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University
of Glasgow

**Policy processes, professionalism
and partnership:
An exploration of the
implementation of ‘Teaching
Scotland’s Future’**

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Philosophy

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to explore the implementation of the recommendations from a recent teacher education policy in Scotland, 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (TSF; Donaldson, 2011), in 'real time', as the policy was alive and continuously evolving.

Shortly after the publication of TSF, the Scottish Government set up a partnership model, the National Partnership Group (NPG) to refine and begin to implement a number of its recommendations in partnership between key organisations in Scottish education. The membership of the NPG consisted of representatives from these key organisations, as well as a small number of individual teachers. The NPG, its structure, membership and the multiple ways in which it operated, was the main focus of this research.

Taking a critical policy analysis approach, this research set out to investigate the representation and participation of actors within the policy process and identify the voices that were not heard within the NPG. The research employed elements of actor-network theory (ANT) to conceptualise the participation of institutional actors as a process of 'interest translation' and drew on literature in the area of policy networks and democratic network governance in order to examine the processes by which the NPG operated. The data used in this research consisted of interviews conducted with members of the NPG and documentary evidence in the form of minutes of meetings, policy documents and press releases.

Drawing mainly on the perspectives of actors central to the process, this thesis highlights the complexity and subtlety of the policy processes at work. On the surface, the development of a partnership model was regarded as evidence of the government's apparent commitment to collaborative and democratic policy-making. However, this research shows that underneath this 'simulacra of order' lay great disorder: divergent institutional interests, unequal power relations, strategic institutional positioning and a conservative network culture that favoured the participation of some actors over others. Of even more concern was the exclusion and restriction of the voice of the teaching profession. The non-involvement of teacher unions and restriction individual teachers in the policy process sits at odds with the overall policy vision set out in TSF: the development of teachers as 'agents of change' who can shape and lead educational change. The thesis concludes that there is a significant tension between the overall intentions of the policy agenda and the process that was designed to implement it and calls for a new model of policy-making where disorder and divergent interests can be brought to the fore in a way that allows the voice of the teaching profession to be heard.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except there explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature

Printed name

Anna Dorothy Beck

Introduction

Teacher education reform has become a global policy trend. Countries across the world are embarking on ambitious programmes of change in order to improve the quality of their teacher education, and Scotland is no different. In 2011, following a large-scale review of teacher education provision in Scottish education, 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (TSF; Donaldson, 2011) was published, which contained fifty recommendations for the improvement of Scottish teacher education in its entirety.

The overall objective of this research was to explore the nature of policy processes in Scottish education by using the implementation of the recommendations of TSF as a case study. While 'Teaching Scotland's Future' embodies many of the theoretical characteristics of an attachment to the shibboleths of the Scottish Enlightenment and the Democratic Intellect (Davie, 1961), it also partakes in a more pervasive mood of anxiety about the quality of teacher education. With its fifty recommendations, it proposed to reinvigorate partnerships within the orbit of school teaching while recovering a kind of intellectual eros rooted in the University.

The Scottish Government's acceptance of all of Donaldson's recommendations (Scottish Government, 2011a) was considered somewhat unusual given the propensity of governments to 'cherry pick' the elements of a review process that confirm their ideological preferences. Following this acceptance, the Scottish Government established a partnership group, the 'National Partnership Group' (NPG) to further develop and begin to implement a number of the recommendations. The development of the NPG highlighted an apparent commitment to collective decision making and partnership, with the NPG being comprised of representatives from universities, local authorities, schools and national organisations, as well as individual teachers. The recommendations were wide ranging and the process of taking all fifty of them forward proved to be incredibly complex, resulting in deliberation and struggle between different institutional actors.

The NPG, its structure, membership and the way that it operated became the main focus of my research. I conducted twenty-seven interviews with members of the NPG and its three sub-groups while the NPG was in operation. Gaining access to this network was particularly difficult, but I cannot pretend that having the author of the Report (Professor

Graham Donaldson) as one of my supervisors did not ease this process. My findings are based upon the perspectives of these actors, but my understanding of the policy process was broadened through a critical reading of various documents.

Two aspects of this research combine to make it an original design. Very few policy studies seek an 'inside' approach and attempt to gain insights of key actors who are central to the policy process. Those that do, end to obtain such data once the 'implementation' stage has ceased (Humes, 1997). Secondly, few studies attempt to analyse and map out policy implementation and education politics 'in action' as they occur in 'real time'. Although this presented a number of methodological challenges, interviewing policy actors while they were acting within the process provided a certain level type of insight that would be different from that offered in hindsight.

There is something distinctive about the way that policy is made in Scottish education. The Scottish 'policy style' is described as consultative and participative and claims to be based on the values of meritocracy, democracy and egalitarianism. Indeed, the development of a partnership group that represents key organisations in Scottish education might be seen to reflect these principles. However, it is often said that there is something 'mythical' about these claims. This research conceptualises myths as 'stories' that are used to celebrate identity and guide behaviour.

But stories can be destructive, and they can be used to hide a multitude of democratic problems and disorder. It is almost thirty years since McPherson and Raab (1988) published their seminal work on the governance of Scottish education. Within this, they identified the existence of the 'assumptive world' of the policy community. The 'assumptive world', and the picture that it painted about Scottish education politics was incredibly powerful, and also incredibly disturbing. It found that there was a shared culture amongst policy-makers, characterised by a set of values and ideologies that were apparently common to all in Scottish education. My research found that this 'assumptive world' still exists and acts as a significant barrier to the participation of those who don't 'belong' to the traditional policy community. For a nation that is apparently committed to the values of democracy and participation, this signals that there is something significant to be addressed within the culture of Scottish education.

Broadly speaking, this research can be regarded as an exploration of how complex policy processes operate. The case study involved an examination of the processes by which the

recommendations from TSF were further developed and implemented by the NPG. Drawing on literature on policy networks (Rhodes, 2006) and democratic network governance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009, 2008, 2005a, 2005b), I explored the participation of institutional actors within this space and examined the process of interest translation, drawing on elements of actor-network theory (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998).

There is a great deal of research that looks at the way that education policies are enacted at school level, and recontextualised by a variety of actors in the process of understanding (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2010). However, this research examines the space before this: where institutional actors are brought together to further develop the policy *before* it travels to the level of action. Drawing on the ANT model of translation (Callon, 1986), the process of implementing a policy requires this policy to go through a process of translation, during which elements of the policy can become strengthened, distorted or lost depending on the interests that it comes into contact with. Within the context of this research, translation occurred within the NPG and the sub-groups therefore the interests that were important to trace were institutional in nature.

The overarching aim of this research was to identify and explore spaces of the policy process where translation occurs and where it does not. As I gathered insight into the location and nature of these spaces, three specific research questions emerged:

1. Who or what was included in or excluded from these spaces?
2. How do individual actors represent the interests of an institutional actor within this space?
3. How do institutional actors translate their interests into the policy agenda?

The first research question explored the membership and structure of the NPG and its sub-groups. The identification of individual members (also referred to as representatives of individual actors through this thesis) allowed for the mapping of institutional interests that were formally represented within the network. As well as tracking who or what was invited into this process, this question allowed me to explore issues of exclusion, and in particular, identify the voices that were under-represented or not represented at all within particular

spaces. An additional line of enquiry was to explore process of selection and network design. Specific aims here were the identification of whom or what was responsible for selecting the membership of the NPG and sub-groups and exploring the rationale behind these decisions.

The second research question focussed on the politics of institutional representation. Two key related sub-questions were asked around the criteria for institutional membership and the extent to which this can be considered as balance. The act of representation can vary considerably amongst individual representatives, as institutional actors differ in size, scope and purpose. Barriers to representation were also explored.

My final research question allowed me to move beyond issues of membership, structure and representation in order to consider how all of these impacted on the translation of policy. The first step to answering this was to identify all of the different spaces where the original policy intentions could be translated. Once these had been highlighted, I then identified which institutional actors had been included or excluded from each space. Developing an understanding of network culture and the processes by which it operated were essential in order to answer this question.

Structure of thesis

This thesis is arranged into six chapters. I describe each of these below.

Chapter One: Teacher education reform: global and local actors

Teacher education reform is has become a global policy trend, with ‘policy problems’ and their ‘solutions’ often borrowed from other countries that are perceived to have successful education systems. However, it is important to note that these problems and solutions are often mediated or ‘re-contextualised’ to fit in with a particular local setting. In this first chapter, I discuss the reform of teacher education within this global context. I describe the process of policy ‘re-contextualisation’ and then introduce key concepts that help us to understand the global circulation of policy ideas. I highlight the role that transnational actors such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) play in the movement and promotion of policy ideas and describe a number of themes that have come to characterise teacher education reform across the world. Returning to my

discussion on policy ‘re-contextualisation’, I introduce key local actors that must be considered as playing a role in the mediation of global ideas. I begin this discussion by outlining the ‘distinctive’ nature of Scottish education and a number of traditions and beliefs that have come to characterise the way that we think about Scottish education, its policies, and the processes that create them: democracy, egalitarianism and meritocracy. There is something somewhat mythical about these traditions and beliefs and I summarise the literature that describes them as the Scottish ‘myth’. In the final part of this chapter, I introduce the concept of the ‘policy community’: the group of actors who are traditionally involved in the development of policy. I suggest that they use the ‘myth’ in two ways within the Scottish policy process: as ‘sustenance’ to feed the traditional image of Scottish education; and, as ‘mask’ to hide the disorder that lies beneath the simulacra of order.

Chapter Two: Analysing the policy process

This chapter introduces the conceptual and methodological frameworks that I have used within my research. I provide an overview of the key concepts and ideas that have been used to interrogate the membership and structure of the NPG and its sub-groups, to explore the nature of participation within the network and reveal the nature of policy translation. This chapter should be understood as having two parts. In the first, I outline my conceptual framework and introduce key concepts and ideas that have been used as different lenses to look at various elements of the policy process. I begin by considering different conceptualisations of policy as text and policy as enactment. I then discuss literature in the area of policy networks and democratic network governance and show how this can be used to explore the structure and processes of networks. Following this, I introduce key concepts from actor-network theory (ANT), including the idea of the ‘token’ (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) and the translation model of change (Callon, 1986), both of which are central to my understanding of policy translation. The concept of ‘power’ is central to any research that draws on critical policy analysis; I therefore finish this conceptual section by outlining the way that I have understood and used this concept within this thesis.

The second half of this chapter constitutes the methodological framework. In this section, I provide an overview of the different methods that I used to collect the data used within this research. I begin by outlining key methodological issues and tensions that can arise when conducting research in this area. This research mainly drew on data obtained through semi-

structured interviews conducted with members of the NPG and its sub-groups. I provide details about my participant group, the interview process and the different stages of data analysis. In order to develop a broader understanding of the wider policy process, I conducted some document analysis and network ethnography, which I discuss here. To bring this section to a close, I revisit the methodological and ethical tensions discussed at the beginning and consider how they might have shaped my research, reflecting on my own positionality within the data.

Chapter Three: The policy context for 'Teaching Scotland's Future'

In Chapter three, I situate TSF within its specific policy context by providing an overview of three key policies that it is linked to: the McCrone Reviews (2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2005), A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE); and, 'Advancing Professionalism in Teaching' (McCormac Report; Scottish Government, 2011b). In the second part of the chapter, I conceptualise TSF as a *policy process* rather than a *policy* per se. I begin by providing an overview of this process and the different stages within it, but I stress that these must not be seen as distinct stages. The policy process is messy, dynamic and constantly evolving; as such, stages of policy enactment are never 'complete'. They can become 'black-boxed' (Feniwick & Edwards, 2010) and presented in the form of a policy document or draft report, but their stabilisation is only ever temporary. Nevertheless, presenting TSF as a process of 'stages' has allowed me to highlight the different spaces that this research explores. In this chapter, I provide an overview of the structure and membership of the NPG and its sub-groups. This information is necessary for understanding the findings that I present in the following chapters.

Chapter Four: The policy process: characteristics of a partnership model

I present the findings from my research across two chapters based on my analysis of data gathered from interviews with members of the NPG and its three sub-groups and various documents outlined in Chapter two. In the first chapter, I present findings on the membership and structure of the NPG and its sub-groups. I also consider a number of issues around the representation of institutional actors within a policy network. I begin this chapter by considering different rationales behind the establishment of the NPG and its

sub-groups. I then present details on the range of institutional actors and institutional interests that were represented within this network and highlight a number of issues around the criteria for selection of network membership. I then outline a number of issues that arose around the representation of institutional actors within a policy network. In the final half of the fourth chapter, I deal with issues of exclusion and positioning, using the experiences of two institutional actors as examples: teacher unions and the GTCS.

Chapter Five: The process of policy translation

In the fifth chapter, I move beyond issues of membership, structure and representation to explore the participation of individual and institutional actors. Of specific interest were the different methods and techniques employed by actors in the process of interest translation. I begin this chapter by identifying and describing a number of formal and informal spaces where institutional actors were able to translate their interests into the policy agenda. Focussing specifically on the NPG and its three sub-groups, I describe the culture of these networks from the perspectives of its members and argue that the participation of any actor needs to be understood as existing within this. I then explore the participation of institutional actors, suggesting that it took three forms: conservatism and resistance to change; territorialism and protection of proprietary interests; and, the subtle subversion of sub-group remit points. In the final section of this chapter, I explore the participation of individual actors, drawing on the experiences of individual teachers. This discussion falls into four themes: the co-construction of network rules; knowledge of structures, procedures, cultures and rules; perception of self in the network; and, perception from others.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In this final chapter, I provide a conclusion to the thesis. I begin by providing an overview of the research objective, three research questions and key theoretical concepts and methods that were employed. I then return to each research question and present a summary of my findings for each. In the following section, I consider the extent to which my methodology delivered the data that I required. As the research progressed, the data revealed issues that I did not expect to find, requiring some adaptation of the theoretical

concepts and tools that I was using. I discuss this issue and reflect on my incorporation of ideas from democratic theories of network governance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008; Tønnesen, 2015) in this chapter. I then highlight future research possibilities by discussing further application of my methodology and different ways that this research could be taken forward. To conclude this chapter, I outline three key contributions that this research to the area of education policy research by discussing three key themes: issues around transparency in the policy process and the implications for democratic policy-making; the culture of consensus and its role in restricting the potential for educational reform; and, the restriction and representation of the teaching profession within the network.

Chapter 1 Teacher education reform: global and local actors

Teacher education reform has become a global policy trend. Countries all over the world are reforming their systems of teacher education and it is no coincidence that many of these reforms have shared characteristics and features. Policy ideas travel across borders and are adopted by governments and other institutional actors in order to shape, drive and justify reform.

Much has been written about the way that travelling policy ideas shape policy and practice in national education systems (Alexiadou & Bunt-Kokhuis, 2013; Ball, 1998; Olssen & Peters, 2005). Transnational organisations such as the OECD, European Union (EU), World Bank and UNESCO (Alexiadou & Bunt-Kokhuis, 2013) act as agents for the dissemination of discourse and globalised practice, usually without reference to local contexts¹.

Education is a highly political institution that is historically and socially constructed. Each country's education system is shaped by a "collection of structures rules and standard operating procedures" (March & Olsen, 2004, p. 4), including specific traditions, agendas, beliefs, ideologies, and cultures of practice. Scottish education sits within a particularly distinctive political, historical, and social context, which has its own set of traditions and rules that have been well documented (McPherson & Raab, 1988; Menter & Hulme, 2011; Humes, 2013; Hulme & Kennedy, 2016). Global agendas are mediated by local forces in a process of 'vernacular globalisation' (Ozga & Lingard, 2007); they are 're-contextualised' by the 'local' (Ball, 2012). In other words, they are adapted in order to fit in with national culture and local identities.

This chapter discusses key global and local forces that have emerged as actors in the development and implementation of the recommendations from 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (TSF). I begin by discussing the process of 'vernacular globalisation' (Ozga & Lingard, 2007), where global actors are re-contextualised by the local. I then position

¹ However, this does not necessarily mean that the local context and the actors that act within it do not play a role in the mediation of global policy trends.

teacher education reform as a global policy agenda and discuss the role that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) play in the space of policy-making. Since teacher education reform across the globe tends to share common characteristics. I discuss common themes of these characteristics in the subsequent sub-topic and consider the extent to which they can be recognised in TSF. As a theme of reform, the apparent relationship between *teacher quality* and student attainment, and the importance of this for the *knowledge economy*, underpins the vision set out by TSF. I discuss this in depth and suggest some implications for the future of education in Scotland. Chapter 1 also discusses the role of the Scottish ‘myth’ as a local actor that shapes the policy process and mediates the traction of global policy trends. I describe the way that the ‘myth’ has been conceptualised within this research and consider the relationship between national identity and ‘myths’. I then consider the origins of the ‘myth’ and present discourse around the ‘distinctive’ nature of Scottish education and the ‘shared assumptive world’ of the policy-making community as two complex spaces that work to sustain the ‘myth’. I argue that the ‘myth’ played two roles in the development and implementation of TSF: both as *mask* and *sustenance*.

1.1 Policy re-contextualisation: a complex interplay of global and local forces

While on the surface, there appears to be a degree of similarity between national educational reforms, Cochran-Smith (2005a, 2005b) reminds us that during the process of enactment, these are *mediated* by each nation’s historical, socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic, institutional, and geopolitical characteristics. These characteristics interact with each other and also with larger ‘social forces’ in a bid to adapt the policy to better align with local context.

As global policy pressures travel across the world, they are forced to interact with historically embedded assumptions, ideologies, and cultural traditions, which act as gatekeepers (Menter & Hulme, 2011). Through a process of ‘vernacular globalisation’ (Ozga & Lingard, 2007; Lingard, 2010), the local mediates the global; local actors ‘institutionalise’ global ideas and integrate them into pre-existing cultural structures, translating policy to reflect local priorities (Ozga & Jones, 2006, p. 1). Global policy themes are ‘re-contextualised’ within their local context (Ball, 1993; Ball et al., 2012;

Sultana, 2008) at the level of local policy-making, setting of national policy priorities and various other spaces where policy is ‘made’. In the context of Scottish education, global policy agendas are adapted at the levels of government, schools and policy networks that are established to develop and implement educational reform. Hulmes and Kennedy (2016) write that, as a result of ‘vernacular globalisation’, teacher education policy in Scotland is a delicate balance between local, national and global drivers and historical and cultural factors.

Through the process of ‘translation’ (Edwards, 2012; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998), original policy intentions are transformed, distorted, or silenced by these local actors. Therefore, what emerges as ‘policy’ in the context of Scottish education, tends to be a transformation of global agendas that ‘fits’ with local traditions, values, and claims about the purpose of education. This can be viewed as a positive element of policy development as traditions and ‘ways of operating’ that have been constructed over years are somewhat protected. However, policy development can also take on a ‘conservative’ nature and there may be resistance to changes that would benefit the system.

If we take the global movement of the ‘Teach First’ agenda as an example of policy travel, we could say that a number of Scottish ‘characteristics’ had come together to resist neoliberal change². This is an example of the strength of the local context and shows how cultural resistance can work to restrict the traction of global policy ideas. However, it is important to note that any resistance is only ever temporary. Existing global and local forces are continually and new forces are always emerging and exert pressures in different ways.

1.2 A global policy agenda

Different features of education systems are becoming increasingly similar throughout the world (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). One area that has recently been subject to the traction of policy agendas is the education of teachers. Teacher education reform has become a key government priority across many developed countries (Kennedy, 2015; Darling-Hammond

² Despite a number of countries developing their own versions of the ‘Teach for All’ programmes in teacher education (e.g. ‘Teach First’ in England, ‘Teach for America’ in the USA and ‘Teach for India’ in India), Scotland has resisted this trend.

& Leiberman, 2012; Cochran-Smith, 2005a, 2005b). This convergence is often cited as an effect of the increasing *globalization* of education policy (Ball, 2013³). There is an enormous amount of literature on the globalization of education⁴ and here I briefly discuss the role that it has played in shaping the direction of teacher education reform.

Globalisation plays a significant role in not only the content of many national level education policies, but also the processes by which it is made. In summarizing these characteristics, Ball (2013, p. 1) distinguishes between two key themes: the *creation* and *regulation* of policy priorities in education, and the *circulation* and *promotion* of policy ideas. Both of these themes are interlinked and work together as coercive forces in the development of educational change at national levels.

These globalised education policy discourses (Lingard, 2010) are promoted by a host of powerful *transnational actors*, such as the OECD, the European Union, and the World Bank. Not only are they *communicated* by these global actors, but they are often *created* by them through the identification of ‘policy problems’ or ‘priorities’⁵. In this governing role, globalization is conceptualized as a *coercive* force that dictates and shapes the design and formation of education policy, placing particular requirements and restrictions on national states across the world.

The process of globalisation has allowed for the production of a set of *global imperatives* for education policy at a national level. These imperatives are not stable; they are constantly transforming and shifting and are translated and enacted in different countries, at different times, and in different ways. An example of a global policy imperative that is central to this thesis is the focus on ‘teacher quality’⁶.

Its second key contribution is the circulation of ‘policy ideas’ around the world. Ball (2013, p. 29) suggests that it has rendered the nation-state inadequate as a space within which to think about policy. Instead, policies are ‘borrowed’, ‘exported’, ‘donated’ or ‘sold’ between countries, creating a ‘flow’ of policies across the globe, and it is this that

³ See also Ozga and Lingard (2007) and Tatto (2007).

⁴ See Rizvi and Lingard (2010) and Ozga and Lingard (2007) for in-depth overviews of this literature.

⁵ A recent example being the OECD’s review of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and emerging impacts in quality and equity in schools (OECD, 2016), which provided an overview of policy ‘problems’ and included a number of recommendations on how to ‘improve’.

⁶ This emerged following the publication of ‘Teachers Matter’ (OECD, 2005) and more recently, the emphasis on ‘leadership for learning’ (OECD, 2013).

leads to a degree of similarity across education systems. Ball is not alone in suggesting that this ‘flow’ is influenced and driven by ‘authoritative supranational agents’, such as the OECD, Oxfam, or the World Bank (Rizvi & Lingard, 2000; Sellar & Lingard, 2014). I will discuss the work of these transnational actors in more detail further in this chapter, but here it is important to state that they not only play a role in the translation of policy ideas, but also in the creation and promotion of global imperatives for policy⁷

Many authors writing about teacher education reform highlight the way in which it is increasingly viewed by governments across the globe as a ‘policy problem’ (Cochran-Smith, 2005a⁸). Arguably though, in many cases, it is provided not only as a ‘policy problem’, but also a ‘policy solution’. Teachers are positioned as problems to be fixed, and yet also as ready-made ‘solutions’, e.g. ‘education can close the attainment gap’. This is in direct tension with policy discourse that positions teachers as ‘agents of change’ or ‘change agents’. Where one treats teachers as passive and somewhat restricted, the other requires teachers to be active and transformative. This tension is important to the wider discussion around teacher education reform and will be revisited throughout this thesis.

1.2.1 The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a transnational actor

Transnational actors play a central role in the movement and translation of policy ideas and agendas across the globe. In this research, the most influential ‘global actor’ in the sphere of teacher education reform, and education reform more widely, was the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The OECD was founded in 1961, and now has 34 member countries, all of which can be considered as ‘developed’ countries with high-income economies and a very high Human Development Index (HDI)⁹. It defines itself as “a forum in which governments work together to seek solutions to common problems, share experiences and identify best

⁷ For example, the OECD conduct reviews of education systems and offer suggestions for reform.

⁸ See also Cochran-Smith, 2005b; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008; Rowan, Mayer, Kline, Kostogriz & Walker-Gibbs, 2014).

⁹ The HDI is used as a measurement of human development. It focusses on three basic dimensions: life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate and gross domestic product per capita at purchasing power parity to measure standard of living.

practices to promote better policies for better lives” (OECD, 2014, p.4). More specifically, with regard to its role in shaping global policy agendas:

The OECD supports policy makers in identifying challenges and addresses them through appropriate policies. It is also a source of advice on almost all areas of policy making and implementation, and one of the world’s largest and most trusted sources of comparable statistical data on economics, trade, employment, education, health, social issues, migration, the environment and many other fields (OECD, 2014, p. 4).

This global actor plays a number of roles in the development of transnational policy agendas. It also generates its own statistical data on education in many forms and metrics through, for example, the auspices of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA; Henry et al., 2001), and more recently, country reviews. Essentially, the OECD offers ‘policy solutions’ to social and economic problems. The interesting thing about this, however, is that they also ‘identify’ these problems, though, for example, their country aspect reviews or PISA tests, which are discussed below.

The OECD is a powerful force in the governance of Scottish education policy and plays an integral role in promoting the assumptions that teacher quality is central to student attainment, and that student attainment is directly linked to a country’s economic performance on a global stage. However, its influence is far greater than this and we witnessed evidence of this in the publication of ‘Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective’ (OECD, 2016) and the connections between its findings and the government’s policy agenda set out in ‘Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: A Delivery Plan for Scotland’ (Scottish Government, 2016a). In 2015, the Scottish Government commissioned the OECD to conduct a review of the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and emerging impacts in quality and equity in schools. The ‘delivery plan’ presents a number of changes that the Scottish Government plan to make to address the ‘recommendations of the OECD review, and the foreword of the policy document confirms the role that the OECD has had in shaping the Scottish Government’s key agenda for education (at the time of writing): “We will build on Scotland’s strengths, so powerfully highlighted by the OECD” (p. 1).

1.2.2 PISA: a powerful product of the OECD

PISA is another key global actor that plays a role in the formation and implementation of education policy in Scotland and has been described as one of the OECD's "most successful products" (Seller & Lingard, 2014, p. 917). PISA is a triennial assessment, organised by the OECD, which aims to evaluate education systems around the world by testing the skills and knowledge of a sample of fifteen-year old students. According to PISA, the tests are designed to determine the extent to which young people can apply knowledge to real-life situations by assessing skills deemed as 'necessary' for participating in society. There is, of course, a question that needs to be asked around what constitutes 'necessary skills'.

Carvalho and Costa (2014) refer to PISA as a 'public policy instrument', used by the OECD to 'intervene' in education. Due to the cyclical nature of the survey, countries can compare their students' performance over a number of years, which potentially allows for the possibility of assessing the impact of education policy reform. It is also used by governments to compare their education system to other education systems from around the globe. Each OECD member country participates in the study, along with a variety of partner countries¹⁰.

When comparing results, governments often focus on signs of 'underperformance' in international benchmarking schemes is a key driver of education reform. The most recent PISA survey was conducted 2012 and the report (OECD, 2013) showed that performance in Wales was lower than the rest of the UK in all three domains: reading, mathematics and science. This conclusion was understood by the Welsh government as a sign that there needed to be significant change in the education system. In 2014, Professor Graham Donaldson was invited to conduct a fundamental review of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. The review concluded in January 2015, and the report, 'Successful Futures' (Donaldson, 2015) recommended significant reform across the system. This is not only an example of the influence of international comparative data, but also of the traction of policy elites in the space of education.

¹⁰ The United Kingdom is a member state of the OECD and Scotland therefore participates as an 'adjudicated region'. Although one report is produced for the UK, country-level analysis allows for separate results to be provided for Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The use of PISA data to inform reform and the comparative assessments employed by the OECD have been the subject of much methodological criticism (Feniger & Leftsetin, 2014¹¹). Despite its wide spread criticism and apparent limitations¹², PISA league tables continue to be used by governments to inform and justify educational reform (Carvalho & Costa, 2014; Feniger & Leftsetin, 2014).

Carvalho and Costa (2014) regard the circulation of PISA as a part of a multidirectional and multilateral process of translation. This process is complex, and involves various stages of reinterpretation, de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation by national, local, regional and international agencies, as well as by the media and the public, in which ‘evidence’ is either absorbed, adapted or silenced. PISA data is therefore an example of a global actor that is mediated and translated by local context in a process of ‘vernacular globalisation’ (Ozga & Lingard, 2007; Lingard, 2010).

As well as sparking the need for educational reform, the publication of global league data allows countries to identify others that are performing well, thus promoting ‘policy borrowing’. The reasoning behind this, according to Feniger and Lefstein (2014) is that superior performance in test performance is taken as evidence of ‘superior policies’. Carvalho and Costa (2014) reason that PISA allows for the opening and closing of policy routes and the establishment of a ‘set of possibilities’, but these ‘possibilities’ are re-contextualised in by local cultural, political, and economic forces. In their study of the reception of PISA in six European countries, Carvalho and Costa (2014) have shown that there is significant variation in the use of PISA data and perceptions of its credibility. They did not find any automatic convergence of education policies as an effect of PISA discourse. Instead, they suggest that PISA evidence is recontextualised and distorted by local actors, for use within the local policy arena. Similarly, Sellar and Lingard (2013, p. 479) argue that PISA data is used as a tool to “push internal reform agendas”.

This suggests that policies are not simply ‘imported’ and that there is a danger that the promotion of ‘policy as numbers’ (Lingard, 2011) could lead to national governments adopting policy agendas that do not work in their specific local context.

¹¹ See also Carvalho & Costa (2014); Coffield, (2012) and Goldstein (2004).

¹² Arguably the biggest limitation of PISA is that it is a sample survey. For example, in Scotland, the PISA 2012 sample consisted of 2,954 students from 111 schools. The necessity of assessing a sample of students means that the results are subject to sampling error. In other words, the sample of 15 year old students chosen to sit the test may not be representative of the population, and governments may wish to interpret results with caution.

Evidence from PISA surveys has been used by the Scottish Government in a number of ways. Firstly, it is used to describe trends in Scottish education. For example, it features in a recent Scottish Government's publication: 'High Level Summary of Statistics Trends for School Education' (Scottish Government, 2014) alongside a small number of other assessments and measures, such as the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy.

The most recent PISA results (OECD, 2013) showed Scotland's scores were similar to the OECD average in mathematics and above the average in reading and science, and that Scotland's relative position had improved slightly since 2009. PISA 2012 also provided evidence for a reduction in the performance gap between young people from low-income and high-income households as well as a reduction in the effect of deprivation on performance (in comparison to the results from PISA 2009). In relation to the rest of the UK, Scotland outperformed England, Northern Ireland and Wales in the domains of mathematics and reading, while England outperformed all three in the domain of science. In the main, Scotland appears to be performing well. However, concerns have been raised about the speed at which the Scottish system improves when compared on a global scale to countries outside of the UK.

Grek, Lawn and Ozga (2009, p.81) have found that, in the case of PISA evidence in Scotland, the 'local' mediates this external force in quite a distinctive way. They suggest that the biggest driver behind Scotland's participation in PISA is "the need to appear on the international stage" and that, as a country, "it does very little, if not absolutely nothing, with the findings". They continue by arguing that international comparative data is useful as an "external validator of internal quality assurance processes", but that it is used mostly as "an arena for the promotion of Scotland as a separate and distinctive education system".

The most recent PISA results were referred to in the Scottish Government's 'Programme for Scotland 2014-15' (Scottish Government, 2014): "we have halted our decline in the PISA league tables and reinforced Scotland's international standing in education". Here it is used as a discursive tool to celebrate the place of the Scottish education system internationally, and as a 'reassurance' that the system is strong. It does not appear in the subsequent programme for government (Scottish Government, 2015a), but this does refer to the commission of the OECD review of broad general education (OECD, 2016).

Grek, Lawn & Ozga (2009) suggest that PISA's most dominant use in Scotland is discursive, in that it appears and re-appears in political debates when statements require justification or evidentiary support in the form of 'international data'. In the same vein, it is often used as a tool in policy texts to justify the need for change¹³.

1.2.3 Themes of teacher education reform

Due to the travelling nature of policy agendas and the tendency for governments to 'borrow' policy problems and solutions, common themes of teacher education reform can be spotted across the globe. Focussing on education reform, Sahlberg (2015) wrote about the 'Global Education Reform Movement' (GERM) and identified five common themes: standardisation of education through the development of outcomes-based policies; increasing focus on 'core' subjects in school curriculum and a move away from social studies, arts, music and physical education; a search for low-risk methods for reaching goals and avoidance of experimentation; a focus on economic rather than moral goals and a reliance on corporate management models; and, test-based accountability policies. Although these are identified as 'common themes', it is difficult to recognise each feature of GERM within the current Scottish context. The recommendations set out by 'Teaching Scotland's Future' and the implications that these potentially held for teacher education were recognised as a somewhat 'radical' approach to reform (Menter & Hulme, 2011). Although it is possible that these were perceived as radical because of Scotland's 'conservative' approach to change (Hulme & Kennedy, 2015; Humes, 2013), some recommendations could be described as 'experimental'. For example, the creation of new models of undergraduate initial teacher education and the development of 'hub schools' (although already in progress in various forms). The terms 'economic success' (p. 7), 'economic growth' (p. 9) and 'economic expectations' (p.20) are used throughout the report (Donaldson, 2011). Furthermore, the rationale for the Review, presented at the beginning of the Report, highlights this tension,

Over the last 50 years, school education has become one of the most important policy areas for governments across the world. Human capital in the form a highly

¹³ Indeed, this can be seen in 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (pg. 17, 18, 26, 75) where it is cited a number of times.

educated population is now accepted as a key determinant of economic success...
(Donaldson, 2011, p. 2).

From this it is clear that the need to compete in the global economy is one driver of reform. However, this does not necessarily mean that the agenda focuses on economic goals at the expense of moral goals, as Sahlberg's (2015) GERM suggests.

The second set of themes that I present here are outlined by Menter (2016) in a recent collection of writings on the nature of teacher education reform. He states that while diversity exists (Tatto, 2007), some key themes can be recognised in the global trend of teacher education reform. First, he suggests that there is an increasing pressure on 'teaching as a profession' and a systematic 'reconstruction' and 'repositioning' of teachers (although this takes different forms in different countries). The core of TSF is built around the need to increase teacher professionalism, with the Report stating that teacher professionalism must be 'reconceptualised', 'redefined', 'extended', 'enhanced', 'reinvigorated' and 'widened' (Kennedy & Doherty, 2012, p. 840). This might be recognised as external pressure placed on teachers that works to reconstruct and reposition the role of the teacher.

As originally highlighted by Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008), there is a tendency to define teacher education as a 'policy problem' rather than a *learning* or *training* problem. This highlights the *politicisation* of teacher education reform and points towards the increasing demands and expectations placed on teachers by governments. As a result of this, Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008) suggest that the focus of teacher education reform has become pupil achievement as measured by academic test scores, rather than social or emotional development. Indeed, the process by which TSF was developed and implemented points to the *politicisation* of teacher education in Scotland. The Review was commissioned by the Scottish Government and this thesis will show that the government played a significant role in the further development of the policy agenda at the level of the National Partnership Group (NPG) and National Implementation Board (NIB). Furthermore, the developments and changes that emerged as a result of its implementation were often referred to in political discourse¹⁴.

¹⁴ Angela Constance (Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Nov 2014 to May 2016) would often refer to the implementation of TSF in political speeches as evidence of progress. For example, at her keynote address at the Robert Owen Centre in May 2015, Constance confirmed the government's continued commitment to 'embedding' the core ideas from TSF, highlighting the establishment of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) and the provision of funding for Masters-level funding as examples of this commitment (Scottish Government, 2015b).

Menter also highlights ‘enormous variation’ in the extent to which politicians and communities trust teachers, suggesting that teaching professions are perceived differently in different countries. It could be suggested that the discourse used in TSF to discuss the existing teaching profession positions teachers in a positive light:

The established strength of the teaching profession in Scotland, together with the steps taken by successive governments to improve it further, have created a secure platform upon which to build. The breadth of commitment across Scottish education to the importance of professional development is impressive (Donaldson, 2011, p. 2).

However, the need to reform teacher education and introduce Masters level learning for existing teachers might themselves be recognised as indications of a lack of trust. Kennedy and Doherty (2012) highlight the need to ‘reconceptualise’ teacher professionalism as a criticism of teachers’ current enactment of professionalism and they suggest that this is more in line with a managerial perspective of professionalism. There is a tension between this and the vision of teachers as ‘agents of change’, who are not “reluctant receivers of externally-imposed prescription” (Donaldson, 2011, p. 23), which is at the core of the Report (see Chapter 4 for a wider discussion of this tension).

The final theme that Menter highlights is the tendency for countries to ‘policy-borrow’. He highlights the role of ‘transnational corporate entities’ in raising awareness of the importance of teacher quality and the rise of the ‘Teach for’ brand. In the same vein, Cochran-Smith (2015) writes that one common factor in educational reforms across the world has been the shift to a “global and competitive knowledge society”. Such a shift promotes the role of individualism, free markets and privatisation. She writes that across the world, ‘neoliberal perspectives’ have become the “norm, often being understood as ‘common sense’” (Apple, 2005; Ball, 2012). Indeed, Apple (2011, p. 223) warns that we cannot understand education unless we recognize the role of the ‘increasingly integrated international economy’ and the ideological and social dynamics that it is subject to.

This theme demonstrates the rise of the private sector in national education systems (for a wider discussion, see Ball & Junemann, 2012); however, such trends have thus far (at the time of writing), have been resisted in Scottish education. Although Donaldson (2011, 92) suggested that the suitability of the possibility of a ‘Teach First’ model ‘should be investigated’, little has emerged from this. He also warns that ‘Teach First’ “would need to work with a Scottish university to develop the academic component of the course to the

same standard as other routes”. This suggests that ‘Teach First; in its traditional form, was unlikely to ever be a viable option, particularly given the importance placed on higher education throughout the Report. While the traction of private teacher education provision might have been resisted, the reliance on ‘transnational corporate entities’ can certainly be spotted throughout the Report. At various points, evidence from the OECD and PISA is used to justify the need for reform; reference is also made to ‘international evidence’. This is clear from the very first paragraph of the Report where the rationale for the Review is set out:

Evidence of relative performance internationally has become a key driver of policy. That evidence suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the foundations of successful education lie in the quality of teachers and their leadership. High quality people achieve high quality outcomes for children. (Donaldson 2011, p. 2)

This reveals that the role that international evidence has played in shaping teacher education reform in Scotland. It might even be said that it has been used to create a ‘policy problem’, the only solution being to embark on an ambitious programme of reform.

In a recent policy brief, Kennedy (2015) suggests that the following themes appear to be gaining popularity internationally: the development of teacher standards; a drive towards masters-level learning; enhanced partnership between schools and universities for all levels of teacher education; and, an increase in enquiry or evidence based teaching and teacher research. In comparison to the themes from Sahlberg (2015) and Menter (2016), each of these can be identified to varying degrees in the agenda set out by TSF.

Regardless of differing national contexts and traditions, these reforms often share the underlying assumptions that *teacher quality* is central to *student learning* and that *teacher education* is a major factor in the improvement of *teacher quality* (McMahon, Forde & Dickson, 2013; Wang, Odell, Klecka, Spalding & Lin, 2010). The overall assumption therefore being an assumed link between teacher education and student attainment, as heightened by the influential report ‘Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers’, produced by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD; 2005)¹⁵.

¹⁵ This report draws on a major OECD project conducted between 2002 and 2004, which explored key issues affecting the teaching professions in twenty-five countries. The report provides recommendations based

At the heart of this report is the claim that high-quality teaching is vital for improving student learning. Of those variables that are open to policy influence, the OECD reported that ‘teacher quality’ is the most important school variable that influences student attainment, but warned that there are many important aspects of teacher quality that cannot be measured. Hanushek and Wößman (2007) confirm the association between teacher quality and student attainment, but warn that there is little agreement over what constitutes ‘teacher quality’ as it is difficult to differentiate between the effects of teacher education, teacher experience, teacher salaries and teacher certification. Similarly, Cochran-Smith (2012) reminds us any links made between teacher quality and student achievement are tenuous given the difficulty in finding evidence for this assertion.

Despite the challenges of establishing a causal connection between teacher quality and teacher education, there appears to be widespread professional agreement that they are in fact positively related (Menter, Hulme, Elliot & Lewin, 2010) and raising teacher quality has become a key policy priority of governments across the globe. However, McMahon, et al., (2013) warn that there is a danger that this narrow focus on teacher preparation constricts policy solutions to those that address immediate contexts. This therefore raises concerns about the ability of short-term changes in teacher education policy to result in systemic, meaningful and sustained change in education.

