

Considering the observations recorded in response to the first two research questions, the discourses and ideologies within the overview of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) are clearly compatible with theory and research's appraisal of global neoliberal conceptualisations of the teaching profession. However, at the same time, it is important to note that the social organisation of teachers as subservient to the needs of the state and, by extension, the economy, is incompatible with the same body of literature's view of the ideal conceptualisation of teaching. The first area of compatibility comes in the review's clear affinity with OECD (2001; 2005; 2007; 2010; 2015) policy directives which, in turn, were perceived by Godin (2004; 2006) to be serving the needs of the European Union's ambition to create "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy" (European Council, 2000: no page). Furthermore, the recurrent observation that teachers within *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) are positioned in such a way where they lack full agency and require state intervention to become stronger mirror the contention through both theory and research that excessive regulation is the state's method of trying to control teachers and, subsequently, the economic output (in the form of children) that they are responsible for (Apple, 2001, cited in Gerwitz *et al.*, 2009; Jessop, 2008; Fairclough and Wodak, 2008; Lipman, 2009; Menter, 2009; Johnston, 2015). As such, the nature of teacher professionalism within Donaldson's (2011) report closely aligns with its perception as a neoliberal concept providing limited options for active choice or, as Servage (2009: 155) calls it, a "means to regulate professional behaviour." Such articulation with neoliberal principles of social organisation is, however, at odds with how many theorists and researchers posited that that teaching could – and, indeed, should – be configured in modern-day society (Sachs, 2000; Mockler, 2005; Reeves, 2009; Zeicher and Listin, 2014; Ainscow, 2016). Indeed, many contend that it is such organisation that has degraded and diminished the role of the teacher (Hilferty, 2008; Menter, 2009; Bates *et al.*, 2011). Indeed, passive acceptance of such domination has been attributed by Apple (2004: 14) to lack of knowledge in the repressed, stating:

lack of certain kinds of knowledge – where your particular group stands in the complex process of cultural preservation and distribution – is related, no doubt, to the absence in that group of certain kinds of political and economic power in society.

Accordingly, *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) could be read both as an antithesis of, and yet stimulus for, Sachs' (2000) concept of the "activist professional," its

contents providing ample opportunity for teachers to respond critically towards the conditions that govern their practice in order to effect change, reclaim agency and cultivate a critical awareness of the ideological underpinnings of their existence.

5.3: Reprise of Research Evaluation

Given the findings provided, it would be sensible to revisit the concepts of reliability, validity and generalisability. Adherence to established frameworks has ensured reliability and, given that all research questions have now been answered, the research design has been validated. Furthermore, the results provide ample room for discussion and debate among the wider population of Scotland's teachers – many of whom may not have questioned the ideological assumptions inherent in policies shaping their practice or, indeed, their position in relation to them. There are, as noted previously, limitations to the study that, in turn, provide opportunities for further research. Discussion now turns to how these limitations can have such potential realised.

5.4: Recommendations

5.4.1: Apply alternative analytical frameworks

It has been acknowledged that this CDA was undertaken by using the framework provided by Fairclough (2015) and supplemented by the work of Janks (2010) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). While this approach generated a wealth of data that allowed the researcher to answer the research questions, it must be noted that many alternative frameworks exist (Gee, 2011; Rogers, 2011). Therefore, it stands to reason that, if these alternative frameworks were applied to the same source, the knowledge base regarding the ideological underpinnings of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) would be widened and, indeed, the contentions put forth in this dissertation subsequently strengthened or challenged – both of which outcomes would create opportunity for debate and further study.

5.4.2: Extend the scope of the study to include more of the source document

The outcomes of this CDA identify *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) with the wider neoliberal discourse seen as operating in global educational policy. While the outcomes of this study are valid in the sense that they were generated through a systematic framework, there remains the obvious limitation that the scope of the dissertation naturally limited how much of the document could be analysed. Indeed, the scope of the study even had an impact

on how many themes from the overview could be investigated as part of the literature review, and there therefore remains the opportunity to critically study professional learning, leadership, initial teacher education and many other topics. This recommendation is therefore two-fold: widen the amount of the document covered and give due consideration to a greater range of thematic concerns. Adherence to this recommendation could provide intriguing possibilities for investigation at doctoral level.

5.4.3: Use the findings here as stimulus for further critical investigation of educational policy

This enquiry came to be due to the researcher's perceived lack of critical attention to policy directions in Scottish educational discourse. Having subsequently undertaken the enquiry and generated compelling results, it must be noted that potential for similar study of many of the documents used to locate the interdiscursive context of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011) now exists. Future research could choose to undertake a CDA of the ideological assumptions underpinning documents such as those comprising the suite of professional standards designed in light of Donaldson's (2011) review (GTCS, 2012), any one of the numerous documents comprising the guidance on CfE (Scottish Government, 2009; Education Scotland, 2012; 2016) or, indeed, any document taken from the broad suite of publications related to the government's *National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education* (Scottish Government, 2016; 2017b; 2018). Undertaking such studies could, in turn, continue to clarify the ideological stances within Scottish education policy and subsequently widen the opportunities for teachers to evaluate their practice in light of these.

5.5: Final thoughts

If there are things worth defending [...] such a defence must be a proper understanding of the relations of power within which we now find ourselves enmeshed and which shape our present (Ball, 2008: 68).

When I look back upon the teacher I was prior to undertaking this enquiry, I am struck by a sense of naïvety that I no longer believe to be evident. While I had always been aware that policy was not ideologically neutral, I had given little time to trying to understand the specific relations of power which shaped my professional existence. This study serves as the first step in my personal emancipation from this political passivity that many argue is encouraged and promoted by the neoliberal discourse governing education (Tuinamuna, 2011; Johnston, 2015; Costello and Costello, 2016; Krise, 2016). I now feel more informed, inspired and, to use one of Donaldson's (2011: 2) own terms, strengthened – although my

strength does not lie in my deference to, but in my ability to critically understand, and articulately challenge, many aspects of policy that followed the publication of *Teaching Scotland's Future* (Donaldson, 2011). Indeed, it is my hope that the findings of this project can inspire many more members of the teaching profession to engage with, and subsequently critique, the conditions in which they practice so and become even more informed “partner[s] in the communities in which [they] work” (GTCS, 2012: 11).

16, 478 words.

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Appendix 1: search results

The table which follows provides full details of the search terms used when conducting the literature search using ProQuest Academic, as well as the number of results returned for each individual search.

Search term	Choice of journal type	Time period	Number of hits
'teacher professionalism'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	16, 219.
'teacher agency'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	93, 451.
'teacher autonomy'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	51, 337.
'teacher professional standards'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	114, 962.
'globalisation'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	217, 192.
'marketisation'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	3, 289.
'ideology'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	273, 705.
'neoliberalism'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	54, 711.
'knowledge-based economy'	Peer-reviewed.	2000 – present.	14, 556.