An important feature of this meta-narrative is the assumption that a country’s level of educational attainment can predict their economic performance on a global stage. A fairly recent OECD (2007) report ‘The High Cost of Low Educational Performance’ confirmed a direct link between educational attainment and economic performance. However, it is not as simple to say that the expansion of student attainment results improves a country’s economic conditions (Hanushek and Wößmank, 2007). Instead, they have shown there to be strong evidence that the cognitive skills of the population – rather than mere school attainment – are powerfully related to individual earnings, to the distribution of income, and to economic growth.

There are of course some exceptions to this global trend. Scotland has consistently positioned itself against individualism and privatisation in education; it has not witnessed

on analysis of evidence of key factors in attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers from around the world.

the same growth of for-profit provision, edu-business or private philanthropy that has been seen south of the border (Ball, 2012). Given the traction of neoliberal forces, this highlights the important role that local actors play in the mediation of global trends. The implications of such developments would not sit comfortably with the traditional image of Scottish education, which is often viewed as democratic, and meritocratic; an important point to which I return in the second section of this chapter. Indeed, Menter (2016, p. 3) writes that an analysis of country's teacher education policy can be 'deeply revealing' of that society's 'dominant values'. I now discuss this in more detail in the following section.

1.3 Local actors: the stories we tell ourselves

Much has been written about the 'distinctiveness' of Scottish education (Cairney, 2013; Humes, 2013; Humes & Bryce, 2013; Menter & Hulmes, 2008; Raffé, 2004) and it is from here that the myth was born. It is often depicted as a democratic and fair system, built on meritocratic values. However, those who write about this often do so with a hint of caution, warning that there may be a certain degree of romantic *mythology* associated with such claims (Anderson, 1995¹⁶). Whether real or imagined, this Scottish 'myth' has had an enormous impact on Scottish education, and continues to shape policy as well as practice (Menter & Hulme, 2008).

At the beginning of this chapter I introduced the concept of policy re-contextualisation (Ball, 1993; Ball et al., 2010; Sultana, 2008), arguing that the movement of global policy trends must be understood as being mediated by a specific local environment. In the context of education policy reform in Scotland, it is the 'myth' that acts a gatekeeper (Menter & Hume, 2011).

The Scottish 'myth' has emerged as a powerful force in the development and implementation of 'Teaching Scotland's Future'. It is a complex actor that presents itself as a network of ideas, beliefs and traditions. It is, by its very nature, unfinished, fluid and susceptible to distortion and destruction. The 'myth' performs two different functions in the policy process: it exists as a 'mask' that works to cover up the infelicities of the system by creating 'simulacra of order'; but it should also be recognised as a form of 'sustenance' from which actors feed.

¹⁶ See also Gray, McPherson and Raffé (1983); Humes and Bryce (2013); McPherson and Raab (1988).

I would like to highlight the importance of the ‘myth’ within Scottish education and the role that it plays in shaping education policy and the processes by which it is made, first by outlining the characteristics and functions of nationalistic ‘myths’. I then describe the Scottish ‘myth’, consider its origins and discuss the role that the myth has played in shaping the way that policy is made in Scottish education. Much has been written about the ‘traditional policy community’ and their ‘shared assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988; Humes, 1986). Without wishing to over-simplify this work, the general argument is thus: members of this policy community have developed attachments, of varying degrees, to particular traditions, values and ideologies about the purpose of education. These traditions, values and ideologies can be taken as representations of the ‘myth’. This ‘collective view’ allows for the creation of a ‘shared assumptive world’, into which existing and new members can buy. As with any community, it might be expected that in order to be accepted, new members must show that they share similar views and beliefs.

While the myth has shaped the ‘shared assumptive world’, it is also sustained and strengthened by it and the players who belong to it. This world and myth work together to create a perception of ‘cohesion’ between institutional actors and their representatives, where all members appear to have concordant beliefs and views. This cohesion presents itself as a ‘simulacra of order’, underneath which lies a great disorder that is never quite allowed to rear its head, although at times we catch a glimpse of the power struggles and discord between institutional interests that lie beneath. As such, I argue that the assumptive world is much more than a myth; its effects can be seen in the behaviour and discourse of institutional actors and their representatives in the policy process and this is something that is *real*. I introduce characteristics of this behaviour and discourse towards the end of this chapter, and return to this argument in Chapters 4 and 5.

1.3.1 Conceptualising ‘myths’ as stories

While there has been a great deal written about the nature of myths, I have therefore drawn mainly on literature about national myths, particularly within the context of Scottish education, to inform my understanding of its form and function in the policy process.

On some level, every national ‘myth’ makes claims about what has happened in the past. According to Barthes ([1973] 1974), myth is a “form of speech chosen by history” (p.

108). In other words, it can be understood as reality converted into speech and presented as a 'message'. However, Barthes does not limit 'myth' to the spoken word, suggesting that it can be represented in many forms, such as photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows or publicity (p. 108). This does not imply that the 'myth' *is* an object, a concept or an idea; "it is a mode of signification, a form" (p. 107). It is a material that is continuously transformed in the process of becoming. Barthes description of myth encourages us to see the fragile and temporary nature of 'myth'; as a translation of history, it is subject to distortion, silencing and embellishment as different actors pick it up and use it in different ways.

In the same vein, Anderson (1995) warns that it is a mistake to understand 'myths' as 'truth claims', and instead, suggests that they should be regarded as 'stories' that have a core of truth, but idealise reality. Gray, McPherson & Raffe (1983) also highlight the 'story-like' characteristic of 'myths', and suggest that we use them to 'explain the world', 'celebrate identity' and 'express values'. Similarly, Hayward (1999, p. 106) stresses that 'myths' are not "pure simple reflections of history" and instead describes them as 'transformations' of history.

Miller (1995) warns that to subject national 'myths' to the criterion of historical truth, is to miss the point altogether:

... we should ask what part these myths play in building and sustaining nations. For it may not be rational to discard beliefs, even if they are, strictly speaking, false, when they can be shown to contribute significantly to the support of valuable social relations. (Miller, 1995, p. 35-6)

In other words, 'myths' are, to some degree, 'imagined', but their effects on nations and communities are very real. Throughout this thesis, I argue that they should not be disregarded; they play an important role in shaping the policy process and the behaviour of policy actors.

Myths also have a creative function, because of its element of 'transformation' through imagination. 'Myths are not direct reflections of the way a nation is, but rather a way that a nation wants to be (Abizadeh, 2004). Miller (1995) and Abizadeh (2004) suggest that more specifically, they can perform an ethical and moralising role. If they are based on a 'selective' account of past 'glories' and 'sacrifices', and express particular moralistic values and strengths, then it may be that they encourage individuals to live up to the "virtues

of our ancestors” (Miller, 1995, p. 36), regardless of whether these ‘virtues’ are real or imagined.

‘Myths’ also have a political function, and they have been discussed with regard to its potential as a political tool:

‘Tradition’ has been commonly understood as relatively inert, historicised segment of a social structure: tradition as the surviving past. [But it is, rather,] an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification. (Williams, 1977, p. 115)

This description captures perfectly the understanding of the function of *mythology* that is applied within this piece of research. It breaks through these neutral interpretations of *myths* as expressive and explanatory, and instead operationalises it as an actor with agency, in-line with an actor-network theory understanding of non-human objects (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, 2011). The important phrases here are ‘pre-shaped present’ and ‘powerfully operative’.

1.3.2 Myths and national identity

‘Nationalistic myths’ because they shape the way in which individuals perceive the nation of which they are a part of. They are also often described as core components of *national identity*. Ernest Renan (1882) in his famous lecture “Qu’est ce qu’une nation?” argued that the development of a large-scale national identity depends on a selective and distorted memory of historical events, such as glories, sacrifices and common suffering. He continues, “the essence of the nation is that all the individuals have many things in common, and also that all have forgotten many things...” (Renan, 1882, p.902; cited in Abizadeh, 2004). Essentially, this ‘distorted memory of historical events’ is the ‘myth’. It is a story built from key moments in history that have been selected because they define the positive characteristics or values of a nation.

Nationalistic ‘myths’ are of course not the only component of a national identity. Miller (1995) outlines a number of features that create our ‘national identity’, including: a shared national history; collective action, such as decision-making; and, a specific ‘national

character' or 'public culture' made up by a number of shared 'characteristics' or 'values'. Each of these features needs to be understood as existing within a complex network, within which they continuously interact and shape each other and come into contact with other forms of collective and individual identities.

A set of characteristics and values emerge from understandings of history, and are often evidenced within historical discourse. This in turn shapes (sub)consciously the collective action of individuals belonging to that nation, or at least the way that they perceive their action, and historical claims are often used to justify such action. These perceptions of collective behaviour shape our 'public character' and values that characterise it (whether real or imagined), which ultimately shapes historical discourse and our memories of the past. Identities therefore use the resources of history and culture "in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves..." (Hall, 1996, p.4). In other words, national identity is not fixed and stable; it is fluid, dynamic, relational and constantly (re)negotiated, albeit at such a pace that any changes are subtle. It is clear that it plays an important role in shaping perceptions of all of the above, and essentially represents at least part of the collective feature of national identity.

One problem with all of these interpretations however, is that they appear to prioritise the human. They all allow the human a degree of agency with which s/he can choose and select parts of the 'myth' and use it in whichever way s/he sees fit. But what if agency is afforded to the 'myth' itself? We know that 'myths' often operate at a subconscious level (Miller, 1995). What if the 'myth' is able to exert force and influence of its own accord and work in covert ways that may not always be initially obvious? The 'myth' will be considered in this research as a 'story' with its own agency (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) that is continually modifying the traction of global actors and global policy trends and shaping the policy process. It can be used consciously by actors to support interests or positions, but also operates simultaneously at a subconscious level. In this sense, it could be regarded as an *autonomous* actor, but at the same time it requires the actions of humans to *put it into action*, whether they realise it or not.

1.3.3 The distinctive nature of Scottish education

In order to discuss the multiple functions of the ‘myth’, I will first outline the characteristics of Scottish education from which it feeds. As with any ‘myth’, the foundations of the Scottish education ‘myth’ lie in historical narrative. Scottish education has come to be associated with a set of characteristics, values and claims about its importance for and position within society. After introducing some key historical moments, traditional values and related claims about the nature of Scottish education, I argue that it is from here that the myth emerged, but discourse around these moments, values and claims also work to sustain it.

For over 300 years, since the United Kingdom was formed, long before political devolution in 1999, Scotland has developed and governed its own education system, which is separate and at times quite different, to the education systems of Wales, Northern Ireland and England. Education is therefore widely recognised as one of the three key Scottish institutions that mark it as separate from the rest of the United Kingdom, alongside the church and Scottish law, and plays an important role in the development and sustainment of our ‘national identity’ (Grek, 2011; Humes & Bryce, 2013; Paterson, 1997).

Throughout history, Scottish education has been described as a ‘democratic’ system, based on values of meritocracy and egalitarianism. It is something that Scottish people tend to take a great sense of pride in (Scotland, 1969). Attached to these values are a number of claims about the purpose and importance of education in Scotland: education should be a public good and available to all at no personal expense; education systems should be democratic and self-governing, encouraging a culture of democratic debate, thus allowing for the continuity of values; and, academic success comes to those who work hard, regardless of social class (Raffe, 2004).

These claims are often expressed in the historical image of a ‘lad o’ pairts’, the story of a boy from a rural town who climbed the educational ladder through hard graft and determination to secure a position in a respectable profession. Liberal universalism (Paterson, 2003) and the ‘democratic intellect’ (Davie, 1961) are two other Scottish traditions that are drawn on to express the meritocratic, democratic and egalitarian view of education. Liberal universalism can be defined as the belief that society should be founded on principles of equality, freedom of speech, non-discrimination and equal opportunity (Barry, 2001). ‘The Democratic Intellect’ is seminal piece of work by George Davie

(1961) that examined the nature of Scottish universities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this, Davie celebrates a distinctive intellectual and academic tradition that apparently characterised Scottish universities before they were subject to a programme of ‘anglicisation’. The image of the ‘democratic intellect’¹⁷ is used to celebrate the ‘distinctiveness’ of Scottish education from the rest of the UK, by positioning it as intellectually and morally superior, and promoting democratic features such as ‘mass literacy’.

Throughout history, there is a sense that the Scottish nation has always remained firmly devoted to the importance of education. Examples that Scotland (1969) uses to support this claim include the fact that the first education act in European history was passed in Scotland in 1846; that schools were developed in every single parish; that access to universities in Scotland was reported as being more meritocratic than in almost any other country; and, a number of reports of grown men returning to school to gain the education they never had. Whether real or imagined, these ‘stories’ have had plain effects in Scottish history are firm ‘components’ of the Scottish ‘myth’. The ‘myth’ was created from these narratives, but at the same time, is sustained and strengthened by the continued circulation that these narratives promote. Incorrect

1.3.4 The role of the myth in Scottish education policy: mask and sustenance

Nationalistic ‘myths’ have different functional properties. They can be used to express identity, explain the world, justify a political position, or they can be used to communicate aspirations and encourage the members of a nation to live up to a set of moralistic ideals. The Scottish ‘myth’ has played an important role in shaping the Scottish education system. It has influenced the content of education policy as well as the way in which it is developed, implemented, and communicated (Grek, 2010; Menter & Hulme, 2008). In the process of developing and implementation ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ (TSF), it appears to have two different functions: it is used as a *mask* and it is used as *sustenance*. Incorporated within both of these is a core function of nationalistic myths: to *express* particular values or characteristics and they are often used to explain the world.

¹⁷ Anderson (2003) provides an interesting critique of Davie’s (1961) work, suggesting that his analysis of Scottish universities and wider claims are inaccurate.

Nationalistic ‘myths’ transform key historical moments, and in doing so, distort them in some way. The formation of ‘myths’ involves an element of cherry picking to find characteristics and features that align with the image that a nation would like to portray. Humes and Bryce (2013) have suggested that at points, the Scottish ‘myth’ has been used to cover up potential challenges or shortcomings in Scottish education.

Paterson (2003) suggests that one of the *myth*’s most striking features is the ease with which human actors can select parts of the Scottish ‘myth’ and use them to shape the present and future, by justifying the need for change and gaining support for this. Here Paterson is referring to the sustenance function of the Scottish ‘myth’. Indeed, elements of the Scottish ‘myth’ can be recognised in political discourse, such as the Government’s Programme for Scotland 2014-2015 (Scottish Government, 2014). It is often used by institutional actors such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and Education Scotland to gain support and to justify particular positions, and this will be discussed further in Chapter 3. The Scottish ‘myth’ is often used as a tool for engaging the public and encouraging stakeholders to ‘buy in’ to reform. It is a powerful tool in policy-making, and its role in the formation and implementation of ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ is undeniable.

The problem with the ‘myth’ is that it can be used to hide democratic problems. If we believe that a policy process can be characterised by the values and narratives discussed above, then it is unlikely that we will expect any different. If we do not expect to find any democratic problems, we do not look for them

1.3.5 The ‘shared assumptive world’ of the ‘traditional policy community’

The Scottish myth is powerful, but in order for it to operate and exert force, it must be taken up and used by a range of actors. In the case of teacher education reform, these actors are mainly members of the traditional policy community in Scottish education. The ‘traditional policy community’ (and their ‘shared assumptive world’) should be understood as having key components in the local context that work to mediate global forces. Travelling policy agendas will either be resisted or picked up by the policy community; if the latter, they are translated by actors in a way that allows them to ‘fit’ with their ‘shared assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988).

Much has been written about the ‘policy community’ in Scottish education and the way that it operates (e.g. Humes, 2013; Hulme & Kennedy, 2015; Menter & Hulme, 2008; Menter & Arnott, 2007; McPherson & Raab, 1988; Humes, 1986). The policy community is made up of a range of actors from key organisations and institutions within Scottish education, as well as civil servants with a remit for education. These organisations and institutions include the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), the Association for Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), the Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC), Education Scotland and the largest teacher trade union, the Education Institute of Scotland (EIS).

Despite the range of institutional actors involved, one of the policy community’s key characteristics is that it is particularly small and tightly networked, with many of the key policy actors knowing each other on a personal basis (Humes, 1997). The development of education policy in Scotland in the past has seen “a striking continuity of relationships among a small group of educationalists and officials” (McPherson & Raab, 1988, p. 403). This, of course, has something to do with the size and geography of Scotland, as suggested by McGarvey and Cairney (2008). But the ‘close-knit’ nature of the policy community is one feature that helps to sustain the myth.

In their influential study ‘Governing Education’, McPherson and Raab (1988) highlighted the strong cultural element to policy networks. They found that members of the Scottish education policy community bought into a ‘shared assumptive world’, which is shaped by the ‘myth’. This world is based on a set of assumptions and claims about the way that policy should be made. These assumptions and claims are based on meritocracy, democracy and egalitarianism (Raffe, 2004) and as such, the ‘policy style’ is often describes as consensual and developmental (Menter &Hulme 2008). The extent to which this was the case in the development and implementation of TSF formed a key point of inquiry in my research into the participation of actors in the NPG.

Just as the policy community plays a role in sustaining the myth, the myth plays a role in the development of the policy community and the way that it operates. In Scottish education, it works as *sustenance*, and provides members of the policy community with rules for how to operate and behave in the context of educational reform. The following

extract from McPherson and Raab (1988, p. 499) reveals the nature of the ‘assumptive world’ and describes the way that views and traditions are reproduced,

The assumptive world of the educational policy community was deeply persuasive to those who shared in it. It ordered their understanding of the nature of Scotland and the schools that served it, and it did this by ordering their sense of themselves and the service they could give. Their socialization to a common identity was part of a wider process of sorting and selection by which the policy community was constituted, making the world of practice possible, and with it the reproduction of a social order.

Essentially, this depicts the way that a social selection process allowed for the sustainment of particular views and values, and the creation of a common identity that its members could buy into. It describes the power of the assumptive world, and shows how it works to shape and govern actor behaviour. Indeed, it has been suggested that this ‘common culture’ acts as a ‘structural constraint’ on the action of policy actors within the network (Marsh & Smith, 2000, p.6).

This shared assumptive world has real implications for the way that policy is made. The basis for this shared view is the perception that all institutional actors in Scottish education (e.g. GTCS, ADES, STEC and Education Scotland) buy in to the shared ideology. This allows for the development an image of ‘consensus’ in which all actors seemingly agree about the direction of education reform. This in turn creates simulacra of order, which works to disguise divergent views and power struggles between key players in the policy community. Those who buy in to the shared assumptive world also buy in to the culture of ‘consensus’ and ‘shared ideology’, despite them themselves having divergent opinions and competing interests in the reform of teacher education. The assumptive world should be recognised as a powerful local force that works, alongside the myth, to masquerade discord and divergent institutional interests. It is possible that these tensions are not permitted to surface within the policy space as actors wish to avoid conflict that does not fit with their shared world view.

Given the slow-paced, conservative, and close-knit nature of the policy process described above, it could be suggested that it is difficult for global neoliberal agendas to gain traction in Scotland. Tradition and values based on However, at the same time, because the myth acts as a mask to hide disorder and create a vision of political cohesion, it might be fairly

easy for travelling policy ideas to enter unnoticed. Either way, the policy community should be considered as a powerful local actor that plays an important role in the re-contextualisation of global policy agendas. The myth acts as a barrier to neoliberal change, but only if it is used by policy actors at the centre of the process.

1.4 Chapter summary

This chapter set out the wider context within which the remainder of the thesis should be understood. To do this, I introduced the key global and local forces that have played a role in shaping the content of education policy in Scotland and the processes by which it is made. I argued that teacher education reform is a global policy agenda, and considered a number of theoretical concepts and arguments that allow us to better understand the increasing tendency of governments to ‘borrow’ policy problems and their solutions. I argued that any policy ideas that are ‘borrowed’ are not simply taken and implemented, but enter a complex process of re-contextualisation, where they are translated by local forces to ensure that they align more closely with local priorities, traditions and culture. Arguably, the strongest local force in Scottish education is the Scottish ‘myth’. I discussed the different forms and functions of this myth in detail, highlighting two key functions within the policy process: myth as ‘mask’ and myth as ‘sustenance’. However, in order to have effect, the ‘myth’ must be picked up and used by actors who have the power to translate global trends into local policy: the policy community. I drew this chapter to a close by describing the characteristic, beliefs and cultures of the traditional policy community, which must be understood as intertwined with the ‘myth’. The next chapter proceeds to build on this understanding by introducing conceptual tools that have been used to explore the spaces where policy is made and the process of policy translation.

Chapter 2 Analysing the policy process

This chapter sets out the conceptual and methodological frameworks that have guided and shaped my research. Here, I introduce the key concepts and ideas that have allowed me to interrogate the spaces where policy is made, uncover the network of actors that have been fundamental to its translation, illuminate the nature of actor participation in the network, and consider the extent to which this can be understood as a democratic process. Each of these concepts and ideas are reintroduced and further expanded in Chapter 4 and 5, where I discuss them in relation to my data.

This chapter is arranged into two parts. In the first, I outline my conceptual frameworks. I describe the key theoretical concepts and ideas that have been employed in different ways to look at various elements of the policy process. In the second, I outline my methodological framework. Here, I provide an overview of methods of data collection and re-visit a number of methodological tensions and ethical dilemmas that shaped this research.

2.1 Part one: conceptual frameworks

There are two key areas within educational policy research: the *content* of the policy itself and the *process* by which it is created. Critical policy analysis (CPA) researchers, Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry (1997, p. 19¹⁸) highlight the importance of researching both:

If the values of justice and participation are central to education, then critical policy analysis must pay attention not only to the content of the policy, but also to the processes of policy development and implementation... Issues of power and interests need to be investigated. Questions of who is involved in policy making, how processes of consultation are arranged and whose interests they serve thus become critical.

The concerns addressed above have acted as key drivers of my research. As such, I explore issues of inclusion, exclusion, power, and participation in the *process* that was constructed by the Scottish Government to implement the recommendations from ‘Teaching Scotland’s

¹⁸ See also Taylor (1997)

Future’ (TSF; Donaldson, 2011)¹⁹. Of these four issues, *power* has become central to my exploration of the policy process. Inclusion in, exclusion from and participation in the policy process cannot be understood fully without an exploration of issues of *power*. As a concept, it can be understood in many different ways, and indeed, it takes different forms within this research. I describe the different ways in which I have mobilised and made use of concepts of *power* in section 2.5 of this chapter.

There are different ways to understand processes of policy-making, and a number of conceptual models exist. Ozga (1987, p. 144) defined the field of ‘inquiry’ in education policy as ‘policy sociology’, describing it as being “rooted in the social science tradition, historically informed and drawing on qualitative and illuminative techniques”. This has proved to be an extremely popular approach in education policy analysis, with many key authors still referring to their work as ‘policy sociology’ (Ball, 2013; Rawoelle & Lingard, 2015). The emergence of this field was regarded as important because it recognised that policy was more than text and shifted the focus to policy as process, while acknowledging a relationship between structure and agency within the ‘policy cycle’ (Lingard & Sellar, 2013).

Almost twenty-five years ago, Ball (1994) made a call for a renewed form of policy sociology, including new conceptual tools that would enable policy researchers to capture the ‘messiness’ and ‘complexity’ of the policy-making process. He also made a strong case for critical policy analysts to take risks and use their imagination, highlighting that “the concern is with the task rather than with theoretical purism or conceptual niceties” (p. 2), suggesting that tightly constructed theoretical frames may restrict some forms of policy analysis²⁰. The development of ‘network ethnography’ (Ball, 2012; Ball & Junemann, 2012), a methodological approach that can be used to map the emergence of new policy networks, might be recognised as Ball’s own solution to this methodological problem (Lingard & Sellar, 2013).

¹⁹ Although this research does not analyse the entire contents of ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’, this is briefly explored in Chapter 3. See Kennedy and Doherty (2012) for a critical discourse analysis of its content.

²⁰ Not wishing to be constrained by prescriptive methodology, I draw on a number of different concepts and ideas from a range of theoretical approaches. The selection of divergent approaches was deliberate because it allowed me to capture and describe the complexity of the policy process in ‘real time’ and interrogate a number of different issues in hidden and visible spaces. However, it is important to note that the conceptual framework was designed in such a way that these different ideas and approaches can co-exist effectively.

In order to explore the process of policy translation, I conceptualise the National Partnership Group (NPG) as a policy network (Rhodes, 2006)²¹, and this concept is central to my research. There exists a great deal of literature around the form and function of policy networks, but I argue that a distinction can (and should) be made between three different areas of policy network literature, all of which are relevant to this research: literature that conceptualises policy networks and considers the characteristics of policy communities (Rhodes, 2006; Marsh & Smith, 2000); literature concerned with the democratic function of policy networks (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009; Tønnesen, 2015;); and policy-ethnography literature, which seeks to trace and map the structure and formation of policy networks and trace the influence of global edu-business (Hogan, 2016; Ball & Junemann, 2012). Each of these areas have informed the development of my conceptual framework and guided specific areas of analysis. Policy-ethnography literature (Ball & Junemann, 2012) provides an innovative approach for exploring and representing the structure and membership of policy networks. The literature on policy networks (Rhodes, 2006) and policy communities (Marsh & Smith, 2000) has allowed for a conceptualisation of institutional actor participation within the network and highlighted the importance of network culture, which can operate as an inhibitor or facilitator of network participation. Finally, literature on democratic theories of network governance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009) identifies a set of network features that strengthens or reduces the democratic legitimacy of policy networks, which have guided my interrogation of network procedures and the participation of actors in the NPG and its three sub-groups.

I begin this chapter by defining policy as a process. I then set the development and implementation of TSF within the wider context of network governance and describe the increasing reliance of governments on networks of actors to formulate and enact policy (Ball & Junemann, 2012). I discuss the characteristics of policy networks and argue that the model used in the implementation of TSF aligns best with Rhode's (2006) conceptualisation of 'policy communities'. Concerns of democratic participation are central to this research. Drawing on the work of Sørensen and Torfing (2005a, 2005b,

²¹ Other researchers in the field might not consider the networks on which I focus as the whole 'network'; they are not informal representations of the 'real' policy networks. I have identified these networks by looking at the membership of the partnership groups that were designed and implemented by the Scottish Government. In this way, they can be regarded as *formal* policy networks. I am fully aware that there will be *other informal* actors within these networks, which work to shape policy processes in subtle ways. Nevertheless, the networks that I explore are the official networks, which have been created by the civil service to determine and develop policy, and I explore their function as such because they are accountable for policy development.

2008, 2009) around theories of democratic network governance, I consider different characteristics of the policy-making process that can serve to facilitate or inhibit the democratic function of policy networks. One important aspect for democratic legitimacy of a network is its structure. I discuss the emerging field of policy ethnography (Ball & Junemann, 2012) as a method for tracing the form and content of policy relations, enabling a mapping of contemporary policy processes and the actors that shape it (Hogan, 2016). In the final part of this chapter, I consider the application of an actor-network theory (ANT) approach to critical policy analysis. More specifically, I discuss the contribution of Latour's (1987) model of translation and argue that it is a useful concept for understanding what happens to a policy agenda as it circulates through a policy network during the process of implementation. In the second part of this chapter, I provide an overview of the research methods used to collect the data in this research.

2.1.1 Policy as text and policy as enactment

There is no single, fixed definition of 'policy'²² and this often results in people applying the term in a variety of ways when talking about different things. Ball (1993) highlights this as a conceptual problem in policy analysis. In order to address this concern, I begin this section by making clear my understanding of what 'policy' means and how it has been used conceptually in this research.

Policy is often regarded as a 'thing' or 'object' that is delivered by the government, often as a solution to a perceived societal problem (Trowler, 2003, p. 95). Although this understanding is somewhat restrictive, it is not entirely incorrect. For example, legislated policy might be recognised as a response to a societal issue. This kind of policy is sometimes referred to as 'big P policy' in relation to 'small p policy' (Ball, 2013), but the two should not be regarded as entirely separate or distinct. It is possible to consider 'Teaching Scotland's Future' as a 'thing' - a colourful document of recommendations - but the policy agenda must be understood as existing far beyond its physical form. Ball et al. (2010, p. 2) warn that if policy is conceptualised as a 'thing', then key 'moments' in the process of policy enactment can go unnoticed.

²² Although there is a body of research that seeks to define and conceptualise the term 'policy' (see for example, Trowler, 2003).

In his earlier writings, Ball explains his conceptualisation of ‘policy as text’, but insisted that this must be understood as being part of a *policy cycle* that occurs in different sites and involves a range of divergent interests, which can also be restricted or empowered by the policy (Ball & Bowe, 1992). He offers the following as a definition of ‘policy as text’:

Policy texts are not closed, their meanings are neither fixed nor clear, and the carry-over of meanings from one policy arena and one educational site to another is subject to interpretational slippage and contestation. (p. 98)

This non-linear model highlights the way that different parts of a policy text can be interpreted and enacted in different ways by different actors; in this way, the text must be understood as a working document that is incomplete, continuously evolving, and susceptible to distortion. This idea aligns closely with the ANT model of translation (Callon, 1986) and the concept of the token (Edwards, 2012) discussed towards the end of this chapter. In my research, I conceptualise the policy document ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ as a *policy text* that is open to interpretation by a network of institutional actors: The National Partnership Group (NPG). Policy is not something that is *delivered*; it is something that is *struggled* over, contested, and negotiated between different groups (Ozga, 2000). Highlighting the dialectical nature of policy processes, Ball (1994) suggests that policies are the product of a series of compromises between multiple influences and agendas. What we sometimes come to refer to as policy, therefore, is the result of a micropolitical process and what Ball refers to as ‘muddling through’. If policy emerges from these moments of contestation, then it is important for policy analysis to attend to these spaces and consider who or what is in/excluded from them.

The term ‘policy implementation’ is often used to talk about what happens to a policy when it enters the space where it is meant to have effect and enact change. For example, one might expect a policy for curriculum reform to be ‘implemented’ at school level. However, the word ‘implement’ is suggestive of a linear process in which policy intentions are communicated from government to schools and then simply *delivered* by teachers²³, without distortion or redefinition. Rizvi and Kemmis (1987) argue that the translation of policy into action requires ‘interpretations of interpretations’ and Ball *et al.*, (2010) highlight this as a creative process of ‘interpretation and recontextualisation’. As such, they argue for a process of *enactment*. The process of policy enactment is messy, collaborative,

²³ See Priestley (2013) for a wider discussion about the implications of using the term ‘delivery’ in a policy process. This concept is also discussed in Chapter 4.

and involves a *mélange* of social and material artefacts. Parallels can be drawn between this conceptualisation of policy and an ANT-inspired understanding of policy translation, which sees a policy agenda as unfinished and open to distortion by a multitude of social and material actors (Hamilton, 2012).

2.1.2 Network governance and policy networks

An increasing body of research is beginning to look to theories around network governance and policy networks as methods for the analysis of policy processes in education (Ball & Exley, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012; Kretchmar, Sondel & Ferrare, 2014; Shiroma, 2014). There has been a gradual shift from ‘government to governance’, following public sector reform in the 1980-90s. In the UK, and indeed, in many places across the globe, public policy-making has changed from being a top-down hierarchical process to a shared process of exchange and negotiation involving a range of actors. In the UK, this move is seen as being interlinked with the increasing prevalence of marketization and privatisation of education (Ball, 2012; Ball & Junemann, 2012). These changes have challenged researchers to develop a new understanding of governance and authority that does not see it as being regulated solely by the state or by markets (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008, p. 2) and instead recognises the contribution of markets, philanthropic actors, and global forces.

The move from government to governance is not a recent development, and as such, there exists a great deal of divergent literature that seeks to conceptualise it. This research recognises the formation of policy networks as central to the act of network governance. For this reason, I discuss these concepts together.

Although traditional ‘top-down’ government is still strong in countries across the world, Sørensen and Torfing argue that public governance is increasingly being conducted through “pluricentric negotiations among relevant and affected actors interacting on the basis of *interdependency*, *trust*, and jointly developed rules, norms and discourses” (2008, p. 236). Borzel (2011, p. 50) also highlights the ‘power-dependency’ characteristic of network governance, and argues that it operates on the basis of resource exchange between government and interest groups. The power afforded to networks of actors varies considerably, and it is often the case that government continues to play a central role. This is because the power to distribute power remains in the ‘hand of the state’ (Ball, 2009).

The conduct of public governance through networks is by no means a new phenomenon. Sørensen and Torfing (2008, p. 4) show that in many policy arenas, the inclusion of social partners in policy-making and implementation processes is tradition, and there has been a long history of political dialogue between public authorities and groups or organisations, especially within the European Union.

In Scotland, the effects of network governance are such that education policy-making takes the form of an extensive, and somewhat messy, consultation period between a surprisingly large numbers of actors. However, the extent to which this can be considered as an emerging trend is debatable, for the tendency to consult with all key players emerges as a key theme across a great deal of early research in Scottish education policy (McPherson & Raab, 1988). Referring directly to the development of teacher education policy, Kennedy and Doherty (2012) argue that the ‘partnership approach’ taken by Scottish Government in the implementation of TSF encourages a form of network governance that has the “capacity to set-up the various parties against each other and allows for the dispersal of ‘blame’” (p. 845). They suggest that if such a process is to be successful, then there needs to be a ‘shadow of hierarchy’ that works to encourage collaborative working between institutional actors. In other words, the process must be controlled by government. Indeed, this has been shown to lead to an increase in network efficacy and democratic legitimacy (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009) which I discuss further in Section 2.3.

Rhodes (2006) describes policy networks as:

...sets of formal institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors structured around shared if endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policymaking and implementation. (p. 423)

This is a broad definition, but encapsulates two useful ideas: institutional actors within the network are interdependent on each other, and *policy* is created from the interactions and negotiations between actors. It is also similar to the definitions of network governance provided above, which illuminates the overlap between the two concepts. This research positions policy networks as a mechanism of network governance.

This perspective suggests that the membership of policy networks is made up of interest groups and organisations that the government depends on to formulate and implement policy. Indeed, Rhodes (1997, p. 9-10) writes that policy network can “limit participation in the policy process” and “privilege certain interests”, by mediating access and favouring

particular policy outcomes. This reinforces the importance of analysing network membership and identifying those actors who have been excluded.

Ball and Junemann (2012) suggest that policy networks may actually expose the policy-making process to “particularistic power games” (p. 7). This is because the ‘territory of influence’ over policy processes (Mackenzie & Lucio, 2005) has expanded, while at the same time the spaces in which policy is made have become more diversified and dissociated. In 1994, Ball highlighted the emergence of ‘new sites’ within the policy process that actors used to influence, create, and distort policy; he argued for the development of a new approach in policy sociology that could capture their increasing complexity.

However, it is important to remember that the reality of policy-processes is hard to reach: within a policy network it may be difficult to identify who said what to whom, where, and in exchange for what. Ball and Junemann (2012) claim that participation in these policy networks enables the traction of new ‘policy ideas’, which often emerge from philanthropic and private interests. They argue that these networks see the recurrence of “particular companies, organisations and people” (p. 77). Essentially, this leads to the blurring of public and private sectors and their interests in particular types of policy networks.

Network-ethnography is a methodological approach that can be used to map the emergence of new policy networks (and changes within existing ones), tracing the way in which they grow or shrink as new actors emerge in multiple educational spaces. Recent network ethnography educational research tends to focus on the emergence of *new* policy networks that are made up of actors from government, philanthropy, and business (Hogan, 2016; Lewis & Lingard, 2015). Ball and Junemann (2012) use network diagrams to provide a spatial representation of the plethora of public and private agencies that have influence over the direction of educational reform in England. This approach is particularly useful for highlighting the traction of global edu-businesses in local policy contexts and identifying the spaces where they influence.

While much of recent research on policy networks in education reveals the increasing presence of the private sector and what could be considered as ‘philanthropic corporate’ organisations (Ball & Junemann, 2012; Hogan, 2016; Shiroma, 2014), the policy landscape in Scottish education is quite different. The role of the market in education has not enjoyed

the same escalation in Scotland as it has south of the border. Very few private actors are invited or permitted to participate in the policy-making process, and this is perhaps linked to the Scottish characteristics discussed earlier in this thesis. Indeed, Menter and Hulme (2008, p. 320) suggest that it is the “combined strength of the policy community” which helps to keep them out. However, we must not get too comfortable with this idea; the traditional image of the ‘policy community’ is changing; it is fluid and any perceived stability is only temporary. Furthermore, it may be the case that ‘private’ actors shape the policy process in discrete and hidden ways that may be less obvious in a country committed to egalitarianism and democratic values. Nevertheless, Lingard and Sellar (2013) highlight network ethnography as a useful approach for looking at, thinking about and representing the structure of policy communities and the relationships within them. This research adopts ‘network as method’ in order to analyse and represent the range of institutional interests involved in the development and implementation of TSF. Lingard and Sellar (2013) highlight the ‘analytical power’ of a diagrammatic approach in policy sociology.

The structure and function of a network can make it difficult to locate accountability, and it is possible for actors to enjoy a ‘privileged’ position within the network if they are connected to the right resources. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that network governance has been found to be an effective tool for increasing democratic processes, given that a number of actors are invited to participate in a decision-making process, when compared to a state-control model in which input is restricted. It is clear that the issue of democracy is complex here, and the extent to which a process can be considered ‘democratic’ will depend on a range of factors, with the structure of a network being only one.

Given the variability discussed above, it is clear that the concept of policy networks should not be understood as one homogenous group. There are, in fact, distinctly different types of policy networks, and these are best described by Rhodes, who distinguished between five different types of policy networks (Rhodes, 1986; Rhodes & Marsh, 1992).

At one end of the continuum, ‘policy communities’ are characterised by restricted membership and vertical interdependence due to shared delivery responsibilities and stability of relationships. ‘Professional networks’ express the interests of a specific profession, such as the National Health Service, but also function through vertical interdependence. Both policy communities and professional networks are relatively well

insulated from the public. Intergovernmental networks consist of representative organisations of local authorities, which includes clients of local authorities and are characterised by ‘toporatic’ membership, horizontal interdependence, an ‘extensive constellation of interests’, and the exclusion of public sector unions (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). ‘Producer networks’ are characterised by the role of economic interests in policy-making, a fluid membership, limited interdependence between actors representing economic interests and dependence on industrial organisations from the centre. The final network is termed an ‘issue network’, which is unstable, due to its large number of participants and fluctuating membership.

Given the nature of placing definitions on a continuum, Rhodes (2006) makes clear that the different types of networks can vary along several dimensions and thus consist of any combination of the dimensions. I argue that the NPG is most like a policy community, but does have some similarities to the function of producer networks in that the government relies on the resource of a number of institutional actors for the fulfilment of educational goals. The network, therefore, operates through a process of resource exchange, a concept I discuss in the next section.

How do policy networks operate?

In his typology of policy networks, Rhodes (1997²⁴) describes a framework based on a theory of power dependence, which has five propositions:

1. Organisations are dependent upon other organisations for *resources*
2. In order to achieve their goals, organisations have to exchange resources
3. Decision-making within an organisation can be constrained by other organisations, the *dominant coalition* retains some discretion.
4. The *dominant coalition* employs strategies within known *rules of the game* to regulate *the process of exchange*.
5. Variations in the degree of *discretion* are a product of the goals and the relative power potential of interacting organisations. This relative power potential is a product of the resources of each organisation, of the rules of the game and of the process of exchange between organisations. (p. 36-39)

²⁴ Originally developed in Rhodes (1981).

This conceptualisation of power-dependence is particularly useful for understanding the processes involved in the NPG. Power is exercised through collective decision-making and the resources that each actor brings to the collective development of policy. These resources could be anything from knowledge, expertise, procedures, provision, or financial resource. This model highlights the importance of ‘rules of the game’, essentially network rules for the operation of the network, and predicts that the ‘dominant coalition’ know how to use them to their advantage. This element of network behaviour is central to this research.

Policy networks can be understood as resource-dependent organisations, and as such, the relationships between actors are characterised by certain degrees of power-dependence. Each organisation, or actor, is dependent on the resource of another organisation/actor within that network. This means, that in order to achieve their institutional goals, the actors have to go through a process of ‘resource-exchange’ (Rhodes, 1999 [1981], 2006).

The ‘power-dependence’ model predicts that actors will employ strategies within the known ‘rules of the game’. According to Rhodes (2006), these rules are co-constructed by actors within the network and are used to regulate and shape the process of exchange. It can be assumed that in order for actors to benefit from the process of ‘resource-exchange’, they must have a strong understanding of network rules to enable participation. One limitation of this model is that it does not seem to explain *how* actors co-construct network rules. It would be naïve to assume that each actor plays an equal part in this stage, and it is wise to consider the possibility that some actors dominate and shape the rules to benefit their own institutional agendas.

One limitation of this model is that it does not seem to account for those actors who have limited understanding of the ‘rules of the game’, either because they were not involved in the co-construction of network rules at the beginning of the network, or because they already existed before the network was created. To what extent can these actors engage and use the rules to their advantage to ensure that they benefit from resource-exchange? Limited awareness of network rules is likely to restrict the participation of actors who are not considered as central to the network, and thereby act as a mechanism for disempowerment, which is a key focus of Chapter 5.

Policy communities

As previously mentioned, a 'policy community' (Rhodes, 1986; Rhodes & Marsh, 1992) is characterised by restricted membership (with some groups consciously excluded), vertical interdependence due to shared delivery responsibilities, hierarchical leadership to ensure compliance of members, stability in membership, form, and function, and exchange-relationships with each actor possessing a certain amount of resource.

If the function of a policy community is based on exchange relationships, then the 'basic interaction' between network members can be described as *bargaining* for resources. In this bargaining process, Rhodes states that there is a balance of power, but that actors do not necessarily benefit equally from their participation, which indicates some issues around the democratic legitimacy of a 'policy community' style network. Another feature that I would like to highlight as potentially problematic is the stable and exclusive nature of network membership. Jordan (1990) also highlights the 'stable' nature of policy communities and this suggests that it may be difficult for new actors or groups to enter the network, which restricts the range of voices that can influence policy development.

In addition, to these characteristics, Rhodes (2006) writes that policy communities are defined by a set of shared values, ideology, and 'broad policy preferences' that are shared by its members. Jordon (1990) also highlight consensus as an important feature of policy communities, suggesting that each member bought in to a 'shared view'. Similarities can be drawn between this feature and the McPherson and Raab's (1988) depiction of the 'shared assumptive world' of the Scottish education policy community. McPherson and Raab's work emphasised that there is a strong cultural dimension to policy networks, and this 'shared view', and the values and ideologies that it promotes, come to act as a network culture. Marsh and Smith (2000) highlight that this type of network culture can act as a structural constraint on the participation of network actors, particularly those who do not buy in to the 'shared assumptive world'. This kind of cultural barrier must be recognised as an important complication to a policy process that strives to be democratic.

However, democratic problems arise when policy preferences, values, and views are not shared. This research draws on the concept of the 'shared assumptive world' to explore the

extent to which these kinds of assumptions can restrict the participation of less experienced actors.

As discussed in Chapter 1, McPherson and Raab (1988, p. 472) used the term ‘policy community’ to describe the network of actors that are “directly involved in the making and implementation of policy” and a number of authors have noted its continued prominence in Scottish education (Hulme & Kennedy, 2015; Menter & Hulme, 2011; Menter *et al.* (2006). The policy community includes individual people and organisations from Scottish education. Close connections and strong ties exist between civil servants, head teachers, teacher unions, directors of education, local authority education officers, GTCS, Education Scotland and the universities.

The existence of a ‘policy elite’, or as McPherson and Raab (1988, p. 433) described it, a “community of individuals who [matter]”, and the possibility that this group can shape and govern the formation of education policy, has been subject to critical scrutiny over the years (Humes, 1986; McPherson & Raab, 1987). Humes (2013) argues that scepticism has increased in the post-devolution period, despite the Scottish Government’s apparent commitment to a participative and open approach to policy-making.

The democratic function of policy networks

Policy networks, or governance networks as they are also known (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003), can be effective tools for increasing democratic participation in the policy process (Tonnesen, 2015). In this section, I will outline key features of policy networks that can work to increase or restrict democratic participation.

As discussed earlier, the concept ‘policy network’ must be understood and applied as an umbrella term, under which many different types of networks can be grouped. Some policy networks can be closed, with a restricted membership and tight focus, while others can be seen as more inclusive, addressing broader issues in society. The network that is explored in this research might be regarded as closed and tight-knit. While this type of network has been criticised for a lack of transparency and limited opportunities for democratic participation, it can also contribute to the development of new forms of democracy, but this depends on how the process is governed (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009).

Sørensen and Torfing (2005a, 2005b) state that networks are not necessarily ‘democratic’ or ‘undemocratic’ by definition; this is determined by their form and function. For a network to perform ‘democratically’, they argue that it must have the following four features: it must be metagoverned by democratically elected politicians, it must represent the membership basis of the participating groups, it must be accountable to the membership basis, and it must follow a set of democratic rules. They conceptualise each of these four features as anchorage points, which suggests that different levels of democratic legitimacy can be achieved in each. The first two anchorage points hold the most significance for my research, and I discuss these below, indicating how they have been applied as conceptual frames.

Metagovernance

The first anchorage point states that the democratic legitimacy of policy networks can be enhanced if they are metagoverned by elected politicians²⁵. Metagovernance can be defined as the “governance of governance” (Sørensen & Torfing 2009, p. 245). Within a policy network, it characterises the way that particular network actors can facilitate, shape, and direct participation. Metagovernance can exist in three forms: network design, network framing, and network participation. Network design is concerned with network membership (simply, who is excluded or included) and the way that the network is structured. In the context of TSF, ‘meta-governing politicians’ might be understood as a group of civil servants who were tasked with designing the NPG. A small number of these also had formal positions within the wider network (either as members of the NPG or as administrative assistance). However, it is possible that other actors, who were not necessarily employed by the government, had a role to play in the design of the network. Network framing is concerned with the formulation of goals and objectives that are intended to be pursued by the network. The creation remit points for the NPG and its sub-groups might be regarded as an attempt by the civil service to frame network behaviour. Finally, Sørensen and Torfing (2005b) discuss the network participation of meta-governors as a technique for increasing democratic legitimacy. The direct participation of civil servants in the NPG might be recognised as a method for aligning the work of this network

²⁵ I use this concept to discuss the role of the civil service in the implementation of TSF. It is important to note that these are not elected members of government. Nevertheless, the concept and ideas is useful for exploring the way that civil servants might shape and govern the policy process.

to the overall goals of government. Network steering might limit the participation of some actors whose interests and agendas do not necessarily align with the objectives of government, and in this case, participation of meta-governors might be recognised as a technique for improve network effectiveness (Tonnessen, 2015) rather than democratic legitimacy.

Indeed, Ozga (2009) and Kennedy and Doherty (2012) warn that governance networks and the act of meta-governance might be used as a smokescreen. Governance may appear deregulated through the function of networked processes; however, the government continues to control decision-making. In this way, policy networks can be used as a technique by governments to *control* areas of public policy and to keep a check on the flows of power between key actors in the policy process. This form of metagovernance ensures that no one actor is capable of exerting more power and influence than another, and no one actor is capable of exerting more power than the government.

The second anchorage point is the membership basis of participating groups and this is concerned with the extent to which the members of the policy network constitute a multitude of directly affected people (Soresnen & Torfing, 2005a). The inclusion of affected groups and organisations in policy networks has been shown to help overcome problems in terms of societal fragmentation and resistance to policy change (Mayntz, 1993). The participation of a plurality of stakeholders in the decision making process is thought to enhance democratic legitimacy of public policy and governance (Scharpf, 1997). In order to call it a democratic process, the voices of those most affected by the proposed change must be heard in the policy network. Laclau (1993) rightly points out that the classic notion of 'representation' is problematic, as it assumes that opinions, interests, and views can be reproduced with precision. However, as ideas move between actors and spaces during a process of consultation, elements become lost or distorted in the process of translation (Callon, 1986; Nicoll, 2006), as Latour (1996, p. 48) reminds us, "to translate is to betray: ambiguity is part of translation". The consequence of this is expressed well by Sørensen and Torfing (2005a), "The interests and preferences of the participating groups and organisations are defined by the way they are articulated at the level of representation".

Selection and Consultation Processes

This brings me to two of the main focus points of my thesis: the selection process used to identify actors to represent institutional actors (key organisations in Scottish education), such as Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) into the policy agenda in the spaces of the NPG and its sub-groups, and the processes of consultation in order to gather and translate the voices of affected actors.

If a network is to be democratically legitimate, the process used to select representatives of organisations must be transparent and open to all. Sørensen and Torfing (2005b) also state that “there should be opportunities for the members of the participating groups and organizations to discuss whether they should participate... whom should represent them, and what the role and position of the representatives should be” (p. 207). The extent to which this can happen depends on how the network has been designed and whether affected actors have been consulted by meta-governors. In a tight policy network that has been established by government and populated by ‘policy elites’ or people who come from the upper echelons of their organisation, this is unlikely. Nevertheless, this formed a key point of enquiry in my analysis of the membership of the NPG and its sub-groups.

Another important aspect in relation to membership is the ability of those being represented to gain information about their representatives’ participation in the policy process. Sørensen and Torfing (2005b) suggest that this required (in)direct access to information about network activities, which can be through the medium of minutes from meetings, press releases, or online documents. Making such information available can increase the transparency of the network and this is an important feature that I explore within the NPG and its sub-groups.

2.1.3 Actor-network theory

Actor-network theory (ANT) offers a powerful framework for understanding policy implementation and the participation of actors within a policy network. In my research, I draw on ideas from Actor Network Theory (ANT) to conceptualise the development and implementation of policy as a process of translation (Callon, 1986; Edwards, 2009; Gaskel

& Hepburn, 1998; Hamilton, 2012). It is important to stress that this research by no means takes a traditional actor network theory approach. I view ANT as a toolbox of ideas rather than a single theory, which has enabled me to draw on specific theoretical concepts suitable for exploring the implementation of TSF. I therefore refer to my research as an ‘ANT-inspired study’ (Fenwick, 2010) since, similar to Ball et al., (2010, p. 16), I have reservations about claiming to be a ‘full subscriber to ANT’²⁶.

In this section, I discuss key contributions of ANT to policy analysis. I then provide a brief overview of ANT as an ‘approach’ but stress that it should not be understood as a single theory. This thesis draws on specific concepts and ideas from ANT, namely the model of translation and the concept of the ‘token’, which I discuss/define in detail and show how I have applied them in my research to explore the participation of institutional actors. As a policy is enacted, it changes. Through the concept of translation, and viewing the policy agenda as a ‘token’, ANT helps us to understand the roles that institutional interests and agendas play in the (re)formulation of policy.

An overview of the ANT approach

The key aim of ANT is to suggest analytic methods that reflect the mess, disorder, and ambivalences that organise phenomena in a given society. ANT’s roots lie in post-structuralism, and it has mostly been employed in the areas of sociology, science and technology, technological innovation, and human computer interaction. It is a relatively novel approach with regard to its use in education. Nevertheless, Fenwick and Edwards (2010) argue for its sustained use in the intervention of educational research, policy, and practice, having used it extensively in their own research. However, they warn that ANT “is not for telling us about educational issues; it is a way of intervening in educational issues to reframe how we might enact and engage with them” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010).

²⁶ Because it would not be appropriate to use elements of ANT that do not ‘fit’ with my overall research objectives, I have been mindful of this in my selection and development of a conceptual framework. Murphy (2013) warns that it is important not to feel restricted by a theoretical framework, and throughout this process I have been aware of ANT’s tendency to make research findings too abstract. My ultimate aim in writing this research is to contribute not only to the wider field of education policy analysis, but also to provide evidence for policy-makers, thereby informing current policy processes in Scottish education. Although I find it helpful to refer to my approach as “ANT-inspired”, I refrain from using heavy ANT terminology for this reason.

ANT has been described as one of the more ‘controversial’ approaches in the social sciences (Rimpilainen, 2009), as it was originally developed as a criticism of traditional Sociology for ‘disregarding’ the role of the material in analysis of social reality. ANT affords equal importance to both social and material, and sees society as being something that is constructed from networks of relations between humans and non-humans (Latour, 2005).

As such, the most important assumption of ANT is that human beings should not be treated any differently from ‘non-humans’, “without the non-humans, the humans would not last for a minute” (Latour, 2004, p. 91). This is because everyday things, and parts of these everyday things, such as behaviours, intentions, reports, furniture, conversations, as well as individual people, are assumed to possess capabilities of exerting force, assembling together, changing, and being changed by these other things. As these ‘things’ come together, they form a limitless number of networks that continue to expand across space and time.

Many of its forebears, such as Bruno Latour and John Law, refuse to define it as a theory, stating that it cannot be described as a “single, stable or identifiable theoretical framework” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 2). Instead, it is often referred to as a set of ‘tools’, ‘sensibilities’ and ‘methods of analysis’ (Law, 2004, p. 595), as an ‘array of practices’ (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. iix), and as a “highly diffuse cloud of diverse studies and approaches” (Fenwick, 2010, p. 118). The reluctance to define it stems from concerns that explaining ANT would only work to ‘distort’ or ‘domesticate’ it (Fenwick & Edwards, 2012) as “only dead theories and dead practices celebrate their identity” (Law, 1999, p. 10). Rimpilainen (2009) suggests that ANT should therefore be recognised as a series of ‘tools’ that have functions: to collect data and make sense of it.

One striking -and perhaps surprising- feature of ANT research related to this, is the tendency for its researchers to avoid using explicit ANT-associated terminology, referring to their work instead as ‘explorations of complexity’, ‘material semiotics’ or ‘sociology of science and technology’ (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). There may be a number of reasons for this apparent distancing; perhaps related to a perceived fragility of ANT as an approach. It is possible that this fragility is heightened by its insistence that it is not a theory, and associated claims about what it can and cannot be used for.

ANT, therefore, with its array of concepts and tools, allows researchers the flexibility to ‘map out’ how these ‘things’ come together to form networks. Networks are formed through things being invited or excluded. These things then develop links or associations between themselves, through which they can exert force. Associations are developed through ‘minute negotiations’, and Fenwick and Edwards (2010) suggest that ANT is particularly useful for exploring how these negotiations occur and amongst which entities, “[t]hings – not just humans, but the parts that make up humans and non-humans – persuade, coerce, seduce, resist and compromise each other as they come together” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 4). They also suggest, that the ways in which these things come together do not just differ in terms of the force that they are driven by, but by the ability for them to be merely pretence, or consist of a partial connection that then disappears. By employing ANT, these associations and their effects can be traced, and the way in which these networks control and direct “actions, flows of movement and choices in space in time” can be captured.

A network can therefore be regarded as an “assemblage of materials brought together and linked through processes of translation that perform a particular function” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). A network can act to ‘stabilise’ dynamic events, into a durable object, such as a report. If the Donaldson Review that led to the development of the policy text, ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’, is taken as an example, it can be postulated that it brings together and freezes in one form: a number of formal and informal meetings and conversations conducted in private and public spaces, a range of voices and opinions of different stakeholders nationally and internationally, a variety of conflicts and debates between key actors, and many explored and discarded ideas and possibilities. This policy text then circulates across “vast spaces, gathering allies, shaping thoughts and actions and thus creating new networks” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Depending on the amount of allies and networks (and indeed who or what these allies are and what these networks represent), the policy agenda set out in the text can become stronger, weaker, or completely distorted.

ANT as a method of policy analysis

A number of educational researchers have recently drawn on elements of ANT to research the policy process (Gorur, 2011, 2014; Hamilton, 2012²⁷; Watson & Michael, 2016).

Hamilton (2012) demonstrates what can be gained by applying the core principles of ANT to policy analysis in her research on recent national education reform in England, *Skills for Life* (Hamilton, 2009; Hamilton & Hillier, 2006). ANT, as a theoretical and philosophical approach, understands and validates the idea of policy processes as messy, fluid, uncertain, and temporal, and offers resources for the exploration and uncovering of power. Hamilton (2012) suggests that it is best used for following the detailed unfolding of policy implementation, and that it can be useful for tracing connections between the local and the global, as well as the micro-connections between actors in a policy network.

Furthermore, ANT allows us to see how policy implementation can be successful, and why particular policies may appear to be stronger than others. Nespore (2002, p. 95) writes that the “meanings of an event are constituted by hooking it up to moving networks of people acting with through, and by virtue of their entanglements with durable artefacts, structures and materials”. If we apply this to policy implementation, we can see that a policy agenda hooks on to other actors and discourses, and this is essentially how policy ideas and agendas spread. If we take TSF as an example, we can see how it has ‘hooked on’ to the wider educational reform agenda in Scotland, becoming interwoven into the discourse around leadership and teacher quality, as promoted by recent GTCS developments such as Professional Update and the new standards.

Fischer (2003), along with Hajer and Wagenaar (2003), have shown that policy translation occurs through a process of argumentation and paperwork negotiated between actors at all levels. Hamilton & Hillier (2007) write that much of what we consider to be ‘policy’ is thrashed out in the oral and written exchanges between different groups and key players. This is similar to Ozga’s (2000) comment about contestation and struggle, discussed earlier in this chapter. The shape of policy is affected by how convincing and inclusive these exchanges are, and whether they are accepted or rejected by the key actors. She continues, the terms of these debates and discourses are powerful mechanisms for the exclusion of certain groups and perspectives. The opportunities for deliberation are determined in part by the formal consultative spaces, and partly by informal networks that exist. This

²⁷ See also Fenwick (2010); Mulachy (2011); Nicoll (2006)

reiterates the importance of exploring the nature of these formal and informal spaces, as well as who or what is included and excluded from them.

Translation and the concept of the token

Translation is an ANT term which is used to describe what happens when “entities, human and non-human, come together and connect, changing one another to form links” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 9). It is through translation that networks are formed and can become stable and durable, and it is through networks that power is exercised.

In her analysis of *Skills for Life*, a recent policy initiative, Hamilton (2012) utilises Callon’s (1986) sociology of translation, looking at three ‘moments’ in the life of this initiative. Callon shows that translation occurs through a number of ‘moments’, and Hamilton suggests that the use of the term ‘moment’ suggests two things: a freezing of chronological time sequence to allow us to look at an event closely, and also ‘moment’ in the sense of the pivotal point around which events turn. This is useful for looking at a policy process because policy moments occur in real time as events, but their occurrence is also repeated, simultaneously experienced, and performed by multiple actors during the process of enactment (Ball et al., 2012). They extend over time and are embedded in overlapping time scales (Lemke, 2000).

Hamilton (2012, p. 45) sees the first two moments of the process of translation - *problematization* and *interessement* - as hypothetical. Problematization can be understood as a moment of definition: defining who and what is part of the network and who or what is excluded from it. In this moment, a policy agenda only exists on paper as an idea, or in the mind of the person who first defines it. In the moment of *interessement*, attempts are made to impose and stabilise the identity of actors identified in the first moment. This requires links between actors to be interrupted and weakened, thereby creating a space in which the policy can grow and fend off competing policy initiatives. Examples of these mechanisms might be a sequence of documents that describes the new policy agenda and infrastructure that will replace previous policy reforms and ‘lock allies into place’.

The third moment, *enrolment*, is where material elements and devices are assembled to support actors to join the network. Hamilton (2012) suggests that one example of this stage might be the development of a new research centre. Within the context of TSF, the

establishment of the NPG might be conceptualised as a moment of enrolment. However, it is important to note that setting up a structure for the participation of actors might not necessarily lead to the enrolment of all actors in the policy agenda.

The final moment of translation, *mobilisation*, is where ‘the few come to speak as the many’. It is here that previously unstable policy ideas are stabilised and represented by ‘one voice’ and policy might be regarded as ‘effective’, but any perceived success is only temporary, given the unfinished nature of translation. In reality, ANT asserts that it is impossible for translation to come to a conclusion, as there is a constant overflow and entangling, with some actors being ‘stolen away’ and new ones joining.

The contribution of the model of translation (Callon, 1986) to policy analysis is clear. As well as identifying progress, the idea of translation can be useful for looking at how ideas come to be silenced within the policy making process. The concept of a ‘token’ in translation can be a particular effective way to trace policy (Edwards, 2009), although is often associated with ‘early’ ANT research²⁸.

A token can be discourse(s) or objects. Latour (1987) utilised the idea of a ‘token’ to challenge the widely held view that ideas and objects ‘diffuse’ through society, instead arguing that the “spread of anything – claims, orders, artefacts, goods – is in the hands of people” (Latour, 1986, p. 267). Therefore, the ‘spread’ or enactment of a policy agenda relies on actors engaging with it and sharing it with others. However, the model of translation shows that when actors pick up a token, they change it in some way. This is explained best by Gaskell and Hepburn (1998):

The token is usually not passed unchanged from hand to hand...
The token is either ignored or taken up by people who see their interests translated within it. In the process of shaping it to their interests, these people usually modify the token. The path of the token is a product of the number and strength of the links that are established between it and a diverse group of other actors. It is not a product of an initial quality but of the subsequent actions of a multitude of others. (p. 66)

In the context of this research, the agenda set out in TSF in the form of recommendations can be ignored or taken up and translated as different interests are invested in it; this can be

²⁸ In more recent ANT research, the term ‘boundary object’ has come to replace that of ‘token’ (see ???)

applied directly to the work of the NPG. Gaskell and Hepburn (1998, p. 56) state that as these actors take up and use the token, their actions are changed as they begin to see new possibilities with it. Edwards (2009) suggests that the translation of a token is possible because tokens are, by their very nature, unfinished; therefore, patterns of possibility can be inscribed into them.

By utilising this concept of the translation of a token, it is possible for me to describe and conceptualise what happened to the report's recommendations and its overarching philosophy as it entered a messy and complex policy making process.

In the model of translation, interests are defined as goals, motivations and expectations of actors (Callon, 1986; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998; Latour, 1986). In the context of my research, the interests that have potential to strengthen, distort or silence the policy agenda are institutional in nature. For example, the participation of actors brought in to represent organisations like the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) or the Association of Directors in Education in Scotland (ADES) is understood as being shaped and guided by the interests and agendas of those organisations. The action of actors in the network is guided by the promotion of particular positional goods²⁹.

Since there is a great variety of actor within a network, it is important to note the difference between the term 'actor' and 'institutional actor', especially as it applies to the focus of my research. I use the term 'actor' to refer to the human actor who was brought into the process to represent an organisation (I also use the term 'representative'). I use the term 'institutional actor' to refer to the organisation that the actor/representative represents. Therefore, the interests that are of significance to this research and its findings are those of the institutional actor, not the individuals who are actors at the behest of an organization. The multiple layers and complications that arise from the variety of voices and interests are analysed and discussed in depth in Chapters 4 and 5. But I include these distinctions here as they pertain to my methodologies. One benefit of drawing on ANT ideas is that it allows the researcher to take a step back from the human as human interests and beliefs are not prioritised.

²⁹ This is not to say that individual and personal factors do not shape participation. However, the focus of this research is an exploration of the way actors participate in the process in order to translate institutional interests into continuously evolving policy agenda.

Critique of ANT

Although ANT appears a suitable method for tracing the development and enactment of policy, it has received much criticism, the majority of which appears to be based on the point I made above: its lack of regard for human consciousness. ANT's insistence that humans and non-humans must be treated analytically in the same way is the claim that ANT-sceptics often find most difficult to accept. It is true that non-human actors can play a role in the action and behaviour of human actors and the decisions that they make; however, it is difficult to disregard the power of human intent and consciousness, particularly within the policy making process, which could be regarded as a highly emotive process, involving much contestation, debate, argument, mediation, and disagreement, as well as agreement. To achieve a positive result some sort of consensus must be reached, and this is rarely a smooth process.

Indeed, many ANT critics accuse it of failing to recognise what is fundamentally human and subjective in communication and action during social processes. For example, Murdoch (1998) argues that ANT should adapt its stance of 'radical symmetry' to allow for the realisation that humans are different from objects because humans are capable of making symbolic meaning of events and can exert intentional action, whereas objects cannot.

The reason that ANT does not "privilege human consciousness or intention" (Edwards, 2009, p.5) is because it asserts that inanimate and animate objects are to be treated as materially equal. This so-called 'symmetry' between the human and non-human occurs because "human powers increasingly derive from the complex interconnections of humans with material objects... the human and physical worlds are elaborately intertwined and cannot be analysed separate from each other" (Urry, 2000, p.14). It is easy to acknowledge the idea of humans and physical worlds as being intertwined, and just as easy to identify that this contributes to what makes the policy making process so complex and messy. There are a number of different things, human and non-human, which exert force on each other, and ANT allows for the mapping of such complexity.

ANT therefore does not conceptualise agency as individuated and rooted in conscious intentions, and in this way is very different to the ecological view of agency found in the work of critical realists (Archer, 2000; Emirbayer & Mishce, 1998). However, Hamilton

(2012) sees the freeing of agency from human qualities as one of ANT's most important philosophical contributions:

It does not disallow them, but neither does it give them a privileged role in the analysis of social projects. There is no attempt to deny the existence of conscious intention: a social project, after all, has to be imagined and recognised by someone. (p. 55)

The shift away from human agency can be particularly useful in understanding the policy process, as it encourages us to look beyond the personalities and personal intent of individual actors and consider them as representatives of institutional actors. Their participation in the process therefore must be understood as being shaped by much wider societal forces, institutional agendas, and goals. Institutional actors can be considered as complex actors that are made up by an ever expanding, reducing and changing network of human and non-human actors. Examples of non-human actors might include the buildings in which they do their business, the websites and online content that communicate their work and goals, the discourse that surrounds their institutional agendas, the beliefs and ideologies that they use to promote a particular vision and their history, which exists in multiple forms (texts, memories, visuals and spoken word). Examples of human actors that attach to form an institutional actor might include the stakeholder group they represent (e.g. members of a trade union; teachers registered with a professional teaching body), the groups that their work impact on (e.g. school pupils or parents), and individuals who officially represent them within the policy space (e.g. members of the National Partnership Group). Although human agency plays a role in the way that individuals operate within this space, an ANT approach to policy analysis allows the researcher to look beyond this.

Another popular criticism of ANT, highlighted by Hamilton (2012), is that it is 'a-moral' as it does not allow us to pass judgement on networks or actors, apart from to comment on their effectiveness in increasing or decreasing the 'power' of a network. This is because it does not start from an assumption that there must be unequal distributions of power in society. However, Hamilton (2012) argues that this allows those who would like to take a more activist role in shaping public policy to do so. This is because the workings of power can be shown, and the instability of social policy is revealed: thus allowing 'activists' to find the appropriate space to intervene, which is a key aim of my research.

2.1.4 Conceptualising power in the policy process

If there is any one concept that is central to critical policy analysis, it is the concept of power. There are multiple and conflicting conceptions of what power is, what it means and how operates: “we all know perfectly well what it is – until someone asks us” (Bierstedt, 1950, p. 730). Influenced by elements of ANT (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010), this research considers power to have multiple forms which exist in multiple spaces, acting on multiple motivations towards multiple goals. ANT argues that power is not pre-existing; it is an effect of an actor-network, which emerges through a series of complex and multifaceted actions. Furthermore, this perspective stipulates that power is not delegated to one group or individual; it circulates through complex, shifting webs of relations (Rose, 1999). In other words, it develops *between* actors (human and non-human) during the formation of networks. Powerful actors, such as dictators, educational policies, or significant reports, become powerful through making connections with other actors, thus enlisting them as allies. Powerful actors consist of networks of different things (bodies, texts, tools, and desires) which are held together “through fragile ties that demand a great deal of work to maintain them” (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 129). Essentially, an actor is only powerful if it is connected to other actors; if it stands alone, it cannot exist.

This is a useful perspective for understanding policy implementation; it allows us to understand how policies ‘come to be’, but also how they can fail. However, when considering the operation of power within a policy network of human actors, I argue that it must be understood as something that actors *have*, and this is where an ANT perspective is not helpful.

When thinking about what makes an actor powerful within a network, particularly within the NPG, it is useful to think about power as their ability to translate their interests into the policy agenda. This is complex, as their ability to do this is shaped by multiple factors, including network structure, network culture, network rules and levels of awareness around these, perceptions of the self, actor agency (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015), and resource exchange relationships (Rhodes, 2006). In other words, it is actors’ abilities to *influence* the process of policy development. Power can also be thought about as an actor’s ability to shape the implementation of TSF by directly influencing the *process*. This might be achieved through the *resistance* of changes proposed by TSF, or by driving particular agendas forwards. However, this thesis argues that resistance and drive are inextricably linked to institutional interests.

2.2 Research methods

This chapter describes the steps taken to address the research questions set out in Chapter 1. I begin by introducing key issues that have been found to arise when conducting policy analysis. This discussion is informed by the experiences of researchers who have conducted similar studies that have shaped my approach.

I then describe the design of the research, and the methods employed to gather and analyse data. Inspired by the work of McPherson and Raab (1988) and Humes (1987) and their interviews with ‘policy elites’, I decided that a qualitative methodology was best suited to this study. Given that the focus of this research is on a specific group operating in a specific context, a single exploratory case-study design was used to frame the research (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2014). Within this case-study, three methods of data collection were employed: semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and network ethnography. Each of these methods and the nature of the data collected are discussed in separate sections below. It must be stressed that semi-structured interviews were the main source of data collection, while document analysis and network ethnography were employed as supplementary tools to develop a broader picture of the policy process. As such, the majority of this section is focussed on the collection and analysis of interview data.

As well as describing the processes by which this research was conducted, I highlight some of the methodological and ethical issues that I encountered and consider how they have shaped my inquiry. To do this, I draw on the discussion at the beginning of this section to reflect on my own positionality within the research. I outline a number of key tensions and dilemmas that arose in relation to this during the collection and analysis of data and describe the actions taken in an attempt to overcome these.

2.2.1 Methodological tensions in conducting policy analysis

In this section, I discuss some of the methodological tensions that can arise when conducting policy analysis. The discussion here deals predominantly with interviewing policy-makers as a method for policy analysis, but a number of points raised hold relevance for the area of policy analysis more widely.

The first methodological tension that I discuss is the selection of an overall approach for policy analysis. Humes (1997) distinguishes between an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’ approach but suggests that they are best viewed as opposite ends of a continuum rather than distinct categories. An ‘inside’ approach involves relying on the insights of those who have been intimately involved in the policy planning and development and this is the approach used in this research. He suggests that such an approach contends that only individuals who have been actively engaged in the process can fully explain any decisions made, shifts of emphasis, changes in direction and re-definitions of aims, and that this insight is required for the researcher to fully understand the policy process. Furthermore, Humes warns that an ‘inside’ approach is “indispensable”, and to “neglect it is to run the risk of missing important clues or misinterpreting events” (Humes, 1997, p. 21). For this reason, I decided to ensure that my research would involve those actors considered to be on the ‘inside’, but remained cautious about the extent to which this approach allowed me to gain a ‘full understanding’ of the process.

Despite these advantages, there are difficulties associated with an ‘inside’ approach, which suggest that it may not yield the type of information that the researcher is seeking. While the interview might be the most suitable method for gathering data from key policy actors (Duke, 2002), it is often the case that such individuals are constrained by their professional position. This can impact on the validity of the data obtained, but Humes (1997) suggests that the most likely consequence of this is ‘un-illuminating’ data that in which responses have been carefully edited. Furthermore, it is often the case that policy actors are well practiced at answering interview questions, and revert to communicating the ‘official line’ on various issues (Welch, Marschan-Piekkari, Penttinen & Tahvanainen, 2016). Even if policy actors are not ‘constrained’ by their position, it might be difficult for them to step back and evaluate the process within its wider context. However, this might not necessarily be a problem, depending on how their data is used. Participant insights from the ‘inside’ can be useful for getting a picture of how the policy actors perceive the process from within and can be triangulated with data gathered through other means. While each of

these scenarios have implications for data validity, it is important to remember that they also raise some ethical issues that the researcher has to grapple with. Gathering data from individuals in important roles can lead to a sense of vulnerability amongst participants. It is possible that any data obtained will be politically sensitive and this was certainly the case within this research.

It might be assumed that the issues outline above are less problematic if the interviewee is no longer in post, and if the policy being analysed is somewhat historic. However, my research sought to analyse a policy which was very much in the ‘development’ stage and had not yet been implemented; as a result, each actor that I wanted to interview could still be considered as being ‘in post’. I discuss the implications of this towards the end of this chapter.

An ‘outside’ approach (Humes, 1997), on the other hand, starts from a different set of assumptions. It assumes that if a researcher is to remain critical, they must not be drawn into the political process that they are attempting to analyse, or in other words, they must not be drawn into their ‘assumptive worlds’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). Another assumption of the ‘outside’ approach is that key actors in the policy community are likely to provide a distorted account of what is actually happening. Traditional sources of data obtained when employing an ‘outside’ approach are documentary sources such as official reports, minutes and press releases. These, of course, are limited by the fact they have been written for those outside of the policy processes. Nevertheless, Humes (1997) states that there is a tendency for researchers to undervalue informal documentary sources, which can be used to illuminate connections between people and institutions, allowing the researcher to develop an overall view of policy networks. In my critical research, as well as conducting interviews with policy actors, I analysed a range of documents, including official minutes for meetings of the NPG and sub-groups, in order to gain a broader understanding of the wider policy process. I discuss my use of document analysis in more detail further in this chapter. In this sense, it could be said that my research drew on elements of an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’ approach.

The second methodological tension for discussion concerns networks and relationships in Scottish education. One key characteristic of Scotland’s education policy community is that it is particularly small and tightly networked. As discussed in Chapter 1, this creates opportunities for intimate relationships between key actors, with many central figures

knowing each other on a personal basis (Humes, 1997). This raises a number of challenges for researchers, particularly around anonymity and the nature of data obtained. However, a well-connected network can also enhance data collection as it increases the number of opportunities to connect with potential participants.

Grek (2011) argues that the concept of ‘close proximity’ is also characteristic of the research-policy relationship in Scottish education, with long standing conversation between elite academic and policy elite communities existing as an established practice. On one hand this can be viewed positive feature as it should help to create the right context for research informed policy. On the other hand, it can work to restrict researchers, and limit the extent to which they can be critical of educational reform.

A critical view on this relationship is offered by Humes (1986) who suggests that Scottish research in the field of education policy has lost its ‘freedom’, describing negotiations with Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) about a piece of research that resulted in him being told he could “write what [he] liked but that [he] should not forget that Scotland is a small country” (Humes, 1986, p. 173). It can therefore be suggested that the relationship between policy makers and academic researchers has become somewhat tense, particularly in regard to the government’s double role of a ‘user’ and ‘commissioner’ of research. Grek (2011, p. 235) concludes “researchers are very aware of their need not to offend powerful funders and gatekeepers”. Although this research was not funded by the Scottish Government, similar concerns around not wishing to ‘offend’ arose during the collection, analysis and presentation of this research.

The final methodological tensions that I would like to introduce here centres on the way in which the researcher might be perceived by their respondent in an interview situation and the impact that this may or may not have on the data obtained. In their paper ‘*Sex, Lies and Audiotape: Interviewing the Education Policy Elite*’, Ozga and Gewirtz (1994) discuss, from a feminist perspective, some of the difficulties that can arise when researching education policy as female researchers. They draw on their experience of conducting research with policy elites who had all previously worked in the field of education policy, in the context of central or local government. All of their informants were male, bar one female director of education. In their paper, Ozga and Gewirtz (1994) reflect on the perception that their gender impacted on the research and their relationships with their informants. They argue that the central issue here was one of self-presentation, which is

perhaps better described as a gender issue. They state that their gender assisted them in gaining access to their participants, as they believe that their informants perceived them as “unthreatening and relatively unimportant” (p. 132). They believe that they were viewed as women in very stereotypical ways, some of which they endorsed due to feeling a degree of familiarity, and as a result, acted to confirm this view. One of these stereotypical roles was that of the ‘attentive listener’. They believed that their informants regarded them as receptive and caring because of their gender, and they decided to act to confirm this stereotype because it was productive for the project. Ozga and Gewirtz (1994) were well aware that they were being patronised by their informants, and in accepting this, that they were compromising themselves on the grounds of feminism. However, they perceived it as a small price to pay in exchange for obtaining deep and meaningful data.

At a deeper level, is the issue of power relations, which can also be swayed by perceptions of youth and inexperience. Given the longstanding relationship between academic and policy elite communities, Grek (2011) states that the position of a ‘junior’ researcher is of great methodological interest, and she lists several points to be aware of as an early career researcher. She warns that gaining access to participants is the first hurdle to overcome, but that “with the ‘right’ institutional affiliation and the ‘right’ cover letter authorised from an established academic... a request for an interview is usually accepted” (p.237). If access is granted, Grek (2011) suggests that the novel researcher can ‘perform’ their role in one of two ways: the role of ‘outsider’ or the role of the confident researcher. She states that the role of the ‘outsider’ is often adopted by young female researchers, and that such an encounter is often rendered ‘harmless’ or non-threatening by the participant. In other words, the researcher is not considered important enough to constitute a threat (Dexter, 1964). In a similar way to the gender effect discussed earlier, such a perception may be advantageous to the research with regard to the nature and depth of data on offer. Furthermore, Grek (2011) suggests that, when a researcher plays the role of inexperienced ‘outsider’, interviewees often appear confident and self-assured when providing answers, and can be very quick to deflect questions which they consider to be inappropriate. Although there is a danger of the researcher being ‘drawn in’ by such a performance, Grek (2011) argues that it is easily detected and can be an interesting part of the analysis. Being a female researcher, at an early stage of my career, I can familiarise with many of the issues described above.

Ozga and Gewirtz (1994) also warn of the danger of the researcher being ‘drawn in’ when conducting interviews with “polished and experienced policy practitioners” (p.121). They felt that the interview data they received in their Policy Elites project could be characterised by “the self-conscious presentation of the ‘public servant’” (p. 131), rather than an accurate presentation of the individual. Indeed, Grek (2011) acknowledges that conducting research in this area can elicit responses from interviewees which are often well rehearsed and at times, platitudinous. Because of this, she stresses that it is important to understand interview responses as part of a story – “as a construction of events and relationships that has a particular plot and follows certain conventions in the roles taken by actors” (Grek, 2011, p. 239). I found this approach particularly useful within my thesis, as it allowed me to take a step back and consider interview data as reflective of the way in which this individual operated within the policy space, as a representative of an institutional actor. I explain this approach in greater detail further in the chapter where I discuss the process of data analysis, and also in the final section.

2.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

At the beginning of this process, I decided that interviewing would be the most appropriate method to use in this research. There were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, this method was used by authors who I would consider to have produced the most important contributions to our understanding of the ‘traditional policy community’ in Scottish education (e.g. McPherson & Raab, 1988; Humes, 1987). My research might be viewed as an attempt to update this body of literature, and as such, it was important for me to use a similar approach.

Secondly, more recent influential research on Scottish education policy processes tends to draw on document analysis (e.g. Kennedy & Doherty, 2012; Menter & Hulme, 2010; Smith, 2011). I felt that a different method of data collection would help to avoid the replication of this research and add something different to developing narrative around Scottish policy processes.

Thirdly, I recognised interviewing as one way to gain access to the spaces of policy translation that cannot be accessed through analysis of documents. To an extent, interviews allow the researcher to learn about what cannot be seen (Glesne & Peskin, 1992). I felt that interviewing actors most central to the process would allow me to go beyond the official

representation of the process that is presented in publicly available documents and minutes of meetings and explore what was actually *happening* within these spaces. There are of course limitations to interviews and the extent to which we can say that participant responses are reflective of what is *really* happening within those spaces and these are discussed throughout this chapter.

Finally, this research views each member of the NPG as an individual actor, acting in different ways to represent the interests of their institutional actor. It was therefore possible that each respondent would tell a different ‘story’ as they play different roles in the network, come from different positions within their organisations and have different interests to translate into the policy agenda. As such, each participant required their own modified set of questions. Using a ‘semi structured’ interview method helped to ensure that I covered similar themes within the interviews, but that interview questions could be adapted slightly to suit each interview participant.

Before I discuss the interview process in more depth, it should be noted that I had considered following the initial set of interviews with observations of the NPG and sub-group meetings in order for me to gather information about the nature of the process. However, securing approval to carry out this part was difficult and a number of concerns were raised by a chair of the NPG. This led to the decision to remove observations from the research design.

Interview participants

In total, I conducted 27 semi-structured interviews. The table below provides information about the interview respondents in my research and their institutional representation. To protect anonymity, I have replaced each name with a code. These codes are used to distinguish between different participants in Chapters 4 and 5.

Table 1 Interview Participants

Respondent Code	Institutional Representation
A	Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL)
B	Teacher
C	Scottish Government
D	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
E	Education Scotland
F (2)	Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC)
G	Teacher
H	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)
I	Teacher
J	GTCS
K*	Dyslexia Scotland
L	STEC
M	ADES
N (2)	GTCS
O	Education Scotland
P*	Association of Chartered Teachers Scotland (ACTS)
Q	STEC
R	Education Scotland
S*	Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC)
T	GTCS
U	STEC
V	STEC
W	Scottish Government
Y	Teachers' Panel
X*	Universities Scotland

All

respondents were members of the National Partnership Group, sub-group one, sub-group two, sub-group three or the National Implementation Board. In some cases, respondents were members of two of these groups, but this information has not been provided as this would reduce participant anonymity. Furthermore, two respondents were interviewed twice in order to gather their views at two different stages of the process. Where this has occurred, '(2)' is marked next to their respondent code. It should be noted that this thesis has not made use of all interview data gathered and an '*' identifies the interviews that have not been used. I have not included information about network positioning (i.e. chairing positions) in order to further protect participant anonymity.

Procedure of interviews

Gaining access to policy elites can be difficult. Ozga and Gewirtz (1994, 134) have warned that “the difficulty of access to people who ‘make’ policy precludes anything other than conventional enquiry,” and indeed this seemed to be the case. As discussed earlier, there are some things that can help a researcher to gain access to those on the inside. Grek (2011) suggested that having the ‘right’ institutional affiliation and the ‘right’ cover letter authorised by an established academic tends to help. Founded in 1451, the University of Glasgow is one of Scotland’s four ancient universities and is a member of the prestigious Russel Group. It is likely that these credentials worked in my favour. Each of my three supervisors certainly can be recognised as ‘established academics’ and the fact that Professor Graham Donaldson was one of them cannot be overlooked as a factor that helped to gain access to the NPG. Below I describe the steps taken to securing access to participants, as well as some of the barriers that I faced.

The first stage of the research process required me to gain permission from the co-chairs of the NPG to interview additional members of the groups. There were three co-chairs of the NPG, all representing different institutional actors: the Scottish Government, Association of Directors of Education (ADES) and Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC). As the Scottish Government established the NPG, it was decided that I should approach the Scottish Government co-chair first. I wrote an introductory letter describing my research (see Appendix A) that was followed up with contact by email.

It was agreed that I would have an informal meeting with this co-chair, to explain more about my research and what would be expected from the members of the NPG, sub-groups and strategic reference group. This was followed up with one more additional meeting, where permission was granted for me to contact members of the wider network.

The next step involved arranging interviews with all three of the co-chairs. This involved one additional meeting with one of the co-chairs, where research objectives and interview questions were shared before participation was confirmed.

I then began to contact additional members of the NPG, including sub-group chairs. I contacted every member of the NPG and its sub-groups from the original membership list placed on the Scottish Government website. I randomly selected eight individuals from the strategic reference group membership list. Although the strategic reference group worked alongside the NPG and sub-groups, its members were involved less frequently in the process and I therefore did not deem it necessary to contact them all.

The majority of individuals who did not participate did not get back in touch to provide me with a reason, but I received a small number of direct rejections by email that provided some insight into their decision to decline. It is interesting to note that the majority of rejections came from civil servants, with two potential participants telling me that there would be no point in participating in an interview as I had already interviewed another representative of the Scottish Government. This example serves to illustrate an issue discussed earlier: the apparent obligation of some policy actors to communicate the 'official line'. One reading of these responses is that these actors were concerned about saying something that was perhaps not in line with their colleague's responses, thereby casting doubt over the government's institutional position within the policy space. Another reading might suggest that they were instructed not to participate, given the possibility that they may say something different or give away too much information. I did not refer to my previous interview with their colleague, so it can be assumed that this information was shared in response to my invitation. Another civil servant who declined my invitation suggested that we have a 'brief chat' by telephone instead. This format would have allowed the individual to participate at an informal level in a conversation that is not recorded and the length of which can be controlled by them.

At the beginning of each interview, I provided each participant with a Plain Language Statement and a Consent Form (Appendix B), and made sure to explain the following: the purpose of my research and the guaranteed anonymisation of each interview transcript. I also told participants that quotations would not be used unless consent was provided. I then offered each participant the opportunity to ask any questions and checked that they were happy to be recorded. Each interview was recorded using two digital voice recorders. Following the interview, the data files were transferred to secure folder on my university computer to allow for transcription, which I conducted myself.

The duration of each interview varied considerably amongst participants from twenty minutes to over two hours. Each participant was informed that the interview would take no longer than one hour; however, I always asked how long each participant had before starting the interview. If the interview ran over the hour, I ensured to inform the participant and to check that they would like to continue. More often than not, interviews were lengthened at the participant's choice.

As discussed earlier, adopting a semi-structured format for my interviews allowed me to retain a certain degree of flexibility with regard to the questions that I asked participants.

One key benefits of qualitative interviewing is that the content, flow and choice of questions within an interview can change to match what the interviewee knows and feels, and because is invented in a different way every time it is conducted (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

An interview schedule³⁰ (Appendix C) was created based on the themes in the table below. The table also shows the relationship between interview themes and initial research questions:

Table 2 Interview themes and relation to research questions

	Interview Theme	Research Question and rationale
1)	The purpose of the NPG/ sub groups/ strategic reference group	RQ2) Interpretations of purpose might provide insight into institutional agendas. This was a way to open the interview and ask respondents for a general overview of the NPG.
2)	The membership and structure of the NPG/ sub groups/ strategic reference group	RQ1) This is closely related to the issue of membership and questions about structure might indirectly lead to questions around who was missing and who was responsible for the design of the NPG and sub-groups RQ2) The ability of an individual actor to represent institutional interests might be determined by their role within the network. In this sense, structure referred to the arrangement of NPG co-chairs and sub-group chairs as well as the distribution of representatives across the whole network
3)	Communication	RQ3) Communication here referred to dialogue between individual actors within groups and between groups. I identified this as a potential avenue for policy translation.
4)	Flexibility of the NPG/ sub groups	RQ3) Flexibility in relation to remit points (e.g. where you able to add in any ideas that were not in the original Report?). This might provide insight into the way in which the process was governed and the identification of actors who had 'influence' and were able to control the process of translation (or not).

³⁰ It should be noted that the example interview schedule provided in this appendix was developed to interview the co-chairs of the NPG so the questions have been shaped towards their role.

6)	Progress	<p>RQ1) Problems/successes with progress might be put down to the membership of the group</p> <p>RQ3) Questions about progress of implementation could unearth various concerns about the way that the policy was being translated and lead to discussions about ‘power’</p> <p>RQ2) Perceptions of progress might also be linked to ability to ‘represent’ institutional interests or the over-representation of institutional interests.</p>
7)	Role of participant in NPG/sub group/strategic reference group	<p>RQ1) Roles within group might lead to conversation around membership, network design and the identification of actors who were responsible for selecting members</p> <p>RQ2) It is likely that individual actors’ roles will shape their ability to represent the interests of their organisation</p>
8)	Representation of institutional actor	<p>RQ2) This is directly linked to this question</p> <p>RQ3) Essentially, institutional representation is the first step of interest translation.</p>
9)	Two main aims of the policy agenda: reshape teacher professionalism and strengthening partnership	RQ3) Discussing the two key themes of the report might provide insight into the agendas of each institutional actor.
10)	Forces which may drive or limit implementation	RQ3) The process of interest translation must be understood as being either driven or inhibited by various forces
11)	The future implementation of Teaching Scotland’s Future	RQ3) This relates directly to institutional agendas but also might lead to responses about the factors that may limit the implementation of the policy and what kind of context is required for preferred versions of translation.

Although the table above presents set themes, it must be noted that my use of the interview schedule was flexible. Questions were adapted, removed or added depending on the organisation that each individual was representing and also on their role within the network. Prior to each interview, I ensured to research the interviewee and their background. This allowed for the consideration of additional questions to gain further

insight into the nature of the institutional actor that they were representing as well as the way in which they were positioning themselves within this space (see Appendix D for an example of an interview schedule that had been adapted). I also had to be flexible in my own approach, as some respondents were less open than others and did not want to answer every question. The approach that I took in interviewing also ensured that I was able to pick up on answers that appeared somewhat complex or vague, and ask additional questions to unearth meaning.

Each interview was recorded using a voice recorder and files were transcribed in full. However, it was often the case that respondents would tell me additional information once the voice recorder was switched off. Although I did not use this data, I cannot pretend that it did not influence my understanding of the policy process in some way. In addition to this, I met individuals that I had interviewed at various research and policy events and they would often discuss my research and ask questions about ‘what I had found’. I always tried to avoid discussing emergent findings with previous participants but there was the odd occasion where they would attend conference papers that I was presenting on my research. In response, some provided me with an overview of what they thought the key findings would be and suggestions of who I should interview next in order to get a ‘real insight’ into the NPG. Given the informal context of the conversations that followed, ‘inside information’ was shared that had not been discussed in any of the interviews and therefore was not included in my dataset. These conversations were often very revealing and certainly shaped my understanding of the overall process as well as the internal politics of the NPG. However, I do not necessarily view this as a limitation of my research. My understanding of Scottish education politics developed and matured as a result of these conversations and this allowed me to paint a richer picture of the way in which the NPG operated.

2.2.3 Interview data: stages of analysis

In this section I describe the process that I used to analyse the interview data. Although I present the different parts of the process in a linear fashion, I am not suggesting that each stage was distinct. There was a degree of overlap between the stages presented below and I often returned to earlier stages of analysis in response to emergent findings in latter stages. As John Law (2004) illustrated, the process of data analysis is *necessarily* messy. The overlapping stages of data analysis are presented in the following section.

Interview transcription

At the beginning of my research, I made the decision to transcribe each of the twenty-seven interviews myself, rather than relying on data transcription services. Arguably, the latter would have saved time and perhaps resulted in more accurate transcripts; however, I felt that the act of transcribing the interview data led to preliminary familiarisation with the data. It also provided an opportunity to identify emergent themes and issues, as well as (dis)similarities across the data set. The first phase of data analysis was therefore transcription of interview data.

As the interviews were spread over a considerable period of time [approximately two years], I began transcribing interview data while I was still in the process of conducting interviews with new participants. This meant that I was becoming aware of emergent themes and issues while I was collecting new data. I was aware of the methodological implications of interview bias in that my awareness of themes and issues might have intentionally or unintentionally driven me to ask particular questions and shape responses to confirm my own initial themes. However, given that these interviews were being conducted in ‘real time’, while the NPG was ‘in action’, I was already adapting the interview questions slightly in order to reflect the current context and stage of implementation. This flexibility was important for ensuring that my research tools were fit for the job of exploring spaces of policy translation in ‘real time’. In other words, as I was adapting the interview questions in line with changing contexts, there was less opportunity for me to shape the interview questions in order to receive interview responses that confirmed my initial emergent themes.

Developing a coding framework

The initial analysis of interview data was modelled on the work of Gerald Grace (2002), detailed in his book *‘Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets and Morality’*, which was originally used to interpret qualitative data from interviews conducted with secondary head teachers. Here, Grace utilised some of the primary interpretative strategies outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in *‘The Discovery of Grounded Theory’*. I also employed some of these techniques, as they were useful in teasing out initial themes and ideas. However, it is important to stress that my research did not take a ‘grounded theory’ approach.

The first stage involved open coding of data, which required me to read and re-read interview transcripts, in order to identify words or groups of words that appeared to hold significance within the data. I decided to use six interview transcripts for this initial stage of the analysis. The six that I selected were representative of the wider participant group as I had a spread of institutional representation and position within the network. The following respondents were selected: F, L, O, G, D and W.

As well as reading the transcripts, I listened to the audio recordings of each interview several times, often as I was driving, walking or working on other parts of the thesis. This helped me to develop an overall picture of each interview and to identify recurrent words and themes. As it was not always possible for me to make physical notes of thoughts and observations, I often used the voice recording application on my phone to store them.

The next stage was then to label recurring words with codes and develop themes. I finished this initial stage of coding once I had reached saturation level with the six transcripts identified above. I determined saturation level to be when the reading or re-reading of these transcripts no longer provided novel codes, and when all emerging codes could be fitted into existing themes. This allowed me to develop a coding framework from the recurring words and themes using qualitative analysis software (NVivo) (see Appendix E for the original coding framework). The table below presents the themes that I developed from this stage of analysis, which were then used to analyse the remaining data set.

Table 3 Initial themes from first stage of data analysis

Theme	Description
1. Membership and Representation	This theme covered a range of issues that arose around the membership of the NPG and its sub groups and the selection of individuals to represent institutional actors.
2. Power	This theme emerged repeatedly and in multiple ways. Examples included: the way in which actors positioned themselves within the network, the extent to which actors understood the process and behaviour within the group.
3. Network Processes	This was concerned with the way in which the NPG and its sub groups operated. For example, procedures by the groups to carry out their work and communication between actors.
4. Policy Processes	This theme considers the work of the NPG and the

	implementation of TSF in its wider context. It includes issues such as national commitment to reform, connections to other policies and policy coherence.
5. Partnership	The development of partnership is at the centre of TSF and emerged as a key theme in initial analysis. This theme is concerned with the building of partnership in its wider sense (e.g. between institutional actors) as well as connections within the network and the way in which the NPG and its sub-groups were intended to operate.
6. Professionalism	The strengthening of teacher professionalism was a key objective of TSF and this theme dealt with the different ways that participants conceptualised the term 'professionalism' and barriers/drivers to the enactment of this policy aim.
7. Ownership and Engagement	This theme included issues around the development of teacher 'buy-in', communication of the TSF agenda and the engagement of actors from all levels of education.
8. Drivers of Change	This theme dealt with global and local forces that were felt to either shape, drive or inhibit the reform agenda. Global forces included international forces such as the OECD and PISA data. Local forces included the Scottish 'myth', traditions and characteristics of the policy community and the political context.

Complex analysis: the need for messy methods

As I came to analyse remaining interview transcripts with the coding framework, I realised that this approach was not effective as a number of new words and themes emerged from the remaining transcripts that were not represented within the framework. Given that the participant group represented a range of institutional interests, positions and roles within the network, it was perhaps unsurprising that interviews varied considerably in content. Furthermore, as discussed in the previous section, interview questions were adapted, omitted and new ones added depending on the background of the participant and the way in which they responded within the context of the interview. The process I was trying to understand was particularly messy and complex and further complicated by the fact that it was being conducted in 'real time', while the network was in operation and the policy agenda was being translated. This 'real time' element of the research also meant that the content of interviews changed depending on the stage of policy implementation.

I persisted with this system of analysis, but it very quickly became clear that arranging extracts into specific nodes and codes was unhelpful for the overall purpose of the research

and much of the policy process became lost. Indeed, Law (2004) warns that something messy cannot be understood by something 'less messy' and suggests that we should find methods that honour the 'mess' of the process. He illuminates this tension best when he writes:

Processes are not simply complex in the sense that they are technically difficult to grasp (though this is certainly often the case). Rather, they are also complex because they *necessarily exceed our capacity to know them* (p. 6).

He offers the following advice: "we will need to rethink our ideas [...] and find ways of knowing the indistinct and the slippery without trying to grasp and hold them tight" (p. 3). I therefore decided to conduct thematic analysis by hand, which became a very messy process in itself. However, it allowed me to a better sense of the data that I was handling. The image below provides a snapshot of this process.

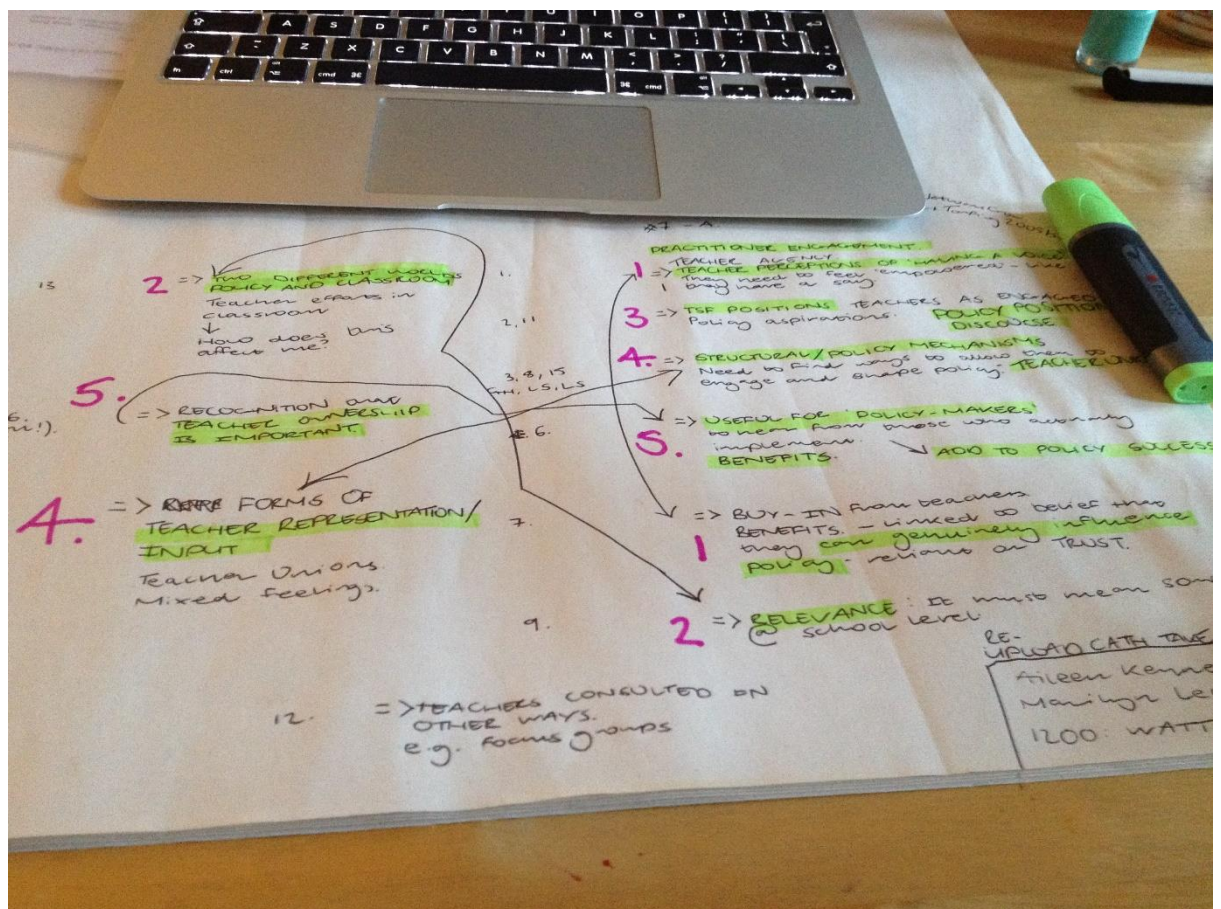


Figure 1 Messy Methods

"If this is an awful mess... then would something less messy make a mess of describing it?" (Law, 2004, p. 1).

I retained the original themes from the initial analysis of six interview transcripts (see Table X), but these were modified in response to analysis of additional interview transcripts. To address the issues discussed above, I engaged in a very messy process of coding, re-coding and continuous modification of the initial group of themes. At the same time as analysing each transcript I listened to the original audio recording of the interview and re-listened to interview recordings while I was doing other things (for example walking or driving). I listened to each interview transcript at least three times (not including listening for the purpose of transcription) and this allowed me to really get to know the data. It should also be noted that the themes were refined by drawing on a combination of theoretical ideas and concepts from my conceptual framework, which helped the analysis to stay focussed. The entire process took almost twelve months, and resulted in the development of a set of broad themes that were flexible enough to be applied to each interview transcript in different ways. The final themes are presented in the table below.

Table 4 Final themes used to analyse the entire dataset

Theme	Description
1. Representation	This theme explored the nature of representation: the way in which individual actors represented institutional actors and issues around this
2. Partnership	This theme considered the concept of partnership as a driving force behind the establishment of the NPG and its sub-groups, and the way that they were intended to operate at a macro level. It looks at partnership between institutional actors but did not include relationships between individual actors (this is categorised under the sixth theme: 'Network culture and behaviour').
3. Network membership: inclusions and exclusions	Moving away from issues of representation, this theme focussed on who or what was included or excluded from network membership and the potential implications of this.

4. Network positioning	This theme dealt with the way that individual actors were positioned within the network (e.g. balance of institutional representation) and the appointment of specific actors to set roles (e.g. sub-group chair or co-chair of the NPG).
5. The process of policy translation	This theme was used to explore the process of policy translation and the different ways that original policy intentions can become distorted as they are enacted. This theme had three distinct sub-themes: 1) identifying of spaces and mechanisms of translation; 2) institutional participation as a method of translation; and, 3) individual participation as a method of translation.
6. Network culture and behaviour	The final theme looked at the overall culture of the network, including the way that groups and individual actors behaved. It is interlinked with the theme above as institutional actors and individual actors used particular forms of behaviour to drive, restrict or shape policy implementation.

The themes above were used to interrogate and organising the remaining data set. They were then used to structure the presentation of research findings in Chapters 5 and 6.

2.2.4 Documentary and Network Analysis

A number of documents were drawn on in order to develop a deeper understanding of the policy itself, the development of the NPG and the way in which it operated. The documents included publicly available information from the Scottish Government website, various versions of minutes from meetings of the NPG and its sub-groups and draft reports. While much of this information was publicly available, the table below provides information about the details of the documents, the process by which they were obtained and the way that the information was used within this research.

Table 5 List of documents used in analysis

Document	Method of obtainment	Purpose in research
Original membership of the NPG, sub-group 1, sub-group 2, sub-group 3 and the strategic reference group	Publicly available on Scottish Government website.	To gather information about the membership of the network, the institutional actor that each individual actor formally represented and the allocation of roles to individual actors. This information was used to identify interview participants, inform the development of interview questions and to explore issues around institutional representation and positioning within the network. This was also used to develop network maps.
Final membership of the NPG, sub-group 1, sub-group 2, sub-group 3 and the strategic reference group	Publicly available as appendix of the National Partnership Group Report.	The membership of the NPG and its sub-groups changed as they carried out their work. This list was used to identify new members and those who had left.
Official minutes of NPG and sub-group meetings	Publicly available through the Scottish Government website	This was used to explore the work of each group and the procedures used by each. Although they were extremely brief, they informed my understanding of the official representation of the NPG and its sub-groups that was offered to the public.
Sub-group remits	Publicly available through the Scottish Government website	Aims and objectives of each sub-group. This was also used to explore the translation of original recommendations into remit points.
NPG work plan	Publicly available: Scottish Government website	This provided the aims and objectives of the NPG and the three sub-groups and offered some insight into the

		<p>way that the groups were intended to operate. However, it is interesting to note that this document was not available until after the work of the NPG formally came to a close.</p>
Press releases on establishment of NPG and their progress	Publicly available: Scottish Government website	To develop an overview of the work of the NPG, the reasons behind its establishment and the position and interests of the Scottish Government.
Internal minutes of the NPG and three sub-groups	Obtained through contact with civil service	These internal minutes were much more detailed than those available on the Scottish Government website. They provided further insight into the work of the NPG and each of the sub-groups as well as proposals that were made by individual actors. Detailed information about meeting attendance was included here.
Draft NPG report	Provided by an interview participant	This was the final draft of the NPG Report prior to the publication version. It was used to get a sense of what might be in the final report, and also as a comparison to highlight what was taken out.
Draft sub-group two report	Distributed at a sub-group two consultation event at University of Glasgow	This provided an overview of the intended direction of sub-group two.

Drawing on actor-network theory (ANT) and the concept of translation (Callon, 1987), I understand each of these documents as ‘tokens’ (Edwards, 2009; Gaskell & Hepburn, (1998): as static translations of the original policy agenda set out in TSF. Each document, although somewhat different in nature, contains an element of the original policy idea, which has been modified, mobilised and presented in a different format. The sub-group remits are the most obvious token, as they have been developed directly from the

recommendations and were presented to the sub-groups as ideas to be ‘implemented’. The sub-groups were not working from the original recommendations in the Report, but from the remit points that had been developed by the civil service. In Chapter 5 I argue that the translation of recommendations into remit points must be understood as the first stage of policy translation. Minutes from meetings of the NPG and sub-groups can also be understood as ‘tokens’, as they provide a snapshot of the policy in a moment of translation, which is then fed back into the process to inform its continued translation. Even group membership lists can be viewed as ‘tokens’ if we consider that design of the NPG and its sub-groups was shaped by a key objective within the Report: the need to develop and strengthen partnership in Scottish education. The act of policy translation is incredibly complex, and this highlights the multiple forms that the ‘token’ can take.

It should be noted that data obtained from these documents was not subject to the same rigorous analysis process as the interview data. The documents were initially read in order to develop a broader overview of the policy process. They provided a structural and political context within which the interview data could be understood, and helped me to gain insight into the official discourse surrounding the establishment of the NPG. The use of additional sources of data also allowed me to look for disconnects between official documents, minutes of meetings and the interview data obtained from my interview participants.

In Chapter 4, I provide an overview of the structure and membership of the NPG, which was informed solely from the analysis the documents detailed in Table x. The majority of documentary evidence was used to develop a picture of the ‘public image’ of the NPG, or the version of the policy process that has purposefully been made visible. This provided some insight into the interests of the Scottish Government. Although this image does not align with findings from the interview data, what emerged from initial analysis of official documents was important because this is the image that the Scottish Government have purposely made visible to the public and the members of the NPG. This can be taken as the representation of the way in which they have positioned themselves within this space.

The membership lists and minutes mentioned in the table above were used to create a network map of the different institutional and individual actors invited to participate in the process. This method is a simplified form of ‘network ethnography’, which is increasingly being used by researchers to trace contemporary policy networks (e.g. Ball & Junemann, 2012; Hogan, 2016; Shiroma, 2013). Network-ethnography is a methodological approach that can be used to map the emergence of new policy networks (and changes within

existing ones), tracing the way in which they grow or shrink as new actors emerge in multiple educational spaces. Recent network ethnography educational research tends to focus on the emergence of new policy networks that are made up of actors from government, philanthropy, and business (Lewis & Lingard, 2015; Hogan, 2014). Ball and Junemann (2012) use network diagrams to provide a spatial representation of the plethora of public and private agencies that have influence over the direction of educational reform in England. This approach is particularly useful for highlighting the traction of global education businesses in local policy contexts and identifying the spaces where they influence as mapping does not need to be confined to one specific context.

The ANT translation model of change (Latour, 1987; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998; Callon et al., 1986) argues that as a policy moves through a network, the actors that it comes into contact with translate it. While this idea is developed in Chapter 2, it is important to note that the extent to which the policy agenda is distorted, and the way in which it changes, depends on the interests of these actors and their level of participation in the network. The identification of these interests is a crucial step in an ANT analysis of policy translation. I therefore use ‘policy ethnography’ techniques to map the complex web of institutional interests that exist within policy networks, which is required in order to answer the first of my core research questions in the thesis:

‘Who or what was included in or excluded from the spaces of policy translation?’

There are, of course, a number of limitations to the application of ‘network as method’, many of which centre on an inability to capture the more ‘social’ elements of networks, such as the distribution of power and network relations. I accept these limitations, but argue that the use of interview data allows me to move beyond this representational image and explore the relational and social aspects of the policy network.

2.2.5 Personal reflections: my positionality within the data

In this section I draw on the discussion at the beginning of this chapter to highlight a number of tensions and dilemmas that arose during the collection and analysis of interview data. I describe the steps taken to deal with each of these issues and reflect upon my positionality within the data.

Many of these methodological issues are related to conducting research with and relying on the insights of individuals who operate *inside* the policy process: policy actors. These individuals can often be constrained in interview situations by their professional positions and stick to the ‘official line’ (Welch et al., 2016). The potential implications of this are that interview data will consist of carefully edited representations of information that it is already publicly available. While I was conducting my interviews, I noticed that this often appeared to be the case. Individuals were constrained by their professional positions, but also by their positions within the NPG or sub-groups. This was evident because some respondents would often find ways to answer the question without actually answering the question. While others would provide me with details and thoughtful insight once the tape was switched off, commenting that they could not do this on record. However, the extent to which this happened appeared to vary depending which institutional actor they represented. For example, one member of the civil service appeared to be extremely restricted in what they could say. Two meetings and a copy of the interview questions were requested prior to acceptance of the interview request and during the interview process, the respondent declined to answer specific questions. Responses provided appeared to align closely with official information provided on the Scottish Government website, the government’s official response to ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ (Scottish Government, 2011a) and the original ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ report. It was extremely difficult to obtain any additional details that were not already publicly available.

It is important to consider the timing of interviews here as well. Given the ‘real time’ element of this research, some interviews were conducted at the beginning of the NPG, while others were conducted towards the end or even once the NPG had come to a close. Those conducted at the beginning tended to be much less revealing than those at the end of the process. The interview described above was one of the very first interviews that I conducted. Not only was this individual constrained by their professional position, they were also constrained by time. Furthermore, as the NPG was established and governed by the Scottish Government, there might be a larger degree of accountability afforded to this actor. A reluctance to comment on future directions while the policy was still in early stages of translation can only be expected.

However, this is where an actor-network theory approach becomes particularly useful, as it allows the researcher to distance themselves from the ‘human’. As well as trying to gain

actors' views about the process, my research was interested in the way that institutional actors positioned themselves within the process. In such an exploration, the 'official line' is actually quite useful as it provides an insight into the way that institutional actors would *like* to be perceived within the policy process and the wider policy space, which is linked closely to their interests and agendas.

My experience of interviewing teacher union representatives was quite different. These individuals tended to be more open in their responses, freely stating their thoughts and concerns about the process and wider reform agenda. Bold claims were made about the underrepresentation of teachers within the process, and the consequences of this for implementation. Initially, this surprised me, but then I realised that this was their role within the process: to act as the voice for the teaching profession. Although thoughts and concerns appeared to run freely in the interviews, when I returned to analyse the data, I realised that their responses were simply unedited versions of the 'official line' and that they were using the interview process to position teacher unions within the policy space.

As I conducted more interviews, I realised that a large majority of respondents were using this process in a strategic manner to promote particular positions and place their institutional actor in a positive light. Some respondents even used this platform to subtly complain about the role of institutional actors (and individuals) within the wider process of reform, highlighting the competitive nature of reform. This made it quite difficult to determine whether respondents were giving me an honest description of the process, or distorting their experiences to better position themselves. It was interesting to note that when I pushed respondents to elaborate on these kinds of comments, they were reluctant to do so, stating that 'everybody gets on in Scottish education, we all agree'. It was clear the 'myth' around consensus in Scottish education (as described in Chapter 1) was being used as a 'mask' within the interviews to cover up the disconnects and divergent agendas that were being revealed.

Although methodologically alarming, such responses need not be problematic. One way around this is to consider each interview as being part of a 'story' (Grek, 2011), with a particular plot and following certain conventions. Once I became familiar with these stories, I could begin to look for tensions between actor narratives and official discourse from the NPG and its sub-groups. In the end, these 'stories' were particularly useful as

they gave me some insight into the way that institutional actors were positioning themselves within this space.

Another methodological tension that I introduced at the beginning of this chapter arises from the nature of the policy community in Scottish education. Given the size and close-knit nature of the Scottish education policy community, it was possible to identify actors from interview data even if this was anonymised, which held clear ethical implications for the use of my data. Lancaster (2017) highlights the fluid nature of policy actors, power, and vulnerability in the research interview process, which she suggests became particularly evident in the post-interview analysis. I was acutely aware of issues of confidentiality and anonymity within my research, given nature of the policy community and the ‘real time’ element of the study. The majority of actors I interviewed had prominent positions within key organisations in Scottish education, so the nature of the data obtained could be regarded as being politically sensitive.

Following a lengthy application process for ethical approval from the University of Glasgow, I made the decision to only use direct quotations from interview data once permission had been granted from the interview participant. On the plain language statement and consent form, I made it clear that I would seek permission to use direct quotations in presentations and papers by email. Thus far, this has not been problematic. While I was choosing what data to use as examples in conference presentations and in the findings chapters of this thesis, I consciously omitted any data that could be used to identify respondents. In many ways, this was frustrating, as I felt restricted in my ability to describe particular statements and views. I also decided to exclude any data where individual actors were using the interview process as a channel to complain about the way that particular individuals behaved within the NPG, its sub groups or the wider process. Nevertheless, it is important to note that just because I did not use this information does not mean that it did not inform my analysis.

Additional pieces of data that were removed were instances where respondents were unsure about elements of the policy and visibly concerned about their lack of knowledge. One example of this was one respondent told me that they did not know what teacher professionalism actually means. Given that all fifty of the recommendations centre on the need to improve teacher professionalism, this was quite a significant finding. However, I felt that it would be unethical to use this within my thesis.

The findings of this research deal with some sensitive issues around the politics of partnership between key organisations in Scottish education, including the government. Throughout this thesis, I have been aware of the delicate nature of my findings, as well as the need not to offend key organisations that I may collaborate with in the future. Furthermore, as my research career began to grow, I became more familiar with a number of my respondents, embarking on new projects with them. It became particularly difficult to decide on a way to present my findings that would not be offensive to these individuals. What is presented in Chapters 5 and 6 must therefore be understood as a carefully edited version of the interview data.

While it can be notoriously difficult to gain access to the policy community, a well-connected network can increase the number of opportunities to connect with potential participants, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will agree to an interview. I certainly found this to be the case. It was not unusual for respondents to pass me contact details for other members of the NPG or its sub-groups. There were also a number of times where I travelled to an organisation to conduct an interview and was introduced to another potential interview participant. Initial access to the NPG and its sub-groups was difficult, as described earlier in this chapter. However, once the research grew momentum and I began making more connections with this community, it became much easier. It should also be noted here that having the author of 'Teaching Scotland's Future', Professor Graham Donaldson, as my supervisor may have also been beneficial in this respect. I say more about this particular issue at the end of this chapter.

An alternative method for gaining access to the policy community is to play the role of 'outsider'. Female scholars in this area (Grek, 2011; Ozga & Gewirtz, 1994) have previously written about the benefits and limitations of being an early-career female researcher in this area of research, suggesting that these characteristics can often lead to being perceived as the 'unthreatening' or 'unimportant' researcher. Within my research, I felt that I was often perceived as young and inexperienced, which is perhaps to be expected as a doctoral student. At times, this worked to my advantage. Working on the presumption that I lacked knowledge about the politics of Scottish education, respondents would often go into great detail about the nature of policy processes, describing the behaviour of different institutional actors, the traditions and beliefs that shaped their work, and the unique culture within which they operated. There were also times when I felt that

respondents were more open than I expected this to be, and I put this down to an assumption that this research was relatively harmless. Being a young researcher worked to my advantage and some instances, and led to the collection of richer and more detailed data.

The downside of being regarded as the ‘inexperienced’ researcher is that experienced respondents can take control over the interview process, deflecting and reshaping questions to suit the type of response they want to provide. I often found that this was the case, particularly with individuals who might be considered as key members of the traditional ‘policy community’. They would often control the flow of the interview and speak at great length about issues that were not always entirely relevant to my questions. There was even the odd occasion where they tried to tell me what I would find in other interviews, for example: “You’ll find that I’m quite sure when you talk to people” and “you will have found all that” (Interview Respondent, Anonymous). The same respondent also used this technique to add in new questions: “it’s a question you probably want to ask anyway...” I became aware of this when I listened back to the recording but I did not see it as methodologically problematic. The worst implication of this behaviour was that it led to lengthy interview transcripts with content that was slightly off topic.

The final methodological issue that I discuss here – although it might also be considered as an ethical issue - concerns having the author of ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ as my supervisor: Professor Graham Donaldson. This might be considered as a somewhat unusual supervisory arrangement, and indeed, many interview respondents (and colleagues) shared concerns about my ability to evaluate the process objectively. In many ways, this arrangement did shape my research; however, I was aware of the potential implications from the very beginning, and made a conscious effort to take a step back and reflect on the decisions that I was taking. Although it was sometimes difficult to take a critical standpoint and to argue this within supervision meetings, a number of factors reduced the extent to which this was problematic. Firstly, I had three supervisors from the beginning, and two towards the end, which allowed for balanced guidance. Second, I was exploring the *process* by which the recommendations from ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ were implemented, not the *content* of the policy itself. While Professor Graham Donaldson was responsible for the recommendations and overall agenda set out within the Report, it was the Scottish Government who established the NPG and the processes by which it would

work. Therefore, what I was looking was not anything that my supervisor had created, but a process that was put in place to implement his recommendations.

In many ways, having access to the mind behind the policy was incredibly useful and I felt very lucky to be in this position. He provided me with a great deal of contextual understanding, particularly around the politics of Scottish education and the relationships between different institutional actors. As someone who was a complete ‘outsider’ to this world, this was invaluable. It allowed me to approach data collection and analysis with a level of insight that would not have been possible otherwise.

2.3 Chapter Summary

The first part of this chapter introduced the main ideas and approaches that have underpinned my research processes and from which I have created a conceptual framework for this thesis. While I acknowledge that there are many different ways to understand processes of policy-making, and a range of conceptual models exist, I have outlined a number of theoretical approaches, ideas, and concepts that I have identified as being particularly suited to this area of policy analysis, defined key elements of analysis and terminology, and demonstrated how the ones I have chosen are particularly and appropriately incorporated into my research.

The overall approach that I have used is critical policy analysis (Taylor *et al.*, 1997), which highlights the importance of exploring the *process* by which policy is made, and illuminating issues of *voice*, *representation*, *ex/inclusion*, and *consultation*. The policy process of interest here must be understood as existing in the wider context of network governance, and as such, is characterised by the government’s dependence on policy networks. Drawing on the work of Rhodes (2006), this research conceptualises the NPG and its sub-groups as a particular kind of policy network: a policy community, that is shaped and governed by specific network rules and culture. The network operates through a process of resource-exchange, but this does not guarantee a balance of power between actors.

Ball’s (2012) network ethnography has been particularly useful in suggesting an approach by which the institutional interests of the network can be mapped and presented

diagrammatically. This highlighted the importance of network structure and membership, which confirmed the importance of identifying inclusions to and exclusions from the network. A growing area of literature in the area of policy networks questions the democratic legitimacy of networks using key anchorage points. I draw on this to explore the representation of institutional actors within the network.

Sørensen and Torfing's work on democratic network governance (2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009) became central to my analysis of policy networks. While the theories and concepts mentioned above led to an exploration of network structure, membership, culture, and actor participation, this literature allowed me to ask some important questions about the democratic legitimacy of the networks. This has been particularly useful in illuminating a number of democratic problems with the way that this policy has been made and implemented.

I discussed a number of contributions that ANT can make to policy analysis, introducing two key concepts of this research: the process of translation (Callon, 1986) and the idea of the 'token' (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) which I conceptualise as the main agenda set out by TSF. Although ANT is a novel approach in educational research, I argued that it has been particularly useful for exploring the participation of institutional actors within the process.

The second part of this chapter described the design of the research, and the methods employed to gather and analyse data. It began with an introduction of methodological tensions that can occur when conducting policy analysis, particularly when this requires conducting interviews with policy elites and other actors who are central to the process. I then outlined the different stages of data collection and analysis, describing first the conduction of semi-structured with members of the NPG and its sub-groups with particular attention paid to the way in which these were carried out. This discussion then moved to the analysis of interview transcripts where I provided a detailed account of each step within this process. Following on from this, I discussed my use of document analysis and network ethnography; two methods that allowed me to develop a better understanding of the overall process and the institutional interests that were represented within the network. I finished this chapter by returning to the initial discussion of methodological tensions, and considering the different ways that some of them manifested within my research. This final section deals with some complex and sensitive methodological and ethical issues, and provides an overall reflection on my positionality within the data.

Chapter 3 The policy context for ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future

The period that followed devolution until the publication of TSF Scottish education can be recognised as a period of significant transformation. This transformation can be categorised into three interlocking areas: school curriculum and assessment, teacher education and teacher work and conditions. This extensive reform emerged from the enactment of a number of major policy initiatives all of which sit within a broader public policy reform agenda. It might be suggested that these policies have been developed in such a way that they can be seen to support each other, and in this chapter I consider TSF as the strategic puzzle piece that holds them all together.

The layout of Chapter 4 falls into two distinct parts. The first provides a brief summary of the policies most closely aligned with TSF in order to build a picture of the wider policy context within which TSF sits. Given that this thesis focusses predominantly on the *making* of policy rather than its content, I have attempted to highlight some of the processes by which policies were made as well as describe their overall aims and objectives. Central to this is the identification of the network of actors involved in policy development. Where possible, I have drawn on basic network ethnography techniques in order to provide some insight into the membership basis of these networks.

3.1.1 McCrone reviews

In September 1999, the Scottish Executive established an independent Committee of Inquiry of Service for Teachers. Professor Gavin McCrone of the then Scottish Executive chaired the committee and the emergent reviews and associated policy have therefore come to be known as the ‘McCrone Inquiry’. The development of this committee was a direct response to the apparent ‘breakdown in negotiations’ over teacher pay and conditions between local authorities and teaching unions in the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee (SJNC). The committee’s remit was to conduct a wide-scale inquiry into:

...How teachers' pay, promotion structures and conditions of service should be changed in order to ensure a committed, professional and flexible teaching force which will secure high and improving standards of school education for all children in Scotland into the new Millennium; and the future arrangements for determining teachers' pay and conditions in Scotland following the removal of the statutory basis of the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee proposed by the Scottish Executive. (Scottish Executive, 2000, p. 1)

The nature of the consultation³¹ exercise appeared to be inclusive and extensive, with teachers, parents, pupils, local authorities, professional bodies, and institutions all invited to participate. This seems to align with the policy process I described in Chapter 1. According to the report of the committee (Scottish Executive, 2000) copies of its consultation document were sent to “every school, school board and parent teacher organisation in Scotland; to local authority employers and teaching unions; to Members of the Scottish Parliament; and to every organisation with an interest in Scottish education” (p. 1). This large-scale circulation generated almost 2,600 written submissions to the inquiry, many of which were from individual teachers. Following this, the committee visited fourteen schools, to speak to teachers, support staff, parents and children.

The findings from the inquiry were published in the report, *‘A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century: the report of inquiry into professional conditions of service for teachers’* (Scottish Executive, 2000). The report highlighted several areas of teacher concerns regarding their conditions of work, such as an increasing number of policy initiatives that have “substantially increased the burden upon them”, and a perceived increase in the amount of bureaucracy in teaching. Some teachers reported that they felt ‘misunderstood’ and ‘under-valued’ by the general public and ‘over-worked’ and ‘underpaid’ by local authorities. According to the Committee, these issues had a “profoundly negative effect” on teacher morale and well-being, with a number of teachers stating that they would like to leave the profession (Scottish Executive, 2000, p. 2).

In response to the report and recommendations discussed above, an Implementation Group was formed in September 2000 to discuss best practice for implementing the recommendations within the report. This group consisted of representatives from the Scottish Executive, employers via the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA),

³¹ In addition to the consultation phase, the Committee commissioned two pieces of independent research. One compared teachers' pay with other professions over a 25-year period. The second compared teachers' pay in 1999 to other occupations requiring similar skills and competences, both in the public and the private sectors.

and representatives from teacher organisations. This model is common to Scottish education, and as we will see, was mirrored in the implementation of TSF.

This phase of work undertaken by the Implementation Group can be regarded as a “stage”³² of the ‘policy-making’ process, where extensive discussion, dialogue, and potential ‘bargaining’ between key members ultimately leads to a number of policy decisions (Rhodes, 2006). In such an environment, different organisational interests come into play, making the policy space messy and complex. The interplay of these different interests and ideas shape the overall outcome of the process: in this case, this was the agreement laid out in the report.

Within the introduction of the report (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p.1), the authors highlight the importance of “a genuine openness among the different interests represented” and “a willingness to listen and to try to understand other points of view”, suggesting that future working relationships between teacher organisations, employers, and the Scottish Executive should be based on “mutual respect and understanding, on shared responsibility and on shared development”. This provides those external to the process with an interesting insight into intended future models of policy development in Scottish education, and indicates some of the difficulties that can arise when creating policy in partnership. The number of different organisational interests represented within this network is worthy of note. Although this group may be considered as quite large (28 members), the array of organisational interests is relatively small (9 institutional actors are listed) when compared to the NPG for example (see Table 6).

³² However, it is important to stress that the policy process should not be understood as consisting of distinct stages, but messy overlapping spaces in a process of enactment.

Table 6 Membership of Implementation Group

Institutional Actor	Number of Representatives
Scottish Parliament	2
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)	6
COSLA Advisor	4
Association of Headteachers and Deputes in Scotland (AHDS)	1
Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)	2
HAS	1
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) Scotland	1
Professional Association of Teachers (PAT)	1
Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (STA)	1
Unspecified Advisor	4
Scottish Executive	2
Scottish Executive Secretariat	3

Scottish Executive (2001a, p. 23)

An agreement on how to take the recommendations from the McCrone Inquiry forward was reached in January 2001 by the Implementation Group, and outlined in the report '*A teaching profession for the 21st century: Agreement reached following recommendations made in the McCrone Report*' (TPT1) (Scottish Executive, 2001a). Key developments arising from this agreement include: confirmation of the introduction of the Chartered Teacher (CT) Scheme, confirmation of the introduction of the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS), a two stage commissioned review of ITE (Scottish Executive, 2001b; 2005), and, of most significance to the development of TSF, the formal definition of a 35 hour working week in order to create space for planning, preparation, and continuous professional

development (CPD). It also included changes in the purpose, content, and control of CPD, recognising it as an important route for strengthening the teaching profession.

3.1.2 First and Second Stage Reviews of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

The first stage review of ITE, as recommended by the McCrone Inquiry and confirmed in the McCrone Agreement, was conducted by private sector consultants, Deloitte and Touche, on behalf of the Scottish Executive (2001b). The overall aim of this large-scale review was to provide a “short, focused, early examination of some key aspects of ITE” (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 1), and it was therefore conducted over a seven-week period. The time-scale contrasts greatly to that of the second stage review, which is discussed in the subsequent section. Of particular relevance to TSF was the focus on partnership arrangements, which was listed as a ‘pressing topic’ in ITE.

The review process was extensive; despite being carried out within a strict timescale. Over fifty ‘consultees’ are listed as having participated in the review, along with their colleagues. A number of areas in need of further development were identified, and the overall significant objective underpinning all of them was the need to strengthen partnership working in teacher education between teacher education institutions and local authorities. This is significant, given that the strengthening of partnerships is one of the main tenants of TSF, and suggests that the development of partnership between universities and local authorities is a longstanding issue.

The second stage review (Scottish Executive, 2005) involved a fourteen-member committee, consisting of established individuals from the Scottish education policy community, including representatives from the government, local authorities, teacher unions, HMIE, university faculties of education, and the general teaching council for Scotland (GTCS), as demonstrated by Table 7 below.

Table 7 Membership of Review Group: Second Stage Review of ITE

Institutional Actor	Number of Representatives
GTCS	1
Universities	3
Local Authorities	3
EIS	1
Teacher	1
HMIE	1
Scottish Executive	4

This serves as another example of the ‘Scottish style’ of policy making, where government establishes a network of actors to oversee and shape the development of policy.

The focus of the review was quite broad, but included an exploration of the competences and values required by newly-qualified teachers in relation to the Standard for Initial Teacher Education and the investigation of partnerships between schools, universities and local authorities.

A small number of official evaluations have been conducted in order to explore the impact of the McCrone Reports and Agreement on teachers’ work and ITE. A report by HMIE (2007) acknowledged that processes had been put into place; however, it reported that the output of these processes did not seem to make much difference. It is difficult to say whether either of the review stages led to radical changes in provision. The second stage review, according to Menter and Hulme (2008, p. 325) “provided a few headlines but virtually no action whatsoever”. It is unclear why these policies appeared to have little impact. However, it is possible that the process used to develop and implement reform restricted the extent to which change could occur and that the strict timeline deterred tangible progress. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, Scottish education is well

known for its sense of conservatism and resistance to change, and this perhaps highlights the conservative nature of policy processes in teacher education.

3.1.5 A Curriculum for Excellence

A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) was arguably the most significant policy initiative to emerge within a post-devolution Scottish context, and has been referred to as a ‘landmark development’ in Scottish education (Priestley & Humes, 2010). In short, CfE aims to support children and young people in gaining a range of qualifications and experiences that meet their individual needs and ambitions. CfE is considered as significant because it is the first systematic attempt to combine disparate strands of Scottish curriculum policy, bringing together early years education, primary and secondary schooling, and post-compulsory education. At the heart of CfE are four capacities, which communicate an aspiration for all children and young people to be able to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors to society.

A major theme within CfE is the notion of *flexibility*, which is used to describe the content and structure of the curriculum itself, as well as the intended nature of how it should be developed: “This is not a once-and-for-all task but a continuing process. The curriculum must develop and change so that it continues to meet the needs of our young people. There will be a continuing cycle of evaluation, refreshment and renewal...” (Scottish Executive, 2004, p. 6).

It has been described by its creators as “one of the most ambitious programmes of educational change ever undertaken in Scotland” (Scottish Government, 2008, p. 8); indeed, it has taken almost a decade to embed within schools. CfE has been at the centre of education reform since the early 2000s and continued to dominate the wider educational change landscape in Scotland until the publication of the Scottish Government’s (2016b) ‘National Improvement Framework’ (NIF). Although its development began in 2002, it was only officially ‘enacted’ in Scottish schools from August 2010 and was still evolving at the time that I conducted my research on the NPG.

The policy texts, associated with CfE positions teachers as ‘agents of change’, who as professionals should become ‘co-developers’ of the school curriculum. The Curriculum

Review Programme Board, who were responsible for developing the architecture of the new curriculum, stated that their approach aimed to “engage teachers in thinking from first principles about their educational aims and values in their classroom practice”, with an emphasis on the importance of ‘reflective practitioners’ who ‘share’ and ‘develop ideas’. They stated that there would be a deliberate move away from “central guidelines, cascade models of staff development and the provision of resources to support implementation”. This indicated the need for a culture shift amongst the teaching profession, and a shift in responsibility for the development of educational change from government to teachers themselves.

However, it has attracted criticism for its vagueness and perceived lack of support on offer for teachers from the government (Priestly, 2010). Many teachers seek reassurance in the form of clear specification, something which is not offered by the new assessment framework proposed by this reform (Humes, 2013). Teachers were not averse to the ideas being promoted, but wary of a goal set forth with no clear path to achieving it.

More than ten years on, it appears that CfE is still not fully embedded in Scottish schools. The “future well-being of Scotland is dependent in large measure on its potential being realised” (Donaldson, 2011, p. 2), but for this to happen, full acceptance by the teaching profession of Scotland needs to be achieved. The attitudes and willingness of teachers to engage with this reform are fundamental to its success.

3.1.6 Advancing Professionalism in Teaching: McCormac

In January 2011, just as Donaldson’s review of teacher education in Scotland was published, Gerry McCormac of the University of Stirling was invited by the Scottish Government to chair a review of all aspects of the McCrone Agreement. The overarching aim of the review was to “examine the terms and conditions and make recommendations that improve outcomes for the children and young people who attend Scotland’s schools” (Scottish Government, 2011b, 52). Particular issues of interest included the need for a flexible, creative, learner-centred teaching profession (which is supportive of Curriculum for Excellence), the degree to which the McCrone Agreement is delivering all the intended benefits, public expenditure issues and affordability, the need for a teacher workforce that is of an appropriate size and quality, the need to continue to attract talented people into

teaching, and methods by which to recognise and encourage excellence in the classroom. Also addressed were the need to develop leadership capacity to improve education, the role of other staff in schools and the relationship between their responsibilities and those of teachers, the recommendations of the Donaldson review of teacher education, and teachers' class contact time (Scottish Government, 2011b).

For the purpose of that review, McCormac chaired a committee consisting of seven members and a secretary³³. This review committee gathered a variety of evidence from a wide range of sources, although the majority of information was collected from teachers. The published report, 'Advancing Professionalism in Teaching: A report of a review of teacher employment in Scotland' (Scottish Government, 2011b) strongly emphasised the importance of basing recommendations on evidence gathered through an open and inclusive approach. Evidence used to shape the report included the outcomes of meetings with teachers, employer's representatives, parents, pupils, and other interested parties. The review committee also issued a call for evidence that resulted in almost 3,400 responses.

Following analysis of this evidence, a total of 34 recommendations were developed by the committee that covered the entirety of teachers' employment. Specific themes under which these recommendations can be categorised include the development of the profession, career structure, the school week, teacher pay, job-structure arrangements, additional school staff, and regulating bodies and committees. However, it is evident that the main themes that emerge from the report are teacher flexibility and enhanced professionalism, which is perhaps unsurprising given the closeness to TSF.

There was a mixed response from teachers to the recommendations from this report, with many teachers and professional bodies feeling that the report lacked detail and that some recommendations could be interpreted in potentially damaging ways (TESS, 2011). While recommendations relating to CPD were mostly received positively by teachers, others were received rather negatively (TESS, 2011), particularly the recommendation concerning the future of the chartered teacher grade. According to the report, the concept of chartered teacher has been unsuccessful since it was introduced by the McCrone Agreement in 2001,

³³Membership of the review committee: Chair: Professor Gerry McCormac - Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling; Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh - Solicitor/Businesswoman/Actress, Hamilton Burns WS Solicitors, Glasgow; Professor Graham Donaldson CB - Former Senior Chief inspector of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education/University of Glasgow, School of Education; Isabelle Boyd CBE - Head teacher, Cardinal Newman High School, Bellshill; Sue Bruce - Chief Executive, City of Edinburgh Council; Moira McCrossan - Retired primary Head teacher/past President of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS); Alf Young - Journalist/Economic commentator; Secretary: David Roy (Scottish Government).

and therefore recommended that the opportunity of chartered teacher should be discontinued. Many teachers, professional bodies, and teacher organisations did not receive this recommendation positively. In fact, the Association of Chartered Teachers Scotland (ACTS) stated the following within an official document which was published in response to the McCormac Review, “the report fails to recognise the important roles Chartered Teachers are currently providing in delivering a modern and rapidly changing curriculum, and their potential to lead future development in this area” (ACTS, 2011, p. 1).

It is interesting to note that Donaldson was one of the individuals in McCormac’s review committee. These two reviews appear to be intertwined, not only in their vision and aspirations for Scottish education, but also in their intended function, “...we view our recommendations as enabling many of the recommendations made by the Donaldson Report” (Scottish Government, 2011b). One intended purpose of McCormac’s recommendations is therefore to create the circumstances required for successful implementation of Donaldson’s recommendations, and in this way the reports can be seen to complement each other. Indeed, Michael Russell, the Minister for Education, said this during a Meeting of Parliament on the 9th of February 2012, “the interlinking of the two is well seen in Graham Donaldson’s involvement with the McCormac review panel...Graham Donaldson’s involvement was fairly crucial because we knew from the outset that his report would have to dovetail with the recommendations of a review of terms and conditions” (Scottish Parliament, 2012).

3.2 Teaching Scotland’s Future as a Policy Process

In this section, I describe what could be considered as the different ‘stages’ of the policy process, although in reality this is not to be considered a linear process. These ‘stages’ are entangled and must be understood as overlapping. The diagram below (Figure 1) provides a pictorial representation of the timelines associated with the policy process.



Figure 2 Teaching Scotland's Future: Policy Process

In 2009, the Scottish Government invited Graham Donaldson, recently retired Senior Chief Inspector of Her Majesty's (HM) Inspectorate of Education, to conduct a 'fundamental review of teacher education in Scotland'. 'Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a review

of teacher education in Scotland', hereafter referred to as the Report (or TSF), was published in January 2011³⁴.

The Report contained fifty recommendations addressing all stages of teacher education, which were “designed to help to build the professional capacity of our teachers and ultimately to improve the learning of the young people of Scotland” (Donaldson, 2011, p. iii). The ultimate purpose of TSF could therefore be seen as improving pupil learning and further strengthening the role that education plays in ‘building Scotland’s future’, although its recommendations focus purely on the capacity of the teaching profession. When compared to the two reviews of teacher education discussed previously in this chapter, TSF is distinct in that it covers the entire spectrum of teacher education, spanning all elements across the career of the Scottish teacher.

Shortly after the publication of the Report, the Scottish Government (2011) published their official response, ‘Continuing to Build Excellence in Teaching: The Scottish Government’s Response to *Teaching Scotland’s Future*’. In this response, the Scottish Government made clear their acceptance of all fifty recommendations, either in full, in part, or in principle. While this appears to equate to full acceptance of all fifty recommendations, in actuality it does not, but represents an early stage of policy diffusion through translation. I discuss this in more detail further in this chapter.

The changes proposed by the Report the Scottish Government’s response stressed the importance of a collective effort between universities, schools, local authorities, and other organisations involved in the provision of teacher education, and announced their intentions to bring together the above partners in a ‘National Partnership Group for *Teaching Scotland’s Future*’, hereafter referred to as the NPG.

The NPG represented a wide range of stakeholder interests, and was provided with a remit to “establish the new and strengthened partnership working to support delivery of effective teacher education and professional development in every school in Scotland” (Scottish Government, 2011, p. 2). The response also asked the NPG to delegate aspects of their

³⁴ At this point it is important to note that I use the term TSF to refer to the wider policy agenda set out in the Report, and further developed through the policy process, and ‘Report’ or ‘TSF Report’ to refer only to the policy text.

work to “focused and time-limited working groups” (Scottish Government, 2011, p. 2), which I discuss in detail further in this chapter.

Following almost two years of being in operation, the NPG published their own report of recommendations in September 2012, ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future – National Partnership Group: Report to Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning’ (Scottish Government, 2012). This document contained 20 proposals for the continued implementation of the recommendations from the Report; the most significant of these was the recommendation to establish a new body to oversee further stages of implementation and to increase the drive for achieving positive change: the National Implementation Board (NIB). The publication of their report signalled the end of the NPGs work, and in November 2012 the Scottish Government established the NIB.

3.2.1 The Review

If we are to look at this through an ANT lens, the Review can be seen as part of the first ‘moment’ of the sociology of translation (Callon, 1986). The commissioning of the Review and the design of its remit can be conceptualised as key ‘policy moments’ (Hamilton, 2012). Before I describe the review process, I will briefly outline the context within which it was commissioned. In doing so, I will consider some possible drivers behind the Review and Professor Graham Donaldson’s appointment as ‘Reviewer’.

First of all, the act of commissioning a Review would suggest that there may have been some perceived inadequacies within Scottish teacher education or concerns about the capacity of the teaching profession; however, these concerns were not made explicit by either the Scottish Government or Donaldson himself. That there was a need for educational reform is suggestive of an inadequate system that must be changed and improved (Ball, 2013, p. 9).

Within this chapter, I conceptualise the commissioning of the Review as the ‘first stage’ of the policy process, which (mirroring all policy process generally) is a messy, complex, and continuously evolving cycle. It can be described as this: it is policy as ‘process’ of forward momentum which leads to a ‘product’ which then leads to a new, evolved ‘process’. The

product and process become simultaneous in their evolution and enactment and cannot be detached from each other.

3.2.2 Drivers of the Review: Partnership and Professionalism

One possible driver behind the motivation for and forward momentum of the Review is likely to have been the perceived lack of progress following previous reviews of teacher education. The two stage review of ITE that proceeded ‘A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century’ (McCrone Agreement; Scottish Executive, 2001) highlighted, among other things, a number of issues with partnership working in ITE, yet little significant change followed (Menter & Hulme, 2011; Smith, Brisard & Menter, 2006). It is possible that this perceived lack of action, coupled with longstanding tensions related to the ongoing development and strengthening of partnerships between key actors in Scottish education, was one of several factors that created a conducive climate for further review.

Another place that might provide us with a rationale for this momentum is the HMIE Report ‘Improving Scottish Education 2005-2008’ (HMIE, 2009). This report identified a number of priorities in the development of Scottish education, one of which was to ensure:

... challenge and progression in learning through imaginative, *well-judged teaching*, leading to the achievement of high levels of understanding and skill. [...] Using curriculum reform to *find fresh ways of engaging learners* in deep and challenging learning, to increase levels of achievement for all learners and in particular to improve standards in literacy, numeracy and science” (p. 95)

This statement has clear implications for the intended direction of change in the nature of teaching, and suggests the need to develop a different style of pedagogy.

The HMIE report asserted the need for teachers to take an active role in the formation of curriculum and promoted the importance of teacher agency, which is a key theme of TSF:

All members of staff need to play their part... in leading learning and curriculum innovation... [...] Priorities [include] increasing teachers’ capacity to operate confidently and competently within a less directed environment (p. 96).

Another commonality between the HMIE Report and TSF is Donaldson himself. It is perhaps unsurprising to find similarities between the focus of these two reports given that Donaldson, who had previously been the Chief Inspector of HMIE, was leading the Review.

The reasons behind the establishment of the Review have not been made explicit by the Scottish Government or Donaldson himself, leading many in Scottish education to suggest that there was a lack of clarity around what actually led to the establishment of the Review (Menter & Hulme, 2011; Smith, 2011).

Prof. Graham Donaldson led the Review, supported by four seconded staff. The Review team were based in Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), now Education Scotland throughout the review process, which began in February 2010, and reported to the Scottish Government in December 2010. Their remit was as follows:

To consider the best arrangements for the full continuum of teacher education in primary and secondary schools in Scotland. The Review should consider initial teacher education, induction and professional development and the interaction between them.
(Donaldson, 2011, p. 106)

3.2.3 The Review Process

When compared to previous reviews of teacher education and the teaching profession in Scotland, TSF can be regarded as distinct as it covers the entire spectrum of teacher education, spanning all elements across the career of the Scottish teacher. The Review process is not the main focus of this thesis, but is of significance because it was the first moment of policy translation. Of interest here is the network of actors involved in this early stage of the policy process. Just as I will argue that this occurred within TSF, we see the complexity in the voices that may or may not have been translated into the agenda before it emerged in the form of a policy text.

The Review was supported by a Reference Group, which consisted of a number of representatives “drawn from each of the main groups covered by its remit” (Donaldson,

2011, p. 108). The members and the organisation/group that they officially represented are listed below:

- Newly Qualified Teacher, Edinburgh City Council (became member of NPG)
- Secondary Head teacher, Stirling City Council
- Primary Head teacher, West Lothian Council
- Executive Director of Education, Fife Council, ADES
- Chief Executive, Law Society of Scotland
- Chartered Teacher, University of Aberdeen
- Academic, University of Edinburgh, STEC
- Secondary Teacher, Glasgow City Council
- Head teacher (Special School), Highland Council
- Chief Executive, NHS Education Scotland (became member of NIB)

One notable feature of this network is the number of teachers and head teachers. This could be seen as a significant attempt to engage the teaching profession at the beginning of the policy process, perhaps in line with one of the four ‘principles’ underpinning the Review, inclusivity: “stakeholders to be fully engaged in and share ownership...” (Donaldson, 2011, p. 106). Other principles that were listed as guiding the Review were ‘openness’, ‘pace’ and the need for the review to be ‘evidence-based’. I summarise the Review process briefly below.

- A literature review was commissioned by the Scottish Government (Menter, Hulme, Elliot and Lewin, 2010) to consider the role that teacher education can play in improving the quality and effectiveness of pupil learning. However, concerns were raised about the extent to which the Review team were genuinely informed by the literature review, with some researchers suggesting that it was “used as a tool to validate the objective integrity of the text” (Kennedy & Doherty, 2012, p. 842). Such concerns were based on the apparent misuse of Hoyle’s (1974) notion of ‘extended professionalism’ within the Report. I return to this argument later in this chapter.
- A formal call for evidence was issued in April 2010 and received 99 submissions from organisations and individuals. Diagram x provides an overview of the network of institutional actors involved

- A teacher survey, also launched in April 2010, received 2381 responses. This response rate could be considered as relatively low, given that the number of registered teachers in 2010 exceeded 50, 000 (Scottish Government, 2010).
- The Review team met with a range of stakeholders including: teacher education providers, representative bodies, local authorities, teachers and head teachers, parents and pupils. The team spoke to approximately 150 teachers and 30 pupil council representatives in both primary and secondary schools.
- Additional data on teachers' experiences of induction and CPD was gathered by HMIE
- The team also met with individuals and organisations with an interest in teacher education in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Canada and Australia.
- Graham Donaldson had a range of 'one-to-one meetings' with individuals. Interestingly, a number of respondents requested for the meeting not to be recorded, which indicates concerns connected to transparency and democracy (Chapters 4 and 5).

A variety of methods were used by the Review team to connect and communicate with different networks of actors in Scottish education. Indeed, this process can be seen to be more inclusive than previous reviews of teacher education. However, Smith (2010) reminds us that an 'inclusive' process, such as the formal call for evidence, may serve as a mechanism for members of the traditional 'policy community' (McPherson & Raab, 1988) or 'leadership class' (Humes, 1986) to maintain control over the development of policy. If the development of TSF were to travel no further than the tight inner network of the 'assumptive world' (McPherson & Raab, 1988), then there may have been a danger of recommendations being steeped in conservatism. It can be difficult for new ideas to gain traction in a tight policy network. Therefore, an 'inclusive' process such as the one outlined above, does not necessarily provide opportunities for radical reform. Furthermore, even if actors from outside the traditional policy community participated in the Review, the extent to which their proposals and thoughts were fed in is incredibly difficult to determine.

3.2.4 First Moment of Interest Translation

While responses to the call for evidence and teacher survey were analysed by an independent research company, the Review team were responsible for analysis of the remaining evidence, as well as constructing the Report. As Ball (1994) states, “texts are the product of compromises... they are typically the cannibalized products of multiple (but circumscribed) influences and agendas” (p. 16). The Review team could be seen as ‘gatekeepers’, with the task of filtering multiple influences and agendas, and most importantly, deciding which ones receive a voice. Through an ANT lens, this is significant as this is the first moment in the process where actor interests and agendas could translate their interests into the policy agenda through a process of ‘negotiation’ (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998), leading eventually to the successful enrolment of institutional actors and their representatives. As I described earlier in this thesis, those approaching policy analysis from an ANT perspective would argue that the number and strength of connections that are made between itself and a network of ‘other actors’ is a strong factor in determining the extent to which policy implementation is ‘successful’. The ‘stability’ of a policy agenda therefore increases as the number of actors linked to it increases, and as the strength of those links increase as well.

Drawing on this idea, and wider writings about the model of translation (Latour, 1987; Callon, 1986), I argue that the nature of the Review process and the Review team’s apparent focus on ‘inclusivity’ and ‘openness’ has provided multiple opportunities for key institutional actors to become enrolled in the network. However, enrolment is a complex process, and the extent to which an actor is ‘enrolled’ may depend on a number of interacting factors. In this particular process, I argue that the following are both important: 1) the extent to which institutional actors *believe* their interests have been listened to and subsequently translated into the policy agenda; and 2) the extent to which institutional actors and their representatives *recognise* their interests in the Report.

The main point I would like to make here is that the process used by the Review team has created opportunities for engaging institutional actors (e.g. GTCS, Education Scotland, EIS, SSTA) in Scottish education and the teaching profession in the TSF agenda, thereby increasing the possibility of developing a sense of ownership amongst those most central to its implementation. However, the extent to which actors felt engaged is more difficult to ascertain. Is being given the opportunity to have your voice heard enough to become engaged in the process and develop a sense of ownership?

3.3 The Report

The Report made fifty recommendations relating to the entire spectrum of teacher education, all of which hinge on the development of what is variously referred to as 'twenty-first century professionalism', 'extended professionalism', 'enhanced professionalism' and 'reinvigoration of professionalism'. It also called for greater partnership working between schools, local authorities and universities, and reaffirmed the place of teacher education within higher education (see Chapter 4 for a full examination of the nature of partnership).

3.3.1 The Vision of the Teacher

TSF entertains a vision of teachers as expert practitioners, who are themselves the engines of professional progress. The Report states that they should be empowered as professionals, and distinguished by their capacity for self-determination and judgement. Central to this vision is the belief that teachers should take responsibility for identifying their own professional development needs and locating the relevant provision required. This undeniably raises a number of issues around engagement, motivation, awareness, and accessibility to provision across the workforce.

The most successful education systems invest in developing their teachers as reflective, accomplished, and enquiring professionals who are capable not only of teaching successfully in relation to current external expectations, but who have the capacity to engage fully with the complexities of education and be key actors in shaping and leading educational change (Donaldson, 2011, p4).

Extended professionals are agents of change, not passive or reluctant receivers of externally imposed prescription (Donaldson, 2011, p. 18).

These policy statements say many things about teacher professionalism. However, what is perhaps most significant is the idea of teachers as 'agents of change' who become 'key actors' in the development of change. This suggests that teachers should be seen as policy actors, and included in the formation of education policy. To what extent can teachers be

‘agents of change’ in the policy process? One space in which this concept might be explored is the process set up to implement the policy agenda: the NPG. This included individual teachers as members of the network and I consider the extent to which they consider themselves as ‘agents of change’ in the policy network (Chapter 5).

More specifically, the Report sets out a number of factors that appear to characterise Donaldson’s vision of ‘21st century professionalism’. First, the report highlights the intellectual nature of teaching, positioning it as ‘complex’ and ‘challenging’ within the Report. It makes a call for teachers to take responsibility for their own career long professional learning (CLPL), build their pedagogical expertise, engage with the need for change, undertake development in relation to the improvement in the quality of children’s learning, and evaluate the impact of this on children’s learning. This seems ambitious, but the Report recognises that the success of this depends on the amount of ‘external support’ given to teachers in order to build their professional capacity

TSF states that teachers need to be ‘21st century professionals’ and provide ‘21st century learning’, but there is no definition of what this means. Responsibility for further developing this idea appears to have been given to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). This can be seen in the recommendations below, which are taken from the Report:

Recommendation 35: The *Professional Standards* need to be revised to create a coherent overarching framework and enhanced with practical illustrations of the Standards. This overall framework should reflect a *reconceptualised model of teacher professionalism*.

Recommendation 36: A new ‘Standard for Active Registration’ should be developed to clarify expectations of how fully registered teachers are expected to *continue to develop their skills and competences*. This standard should be *challenging and aspirational, fully embracing enhanced professionalism* for teachers in Scotland.

This suggests that GTCS have been given room to state what the “core knowledge, skills and competences that all teachers need to continually refresh and improve as they progress through their careers” – through the design of the new standard.

The GTCS is positioned in the Report as the main institutional actor to take forward Donaldson’s vision of what the teaching profession should be: ‘agents of change’. This

highlights the powerful role afforded to this institutional actor, before the process of implementation has even begun.

3.4 NPG: Overview of Analysis

In this section, I begin by describing the nature of the work carried out by the NPG and the NIB. I keep this description relatively brief, as it has been developed only from my analysis of official policy documentation, press releases from the Scottish Government website and similar publicly available material. By doing this, I also represent the version of the policy process that has purposefully been made visible. In Chapters 4 and 5, I offer a much more detailed analysis of network processes, drawing on an extensive range of qualitative data gathered through interviews with actors in these networks. By offering these two different perspectives of the policy process, I hope to reveal key differences between the ‘public image’ of policy-making, which is often positioned as a ‘linear process’, and the ‘reality’ of policy-making, which is incredibly complex, messy, and never complete.

In light of this, a further aim of this section is to explore the structure and membership of the NPG. To do this, I use ‘network as method’ (Ball, 2012), which allows me to capture the ‘visible’ aspects of these policy networks. Throughout this thesis, I use the idea of ‘networks’ to firstly describe things, such as groups and communities, as well as the governance of policy processes (i.e. ‘network governance’); and secondly, to explore the nature of the policy process. In Chapters 4 and 5, I use interview data to explore the relational and social aspects of policy networks, and move beyond the ‘representational’ analysis of the NPG and NIB offered in this chapter.

There are, of course, a number of limitations to the application of ‘network as method’, many of which centre on an inability to capture the more ‘social’ elements of networks, such as the distribution of power and network relations. I accept these limitations, but argue that it is a useful technique for representing the complex web of institutional interests that exist within policy networks. This is crucial step in answering one of the core research questions of this thesis, *‘What happens to a policy text as it enters and is translated by a policy network?’* The ANT translation model of change (Callon, 1986; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998; Latour, 1987) argues that as a policy moves through a network, the actors

that it comes into contact with translate it. While this idea is developed in Chapter 2, it is important to note that the extent to which the policy agenda is distorted, and the way in which it changes, depending on the interests of these actors and their level of participation in the network.

As well as encountering a range of interests and agendas, the policy enters a complex network of pre-existing power relationships that are multiplicitous, fluid, and interactive in nature. Ball's (1994, p. 20) insight that "policy texts *enter* rather than simply change power relations" is therefore particularly relevant in this context. I will argue that the membership of the NPG more or less reflects the traditional 'policy architecture' of Scottish education, and as such, there are a number of pre-existing power relations between institutional actors such as Education Scotland, GTCS, universities and ADES, for example. Creating a network map of the NPG and its sub groups and identifying the institutional actors represented within it reveals the spaces where pre-existing power relations exist. It also allows for the identification of new or distorted power relations between institutional actors that have developed during the 'implementation process', and this is a key focus within my findings chapters.

3.4.1 The NPG: Membership and Structure

The NPG was established by the Scottish Government in March 2011, and was in operation until September 2012, when it published its official report of recommendations to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning (Scottish Government, 2012). The report contained 20 proposals for the continued implementation of the agenda set out in the TSF Report. The membership and structure of the NPG, its sub-groups, and the strategic reference group can be seen in the following network diagram.

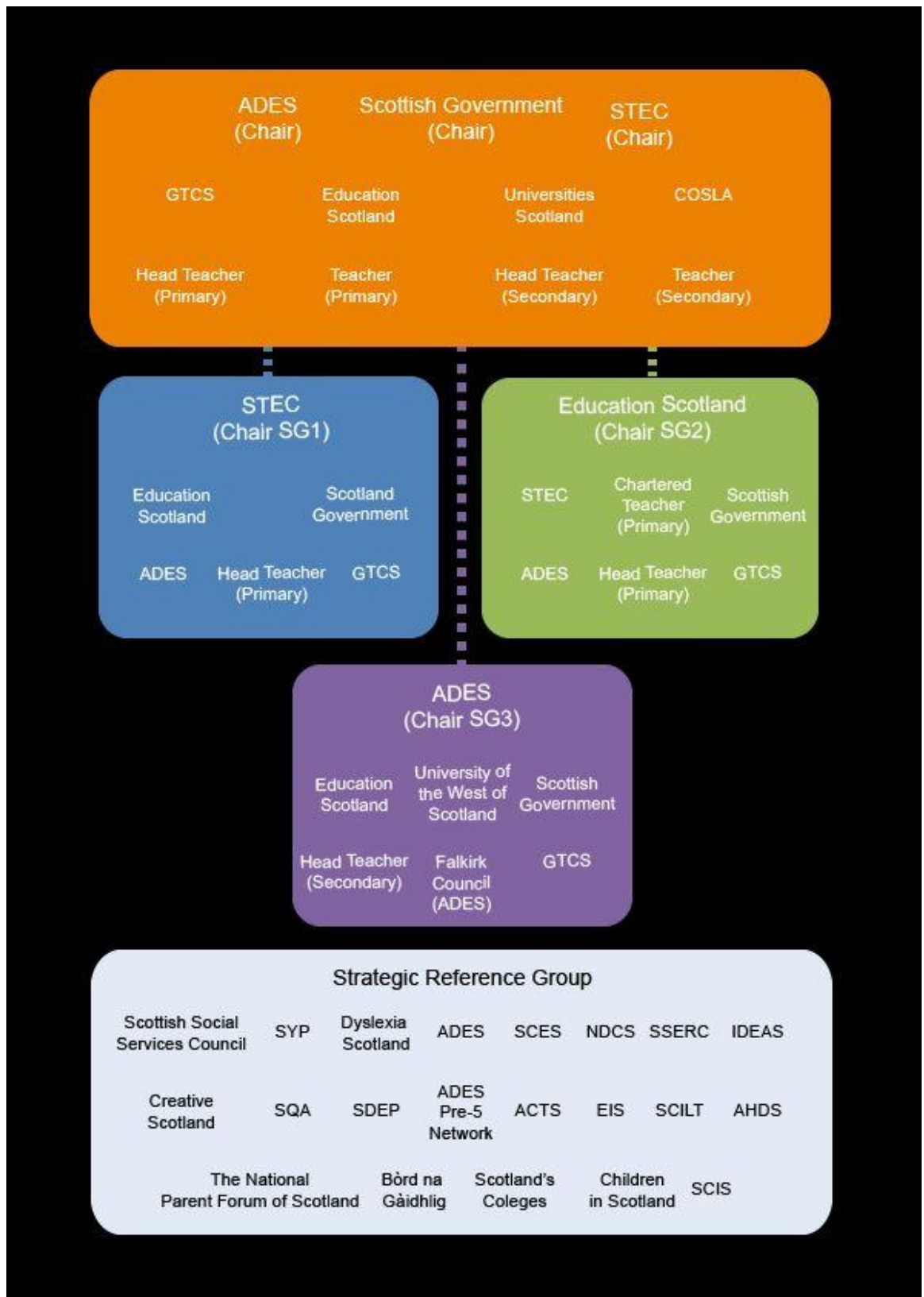


Figure 3 Institutional membership of NPG, SG1, SG2, SG3, and strategic reference group

The membership of the NPG changed only slightly during its lifespan. This network diagram is based on the final membership list as documented by the NPG Report (Scottish Government, 2012, p. 1-2 Annex F). As the diagram shows, the majority of key institutional actors had one or more representatives positioned within these networks. The following lists the 'official' institutional representation and positioning of actors: Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES; n = 3, one as a co-chair of the NPG and one positioned as the chair of SG3); Scottish Government (n=2; one positioned as co-chair of the NPG); Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC; n = 3, one positioned as co-chair of the NPG; one positioned as chair of SG1); Education Scotland (n = 2; one positioned as chair of SG2); General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS; n = 2); Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA, n = 2); Universities Scotland (n = 1); individual head teachers (n = 2); individual teachers (n = 3).

The membership of sub-group one contained official representation from the Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC), the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Education Scotland, GTCS, Scottish Government and one head teacher, presumably to represent the teaching profession in the absence of teacher union representation.

Sub-group two's membership had official representation from STEC, ADES, Scottish Government, GTCS as well as one head teacher (primary) and one chartered teacher. Sub-group three consisted of representatives from Education Scotland, Scottish Government, GTCS, ADES, STEC, and one head teacher (secondary).

The membership of sub-group three changed over its lifespan. For example, the head teacher was brought into the group in time for its second meeting, after recognition at the first sub-group meeting that a head teacher should be invited to join (SG3 Minutes, Meeting 1, 23rd August 2011). Another addition was made at the third meeting, where a representative for the Scottish Government was welcomed as a new member (SG3 Minutes, Meeting 3, 10th November 2011). As well as this, individual people were invited to present to the group, or to provide advice as 'critical friends'. This might point to a perceived problem in the design of this network, which I discuss in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Although not a direct focus of this research, the membership of the strategic reference group membership is also shown in Figure 2. Its membership was made up of a range of organisations from the wider context of Scottish education.

While Figure 2 is useful for representing the structure and membership of the networks, it portrays an image of policy-making as a linear process and does not capture the fluidity, complexity and messiness that came to characterise the process in reality. The diagram below (Figure 4) is an adapted version of Figure 3 that reveals the complex range of institutional interests (both formal and informal) involved in the NPG, its sub-groups and the strategic reference group. It has been designed with the intention of being purposefully messy and difficult to interpret in order to provide a more realistic description of the policy networks.

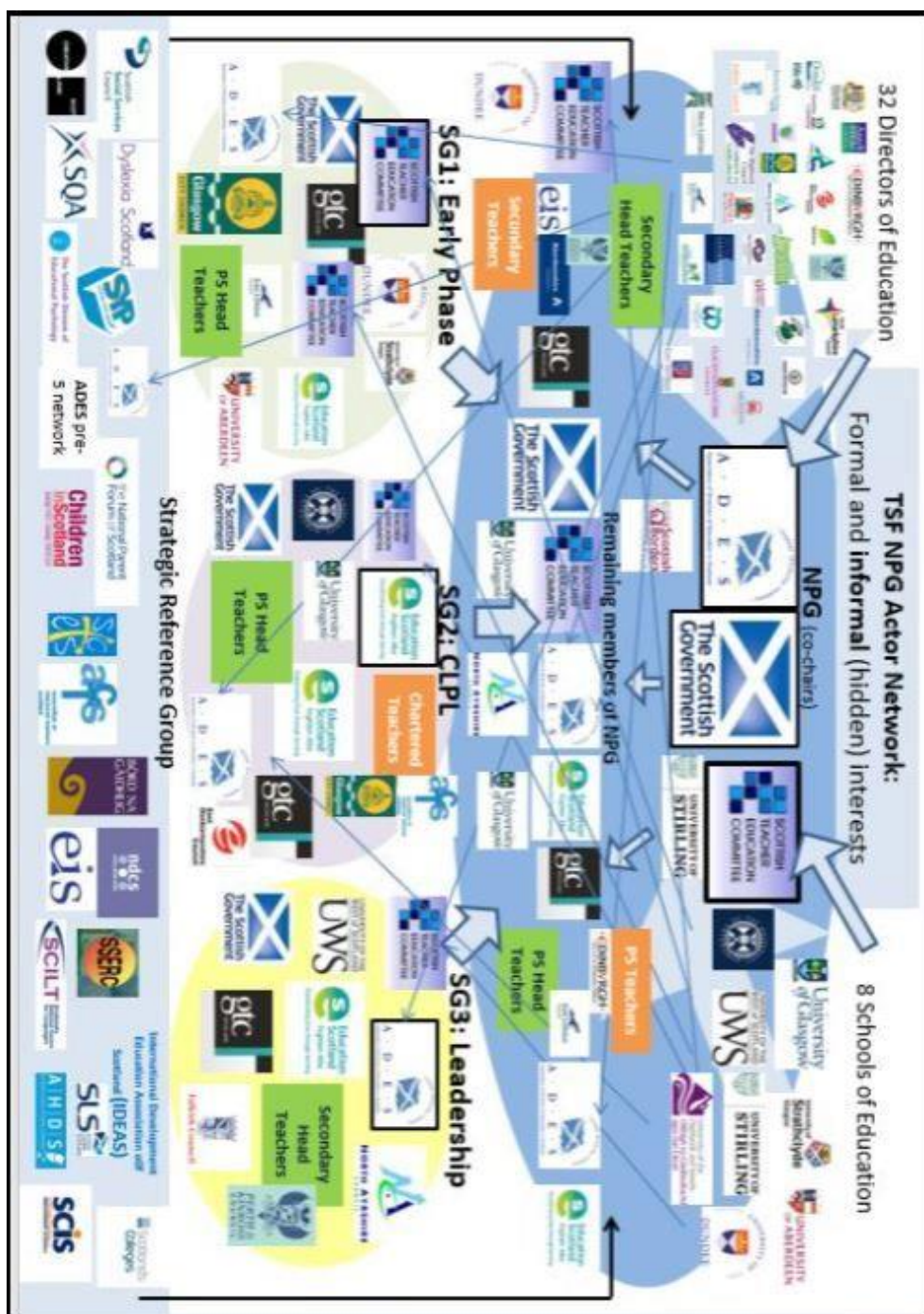


Figure 4 ‘Messy’ network diagram: NPG, SG1, SG2, SG3 and Strategic Reference Group

It is important to note that network diagrams are not able to reveal the pre-existing power relations, which are important features of the Scottish education policy community. I describe the nature of these in Chapters 4 and 5, where I draw on interview data with members of these networks.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This overall aim of this chapter was to position TSF as a policy process and identify the different stages in the development and implementation leading up to and including the TSF agenda. Foundationally, another central aim of this chapter was to provide an appropriate context for the presentation of interview data as well as establish these ideas of process, which I explore further in Chapters 4 and 5.

The chapter began by setting TSF within its wider policy context by outlining policy developments in education and briefly. I outlined the content of these policies and the processes by which they were made and implemented. I identified a number of recurring themes and argued that these should be recognised as key factors that shaped the development of TSF and the establishment of a partnership model to implement its recommendations.

Following this, I discussed each stage of the policy process in TSF. I gave particular focus to the process of the Review, commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2010, that led to the development of the Report. I argued that this stage was particularly significant as it can be conceptualised as the first moment of interest translation. This was the first point in the process that institutional actors were given opportunities to shape the agenda, before it appeared in policy text form.

Finally, I presented two network diagrams of the NPG, its three sub-groups and the strategic reference group to represent the structure of the network, as well as the range of institutional interests enrolled in the policy network. Here, network ethnography has helped to reveal the messy, dependent and transformative nature of the networks.

Chapter 4 The policy process: characteristics of a partnership model

In this chapter, I present findings on the membership and structure of the NPG and its sub-groups. This chapter deals specifically with my first and second research questions, which were:

RQ1) Who or what was included in or excluded from these spaces?

RQ2) How do individual actors represent the interests of an institutional actor within this space?

I present details on the range of institutional actors and institutional interests that were represented within this network, as well as the different roles that they played within each group. This provides necessary background information upon which I build in the following chapter. In this way, it should be noted that the findings presented here contribute some way to answering my third research question:

RQ3) How do institutional actors translate their interests into the policy agenda?

I begin this chapter by exploring the rationale behind the establishment of the NPG and its sub-groups. The main rationale that is often provided is that it was arranged to create and strengthen partnership between key bodies in Scottish education. However, I consider a number of additional rationales that appeared to have played a role in their development.

The section that follows presents findings on what I have termed as the ‘politics of representation’. To begin, I discuss the range of institutional interests officially represented within the NPG and its sub-groups and then consider possible criteria behind the selection of members and highlight a number of issues around the selection of individual actors to represent institutional actors within the NPG and its sub-groups. I then consider the extent to which institutional representation might be considered as imbalanced, with increased representation of specific actors prioritised over others. Some institutional actors can be considered as fragmented as they are umbrella organisations that represent multiple

divergent interests (e.g. ADES represents 32 local authorities), while others play multiple roles (e.g. Education Scotland or the Scottish Government) and therefore have multiple agendas that may conflict. I consider the difficulties faced by those who are required to represent them, and suggest that this adds a further layer of complexity to what is already a complex process.

The final section of this chapter deals with issues of exclusion and positioning and uses two specific institutional actors as examples: teacher unions and the GTCS. Drawing on the perceptions of actors from inside the process, I consider a number of reasons why teacher unions were formally excluded from the membership of the NPG and its subgroups and reflect on the potential implications of this move. In relation to actor positioning, the GTCS were well represented across the groups, but were not appointed with any chairing responsibilities. This was considered surprising by respondents, given their central role in reforming teacher education. I look at the key issues here, consider possible rationales behind their positioning and explore the potential ramifications of this structural arrangement for the wider implementation of TSF.

4.1 The partnership model choice

I consider five contributing factors that might have influenced the government's decision to adopt a partnership model group to further develop and begin to implement the recommendations from 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (TSF). By exploring these different factors, I begin to illuminate and analyse the different forces that worked to shape the policy-making process that was used to develop (TSF). The five factors are the development and strengthening of partnership, the traditions of Scottish policy-making, historical tensions between key players, power-dependency and the process of resource-exchange, and issues related to voice, space and interest translation.

The first contributory factor that I outline is relatively straightforward: The National Partnership Group (NPG) was created to support the development of partnership between key institutional actors. Both the design of this network and the way that it was *intended* to operate are based on a particular model of partnership. This model operates on the idea that partnerships develop between actors when they are brought together in a set space and given a shared task to complete. However, the development of partnerships in Scottish

education is far more complex than this, and I suggest that it is unlikely that the government would overlook this. The second factor I present considers the role of tradition and the Scottish ‘myth’ in shaping the design and nature of the policy process. Here I argue that the ‘myth’ plays two roles in the policy space: myth as *mask* and myth as *sustenance*. The third factor concerns the development of partnership development between the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and the Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC). Here I argue that this has previously been difficult to achieve and I highlight a number of tensions related to this.

The fourth and fifth factors are both based on the premise that policy implementation is likely to be more successful if affected actors or their representatives are included in its membership, however there are important distinctions between them. The fourth factor is based on the idea of ‘power-dependency’ (Rhodes, 2006), which suggests that all actors in a policy network, including government, are dependent on each other in order to function effectively in their respective roles and engage in a process of resource-exchange. This factor assumes that a partnership model was constructed because the government *depends* on institutional actors working in partnership to *deliver* specific parts of the policy.

The fifth factor highlights the importance of involving key institutional actors who are expected to implement change. Here, I suggest that the NPG was developed as a space for further policy development through the process of interest translation, thereby supporting institutional actors to engage with the policy agenda. This suggests that the government understands the importance of allowing affected actors or their representatives to have a voice within the process and to be actively involved in shaping the policy agenda.

4.1.1 Partnership between key institutional Actors

When asking why the Scottish Government decided to develop a partnership model, one must first consider the original policy text. A number of the recommendations from TSF specifically promote the development and revitalisation of models of *partnership* between universities, local authorities, schools, and other key agencies in Scottish education. As a theme, it permeates several of the fifty recommendations³⁵. For example, recommendation 15 specifically requests the need for:

³⁵ Recommendations: 3, 15, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 25 in Teaching Scotland’s Future (Donaldson, 2011).

New and strengthened models of partnership among universities, local authorities, schools and individual teachers need to be developed. These partnerships should be based on jointly agreed principles and involve shared responsibility for key areas of teacher education. (Donaldson, 2011, p. 91)

A partnership model was used to promote and encourage the development of partnerships between institutional actors. Partnership is implied as a vehicle for change, as successful implementation of the policy agenda as a whole depends on the ability and desire of key institutional actors to work together. If many of the recommendations are required to be implemented in partnership between universities, local authorities, and schools and other key organisations, then a reasonable move would be to bring these actors together in the form of an implementation group, asking them to work together and deciding on the best way to do so. As a rationale, this seems to be logical, that is until we consider the absence of teacher union representation.

The Education Institute of Scotland (EIS) is the largest teaching union in Scotland, and is widely considered as one of the most powerful actors in the sphere of Scottish education. As a key institutional actor, their exclusion from participation at this level is significant. Instead, individual teachers were brought in to the NPG and its sub groups to represent the ‘teaching profession’. Another feature of network membership that sits at odds with this model’s goals was the peculiar positioning of GTCS representatives. Of the six chairing positions available, not one was awarded to the GTCS. The implications of these three features are discussed further in this chapter.

Partnership is a deeply ambiguous term that has multiple meanings that can be interpreted in a number of ways; herein lays one of the problems. Aside from the list of participants, Donaldson’s vision of partnership requires the development of two key features: “jointly agreed principles” and “shared responsibility for key areas” (Donaldson, 2011, p. 48). However, these extracts from the policy text do not tell us much about the Scottish Government’s interpretation of partnership, or the intended nature of ‘new’ and ‘strengthened’ partnerships.

This lack of prescription may, of course, be intentional. The development of any form of partnership requires space, and it may be difficult for it to develop in a controlled process governed by tight rules and pre-determined definitions. On the other hand, if this term is left completely open for institutional actors to interpret as they wish, then it is likely to

become distorted, re-written or even forgotten. The concept of *partnership* is integral to TSF, so the fact that it was left open and vulnerable to distortion is noteworthy. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, a number of researchers drawing on ideas from actor-network theory (ANT) have shown how policies, ideas and agendas change during the process of translation (Edwards, 2012; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998; Nicoll, 2006). This is no different for concepts or terms in the policy process, such as partnership. This is not to say that if it had been defined, it would not have been susceptible to distortion via translation. However a lack of any definition or meaning provides ample opportunity for actors to interpret it in a way that fits best with their institutional interests and agendas. If this is the case, then it is doubtful that each institutional actor and their players will have understood it in the same way.

It is clear that the development of any kind of partnership between key stakeholders is politically complex, but a further level of complexity is added when we consider just how many different interests are represented within the NPG. Furthermore, these interests are not always compatible; they often conflict with each other and struggle to exist within the same space (i.e. territorialism). For these actors to work together in ‘partnership’ there needs to be a *harmonisation* of competing institutional interests, a process susceptible to power games. What’s more, there are a number of pre-existing relationships between institutional actors and those who represent them. These must be negotiated carefully as they impact on the way individual partnerships develop. Nevertheless, it is clear that institutional actors have to *adapt* if interests are to be harmonised to an appropriate level, and it would seem that the government was aware of this. When discussing network membership, one civil servant informed me that it was important to include institutional actors “who would need to *make changes in order to deliver the outcomes* that we want to see” (Respondent C³⁶).

The development of partnership requires much more than just getting all the key actors ‘around the table’. It is possible that the NPG was purposefully created to begin to address these complex issues that prevent effective partnership development and policy implementation. The lack of prescription and definition around the nature of partnership can be recognised as a deliberate mechanism to create the *right* kind of space for the

³⁶ Respondent number does not indicate hierarchical position; numbers were generated at random. This note belongs on Respondent C in the page above (first one cited in this chapter)

development of partnership: a space that is flexible and fluid enough for partnership to grow organically.

4.1.2 Tradition, ‘myth’ and the simulacra of order

The partnership model, albeit in different forms, has historically and traditionally been the preferred model for public policy-making in a post-war Scotland. Since devolution in 1999, the government in Scotland has traditionally relied on the participation of a range of representatives from key bodies, different levels of government and civil society in the policy process (Grek, 2010; Keating, 2010; Munn et al., 2004). It is therefore possible that this model was used in the implementation of TSF because it is a ‘tried and tested’ approach that appears (at least on the surface) to be effective.

Emerging from my research, this idea is clearly expressed in the following quotation from a member of Sub-Group One (SG1). This respondent accepts that the ‘partnership’ approach was used because ‘this is just the way it’s done here’.

It was just clear that this was *another example of the Scottish approach*, which is when you develop policy and you implement policy, or any initiatives that are taking place, you try to get everybody, all the relevant stakeholders round the table ... *I have been involved in lots of stuff like this over the years. It was quite familiar territory.* (Respondent U)

I would like to point out in this respondent’s claim that there is something distinctively ‘Scottish’ about the partnership approach. As I argued earlier in this thesis, the values and ideas that have come to be associated with Scottish education, emerging from stories around the democratic intellect (Davie, 1961), the Scottish enlightenment (Herman, 2003), and the ‘lad o’ pairts’, have been found to carry considerable social and cultural weight in the design of the policy process and the way that people participate in it. Not only do they shape the way in which policy-makers see their responsibilities and roles in the education system (Menter & Hulme, 2008), they might also shape the way we see the nature of the policy process, or at least our expectations of the way that it ought to be.

The Scottish myth, and the actors who buy in to it, work to strengthen and sustain the perception that the ‘Scottish model’ is the correct model to use. If it is the case that this actor has been ‘involved in lots of stuff like this over the years’, then it is likely that they are, or have become, a member of the Scottish ‘policy community’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). S/he is an ‘insider’, s/he knows the ‘rules of the game’ (Rhodes, 2006) and how to play it.

The above quotation also illustrates how this is achieved by actors who are part of the ‘shared assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). This actor does not appear to question the efficacy of the partnership approach, but instead accepts it as an agreed and shared method of working because ‘it has always been like this’. Furthermore, this illustrates the inherent danger of the Scottish myth, and is suggestive of the way in which it can limit possibilities for change.

Those who write about the Scottish education policy process often highlight the way it is described by others as a ‘consensual’ and ‘developmental’ process (Menter & Hulme, 2008). The term ‘consensual’ implies that this model has democratic and participatory features that ensure all affected actors have agreed to proposed changes before they happen, while ‘developmental’ hints at a multi-layered and progressive system with many stages in which individuals can become involved. However, as I alluded to earlier, there is a degree of *mythology* associated with such claims and Menter and Hulme (2008, 2011) acknowledge this.

As discussed in Chapter 1, ‘myths’ are *cultural* phenomena that can be incorporated into modern political arenas (such as educational policy-making) and are inherited beliefs and narratives that inform ideologies and priorities of actors at the table. My research argues that it operates both as a *mask* and as a form of *sustenance* in the policy process. As a *mask*, it can be used to hide the infelicities of the system and divert attention away from tensions and that do not ‘fit’ with the ‘myth’. This creates a *simulacra of order*, underneath which lies great disorder. As *sustenance*, it is a source of information, or story (Anderson, 1991; Gray et al., 1983) that shapes actor expectations about the way that policy should be developed and guides actor behaviour in the policy process. My research shows that the ‘myth’, in the different forms in which it manifests, played a crucial role in the development of the NPG and also in the way that it operated.

4.1.3 Historical context of partnership development

The third contributory factor has its foundations in the recent history of Scottish teacher education. Although the theme of ‘partnership’ is presented as a mechanism for reform in current policy discourse, it is by no means a new policy idea. The development of partnerships between key stakeholders has been a longstanding issue in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) since the early 1990s³⁷. Smith et al., (2006) assert that progress in establishing partnership models in Scottish teacher education has been relatively slow compared to the rest of the UK. Although there have been several attempts to address this issue, a number of fundamental issues and underlying tensions remain unresolved.

TSF supports a move to collaborative partnership, but mentions neither the potential challenges linked to this in any detail, nor any plans for addressing them (Smith, 2011). These challenges are not unfamiliar to those working within Scottish education, particularly those who have experience of working at a high-level of policy development and governance such as Professor Graham Donaldson and the members of his Review team. The responsibility for the mediation of these challenges lay solely with the chairs of the NPG and the chairs of the sub-groups, and experience of the system varied considerably between these different actors.

In order to analyse key challenges that emerged during previous attempts to develop partnership between key stakeholders in Scottish education, I outline some of the tensions and issues that arose during the implementation of the policy recommendations from the first and second stage reviews below. This discussion raises a number of questions, particularly around the exclusion of teacher unions, the control of the GTCS, and the lack of understanding around unavoidable tensions and issues.

At the time of writing, it has been fifteen years since the introduction of ‘A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century’ (McCrone Agreement; Scottish Executive, 2001). The two-stage review of ITE that followed this agreement highlighted the inherent difficulties in strengthening partnership working in ITE. The First Stage Review (Scottish Executive,

³⁷ In 1992 a pilot mentoring scheme was initiated at Moray House Institute of Education to encourage school staff to provide formal support to student teachers. A number of questions were raised about the model, and it was not rolled out (see Smith, Brisard & Menter, 2006). Since then, a number of different models and initiatives have been piloted in ITE, with varying degrees of success. Two other significant initiatives were the Scottish Teachers for a New Era (STNE; see Livingston & Colucci-Gray, 2006) and the ‘Glasgow West Teacher Initiative’ (see Menter et al. 2011 for a wide-scale evaluation). Both of these projects are referred to in TSF as examples of partnership working that can be used to support student teachers on placement.

2001b) recommended the establishment of formal partnership agreements between universities, schools, and local authorities. However, no specific progress has been made in developing these. The Second Stage Review (Scottish Executive, 2005) stressed the need for new 'effective and pro-active partnership' between local authorities and universities, and stated that such change required local authorities to become 'more actively engaged' in ITE. Though small progress was made, a number of fundamental issues that had been a source of tension for higher education were left unresolved (Smith et al., 2006). The lack of progress following the publication of both reports highlights the complexity of partnership in teacher education, and also reflects the accuracy of my data that highlighted the conservative nature of Scottish education (see previous extract from Respondent U).

In light of the publication of the Report of the Second Stage Review, Smith et al., (2006) identified a number of possible inhibitory factors. First, although both Reports envisioned strengthened partnerships between universities, local authorities, and schools, neither provided a definition of what was expected in terms of roles and responsibilities, resulting in an overall sense of vagueness. Additionally, there was a sense of resistance from the profession to the formalisation and enhancement of roles and responsibilities for mentoring student teachers. One final limitation, also discussed, was the lack of political importance accorded to the development of partnership. Smith et al., (2006) suggested that the underlying issues and tensions were not placed high enough on the political agenda. The appointment of several representatives of the Scottish Government to the official membership of the NPG and its tripartite chairing system could be taken as an indication that this is now positioned 'high' on the political agenda; it demonstrates a certain level of commitment by government. However, expressions of commitment do not necessarily guarantee that the level of understanding within government has increased.

My research shows that these challenges continued to hold relevance for actors involved in the NPG. In the following extract, a respondent reflects on a tension that had recently emerged between ADES and STEC:

I mean we had a very good representative from ADES in [name removed] but how much was going on within ADES itself. Obviously the other members were involved in other groups and [name removed] was overall kind of co-chair with [name removed] from ADES. But that is an area where ... let's say, evident in the fact that at our STEC stakeholder meeting, we are still to have an ADES representative appear. We had our meeting yesterday and no ADES representative. We are now promised that they will be at our next one but that is not until January

and while the key important area for development is partnership arrangements, partnership agreements, the lack of an ADES person liaising with us at the moment in STEC is quite a concern. (Respondent U)

The quotation above raises a number of issues and allows me to tease out key connections to the current discussion on the difficulty of partnership, as well as to illuminate some potential problems that the Scottish Government may have been hoping to address by using a partnership model. First, the respondent raised a concern about the amount of work that is going on within ADES on teacher education reform. ADES is an actor that represents multiple actors, each of which has their own interests, contexts, political expectations and social pressures. As such, there are variable levels of engagement from different local authorities in the policy process. Secondly, the lack of an ADES representative (which can be seen to be a solution to this problem) clearly highlights a lack of cooperation between ADES and STEC and points to significant tensions in their relationship.

4.1.4 Power-dependency for policy ‘delivery’

The Scottish Government was responsible for the creation of the NPG and it was designed to develop and strengthen a form of partnership between selected institutional actors, which suggests that the Scottish Government saw the development of partnership working as important for the implementation of this policy agenda:

It’s [NPG] designed to bring together all the key partners who are involved in *delivery*³⁸... it’s about taking this document and particularly those recommendations within this report, which are partnership recommendations. So there’s some recommendations, which are just... they’re a matter for the GTCS or they’re a matter for Education Scotland. But there are a number in here which actually require more than one body working together in order to deliver them... And that’s really where the National Partnership Group comes into play. (Respondent C).

Here, a civil servant’s choice of words in ‘delivery’ and ‘deliver’ serve a specific purpose; this is about the effective implementation of change – putting recommendations into practice at an *operational* level. Such language might be seen as redolent of a closed,

³⁸ Italics are author’s own addition

restricted, or top-down process in which there is little opportunity for input from actors and further development of policy recommendation. This does not sit comfortably with the mythical image of policy-making in Scottish education as consultative, open, and democratic. I will refer to this style of policy development and implementation as *policy delivery*.

Priestley (2013) highlights the use of similar language in a number of policy texts for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)³⁹. He warns that the ‘language of delivery’ is “extremely problematic” as it positions education as a product and as something that is *done to* people, rather than a fluid and multi-layered process to be *engaged in*. Priestley also points to a tension between this style of language and the inherent vision of CfE, which he describes elsewhere as “constructive and flexible” (Priestley, 2010, p.27). The prescriptive language used in discourse designed to support teachers to enact the policy conflicts directly with the overall aspirations of the policy agenda.

Furthermore, the conceptualisation of policy enactment as ‘delivery’ suggests that the government views policy enactment as a linear process. As discussed in Chapter 2, the policy process is complex, fluid, and characterised by multiple messy and overlapping stages of a process. In the space of ‘policy implementation’, original policy intentions undergo a process of translation where parts are silenced, transformed, or strengthened (Edwards, 2012); policy is always distorted in the process of becoming. The ‘language of delivery’ is completely redundant here as it assumes that policy intentions remain unchanged as they move from paper to practice. What happens in reality is that schools, teachers, pupils, parents and other actors distort, adapt, mediate and struggle over the meaning of education policies in a process of enactment (Ball et al., 2010). That the ‘language of delivery’ is common across Scottish education policy points to a lack of understanding from the government about the nature of policy implementation.

However, it is, of course, entirely possible that the government was aware of the vulnerability of policy to distortion, and the creation of sub-group remits by the Scottish Government could be seen as a mechanism for governing policy translation and limiting the extent to which original intentions could be distorted. Each sub-group was provided with a set of remit points, and members of the sub-groups were instructed that their remits

³⁹ For example, an Education Scotland (2013) CfE briefing document highlights the need for schools and other stakeholders to ‘deliver’ the aims and purposes of the curriculum.

were non-negotiable. A number of actors commented that these recommendations, or remits, were overly restrictive:

Respondent Y: I suppose my view was that I found some of the recommendations in the Donaldson review restrictive in terms of going forward, and I suppose my position would have been... I don't think blind acceptance of anybody's report... is the way forward for any kind of mature education system. You should take the recommendations and say, well yeah that's a good recommendation but maybe that's not such a good recommendation, and that we should have had perhaps a bit more flexibility about that, which didn't exist.

Interviewer: Okay, so there wasn't room to discuss the recommendations in terms of...

Respondent Y: None at all. Scottish Government's support staff who were there were very clear about that. That this was about... taking those recommendations and implementing them.

This actor states that there was no space to change any of the recommendations, even if they disagreed with what they were proposing, which supports the ideologies of 'policy delivery' (Priestley, 2013). This points to a lack of consultation within the network, and reinforces the idea of a restricted, undemocratic, top-down policy process, rather than a true partnership between institutional actors, rather than a true partnership between institutional actors is unclear. The respondent clearly viewed this as a functional yet unequal partnership, with an imbalance of power. Respondent data shows that a number of actors perceived the civil service to play a governance role in the networks and one way that they did this was by ensuring that the sub groups did not deviate too far from the 'set tasks'.

This demonstrates the government's *dependence* on this network of institutional actors for policy implementation. It also implies a dependence on the ability of these institutional actors to '*work together*'. Börzel (2011) writes that policy networks provide solutions to a number of problems associated with the implementation of public policy, and we can see here how the NPG could be conceptualised as a policy 'solution' for the 'delivery' of policy recommendations. He describes networks as "power-dependency relationships between government and interest groups, in which resources are exchanged" (Börzel, 2011, p. 50). This conceptualisation suggests that there is an element of 'inter-dependency' between all actors in the network. The government relies on these actors and

is dependent on the resources they provide, but they too rely on government as a resource. What's more, institutional actors, other than the government, rely on each other for resource exchange. For example, STEC is dependent on the GTCS for the accreditation of teacher education provision, while during the development of Professional Update and early phases of its implementation, GTCS were dependent on the support of ADES and staff within local authorities.

4.1.5 Institutional 'buy in', policy ownership, and engagement

Engaging key stakeholders in the development of policy is a mechanism that can be used by governments to encourage actors to develop a sense of ownership over reform. Research has shown that involving affected actors (actors who are central to the enactment of policy) in the formation of policy can increase the likelihood of successful implementation (Marin & Mayntz, 1991). The following extract from an interview with a GTCS player describes how this factor played out in the design of the NPG:

But I'm assuming that it was put in place in the way it was to try to bring people together and get them involved, to get... with directors in particular... to get the directors involved... I'm a former member of ADES so I understand the way they operate, they have hundreds of things to do, they're very very busy people. This probably wasn't on top of their agenda and one way to make sure it was was to bring them in as co-chair of the NPG and as chair of one of the sub groups, and bring the matter up on their agenda, so I suppose em... it was probably political in the best sense of that term to try and get them involved, and that's why they were there, but I'm not sure it worked in the way it was intended. (Respondent N)

This pluralistic approach is increasingly promoted internationally as an effective model of policy-making. As I have argued throughout this thesis, global actors such as the OECD have become very influential in the promotion of global policy trends⁴⁰ (Cochran-Smith, 2013; Conroy et al, 2013; Hanushek & Wossman, 2007). The 2015 edition of the OECD's 'Education Policy Outlook' (OECD, 2015) promotes the importance of engaging key stakeholders in the development and implementation of policy; in other words, the adoption of a partnership approach. The annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession, co-organised by the OECD, reiterated the importance of engaging key stakeholders in reform, particularly teacher unions, citing this as a crucial factor for

⁴⁰ These actors position themselves, or are positioned by others, as spaces where global ideas can be promoted and made portable, before being 'borrowed' and translated into national contexts.

sustained reform. However, what is interesting to note is the way in which the OECD conducted their review of the Scottish education system. They used a consultative model that was not open; institutional actors were invited to participate, but this tended to be by invitation only.

The development of 'buy-in' is a much more complex process than the previous quotation from Respondent N suggests. My research illuminated a number of different factors that appeared to shape actor participation, including positioning within the network, perception of actor by other actors; self-perception as a policy actor, perception of hierarchy, awareness of social norms, rules, processes and procedures, power games, nature of institutional interests, and institutional territorialism. Each of these will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5, but I list them here because they all play a role in influencing the extent to which ownership can be developed. In other words, providing actors with a 'seat at the table' does not necessarily guarantee that they will develop a sense of ownership over what is actually decided at the table; it is far more complex than this.

As discussed in Chapter 2, ANT (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) illuminates the importance of institutional 'buy-in' for policy implementation. This is synonymous with the 'enrolment' of actors in a network, which occurs through the process of translation (Callon, 1986). ANT emphasises the vulnerability of policy agendas: "left to their own devices human actions and words do not spread very far at all" (Law, 1994, p. 24). Through the process of translation, networks grow, shrink or disappear. Drawing on the conceptual tools of ANT, Hamilton (2012) warns that if policy initiatives are to be successful, they must construct new alliances, collecting together new actors and develop processes for undermining competing associations. Institutional actors, such as the GCTS, ADES and STEC are important allies for TSF, and we understand how a policy agenda becomes powerful by enrolling these actors within it.

In this research, I draw on elements of ANT to argue that the development of policy ownership and institutional buy-in (actor enrolment) occur when actors are provided with genuine opportunities to translate their institutional interests into the policy agenda. However, the policy agenda needs to be at a stage of development and susceptible to change, otherwise it is unlikely that actors will recognise the 'patterns of possibility' that can be inscribed into it (Edwards, 2009).

A related way to look at this is that a partnership approach to policy-making is a technique that the government can use to make a policy *sticky*. This idea is similar to the process of translation in that institutional actors become involved in the development of policy and become associated with the reform. As this is done in partnership, the actors come together around the policy, with the result being that connections are strengthened between actors as well as strengthened between actors and the policy. The policy agenda becomes part of this institution, and interweaves itself into institutional agendas and visions – it becomes part of what they *do* and therefore shapes the way that they *act*.

4.2 The politics of representation

This section is comprised of four sub-topics. In the first, I illuminate the range of institutional interests formally represented in the NPG to emphasise the complexity of the network and position it as a messy and dynamic space. Following this, I discuss the criteria for selection of members. Network membership appeared to be driven by the need to represent key institutional actors in Scottish education, but I argue that a model based on representation does not result in the development of partnership. I consider a number of issues around the selection of individual actors to represent institutional actors within the NPG and its sub-groups. In the third sub-topic I highlight respondent concerns about an institutional imbalance within the network and consider possible reasons for this. To conclude this section, I consider the fragmented and multiple natures of institutional actors and argue that this adds a further layer of complexity to what is already a complex process.

4.2.1 Network membership: institutional actors

The following diagram⁴¹, originally presented in Chapter 3, displays the institutional membership of the NPG, its three sub groups and the strategic reference group. I am using it here as a reminder of the range of institutional interests involved, to illuminate actor positioning within the networks, and to emphasise the messy and complex nature of the ‘partnership group’. It should be noted that the chairs of each sub-group were also

members of the NPG; some members had two positions, representing their institutional actor within the NPG and one of the sub-groups.

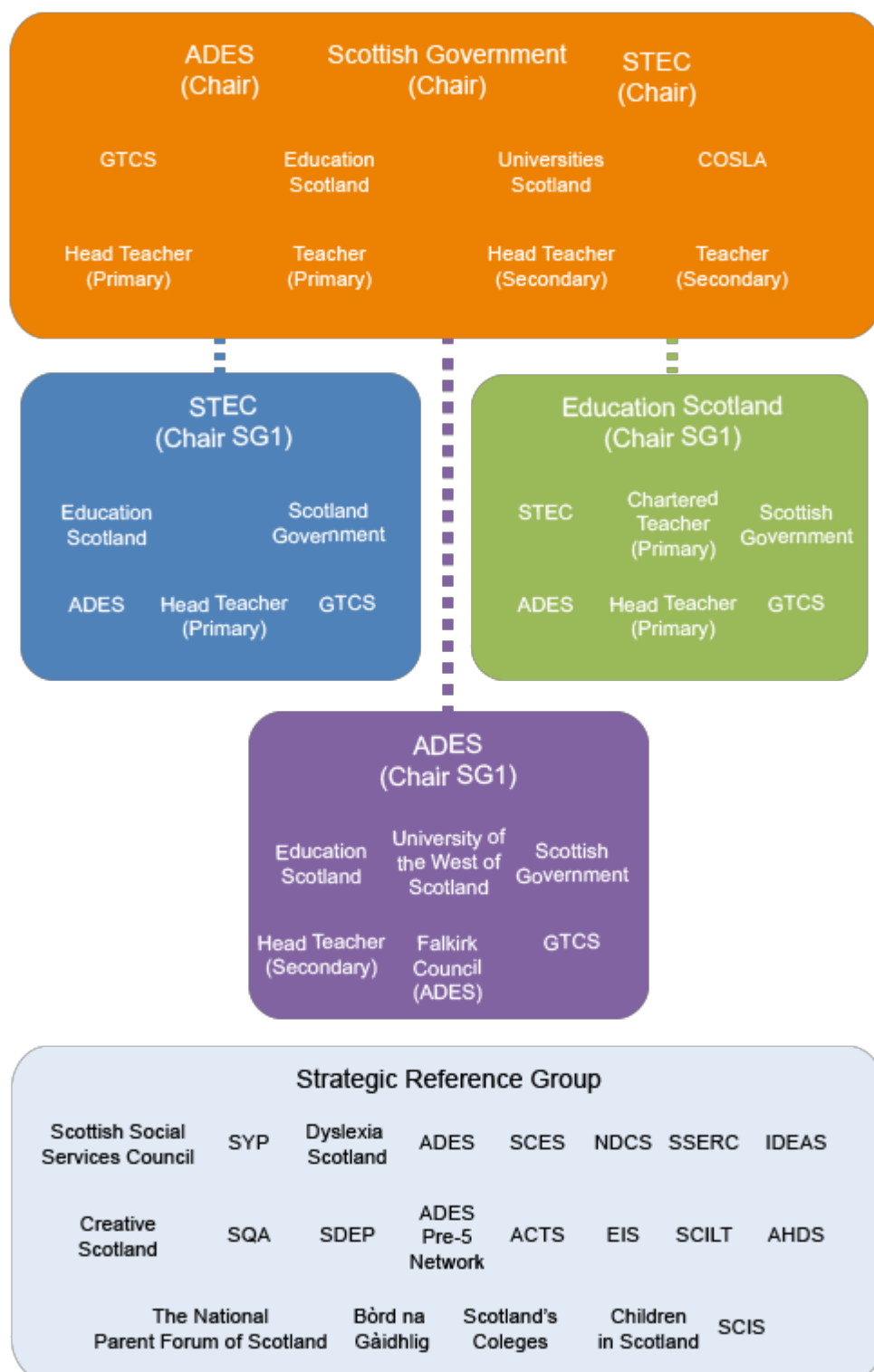


Figure 3. Institutional Membership: NPG, sub-group (SG) 1, SG2, SG3 and Strategic Reference Group

The majority of respondents understood that the membership of the networks was intended to roughly mirror the policy architecture of Scottish education. They noted that the majority of key institutional actors had one or more representatives positioned within these networks,

In terms of wider selection, I think there was an agreement that there would be representatives, in fact I know there was an agreement, from different organisations so for instance there *had* to be a representative from ADES on the group... There *had* to be a representative from STEC, from the GTC, from a local authority, etcetera. (Respondent D)

This extract, which comes from an interview with a GTCS player, highlights the ‘representative’ nature of the networks and appears to stress this as an important and necessary feature of network design: “there *had* to be a representative from...” In the previous chapter, I suggested that the NPG and its sub-groups had been purposefully designed to with the goal of strengthening and development of partnership. It is possible that its architects believed that a representative model, as described above, would create the right circumstances for this to happen.

This also implies that the NPG model was built on the assumption that equal representation of institutional actors would result in the development of partnership. However, as I have previously argued, the development of partnership is complex, particularly within the context of Scottish teacher education reform.

To what extent can the design of the NPG and its sub-groups be referred to as ‘representative’? One might assume that a model purposefully designed to represent key bodies in Scottish education would be *representative* of the education system that those bodies are part of; however, this was not the case. If the creation of the NPG was guided by the principles of *representation* then the decision to exclude teacher union representation is significant. Furthermore, despite the GTCS being a key institutional actor in teacher education and the teaching profession more widely, none of the tripartite chairing positions or the sub-group chair positions were populated by GTCS representatives. The extent to which we can refer to the model used here as ‘representative’ is limited.

4.2.2 Criteria for selection of representatives

An important part of institutional representation is the selection of individual actors to represent their interests within the NPG and its sub-groups. The criteria for selection of institutional members appeared to be heavily swayed by the political need for equal representation, which resulted in a number of tensions within the network. The following quotation, which comes from one of the co-chairs of the NPG, shows this as a constant theme:

The thing about partnership is that *representation becomes the issue...* or becomes an element in and of its own right. You know, people think they need to be sitting around the table. When it's not always necessarily the case that people are around the *right table* at the right time. (Respondent F)

This highlights a tension between what is intended by a model of partnership and a model of representation; they are not the same thing. It would appear that in setting up the NPG, the government created a model based on representation, rather than one based on partnership. Partnership working *can* emerge within a representation model, but it is not guaranteed. Partnership is an inherently ambiguous term, which can be used to describe different things in different contexts. Partnership as a method of policy development is complex, and relies on multiple contextual and social factors, as this member of SG3 illustrates:

I think the challenge was that the focus was, perhaps at the beginning, heavily on representation of specific groups and I'm not always, on having the right person in a particular group, representation as the driver and I think that was a challenge. (Respondent D)

This highlights the political nature of representation. It may be the case that there was a certain degree of political pressure on civil servants to make the NPG and its sub-groups look 'representative' of Scottish teacher education. If this was the case, then the criteria for selection of individual actors was entirely political. It should also be noted that what counts as representative was decided partly by government, which reminds us of their presence as a 'shadow of hierarchy' (Kennedy & Doherty, 2012). Furthermore, this confirms my earlier assertion that individual actors were chosen for their ability to *represent* their institutional actor, rather than their ability to effectively participate in the policy process.

So we thought that really what there should have been in these groups was though who are able, through their experience, through their knowledge, to drive forward the programme that was originally recommended in Teaching Scotland's Future. We would have expected that some of those who were coming into those groups would have been more capable of gelling quickly and moving things forward quickly. In fact, that wasn't the case. (Respondent N)

In general, it was felt that the membership of the NPG and its sub-groups was determined by institutional affiliation rather than personal knowledge or experience. This led to a feeling that sub-group membership was not fit for purpose, and when asked what could have been done differently, one Education Scotland representative replied: "Ensuring that we had absolutely the right people in the different sub groups" (Respondent E). In order to understand more about how this played out within the network, we can look to one of the sub-groups as an example (see diagram 4.1). The purpose of SG3 was to consider a number of remits for the development of professional learning for leadership.

In contrast to the other sub-groups, none of the members spoke about a perceived imbalance of institutional representation. Instead, apprehensions were raised about the lack of 'expertise' and 'experience' in the group:

I think in the area of leadership there was valuable experience in Scotland that could have been around the table that wasn't... we have people like that in Scotland and we didn't make the best use of their expertise. An example would be [name removed]. [Name removed] is steeped in educational leadership...for me it would have made perfect sense for [name removed] to have been part of the leadership subgroup but she wasn't, it was another representative from the university sector who was on that group, who didn't have the experience that [name removed] would have brought. I pushed and pushed for [name removed] to be part of the group, and she was invited along fairly late in the process as a kind of critical friend... I felt that that was a gap... We have people like that in Scotland and we didn't make the best use of their expertise (Respondent D).

The frustration in the respondent is tied to the disclosure regarding the proximity of actors at a personal level – their close and personal knowledge of other actors in the system afforded them certain views of preference around network design – and these views about preference are part of the complex dynamic. On one hand, individual actors act on behalf of institutional actors, and participate in the process in a way that allows them to translate the interests of their institution into the policy agenda. On the other hand, individual actors

act in relation to their personal and professional connections. The interplay between these two purposes of acting is quite interesting in a small polity like Scotland. When acting in the first capacity, as an ‘institutional representative’, members of the NPG can be considered as ‘positional’ actors; they have particular positions that they are expected to hold and strengthen within the network. But at the same time, because of the close interconnected nature of teacher education in Scotland (including teacher professional learning and leadership), actors can be operating from a more personal or informal position. From my data, it appears that there exists an inter-relationship between these different positions and purposes. The respondent’s frustrations also show that her/his suggestions, despite recommending an ‘expert’ in the field, were given low priority over representational selection criteria.

The following quotation highlights some potential implications of basing selection processes on their ability to *represent* rather than individual knowledge and experience.

I think and there were questions about whether some of those who served on it were sufficiently aware of the, not the report because they would have read the report, but the *context* in which the report was written. So, in some cases they might have had to come up to speed fairly quickly in taking issues forward (Respondent N).

The context includes a number of subtle political tensions, the complex array of institutional interests, historical power struggles between institutional actors, and divergent institutional agendas, amongst others. Only actors with a significant level of experience of the Scottish education policy process would be aware of this complexity, such as members the traditional policy community. My data confirmed that some actors were not fully aware of the context for reform and this had implications for the extent to which they could participate. This is an important theme that I develop further in this chapter.

There was a lack of transparency around the criteria for selection of individual actors amongst respondents. I asked every interview participant if they were aware about how individuals were selected as representatives, and not one was able to tell me.

This is either indicative of a lack of awareness, or an inability to say. To what extent can we consider this a democratic process, if fundamental aspects of the policy process remained undisclosed to some central members of the NPG? Transparency in the selection of representatives was highlighted by Sørensen and Torfing (2005b) to be an important

feature for the democratic legitimacy of a network. The restriction of awareness of some actors, whether intended or not, does not align with the ideology of a partnership model. This issue continues to be a main theme within the data, and was communicated by several actors throughout the NPG and its three sub groups. I argue that the development of genuine partnership cannot occur in a context where there is a lack of transparency around important features of policy networks, such as the selection of its members. Furthermore, if actors who genuinely did not know about the rationale behind network membership, and why they or their fellow network actors had been selected, then this is problematic as well, as it is suggestive of an opaque process which is closed to a sub-set of actors within it. To what extent can actors truly participate in a process that they do not fully understand?

While the majority of network actors knew nothing about the selection criteria for individual members, a handful of actors spoke quite openly about the selection process, stating that the civil service were responsible for selecting which organisations should be represented, and that it was then up to the organisation to suggest who would be best placed to represent them: “It was left up to the communities to suggest who was going to go on to it and on to the working groups as well (Respondent T).

However, it appeared that this was not the case with every actor, with one actor in particular stating that s/he received a direct invitation from the Cabinet Secretary and assumed (incorrectly) other member had been invited to join in the same manner:

I mean the Cabinet Secretary had appointed the group... He wrote to us individually if I remember correctly, inviting us... He wrote to me. (Respondent N)

It is important to consider the reasons behind such a move. This may be an attempt at flattery to increase the likelihood of securing institutional buy-in. Flattery can also work as a subtle mechanism for control, so it might be the case that this was an attempt to shape the participation with this actor. Nevertheless, this was the only actor who spoke about a direct invitation, which indicatives, at best, a lack of consistency in the selection process.

As previously discussed, a number of appointments were made to the NPG and its sub-groups once the NPG had already been established and had begun their official work. These developments could be taken as evidence that initial network membership was not fit for purpose. These appointments appeared to be made in a haphazard *ad hoc* basis,

which is perhaps unsurprising given the nature of policy-making (Ball, 2013). One member of the NPG describes the confusion around membership and the process of bringing on people once it had started,

The allocation of people to serve on those particular group was em... it was more difficult to discern why some people were on it and some people weren't and there was a degree to which it was left to individual partners on the National Partnership Group to put people there (Respondent N).

This respondent's perceptions also touch on my next connection to representation issues in the partnership model, which is the perceived imbalance in institutional actors.

4.2.3 Institutional representation: an imbalance?

If representation of the key organisations in Scottish education was one of the guiding principles behind network design, one might assume that this representation would be fairly equal amongst institutional actors. However, some individuals felt that there was an imbalance in institutional membership of the NPG and its sub-groups:

I think, probably in retrospect, most people would look at those who served on that group and wonder whether there were areas that were missed and areas that were over populated (Respondent F).

This quotation from a member of the NPG succinctly summarises how many respondents felt on this issue. Using an example from sub-group one to explore this issue in detail, all of the sub-group remits required an element of partnership working between key stakeholders but, it could be argued, that the remit for SG1 required a significant amount of work to be done around partnership, particularly between local authorities and universities. As such, it could be expected that the membership would be designed with such difficulties in mind; however, this was not the case (see Figure 2).

The main tension to emerge from the membership of SG1 was the strong presence of representation from higher education; this was the only sub-group to contain two representatives from STEC. Furthermore, the representative from Education Scotland had been seconded from a higher education context, to which they had returned at the time of my data collection. Although this player was not representing universities on a formal

basis, it is possible that their position provided a space for institutional interests to indirectly enter the network.

An ADES representative specifically highlighted institutional membership as a limitation of the group, suggesting that the composition was unfairly tilted towards the interests of universities:

Originally the aim was to have quite a balanced group... Except, that in my view there was an *imbalance* in the composition of my group, because Education Scotland for example, sent along a person who had been seconded to Education Scotland from a teacher education background. So we had a chair, who was teacher education, we had [name removed] who was teacher education, we had Education Scotland, oh wait a minute, they were teacher education. And... so how you could get a balanced view with it tipped, so much to, you know it was like turkeys voting for Christmas. So, I have to say that was very noticeable to me at the outset. There was a head teacher on it too. Very noticeable to me at the outset, and I think that probably the findings of the group were probably strongly influenced by that.
(Respondent Y)

Given that the remit of SG1 focused on the reconceptualization of ITE models within higher education, the perceived imbalance in membership towards teacher education is unsurprising.

We must also remember that STEC is a fragmented and complex actor that is required to represent the interests of eight different universities within the policy process. Universities are not a homogenous group; each institution operates within its own distinct political, economic, and social context. Even if we consider the role that informal interests play in this space in relation to the three actors who work within the context of teacher education, it is important to remember that they represent three different universities, which each have their own interests and agendas, and are driven by different political and economic forces. Considering this in light of the very 'individualistic' nature of many of this sub-group's remits allows us to better understand how this challenged the sub-group. Taking forward these remits is difficult because of the sheer range of competing institutional interests and the different kinds of pressures on different universities. It is therefore not necessarily the case that all three actors will have been driving for the same kind of change (as the above quotation would suggest). This may suggest that the problem is not solely with the inequality of representation, but with the politics of representation as well.

The same player felt that this ‘tip’ towards higher education manifested as a sense of ‘conservatism’ within the group, and led to a reduction in the network’s capacity to achieve change:

I just felt our early phase group was disappointing at the end of it because there was an opportunity to think *radically*, and they chose not to. And what they produced was almost the same old same old, or what higher education were planning to do anyway, and they missed a chance, I felt, to make a bit of a statement about early phase teacher education. (Respondent Y)

There are a number of reasons why a sense of conservatism or resistance to change might develop within a policy network; one obvious one could be the range of competing institutional interests. As argued earlier, taking forward many of the key ideas within TSF requires a reconciliation of institutional interests. It is possible that the institutional interests of universities are too strong for this and resist compromise. For an education system that has become known for its shared ideology, this does appear strange, but as we will see, institutional interests are robust, and the perception of a ‘shared ideology’ has acted as a ‘mythical’ mask under which ideas and claims of territorialism have been allowed to develop.

Inconsistency is perceived in multiple layers. One actor for instance felt that there was not enough university representation throughout the NPG and its sub groups:

Through the whole process I have just thought it slightly odd that ... Graham’s report, was about changing teaching in schools. Through a change in teacher education. The report in essence was about teacher education that is provided by universities and yet actually the universities have had, I think, a much lesser role and representation than all of those groups than they merited ... Well if their recommendation was almost to enhance the role of teacher education within universities it seems very odd that there was so little representation then from universities. (Respondent V)

In the context of my argument, it is paramount to note that this extract comes from an interview with a STEC player, who, like all members of the NPG, has institutional interests that influence their perspective. If we look at the membership list from the NPG Report (Scottish Government, 2012) and the diagram above, as well as those in Chapter 3, it is clear that there were seven network members with attachments to universities, whether that be through the representation of STEC, Universities Scotland or an individual university (one actor is listed as representing University of the West of Scotland). To compare this to

representation of other institutional actors, GTCS had five, STEC had six, Education Scotland had six and the Scottish Government had five. It appears that this actor is suggesting that there *should* be an imbalance in representation, with universities being the predominant actor.

4.2.4 Fragmented actors, diverse interests, and multiple roles

Before discussing the exclusion, inclusion, and positioning of specific institutional actors, it is useful to think about the nature of actor fragmentation, diverse interests, and multiple roles. To discuss these institutional actors as single actors within a network does not reflect their complexity. Institutional actors are, by their very nature, fragmented, some more than others. While they are represented by one or two human actors in a policy network, they do not constitute a united voice. Some institutional actors are made up of a diverse range of interests and agendas. Due to their fragmented nature, they can play multiple roles in the policy network.

The development of collaborative partnership requires a harmonisation of these competing interests, a complex process constrained by hidden power struggles. As we will see, this is further complicated by the divergent political, social, and economic contexts that each institutional actor operates in, some of which contain multiple pressures and expectations within the politics of representation. As well as operating within different contexts, each institutional actor varies in terms of its size, range, multiplicity, and the role it plays within Scottish education. For example, ADES is a particularly complex actor as it represents thirty-two individual local authorities each with their own priorities and policy implementation strategies. The GTCS on the other hand can be seen as a different kind of actor. Although the GTCS serves many different functions, and is internally constructed of a team of education officers as well as the GTCS Council; it essentially represents one institution. The Scottish Government operates within a very multifaceted environment. There are many pre-existing (de)stabilised and entangled networks of norms, values, and existing patterns of working that the government and its civil servants have to navigate.

Scottish Teacher Education Committee as a fragmented actor

Within this thesis, STEC is conceptualised as a complex actor. It represents eight schools of education based within different universities, each of which is very different. Each university is subject to its own political, social, and economic pressures and as such, each

school of education is driven by differing pressures and expectations. This has implications for the extent to which it can be considered as one single actor within a policy network.

STEC was represented across the NPG, its sub-groups, and also in the tripartite chairing system. Here, a STEC representative reflects on the difficulties around representing such a complex actor within this space:

Obviously I have to be conscious about what the other heads in the universities, you know, can live with, and are looking to develop, and what the implications are for them, and obviously they vary. You know, we're not... while the universities are represented as STEC, we're all very different, and we've got different interests in this whole thing. And different views about it as well. (Respondent F)

However, despite this, another representative of STEC felt sure that it was possible to represent STEC as 'one voice' within the NPG.

I felt I was representative of all schools of education. I was representing STEC in the national partnership group. And that was important. In STEC we do feel that we need to have a collective voice. We acknowledge there are times when we have to have our individual voices. In this particular role, I was not representing [my university], I was representing STEC. And even in the more wide ranging discussion in the reference group, I chaired that group, but there was a representative from [my university] and there was a representative from everywhere else, and I tried faithfully to represent the discussions and all of the views that were expressed. We did spend quite considerable amounts of deliberations and lengthy minutes of meetings and so on, with organised responses to what was emerging and these were very definitely across the sector rather than institutional representations. (Respondent U)

While this seems to suggest that it was not difficult to secure a harmonization of interests between the different universities, this was not the case. My data revealed that this was, in fact, quite difficult to achieve. It is important to remember that there is an advantage to be gained in positioning institutional interests as harmonious. Without wishing to give too much away with regard to this actor's identity, they could be considered as a member of what McPherson and Raab (1988) referred to as the traditional 'policy community'. As such, they are part of a 'shared assumptive world' in which there is a shared world-view and common culture; both of which can act to shape perceptions of network behaviour. What's more, the basis of this shared view is the belief that all institutional actors in

Scottish education buy in to a shared ideology. It is possible that this is what we are seeing in this respondent's claims; s/he does not recognise the disorder that lies beneath the simulacra of order because s/he is vulnerable to the 'myth' as mask and as sustenance.

At the same time, being unaware of the competition and territorialism that can exist between different universities seems highly likely. Therefore, another possibility might be that she/he does not want to publicly talk about the complexity of interests, and instead wishes to portray STEC as a collective voice for all schools of education. There are two reasons for why this might be the case. First, the continued location of teacher education within higher education is not guaranteed. Second, much of the reform carries direct implications for schools of education, some of which could have potentially presented as challenges. Both of these issues require STEC to present as a strong collective voice.

ADES can be considered as somewhat similar to STEC in that it is an umbrella organisation that represents multiple divergent interests. As an institutional actor, it represents thirty-two different local authorities across Scotland. Each of these local authorities differs in size, geography and population, and is shaped by its own distinctive political, social and economic pressures. As such, each local authority has its own set of unique institutional interests and agendas. To what extent can individual ADES representatives speak for thirty-two different sets of interests and agendas? Given the variability in context and pressures, it is likely that teacher education reform will be assigned different levels of importance by different authorities.

Institutional actors with multiple roles

Some institutional actors play multiple, and often contradictory roles within the space of Scottish education. As a result, they were perceived by network actors to play multiple roles within the NPG. In the following extract, a STEC player discusses this tension:

...the second tension is... government is sitting with multiple hats. It's both setting the policy and political agenda, and the funding climate for local authorities and universities. It's also a key deliverer, not just in terms of schools, but in terms of Education Scotland, which seems to be increasingly focused on the particular sorts of policy goals of the government, you know, supporting those. But it's there, also trying to sit as a partner (Respondent F)

This extract raises a question around the extent to which we can consider the government as a single institutional actor within the network. As previously discussed, some institutional actors represent multiple interests and should be understood as fragmented because they are made up of a number of smaller networks (e.g. ADES and STEC). But there is an added element to the role of the government that adds a further layer of complexity: as well as operating as a fragmented actor with multiple interests that are being translated into the policy agenda, they are governing this entire process whilst also participating in it. I do not wish to imply this as a negative and undemocratic feature of the NPG. Sørensen and Torfing (2005) have shown how government and its representatives can ‘metagovern’ in such ways that enhance the democratic legitimacy of a policy network. However, it is certainly a feature to bear in mind when considering the power dynamics of the network.

In the following extract, the same player reflects further on this tension,

The government is... in a sense in a slightly strange position... because obviously at a co-chair level it's um... uh... civil servants. And, but then, you know in terms of participation in the national partnership group and in the sub groups, it's Education Scotland. Which is, I mean they are civil servants, but they're... well... they're a new organisation and still evolving in terms of precisely what they're going to look like etc. (Respondent F)

This actor sees the government and Education Scotland as the same institutional actor with intertwined interests. In the official discourse of the NPG (e.g. membership lists, minutes of meetings) they are listed as different institutional actors. But this also reminds us that it is in the interest for some institutional actors to collude with each other. Alliances are constructed between actors, thus promoting an imbalance and resulting in the exclusion or silencing of other voices in the partnership model.

4.3 The exclusion of teacher unions

The NPG and its three sub groups consisted of thirty-eight representatives. Given the size of this network, it is significant that not one of these individuals formally represented the voice of the teaching profession. Instead, a small number of head teachers and teachers

were invited to join the NPG or one of its sub groups, the implications of which is the focus in the following section.

The Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS) and Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) each had a formal representative on the Strategic Reference Group (SRG). Additionally, one of the teachers brought on to the NPG had strong links with the EIS. Nevertheless, members of the SRG had limited involvement in the formal machinery of the policy network, and despite links to the EIS, this teacher's role did not allow for the formal representation of trade union interests. The voice(s) of the trade unions were therefore excluded – or at best restricted – by the structure of the network and the mechanisms by which it operated.

The different teacher trade unions listed above represent different interests and agendas, and operate in different contexts, and therefore should not be treated as one institutional group. Instead, it is important to see them as individual institutional actors, and for this reason, I focus only on the case of the EIS in this chapter, using their situation as one example of teacher union or professional association exclusion⁴². Another reason for concentrating this discussion on the EIS is because it is Scotland's largest teacher trade union. As such, it has an important role to play in the democratic representation of teachers in the policy process.

The exclusion of the EIS formed the basis of one my core interview questions. Participants provided a range of different reasons why they might have been excluded from the official membership of the NPG, and I outline the key issues below. I present these as single yet overlapping factors. I then consider the implications of such a move for teacher engagement and implementation of the proposed reform, and conclude this section by introducing what some actors considered to be the 'compromise solution' to the exclusion of teacher unions.

⁴² Although the EIS refer to themselves as a 'professional association', I describe them as a teacher trade union throughout this thesis as this is what interview respondents tended to refer to them as. Although I make a distinction between the terms 'teacher trade union' and 'professional association' further in this section, I do not attach this distinction myself.

4.3.1 “A raft of people”

The simplest, and perhaps most ‘a-political’ justification for the exclusion of teacher unions, that emerged in my data, centred on the size and structure of the NPG and its sub groups. However, it is unlikely that there simply was not space to include one additional institutional actor. Given the size of the NPG, and the widespread nature of institutional representation, not to mention that some institutional actors had multiple representatives positioned across the formal network – would the inclusion of one more institutional actor, with three or four representatives across the NPG and its sub groups, really have made that much difference? The quotation below, from a co-chair of the NPG, provides a classic example of the ‘not enough room’ justification:

The trouble with any implementation group... it becomes huge and unmanageable if you have all of the teacher unions and other organisations there... representation from 3 or 4 different unions plus the primary heads groups and SLS and on it goes and you’ve got that whole raft of people in there and it becomes too big.
(Respondent H)

This actor states that teacher union representation would require equal representation from every teacher union. This is a valid point; however, this did not appear to be a concern for the National Implementation Board, which succeeded the NPG. This partnership group had two teacher trade union actors: a representative from School Leaders Scotland (SLS) and a representative from the Teachers’ Panel, who was previously the President of the EIS. This is an example of how the EIS might be seen to dominate the policy space.

4.3.2 Stage of involvement

Earlier in this chapter, I hypothesised that one reason for the development of a partnership model was the Scottish Government’s dependency on key institutional actors to make changes and work together in order to *deliver* the recommendations from TSF. A model of delivery (Priestley, 2013), as discussed earlier in this chapter, is suggestive of a ‘top-down’ system of policy enactment where policy is viewed as a linear process rather than a messy, multi-layered complex space (Ball et al, 2010). This results in policy being *done to* rather than being *engaged in*, which has implications for policy implementation.

The following statement from a Scottish Government actor highlights the importance placed on ‘delivery’:

There are a number of individuals and organisations which would like to be part of the National Partnership Group but certainly there was a desire to keep the size of it manageable but also try to *bring together all of those that are involved in delivery...* Those organisations who are *directly involved* who would need to *make changes in order to deliver the outcomes* that we want to see⁴³. (Respondent C)

The exclusion of the unions could signal that the Scottish Government did not, at this time or in this context, consider teacher unions to be ‘directly involved’ in teacher education, or as ‘key institutions’ in the *delivery* of change. This implies that they were not expected to make any ‘changes’ and may also suggest that they were not envisioned as being part of this wider *partnership* of institutional actors in Scottish education.

In the same vein, a number of members of the NPG and its sub-groups felt that it was not necessary to involve teacher unions in the same way as other institutional actors. For example, one actor representing the teaching profession stated that the role of teacher unions was “more at the *implementation* stage” and therefore saw them as “part of the service lead team element of it” (Respondent G). This actor implies that teacher unions are not key to the *formation* of policy, but do play a role in its implementation. In contrast to the civil servant’s view above, this would suggest that they *are* involved in the *delivery* of change.

Another actor, a representative of STEC, stated that the NPG was not the correct stage of the policy process for teacher unions to be involved, and that ‘consultation’ would suffice:

Respondent Q: We invited *feedback* from all the unions, but of course there were already systems in place for local negotiated agreements with unions and I think everyone realised that whatever we did would eventually have to be negotiated with them, so the idea was to come up with guidelines which you could take to them...

Interviewer: So they weren’t involved in the first stage?

Respondent Q: Yes they were consulted and invited to give views, but until we actually had proposals there was nothing to *negotiate*.

⁴³ Italics my own addition

Notably, this participant was a member of sub-group one, which worked through a number of complex issues around partnership agreements between universities and local authorities. It is therefore unsurprising that s/he felt the need to have something ‘solid’ to present to the unions, before dialogue could be opened. One interpretation of this might be that s/he was nervous about the implications that the proposals would have for teacher workload, and the reaction of teacher unions to this. However, the problem with presenting proposals that are ‘solid’, or ‘complete’ is that they are difficult to change. The following extract from an interview with a representative of a teacher trade union describes the implications of this delayed involvement:

I suppose one of the challenges for us from the beginning was that because *teachers weren't involved in the middle stage of it...* there are probably things that might have been written differently if we'd been directly involved from the very outset.
(Respondent X)

If we consider this this issue in light of the ANT translation model of change (Callon, 1986⁴⁴; Edwards, 2012 Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998), the fact that there were limited opportunities for teacher unions to translate their interests into the recommendations at the ‘middle stage’ of the process holds significant implications for engagement of teacher unions in the policy agenda. The initial stage of policy development is the most important space for actor involvement; this is where the policy agenda is open enough for institutional actors to translate their interests into it. If particular institutional actors are omitted from this stage, they come into contact with the policy agenda once it has already been defined and is much harder to shape to self-interests. If actors do not see their interests as being recognised in the policy agenda, they simply ignore it and do not become enrolled in the network. This has implications for policy implementation and the extent to which actors become enrolled in the network and engage in educational reform⁴⁵. Furthermore, this actor is positioning teacher unions as representatives for *teachers* rather than teacher unions, and as such, these implications of disengagement could be extended to the *teaching profession* as a whole.

⁴⁴ See also Hamilton (2012); Ball, Maguire and Braun (2011); Fenwick and Edwards (2010); Sakari (2006); Law (1994)

⁴⁵ See Chapter 2 for an in-depth discussion of the process of translation in the policy process

4.3.3 The common ‘misperception’

The next factor that I consider, as a determinant in the government’s decision to formally exclude teacher unions, is the ‘common misperception’ of the role that teacher unions can play in educational change. Taking the EIS as an example, there is a distinction that can be drawn between two different conceptualisations of its function: as a trade union and as a professional association. Both conceptualisations are shaped by different institutional interests and agendas, and therefore hold different implications for the translation of policy.

The first sees their interests as protecting and seeking improvement in teacher salaries and conditions of service, with industrial action as a mechanism for influencing policy change. In the second conceptualisation, the traditional purpose of the union remains, but responsibilities have been expanded to include supporting teachers to engage in professional learning⁴⁶; acting as a key voice in the formation of policy through consultation or participation in implementation boards⁴⁷; promoting educational reform and raising awareness amongst teachers; and, developing professional learning opportunities for teachers⁴⁸.

This is succinctly stated by a representative of the EIS who supports the second conceptualisation:

The EIS is, it’s a kind of interesting body because it’s a *trade union* but it’s also a *professional association*. So we very clearly take two sides to what we do with things. (Respondent X)

The EIS want to position themselves as a *professional association*, with an important role to play in the *professionalisation* of teachers, for example through the *delivery* of professional learning opportunities in the form of events and conferences. At the same time, they are a trade union whose goals are include protecting the interests of their members. They can therefore be regarded as playing multiple roles in Scottish education,

⁴⁶ One example of this was the creation of EIS Learning Representatives in 2003, which is often cited as an example of the ‘professional nature of teacher professional associations’ (Flanagan, 2013, p. 962).

⁴⁷ For example, they are a member of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Management Board, which has overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of curriculum change.

⁴⁸ I see them ‘professional associations’ that play multiple roles, but refer to them as ‘teacher trade unions’, or ‘teacher unions’ throughout this chapter.

which mean they bring different institutional interests into the space of policy-making that may at times be in tension with each other.

4.3.4 Inhibiting change

As I worked through the interview data, it became clear that members of the NPG and its sub groups were quite aware of (and concerned with) this dual conceptualisation and the EIS's multiple roles. However, the majority of participants appeared to view the EIS in its more traditional form as a trade union, and did not refer to any of the additional roles that it can play as a professional association. Some suggested that the inclusion of teacher union representation would have slowed the process down even further, as they may have *blocked* particular elements of the reform that did not align with their institutional interests.

If you had had trade unions there it would have been hard to have discussions, they might have just put their foot down before you even make a decision about what would be allowed and what wouldn't be allowed. (Respondent I)

Although this view did not appear to be aligned to any particular institutional actor, one point I would make here is that this quotation comes from a teacher. Another teacher commented: "the unions are not key" (Respondent G) and I argue that both of these extracts suggest that there is a perceived disconnect between these teachers and teacher unions. These teachers have been specifically selected to participate in the policy process, and in this way can be regarded as unofficial *representatives* of the teaching profession. In other words, they have subsumed part of the role that teacher unions would have had in the NPG. With this in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that they felt that the unions weren't required. But we also need to think about the kind of teacher that this role attracts. The desire to be involved in such a process as the NPG is accompanied by a certain level of political awareness and a willingness to engage and shape educational reform. As I argued in Chapter 3, this is the kind of teacher that TSF is trying to create: 'agents of change' who are able to shape and lead educational reform. It is not possible to draw any conclusions from this, but what this suggests is that teachers who have developed this higher level of engagement and awareness might not see teacher trade unions as relevant, albeit in their 'traditional' form, because they are essentially taking on part of that role. This would also have implications for the positioning of teacher trade unions in the development of the agenda set out in TSF.

A small number of actors appeared to be concerned that their progress would have been slowed down by having teacher union representation in the network. Reservations about their inclusion in the early stage of policy formation were born out of an awareness of the union's power to influence in the space of education reform and their ability to distort and inhibit policy reform if it does not align with their members' interests. For example, an ADES representative stated:

I think part of the messiness that the NPG was trying to avoid was getting change caught up in employment negotiations and pay and conditions (Respondent H)

This suggests that this actor was concerned about the implications of some of their proposals for teacher workload, pay, and conditions, including the drive towards master level learning and the expectation that teachers would take increased responsibility for their own professional learning and development.

The same actor continued:

I have mixed feeling about the union involvement. I'm always keen to look at educational issues rather than employment issues... I recognise there's a degree of naivety in that, but I'm prepared to stick with it because I'm an educationalist. Employment issues are there, and should be sorted out. But if you start with the entangling of those, right from day one, it doesn't always work like that. The pay and condition issues can come to the fore, and the educational issues become a negotiating point. (Respondent H)

It is clear that this actor does not recognise the additional roles that the EIS can play as a professional association in this wider policy space. Her/his desire to keep 'employment' issues separate from 'education' issues is evidence of this. Many, in fact, argue that in order to enact change within the teaching profession, there need to be appropriate changes to teacher working conditions. These issues exist alongside each other in the classroom and if we are serious about enacting meaningful change that will be sustained over time, they should be recognised as interconnected within the policy space. But to what extent can the EIS, as an institutional actor, be a voice for both of these issues in the space of policy formation?

The inability to play two roles simultaneously was cited by a number of respondents, who recognised the multiple roles of teacher unions, but raised concerns about their ability to switch between them:

What would have been their role? The role of a trade union is to represent their members' interests. The EIS describes itself as a professional association, the SSTA is a professional association. Technically they are interested in the furtherance of education, but their bottom line is representing their members' interests. They're there to protect teachers' terms and conditions and further the individual teacher, not actually to protect children's interests and to further children. The trade unions would say yes they do, but the proof is in the pudding. Is it a child or a teacher? They'll go for the teacher every time. (Respondent Y)

Can I be very rude and say they're professional but they can't wear two hats
(Respondent G)

These individuals represent different interests; the first quotation comes from a representative of ADES, and the second quotation come from a teacher. However, they both share the same concern about the ability of teacher unions to switch between multiple roles. The ADES actor implies that their traditional function, to protect the interests of their members, tend to override wider issues around education.

4.3.5 Perceptions about exclusion

There were some participants, mainly representatives of the GTCS, who argued for the second view of teacher unions, as *professional associations*. They spoke about the 'professional' role of the EIS and suggested that the Scottish Government had made an error in excluding trade union representation, to the detriment of the reform agenda as a whole.

I think the EIS is to be commended in how it has changed its outlook and role over the last ten, twelve years. Cause it's not just in there banging the table about pay and conditions of service. It's made a really valiant effort to be involved in *professional development for teachers*... It's been in conjunction with various universities in terms of programmes. It's got its learning rep programme. It's got all these things that are actually really commendable. So they're not going to stand

there with their placards saying ‘thou shalt not pass’. They should be in there trying to help. (Respondent T)

Given that one of the key aims of TSF is to strengthen and promote professional learning, the exclusion of an actor who positions itself as a provider and supporter of professional learning is detrimental to the realisation of this policy intention. Each of the four GTCS representatives that I interviewed reflected on the changing role of the EIS, highlighting the important contribution that they make to the promotion, development and provision of teacher professional learning.

They have made a huge contribution to professional learning and development. And yet we didn’t have one on our sub group. (Respondent J).

That this view was expressed by representatives of the GTCS is perhaps unsurprising, given the professional links between the two organisations. Representatives from the EIS sit on the GTCS Council, and the EIS, along with other teacher trade unions, are usually consulted and invited to contribute to the development of GTCS policy initiatives. The Professional Update (PU) Working Group contained representation from all of the teacher unions in Scotland, and this *collaboration* is often promoted as a positive feature. Furthermore, their website offers an extract from a member of STEC that praises this approach, stating that the process is a “copy book example of how collaborative working has been brought to bear in order to implement a national initiative”. Here we see elements of the Scottish ‘myth’ and the traditions and values that it sustains. This actor is claiming that the process used to develop and implement PU was commendable because it was ‘collaborative’ and this perception fits well with the rhetoric around participative and inclusive policy-making (Menter & Hulme, 2008) that we often hear in relation to policy processes in Scottish education. There are similarities here between the model used by the GTCS and what was perhaps envisioned in creating a partnership model to implement TSF.

A GTCS also talked positively about the collaborative working in the development of PU and the revised suite of standards. It is clear that they are providing them as examples of *alternative* models of policy-making to the NPG:

Now what we would try to do here with both the review of standards and with the development of Professional Update, and it’s probably the better example, we have

a Professional Update Working Group. And all of the big unions are on it. They've been in the tent with us when we've been talking about things. (Respondent T)

Consideration of the language used here shows an attempt to position the GTCS as an inclusive institutional actor. The expression 'in the tent' is suggestive of a participative policy-making process in which the voices of the unions are included, and more importantly, heard. This actor emphasises that the GTCS has strong professional relationships with teacher unions. By doing this, they are positioning the GTCS as *different* from government, perhaps trying to display different values in relation to participative and collaborative policy-making. What is not clear, however, is whether the process is different because the GTCS have inherently different values and beliefs that have shaped their approach to participative policy-making, or whether the GTCS have learned from being involved in the NPG and experiencing 'first-hand' the implications of excluding teacher unions. It is also important to remember that this is just one reflection on the development of GTCS policy. This may or may not be representative of the way that PU was developed within the policy space, but nevertheless, this description is important. If this is the way that the GTCS would like to be seen by others, then it is likely that these interests and values influenced the way that they operated within the NPG.

There may also be a *political* purpose to this kind of statement. Earlier in this chapter, I suggested that the GTCS might have felt somewhat constrained by government in the NPG, given that they were the only institutional actor not to be given a chairing position. This is a point I return to further in this chapter, but I would like to use it here to suggest that the GTCS may see themselves in the same position as the teacher unions, or at least want to position themselves as a fellow 'victim' of government.

Finally, this quotation suggests the unions were 'on board' with PU and the implications this reform would have for teachers. They have been part of a *collaborative* process and have therefore *contributed* to its development. This is problematic because it is difficult for teacher unions to raise questions about an initiative that they have themselves developed because they risk losing important (and political) elements of criticality.

4.3.6 “Too in the tent”

It is possible that teacher unions actually did not *want* to be involved in this stage, as they had to protect their ability to perform in their traditional role. There might have been some political sensitivity around appearing to be collusive with other institutional actors such as ADES and the Scottish Government. Teacher unions need to be able to retain the ability to speak for their members, and if they have been involved in developing the change that their members are unhappy about, this might put them in a difficult position,

It's awfully hard for a union to shout the odds later when they've been part of the design process and the decision making process (Respondent T)

Teachers' trade unions need to have a voice when a report comes out to say... if they're too in the tent then they're not going to come out and say we're dead against it... Excuse me, you were at the table. So they have to protect their ability to talk independently too. (Respondent Y)

To retain credibility, teacher trade unions have to publicly stress the workload and resource implications of educational reform, and position themselves at a distance from government. However, Humes (1994) warns that if teacher trade unions are overly positive about reform, they run the risk of being seen as having an overly collusive relationship with government and other institutional actors.

4.3.7 The perceived implications of teacher union exclusion

As argued earlier, the exclusion of teacher unions from the early stages of policy formation might have limited the extent to which they could translate their institutional interests, and the interests of their members, into the policy agenda. Further, possible implications to their exclusion for the implementation of TSF come from the perspectives of players in the network, who are representing institutional actors. The exclusion of teacher trade unions provided institutional actors, and their players, with a fruitful opportunity to position themselves in certain ways to demonstrate attachments to particular values and beliefs. Some actors may have used the interview as a space to publicly position their institutional interests- a process that could be seen as institutional game playing. This is one challenge associated with conducting interviews with 'policy elites' (Lancaster, 2016).

This is not to say that all responses were deceptive or illegitimate; some might have arisen from genuine concerns about democratic participation, or the ability of the NPG to implement policy without the unions on board. However, as genuine as they may be, these concerns will be the product of emotional attachments to the role of teacher trade unions, either based on past experiences or informal connections. I therefore argue that when interpreting data of this nature, we need to be mindful of emotional attachments as well as institutional interests and game playing. As such, I understand all of these responses as *stories*, which give us information about the way that players, and their institutional actors, wish to be perceived.

A number of actors from the NPG and its sub-groups felt that the Scottish Government had made an error in its decision to exclude teacher unions from the official membership of the NPG. The majority of these statements were founded on concerns around the restriction of teacher union input to the policy process (i.e. limited opportunities for ‘interest translation’):

These professional bodies do have a say, they do have power... And not to have them at the table perhaps may have made the implementation difficult. If you’d had them round the table right at the *beginning* then you were *hearing that voice* and then you *worked with that*. (Respondent O)

In this quotation, this actor draws out two potential implications. One implication is the lack of opportunity for teacher unions to translate their interests into formation of TSF at the *very beginning* of the NPG. This suggests that this could lead to complications further ahead in the process of implementation. The other implication raised in this quotation centres on the perceived *power* of teacher unions: “they do have a say; they do have power”. Rather than positioning the unions as victims of a tightly controlled policy process, this statement serves as more of a warning that their power and ability to shape (or halt) educational reform remains despite their formal exclusion.

In the same vein, the following quotations from GTCS actors illuminate the potential danger in excluding teacher unions from the formal membership of the NPG:

I think the unions felt that they were *after-thoughts*. I think that was a mistake. I’d like to think the Government would recognise that was a mistake too. (Respondent N)

Respondent T: I think it has been problematic [not involving the unions]

Respondent J: Yes I think it has been.

RT: It has been problematic, and we're waiting for what the cabinet secretary is going to say. So the unions will *react* to what the cabinet secretary says.

RJ: And they're coming from a position where they feel left out... So it's not a helpful start.

RT: No it's not, and it could have been avoided.

RJ: It could have been avoided.

These GTCS actors suggest that teacher unions felt 'left out' and imply that this will impact the way unions might *react* to the government's response to the NPG Report. The deliberate positioning of teacher unions outside the formal machinery of policy-making might be seen as a governance mechanism used by the government to *influence* teacher unions. But these GTCS actors present an alternative reading: their formal exclusion places teacher unions in a very *powerful* position, and there are two reasons for this. First, they have retained a safe distance from the formal 'development' of the policy, and have therefore retained their ability to challenge it. And second, the Scottish Government has placed itself in what could be described as a 'checkmate' position. Using Rhode's 'resource-dependency' model (2005), we could say that the Scottish Government depends on the resource of teacher unions. In this case, their resource is their *endorsement*. If the government were to attempt to implement changes without the unions' agreements, the unions are in a good position to act in resistance, which leaves the government in a rather precarious position. This is counter-intuitive to a process whose goal is to develop and implement educational reform using a partnership model.

Their exclusion may have also had some very real implications for teacher engagement. The following quotation from a GTCS actor highlights the potential consequences for teacher union 'buy-in'.

It might have been wise to involve teacher associations, because the whole concept of change such as this will require *buy-in* from those who are at the centre of this delivery... If the unions were inside as part of the process then there's a far better chance that they will buy in to that process. (Respondent N)

On first reading, it might appear that this actor is stating that the unions are "at the centre of delivery". However, it is more likely that they are actually referring to the teaching

profession as a whole. Teacher trade unions can act as mechanisms to bridge the gap between ‘policy’ and ‘practice’, and between ‘policy-makers’ and ‘teachers in the classroom’. These connections are important for securing teacher engagement within the wider profession.

The following quotation comes from a teacher who was a member of the NPG:

It is about relating proposals to the *reality* of learning and teaching. How schools work, how teachers operate on a *daily basis* to do this job... (Respondent B)

Clearly, linking policy reform to the ‘reality’ of the classroom is a critical step in ensuring that any proposed changes are realistic and implementable. However, we need to ask: who is best placed to represent this reality? Practicing teachers may have a particularly deep understanding of day-to-day classroom issues, but to what extent can they be *representative* of the lived realities of the entire teaching profession?

This leads me to the next perceived implication of teacher union exclusion: a lack of ‘democratic accountability’ (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008) within the network. The following quotation comes from a player who was not formally brought in to the NPG to represent teacher unions, but is connected to them.

The key people were missing. Those who democratically speak for Scottish teachers. (Respondent B)

There are, of course, a number of questions that should be raised about the extent to which one teacher union *can* democratically speak on behalf of *all* Scottish teachers. However, the same questions apply to individual teachers, who are not as well positioned or equipped to represent the teaching profession in a policy space.

How do you, as an individual teacher, take views, proposals, issues, concerns back to your constituent group? ... You have a perception, you have a flavour, and your own views based on your own experiences as a teacher, based on the sum total of the experiences of colleagues who have engaged with you. That is different from representing an organisation or a group of teachers who have got a *structure of democratic accountability*. There has got to be democratic accountability. I think that is the fundamental flaw in the National Partnership Group. (Respondent B)

This actor, although not representing teacher unions in the NPG, was deeply attached to teacher unions as institutional actors, so his/her response is not surprising. It is, in fact, hard to argue with these concerns, particularly when one of the most positive attributes of policy networks is that they have the potential to enhance democratic accountability (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008). However, to claim that the perceived lack of democratic accountability was ‘*the*’ fundamental flaw of the NPG, is a rather strong statement. I discuss teacher participation in the NPG later in this chapter when I.

4.3.8 The compromise solution: informal representation

Although they were not formally represented in the original membership of the NPG or its sub-groups, it appears that a compromise solution was reached. At the third meeting of the NPG in September 2011, there was official recognition that the membership of the NPG and its sub-groups should contain practitioner members⁴⁹. Already by this point, a small number of additional practitioners had become members, and were also in attendance at this meeting.

One of these practitioner members was a former president of the EIS, although formally representing secondary teachers. Despite her/his strong ties to the EIS, some members of the NPG, including herself, insisted that she was brought in to the group to represent classroom practitioners⁵⁰. However, an alternative way to look at this is as an *informal mechanism*, engineered by the Scottish Government, to allow the inclusion of teacher unions, albeit in an informal way. If we examine this through an ANT lens, it can be seen as an opportunity for the EIS to position their interests onto the agenda, or at least feel as if they had the power to do this.

[S/he] was brought on fairly late into the process, as a teacher... despite the fact that [S/he] was president of the EIS. [S/he] would have been far better nominated in [her/his] post as President of the EIS. (Respondent N)

⁴⁹ Taken from minutes from NPG meeting 9 September 2011 (not publicly available)

⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that following the publication of the NPG Report, this actor, along with Graham Donaldson (author of TSF) and representatives from GTCS and STEC, addressed the Scottish Parliament and discussed the implications of their Report. Although this actor was formally representing the teaching profession in the NPG, this actor was reflecting on the work of the NPG in her/his capacity as EIS President in Scottish Parliament.

As I mentioned earlier, the EIS were involved at different stages in the formation of the policy, which is where the distinction between different levels of involvement and different stages at which institutional interests can be translated becomes clear. The following quotation comes from an EIS actor and helps to provide their perspective about their involvement:

We had our say at the initial stage... Professor Donaldson interviewed us in terms of the groundwork for the report. Not all our thoughts were conveyed within the recommendations but lots of them were, probably because they mirrored what other people were saying as well. And when it came out we had reservations about several aspects of it, which we expressed. We didn't get in to the NPG, so we couldn't put that *formally* across. But we did, when the paper from there came out, make sure that we were heard again in terms of which recommendations, how those recommendations went forward to the NIB. So we've been involved at different stages in different ways. (Respondent X)

This actor appears to be implying that that because the EIS were not in the 'formal' policy network they could not *formally* speak for their members during the NPG process. However, there were opportunities for them to shape the policy agenda to align with their institutional interests *informally* – either through their position in the strategic reference group, the 'consultation' process in the Review stage, informal and personal networks – or through an actor with links to a teacher union:

Respondent F: We actually did have a significant union person on the NPG. They weren't on there because they were a union person; they were on there as an *experienced teacher*. But we were conscious in suggesting that co-option that they had a significant national role, in relation to the EIS.

I: So that was a way of representing the unions?

R: It wasn't formally a way of representing the unions. It was a way of... getting a voice from the unions into the NPG

There was, I think it's fair to say, a compromise solution that that... The unions were never *formally* brought onto the group, but someone who was a senior member of the union came onto the group in another capacity as a class teacher. So in a sense, that suited a number of people because it meant that the union was indirectly sitting at the table. (Respondent E)

It is clear that these actors were brought into the network to play a dual role: to *formally* represent the teaching profession, while *informally* representing teacher unions. This actor appears to imply that his/her position allowed for the inclusion of a ‘voice for the unions’ in the NPG. This can also be seen to be a functional mechanism for increased participation, in keeping with the mythical image of Scottish policy-making. However, it is important to remember that there is more than one teacher union in Scottish education. To what extent can the EIS speak for all of them, particularly if there is a lack of formal mechanisms around their involvement?

There are, of course, implications around the *informal* representation. Although the actor who was performing a dual role (formally as a teacher and informally as a representative for a teacher union) provides an entrance point for institutional interests and views, it is possible that they lack credibility within the network; there is no guarantee that they are the official voice of those that the teacher union is meant to represent:

One union was sitting at the table, but on the other hand, it wasn’t a formal stamp of the unions. So I would say that is probably an issue. (Respondent E)

Other members of the NPG shared similar concerns around the effectiveness of this decision:

Respondent T: They kind of got round that [exclusion of teacher unions] because they had on Kay Barnett as a teacher. Kay’s a former president of the EIS. But that was *lip service*, it really was.

Respondent J: Yeah, it was a *token*.

These actors appear to be implying that this was a tactical and political move by the government. Such a move serves multiple purposes, but these actors are suggesting that it was nothing more than a *tokenistic gesture*, perhaps to encourage teacher unions to feel like they were included, or to mask the full effects of their exclusion. Bearing in mind that this quotation comes from GTCS actors, their reaction may be shaped by their pre-existing connections with the EIS or the way that they are trying to position themselves within this policy space. Nevertheless, such perceptions are important in a highly politicised process, as they contribute to the behaviour of the network.

4.4 Individual teachers: representing the profession

In the absence of formal teacher union representation, individual teachers were brought in to represent the voice of the teaching profession. In this sub-section, I consider the implications of this. To begin, I cite data from interviews with three different teachers who were invited to join the NPG or one of its sub-groups once the process had begun. Here, they comment on their delayed invitations:

I wasn't brought in right at the start. I think it was October, November-ish.
(Respondent I)

Myself and [name removed], a head teacher in [name removed], we were both asked to join in January of 2012. So the partnership group, in actual fact, had been going since August. So we didn't join till halfway through. (Respondent G)

I, as a teacher, was brought into the partnership group after it was established *as an afterthought*. (Respondent B)

The move to include teachers could be considered as somewhat 'post-hoc', given that the decision was made once the network had been formally established⁵¹. The delayed inclusion had a number of implications for the extent to which teachers could participate in the process.

Despite the importance placed on the development of 'partnership' between key partners in Scottish education, it appears that the inclusion of individual teachers was not a priority for government during the construction of the NPG. It is important to note that the Scottish Government's official response to TSF, the inclusion of 'experienced' teachers was recommended as a feature of network membership.

The delayed representation of teachers in the network sits at odds with the overall ambition of the policy agenda: to develop teachers as agents of change who are able to shape and lead educational reform. More specially, Donaldson (2011, p. 18) writes, "... teachers must be able to engage directly and willingly with the change process. Extended professionals

⁵¹ However, the government's official response stated that partnership group membership should contain experienced teachers and head teachers (Scottish Government, 2011a, p. 32).

are agents of change, not passive or reluctant receivers of externally-imposed prescription”.

If this is what the policy aims to achieve, then is it not logical to begin to enact this vision within the NPG? Yet, teachers and their representatives were not involved as equal partners from the beginning of the process, and when they were added, my data shows that there were a number of structural and cultural barriers that restricted the extent to which they could participate. How can we expect teachers to become ‘agents of change’ when the process that was established to enact this vision does not position them as such? In this sense, the NPG itself could be recognised as the type of ‘externally-imposed prescription’ that Donaldson warns us about.

4.4.1 “It is the teachers that have to do the job”

There was a mixed response from network members about the need to include individual teachers in network membership. A small number raised concerns over teacher participation in formal spaces of policy-making, suggesting that they lacked the confidence, experience, and suitable knowledge to do so. Other actors shared concerns about the ability of individual teachers to represent the teaching profession, especially in the absence of formal teacher union representation. Conversely, many network members saw the inclusion of teachers as a method for allowing the ‘teacher voice’ to enter the network, stating that it was vital to the process of educational reform. Respondents also raised concerns that their appointment came too late in the process to be effective:

What we seem to be moving to is that policy is being made and we involve at a later stage. That’s a move. But what we want to get to is that practitioners are involved in making the policy with policy-makers. And I think we missed that.
(Respondent D)

One Education Scotland actor reflected on the lack of teacher representation as a ‘missed opportunity’:

... Were there missed opportunities? I don’t think we got enough teacher representation. (Respondent E)

This was keenly felt by two individual teachers who felt isolated and underrepresented within the NPG:

I think at one point [my colleague] and I did comment that of all the meetings we were at and the groupings we were at, we were actually the only two classroom practitioners... There was representation from ADES, School Leaders Scotland and so on... But we were the only two people who *were actually in the classroom*. (Respondent G)

Whether you are on the GTCS as Chief Executive, whether you are a chair of STEC, whether you are whoever representing your stakeholder ... are you actually a practicing classroom teacher? Well the answer to that is you might be registered with the GTC but there were two classroom teachers in that room. There were also two head teachers, one from the primary sector and one from the secondary sector. We were the four people who were living the life of a teacher in Scotland. So that is why we should not be making any apologies at all for giving the teachers voice. Because it is the teachers that have to do the job. (Respondent B)

Clearly, both of these teachers, and other network members, felt that the teaching profession was significantly underrepresented within the network. The lack of members who were involved in the operational aspects of education was viewed as a negative network feature. There is a sense of credibility associated with 'being in the classroom' that is not afforded to more 'traditional' policy actors.

As well as highlighting the lack of practicing teachers, some suggested that the network should have included student teachers, a logical connection considering that the main aim of the agenda was to reform teacher education, the bulk of which takes place in universities:

My own personal feeling is if you're talking about developing early phase I would have liked to receive a student representative and a probationer representative. And somebody who's had experience of mentoring or supporting probationers and a teacher that has supported the students on placement... So the people that are actually doing this, implementing all of these changes and so on... Rather than just the people at the national level who've made their way through the ranks. Yes, you need that because you need the big picture. But you also need the operational aspect of it as well. (Respondent O)

No student teachers were included in the official membership of the network and the extent to which they were involved through consultation is unclear. Respondent O makes a distinction between actors who are ‘actually doing it’ and actors who have ‘made their way through the ranks’, highlighting that they bring different expertise to the process. S/he states that both type of network actor is required, but stresses the importance of including actors who understand the ‘operational aspect’. One teacher representative shared a similar view:

If you are representing schoolteachers you have got to inject a note of realism and reality into the discussion and the dialogue and that very often involves talking about things that aren’t really there in the recommendations [...]. It is about relating proposals to the reality of learning and teaching. How schools work, how teachers operate on a daily basis to do this job and to, in turn, cope with strategies [...] cope with potential new ways of working. (Respondent B)

Practicing teachers – who spend day to day in a classroom with students – are ultimately responsible for implementing changes dictated by education policy. Yet, their involvement as network actors was not prioritised. On a practical level, inviting practicing teachers to become members of the policy network can help to bridge the gap between policy and practice. Practicing teachers can advise policy makers on how proposed changes might work in practice and how the profession may perceive them. It can also be an effective way to begin to communicate key messages from the NPG to the wider teaching community. Raising awareness around the reforms is necessary precursor for the development of teacher buy-in. More importantly, the inclusion of affected actors and their representatives can increase the democratic function of a network, but this raises an important issue around the extent to which individual teachers in a policy network can be democratically accountable to the wider teaching profession.

4.4.2 The problem of democratic accountability

Although the majority of network members who spoke about this issue felt positively about the inclusion of individual teachers, a small number of actors raised concerns over the extent to which individual teachers could (or should) represent the wider teaching profession. These concerns were linked to two different issues: the first being the ability of individual teachers to participate in formal spaces of policy-making, and the second being the extent to which individual teachers could be democratically accountable.

One teacher union representative who had some involvement in the NPG through the strategic reference group commented on this issue:

Over time you're generally mainly going to go with an organisation like my own representing that because otherwise you've got, it's how you pick people and whatever. And there were teachers on the National Partnership Group ... [but]... they were three teachers out of sixty thousand. (Respondent X)

Traditionally, the involvement of teachers in the policy process has been done through teacher associations or teacher unions. They link this issue to the problem of selection criteria, but this sits within a much broader issue of democratic representation and accountability, as highlighted by another representative of teacher associations who was a member of network:

How do you, as an individual teacher, take views, proposals, issues, concerns back to your constituent group? ... You have a perception, you have a flavour, and your own views based on your own experiences as a teacher, based on the sum total of the experiences of colleagues who have engaged with you. That is different from representing an organisation or a group of teachers who have got a *structure of democratic accountability*. There has got to be democratic accountability. I think that is the fundamental flaw in the National Partnership Group. (Respondent B)

This actor highlights the practical issues around the representation of teachers in the policy process. An individual teacher cannot speak for the wider teaching profession because there are no structures in place to allow them to gather a representational view and this was certainly something that they were aware of. It is possible for teachers to represent a small sample of views and positions in the policy process, but as highlighted by Respondent B, it is likely that these would be from colleagues. Even so, this would require a level of transparency and some sort of structure to be put in place. One teacher reflected on the problems around discussing the work of the NPG in their school:

They know that I went away to these meetings, and they knew originally ... because originally it was Graham Donaldson HMI... a former HMI inspector. So the head teacher got it in her head that I was at the HMIE and I did tell her that I wasn't ever with HMIE, that it was more just meetings... But yes. Some of what we were discussing wasn't public so ... I didn't want to say anything I wasn't supposed to say. (Respondent I)

The lack of clarity around what this actor can and cannot communicate to those outside the formal process was another barrier to the representation of the teacher voice. If an actor is worried about communicating information s/he is ‘not supposed to’, it is difficult to see how they can speak for more than just themselves⁵². All of this is indicative of a closed process, which does not align with the vision of the participative policy process.

In the following extract, a different teacher discusses her/his role in the network:

I was representing [local authority name removed]. I was a teacher from [name removed]. Whereas [name removed] was a head teacher from a school in [location removed]. So you’ve got to be very careful because you’re not speaking for yourself. You’re speaking for other people. (Respondent G)

It is not clear whether there were any processes in place that would allow this actor to gather the views of those for whom they are speaking. Furthermore, there is a discord here between their view on representation and that which was formally presented in the minutes, which suggests that teachers were not selected for their ability to ‘represent’ a school or sector, but for their personal expertise and ability to initiative and support educational change in schools.

It is clear that individual teachers cannot be democratically accountable to the entire teaching profession within a policy network, nor should they be expected to be. It can be even more difficult to represent the views of their colleagues within the policy space. This seems to be a consequence of an opaque process, with one teacher in particular reflecting on concerns that they would ‘give too much away’.

The pressure to represent, even though this was not an explicit assignment for participants, was a common theme in my data analysis. Such a disconnect is counterintuitive to the aims of a partnership model. The problem lies within the structure, culture and procedures of the network and is not a reflection of participant ability. Chapter 5 discusses how these impacted on the extent to which individual teachers could *participate* in the policy process and restrict the agency of individual teachers within the network.

⁵² And indeed, this teacher did not feel that they could speak for other teachers: “I think I felt that I definitely could not speak on behalf of all classroom teachers” (Respondent I).

4.4.3 Raising awareness, encouraging ‘buy-in’, and developing ownership

It is possible that individual teachers were brought into the process to raise awareness, encourage ‘buy-in’ and support the development of ‘policy ownership’ amongst the teaching profession. Awareness, buy-in, and ownership are all fundamentally important for policy implementation, and the disengagement of actors emerged as a key theme in my interview data: “There has to be a significant degree of practitioner buy in, or the whole process could struggle” (Respondent E).

Actor engagement was referred to in various ways, such as ‘buy-in’, developing a sense of ‘policy ownership’ and ‘having their voice heard’. More often than not, this issue was raised in relation to the involvement of practitioners in the policy-making process. In particular, concerns were raised about the extent to which teachers had the opportunity to have ‘their voices heard’ in the policy formation process:

I think sometimes the challenge is ensuring teachers see that they’ve got voice in that process ... I thought that it hadn’t gone far enough in terms of teacher ownership. (Respondent D)

A number of actors agreed that the network had not done enough to encourage the development of ownership and concerns were raised about a lack of awareness amongst the teaching profession:

There is this view that teachers are not on board and really don’t understand Donaldson and really haven’t got a clue what is round the corner... That keeps coming out in all the meetings I go to. People say ‘schools just haven’t got a clue, they are not engaged’. (Respondent V)

And I think the really worrying thing is that the vast majority of teachers, if you said to them, ‘what is Teaching Scotland’s Future?’ they genuinely wouldn’t know. (Respondent X)

It should be noted that the interview with Respondent V was conducted in November 2012 and the interview with Respondent X was conducted in February 2014, so it is unlikely that their description of teacher awareness extends to the time of writing. However, it provides a snapshot of a point in the policy process where we would expect a level of awareness to

be developing, and this was indicative of problems to come in the latter stages of policy enactment.

Policy disengagement within the teaching profession has a number of implications for the implementation of TSF that exist at two levels: a practical level (uptake of opportunities for career-long professional learning) and, ideological (the development of teachers as ‘agents of change’, which requires a significant shift in culture and the way we conceptualise teaching as a profession).

The underlying principles of the vision set out in TSF entertain a view of teachers as expert practitioners, who are themselves the engines of professional progress. They are to be empowered as professionals and distinguished by their capacity for self-determination and judgment. Central to this vision is a belief that teachers should take responsibility for identifying their own professional development needs and locating the relevant provision required. This undeniably raises a number of issues around awareness of the policy and the extent to which practitioners engage with professional learning opportunities that arise from the work of the NPG. If teachers are not aware that such opportunities exist, then it is unlikely that their practice will change. It also raises issues around the extent to which teachers will *want* to engage with these opportunities:

Will you really be able to change the teaching profession without teachers themselves taking full ownership and responsibility and being sufficiently motivated to do these things of their own volition? I am not sure. (Respondent V)

4.5 Positioning of the General Teaching Council of Scotland

Within the NPG and its three sub-groups, there were six chairing positions available, yet none of these positions had been allocated to representatives of the GTCS. These chairing positions are significant because they carry a certain level of power within the network. They provide enhanced opportunities for institutional interest translation as NPG and sub group chairs were directly involved in writing draft reports and communicating key developments and ideas to other networks. Furthermore, chairs played an important role in governing this process essentially acting as ‘gate-keepers’ to policy translation. This move

carried a series of potential negative implications, not just in terms of the participation of GTCS, but for the translation of the agenda as a whole.

The GTCS is a key institutional actor in Scottish education. It is increasingly involved in the formation of education policy and acts as a central pillar of the traditional policy community in Scottish education⁵³. It also plays an important role in ‘shaping’ the teaching profession in Scotland. Unlike other institutional actors, such as ADES, STEC and Education Scotland, which have a broad range of responsibilities, GTCS’s core interests lie in the teaching profession.

Is it possible that this was a move by government to restrict their power within the network? Or could it be the case that the GTCS did not want to be represented at this level? I consider both of these possibilities within this chapter.

Although the power of the GTCS was somewhat restricted by the design of the networks, my research suggests that they remained one of the key institutional actors throughout the process and contributed significantly to the development and implementation of TSF. My data suggests that they were the most active institutional actor in relation to the translation of institutional interests into the TSF agenda, and therefore played a prominent role in informing policy development, which would indicate that network structure and chairing positions were not key to actor participation within the NPG. Instead, it appears that having multiple actors positioned in different parts of the network (independent of the roles they have) can facilitate participation and increase influence within the policy space. Additionally, the GTCS has a strong position within the wider policy community in Scottish education; they are well respected and well connected to other institutional players within this wider network. It is likely that this will have benefitted them in their participation.

⁵³ Although, Matheson (2015, p.92) argues that this was not always the case.

4.5.1 Perceptions of network members on GTCS positioning

There was a general consensus across the interviews that the GTCS should have been represented in the chairing model of the NPG, either as part of the tripartite chairing system, or as one of the sub-group chairs⁵⁴. One member of the NPG stated:

I think the GTCS should have been represented in the chairing from the outset yes. *If* the co-chairing model was felt to be politically unavoidable then the omission of the GTC from co-chairing seems curious. However, bearing in mind my previous observation, this would also have potentially compounded the problems of co-chairing. (Respondent L)

Although this individual clearly states that the GTCS should have been represented in a chairing position, the second part of the statement suggests that if a political decision lay behind the design of the chairing model, then the exclusion of the GTCS seems especially suspect. The implication here is that another reason existed behind the creation of the tripartite chair. If the GTCS had also been included in this there would have been four chairs, from *four* institutional contexts representing *four* sets of different institutional interests. It is therefore possible that GTCS was excluded from the tripartite chairing system simply because of its unwieldy size had this occurred.

When this individual mentions her/his 'previous observation', s/he is referring to another comment made in the same interview, which suggested that the tripartite chairing system lacked a 'decisive edge'. Other members of the NPG had similar concerns about the ability of the co-chairs to lead the network. Some of these fears emerged from wider concerns about the individual chairs' knowledge of the education system and experience of teacher education in Scotland. Other concerns included achieving distributed leadership between three players from different *institutional contexts*, representing different *institutional interests*.

4.5.2 Perceptions of GTCS actors

When asked, representatives of the GTCS had mixed responses about the chairing system:

⁵⁴ The issue of its exclusion from this level of the network did not arise in all interviews as it was not included as a 'core' question. However, in the interviews where it did arise, almost every individual commented that its positioning within the NPG and sub-groups was surprising.

We were surprised, em... I think we believe that the GTC is central to the delivery of this project because so many of the recommendations have got direct implications for the way that we do our work and em... we would have expected that the GTC would have been more in the centre of that delivery. Now that's not an argument for saying that I should have chaired it or Tom should have chaired it, but we were a bit surprised that the GTC wasn't represented. Either in the three... in the tripartite chairing of the National Partnership Group or indeed of the chairing of any of the sub groups, and we did find that a little bit difficult to understand, but we expressed that point of view, right at the start and on a couple of occasions since, and it was quite clear that that wasn't going to change. (Respondent N)

I know that there were some that were miffed that the GTC wasn't asked to be one of the chairs. But I don't think that's a genuine concern, well I don't think it's a concern that matters too much because I think the three players that needed to act together in concert and better partnership are in fact the universities, the local authorities and to a lesser extent the government. And if I was going to put my hand on the heart, the real nub of partnership is between the Universities and the local authorities. (Respondent T)

Throughout this thesis I have focussed on position and agency of institutional actors rather than the individual people involved. However, these statements reiterate the importance of individual differences between representatives of the same institutional actor. Not every representative of the same institutional actor has the same personal interests or views and this influences the way that they participate in the policy process.

Respondent N reflects on the GTCS's *surprise* that they were not represented in the tripartite chairing model or in the chairing of the sub-groups. This reflection appears to be based on the claim that the GTCS were central to the 'delivery' of the TSF agenda. I have argued that policy discourse has positioned them as central to the strengthening and realisation of the key idea at the centre of the policy agenda: the development of teachers as 'agents of change'. Therefore, on one hand, it is inappropriate that their power was restricted within the NPG. But on the other hand, the official response to TSF from government⁵⁵ assigns the GTCS with responsibility for taking forward a number of the recommendations. It might be suggested that this shows that they have already been placed in a powerful position to shape and drive the reform forwards, thereby limiting the restrictive effect of their position in the NPG.

⁵⁵ See Scottish Government (2011x)

Respondent T acknowledges that some actors were ‘miffed’ that the GTCS was not represented in the chairing of the NPG or its sub-groups, but does not appear to share that view. Instead, s/he states that the GTCS’s institutional position within the network was not a ‘genuine concern’ or a ‘concern that matters too much’, suggesting that the purpose of the NPG was to develop and strengthen partnership between local authorities and universities (ADES and STEC). For this reason, it was important that ADES and STEC had representatives in chairing positions; however, this sits in contradiction to the principles of partnership. If the involvement of some institutional actors was prioritised by government over others, does this mean that more value was given to their contribution than that afforded to other institutional actors? If this was the case, to what extent can we call this a democratic and collaborative model of policy-making?

4.5.3 GTCS positioning

GTCS independent status and interest alignment

Shortly after the publication of TSF, the GTCS was awarded independent status from the Scottish Government. No longer under government control, this led to enhanced powers and greater flexibility in the ways that they could operate (Matheson, 2015). This newfound flexibility also applied to their role within the space of policy-making and teacher education reform. In this policy space, the GTCS can be a powerful institutional actor that is not formally required to act in the interest of government. Furthermore, it is trying to re-position itself within the wider space of Scottish education governance, and its involvement in the NPG might have been an opportunity for it to do this. It is possible that the government foresaw this as a potential problem for successful implementation of TSF, and positioning of GTCS actors in non-chairing roles might therefore be recognised as a subtle technique to *restrict* their power, thereby allowing the government to retain a degree of control over the GTCS within the network.

At the same time, we must remain mindful that the Council’s independent status is subject to conditions and can be removed by the government. It is unlikely that the GTCS would act in a way that would jeopardise their new independent status. It is also unlikely that their

interests would diverge greatly from the policy intentions set out in TSF, given their role in the development of the Report:

We had lots of conversations with Graham during the compilation of his report, both on and off the record. So he was well aware of what we were doing and the topics we were working on... So I don't think it's any coincidence that the bits came together. (Respondent T)

Given their involvement, it is unlikely that GTCS interests would deviate dramatically from the intended direction of change within the NPG⁵⁶. In his historical account of the first fifty years of the GTCS, Matheson (2016, p. 2) states that Donaldson's recommendations "aligned closely with Council thinking", with many of the recommendations being "features of work already being undertaken by the Council". A GTCS respondent reiterated this:

Professional Update is something that we have been considering for a number of years within the GTC... So it predates Graham in his report, but it fits in really well with Graham and the report. (Respondent T)

The agenda set out in TSF and the institutional interests and agendas of the GTCS were aligned before the NPG was created. The GTCS were afforded additional opportunities to translate (Fenwick, 2012, Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) their institutional interests and agendas into the policy agenda before it was temporarily 'black-boxed'⁵⁷ (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) in policy text form (TSF)⁵⁸. This places them at an advantage in the process of policy translation as it has already been shaped to their interests before it enters the NPG.

Role in wider reform agenda

It is, of course, possible that the GTCS was excluded from chairing positions because the Scottish Government had already given the Council responsibility for further developing

⁵⁶ This is not to say that there are no conflicting views and agendas between GTCS representatives and others in the network such as ADES, STEC and Education Scotland. However, their interests appeared to align with the overall agenda set out in TSF by the Review Team.

⁵⁷ This is where a policy agenda becomes stabilised, but this is only ever temporary; the network (TSF) has settled into a stable form that hides all of the negotiations and struggles that were required in order to develop it (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010).

⁵⁸ It is possible that these opportunities were provided to other institutional actors, but this did not emerge in interview data

and implementing multiple parts of the TSF agenda in their official response (Scottish Government, 2011x)⁵⁹. Policy discourse within the original recommendations and the government's response to these placed the GTCS in a powerful position when compared to other institutional actors. Several of the recommendations within TSF referred directly to the GTCS or areas of work that they would become responsible for due to changing responsibilities in line with their new independent status. This move provided them with multiple opportunities to translate their interests into the agenda (Fenwick, 2012), many of which existed outside the formal machinery of the NPG.

However, could it be possible that the GTCS requested not to be given any chairing positions in order to appear overly powerful in the wider space of teacher education reform? As an institutional actor, they are particularly active in the wider programme of educational change. The introduction of Professional Update and the revision of Professional Standards are significant reforms with potential implications for teacher workload and both are led solely by the GTCS. If the GTCS was also represented in a leadership role within the NPG, this might have had consequences for the way that other actors perceived them within this wider educational space.

The process of 'resource-exchange'

Although the GTCS was not represented in any of the chairing positions, it retained a certain degree of power throughout the NPG. There are a number of reasons for this:

I think symbolically [the tripartite chair] is really important... It's also difficult in three ways. One [difficulty] is... the GTC role. Eh... because that's critical as well. And we've involved them heavily... They come to our meetings of chairs of the sub-groups... because we're very keen to ensure that there's coordination between what they're doing from a professional body point of view and what we're thinking from a provider point of view. So, that's a potential sort of tension, or missing body if you like. (Respondent F)

This actor highlights that although the GTCS was excluded from the NPG model, they were included in meetings of the co-chairs and sub-group chairs⁶⁰. A policy network approach, drawing on the work of Rhodes (2005), views this as indicative of the GTCS's powerful position in Scottish education, where power equates to *resource*. Respondent F

⁵⁹ In this document, the GTCS are mentioned explicitly in relation to the further development or implementation of nine recommendations (recommendations 5, 8, 11, 14, 19, 23, 26, 35 and 36).

⁶⁰ In Chapter 5 I reveal these meetings as important spaces where the 'real' policy is made

refers to the role of the GTCS as ‘critical’; they have a set of resources that this network is dependent on for achieving its aims. These resources include: accreditation of ITE provision in universities; specialised knowledge about the teaching profession; and, their connections to a wider network of actors in Scottish education, which includes the teaching profession and teacher unions. The GTCS plays an important role in communicating key messages about educational reform to the teaching profession, which is crucial for teacher ‘buy-in’.

While all of these things are important, Respondent F hints at a more political reading of ‘resource’. As discussed earlier, the GTCS was in the process of embarking on a wide programme of reform in revising their suite of professional standards and developing a programme of Professional Update, at the same time as the NPG was in ‘action’. My data shows that the GTCS felt it was important that their work and the work of the NPG aligned:

It was really important that... we aren’t contradicting each other but we are actually moving in the same direction and we’re moving forward in a manner that is interlinked. (Respondent T)

A lot of the work of the partnership groups supports what we’re looking to develop here, and hopefully what we’re looking to develop here supports the next stages once the cabinet has edited the reports. So there should be coherence, it will be interesting to hear if the profession see coherence but we can see the coherence in the explicit links I think. (Respondent D)

Respondents T and D both highlight the interconnected nature of the two policy areas. The government’s act of formally supporting this programme of change (as set out in TSF and by the government in their official response) might be recognised as a mechanism for subtle control. Linking the two different reforms together in official policy discourse makes it difficult for the GTCS to make any changes that do not support the key messages set out in TSF. The GTCS’s *programme of reform* can be recognised as a *resource* in the sense that it can support the enactment of government policy. But in order for this to happen, GTCS actors need to play a role in joining the dots, which was certainly recognised:

I think the GTCS is absolutely central to all of this because in some ways we're the common denominator that actually links all these different bits together.
(Respondent T)

In this sense, GTCS actors must be recognised as a resource as their roles in the NPG were central to the achievement of policy coherence across different programmes of educational reform in Scotland.

4.5.4 Influencing without a chair

Despite the lack of chairing opportunities, the GTCS emerged as one of the most powerful institutional actors within the network. It was heavily involved in shaping the policy agenda and many of their representatives played key roles in governing the process and moving particular elements of the reform agenda forward. What's more, each of the four actors that I interviewed spoke positively about the reform.

Chairing positions within the tripartite chairing model and chairing of sub-groups were not overly influential positions within the network. Possibly, these positions were more symbolic than substantive and holding one did not necessarily guarantee increased opportunities to influence and shape the policy agenda.

The GTCS played a prominent role in the wider reform, and as such, held powerful positions within this wider educational space. These positions, and their roles in governing elements of the reform, allowed them a certain degree of power and influence within the NPG. In the following quotation, a STEC actor reflects on the changing role of the GTCS, its current reform agenda, and the way in which they retained power within the process:

One of the things I found most interesting in this whole process has been the sort of newly enhanced or emerging role of the GTCS. Very, very interesting. I think they have played it very well. I have got huge admiration for the key players there. So I actually think they will take on a really important role there, and they have created a few new mechanisms by which they can move people along. Professional update and so on. So I am not sure that ... the Donaldson report itself couldn't create those mechanisms. It had to just lay the ground. Other bodies had to create those. I don't think those mechanisms were created out of either the NPG or its sub groups or its reference groups. I think slightly from the side, GTCS has come in and actually shifted things on in a very positive way. (Respondent V)

The term ‘they have played it very well’ insinuates that this actor was aware of a GTCS agenda at work within the NPG. All institutional actors within a policy network have, by their very nature, agendas and interests that they use in order to participate in the process. However, this promotes the idea that the GTCS had a larger agenda at work.

This actor also confirms that the GTCS was instrumental in driving the overall reform forward. It can be assumed that when this actor refers to ‘mechanisms’, s/he is talking about the development of Professional Update and the revision of the standards. S/he states that these ‘mechanisms’ were created ‘slightly from the side’; not from ‘either the NPG or its sub-groups or its reference groups’, which reminds us that the NPG was just part of a wider reform agenda, in which the GTCS played perhaps the most important role. Its position within this wider space might explain why their restricted positions within the NPG and its sub-groups had little implications for their participation and influence.

GTCS actors were positioned throughout the network in such a way that allowed for a degree of power and influence within the network despite the lack of chairing positions:

We were lucky in that we had planned our GTC involvement in the sub-groups in that [name removed] and [name removed] were represented on the NPG itself and then the three subgroups...we had three members, me and two members of my team, linking so we had quite clear lines of reporting into the NPG. (Respondent D)

The GTCS positioned their actors across the NPG and sub-groups in such a way that they were evenly spread throughout the network. This provided them with increased opportunities to translate their interests into the agenda within the NPG and its three sub-groups. It also provided further opportunities for the development of policy coherence between the two programmes of change.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter focussed on three key themes: the membership of the NPG and its sub-groups, including criteria for selection; the structure of the network and the appointment of individual actors to various roles; and, the politics of representation. It began by considering a number of different rationales behind the development of a partnership group in addition to the reasons provided in official discourse. I suggested that it might be recognised as an attempt to align the traditional image of Scottish policy processes, or it

could be in response to concerns about the strength of partnership between ADES and STEC. I also considered the possibility that the NPG was developed as a mechanism for ensuring that actors responsible for ‘delivering’ key aspects of teacher education would be aware of the changes that they were expected make in order to ‘deliver’ or that it was developed to encourage actor ‘buy-in’ to the reform agenda.

Following this, I discussed the range of institutional actors represented across the membership of the NPG and its sub-groups, highlighting the number divergent interests within one space. I then suggested that the rationale for selection of institutional actors was based on the assumption that representation leads to partnership but argued that the development of partnership is far more complex than this. There was a lack of transparency around the selection of individual actors to represent institutional actors. Many respondents also raised concerns that the selection criteria did not appear to be based on knowledge or expertise, and I reflected on the implications of this. Following this, I discussed the difficulty surrounding the representation of institutional actors that are fragmented or serve multiple interests and agendas.

The chapter then focussed on the exclusion of teacher unions from the network membership and considered different rationales behind this move. I summarised mixed responses from members of the NPG about their exclusion, and considered whether there was a misperception about the evolving role of teacher unions in Scottish education. Of significance here was the ‘compromise solution’, where a previous president of the EIS was invited to join the NPG not as a representative for teacher unions or the profession, but as a classroom teacher. I suggested that this allowed for informal representation of teacher unions, but ensured that they could remain at a distance from policy development. Once the network had begun their work, additional teachers were added to the membership of the NPG and its subgroups. Despite this, concerns were raised about the lack of teacher representation across the network and this was highlighted several times as a ‘missed opportunity’.

The final part of this chapter explored issues around network positioning, using the GTCS as an example. Despite the important role that the GTCS plays in teacher education, they were not provided with any chairing positions. These positions were important because they provided increased opportunities for interest translation. With this in mind, it could be recognised as an attempt by government to reduce the power of the GTCS in the further development and implementation of TSF. However, it was interesting to note that this did

not appear to limit the influence of the GTCS within the network. Despite not being in a chairing position, the GTCS had multiple opportunities, not only to translate their interests into the policy agenda, but to govern the process of translation.

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Chapter 5 The process of policy translation

While Chapter 5 explored issues around the structure and membership of the National Partnership Group (NPG) and its three sub-groups, Chapter 5 moves beyond this representational image and explores the participation and behaviour of institutional actors and their representatives within this space. Just because an actor is listed in an official membership list, does not mean that actor will have influence and this is the issue that I deal with here. This chapter therefore relates specifically to my third research question:

RQ3) How do institutional actors translate their interests into the policy agenda?

In order to answer this, I begin by identifying the different spaces where policy was made. There were a number of formal and informal spaces within the policy process where institutional actors were able to translate their interests into the policy agenda and I describe the nature of each of these, and identify the institutional actors who were excluded from or included in each space.

I describe the culture of the network from the perspective of actors within it as well as the participation of institutional actors within the NPG and the sub-groups. I argue that the participation of institutional actors took three forms: conservatism and resistance to change, territorialism and protection of proprietary interests and the subtle subversion of sub-group remit points.

I then explore the participation of individual teachers in the network. This discussion falls into four themes: the co-construction of network rules, knowledge of structures, procedures, cultures and rules, perception of self in the network, and perception from others.

5.1 Spaces of translation

To translate is to betray: ambiguity is part of translation.

(Latour, 1996, p. 48).

Using concepts from actor-network theory (ANT) allows us to explore the way that a policy agenda can be distorted or ‘betrayed’ as it moves across time and space. Latour reminds us that policy implementation is not an unproblematic linear process. In the process of translation, a ‘token’⁶¹ (in this case the policy agenda set out in TSF) moves through these different spaces and is met by a multitude of actors, each with their own agendas and diverse set of interests. As it forms links with other actors, the token is continuously transformed. At the same time, the actors are transformed as they see new possibilities with the token and a network is formed. According to Gaskell and Hepburn (1998, p. 66), the network and the token ‘co-evolve’ and the token comes to define a part of nature, while the network comes to define a part of society. An example of this might be the way that the GTCS have been able to shape the policy agenda to align with their wider programme of change. Both the token (TSF policy agenda) and the actor (GTCS) have been transformed by each other during this process and a network has been created. The token and network have co-evolved in such a way that they are now dependent on each other to stay alive.

The process was complex, and enacted over and between multiple, fluid and overlapping spaces. I refer to some of these spaces as ‘formal’ and some as ‘informal’, although the boundaries between formal and informal are not always distinct, and a number of informal spaces exist *within* formal spaces. For example, the NPG could be regarded as a formal space for a particular type of participation, but there were also a number of informal spaces where the policy agenda was adapted, distorted and silenced.

In order to discuss the participation of institutional actors and individual players, it is useful to provide an overview of the different spaces in which they participated. Respondents spoke at length about the spaces where policy translation occurred and where it was absent. They also spoke about the spaces in which they were included or excluded, or where their participation was restricted or enabled. By presenting a selection of these as examples, I hope to provide some insight into *where* policy translation occurs, *who* or *what* is involved, how these different spaces differ, and the implications that this holds for the translation of institutional interests. Identifying which institutional actors are active in each space also allows us to consider which interests are translated into policy agenda at which points in the process.

⁶¹ See Chapter 2 for a wider discussion of the concept of ‘token’.

5.1.1 Translation of recommendations to remits

The translation of recommendations into remits is what I consider to be the first, and perhaps most significant, stage of policy translation. As described earlier, the role of the sub-groups was to further develop and begin to think about how to implement a significant number of recommendations from TSF. However, before the sub-groups were established, the original recommendations were translated into groups of remits by the civil service who were members of the NPG. Some were combined with others, while a small number were fragmented into multiple points. Others were passed directly to institutional actors to take forward. An Education Scotland player reflects on this move:

Well it wasn't the recommendations so much. It was the remits so that what we were given as a sub-group was remits, which didn't necessarily match the recommendations [...]. They were based on the recommendations. Perhaps two recommendations had been collapsed into one remit point for example. So we were working to the remits and the remits that the three sub-groups had didn't cover the fifty recommendations. (Respondent R)

It would be relatively easy to overlook this detail, regarding it as an irrelevant or unnecessary part of the process, but it is hugely significant. What this shows us is that the sub-groups were not working with the recommendations from the Report, but rather a (re)interpretation of these recommendations, from the perspective of the government. This is evidence of the 'metagovernance' (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005b, 2009) role that civil servants played within the network.

The creation of sub-group remits might be one of the most significant stages of *policy translation*, but members of the NPG seldom mentioned it, perhaps because they entered the process after it had been done. To create the remits, the policy agenda set out in TSF was disassembled, distorted, squashed, spread and reassembled. An inevitable part of policy translation is that things will be lost and key messages will be distorted. Once the token drops, it is forgotten about and the re-enrolment of forgotten ideas, or the restoration of key messages, requires a significant amount of effort. The changes made by the government at this stage are subtle, but they are certainly not insignificant. To add to the complexity of this process, changes such as these can be made at multiple stages and through a variety of networks.

5.1.2 Consultation through informal networks

The sub-groups held a series of different consultation activities, such as seminars, focus groups, and other dissemination events to gather the views of individuals who were not formally involved in the process. In the following extract, an Education Scotland player reflects on the level of consultation by the sub-groups:

We did some good work. [Names removed] and others did some really good work. They got quite large groups together, sample groups, discussion groups, focus groups. (Respondent E)

I myself participated in a dissemination event organised by the chair of sub-group two, which was predominantly attended by teacher educators. The aim of these consultation exercises was to gather the views of those who might be involved in the implementation of different aspects of TSF, thereby increasing the democratic performance of the network. However, they might also be recognised as mechanisms for raising awareness, communicating key ideas and increasing ‘buy-in’ to the agenda. I discuss the implications of this below.

In her analysis of lifelong learning policy, Nicoll (2006) positions consultation as a tool for spreading the network of policy-making and demonstrates how different interests can be enrolled into a network through the process of consultation. However, in her analysis, she points to the limits of consultation by identifying who engaged in the process, how they engaged and how their responses were restricted. By focusing on who engaged in the process and how they engaged, we can witness the enrolments and translations enacted through the creation of the policy text and the consultation process.

We can also see what Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p. 140) refer to as the “holes in the process in the many who were not enrolled through the consultation”. In other words, while consultation can be viewed as a way to open up the policy space, it can also be used as a method to ‘control’ and ‘limit’ participation. Weak participation might be the effect of disengagement, a lack of awareness through poor communication or a direct consequence of exclusion. It is important to remember that the organisation of consultation exercises and the selection of groups to be consulted are two important roles that are often taken by

civil servants in government. Arguably, this strengthens the position of government in the network.

‘Spreading the network’ can help to increase actor engagement, build authority for the policy, raise awareness and communicate key ideas to a wider network of actors. It can be used to encourage actors who were originally excluded from the formal membership of the network, to ‘buy-in’ to the reform agenda. Essentially, it is another way to make the policy ‘sticky’. As discussed in Chapter 4, the ‘stickier’ the policy, the more chance it has of being implemented.

The process of consultation is often highlighted as a method for increasing the democratic performance of governance networks (Nicoll, 2006) as it can be used to include the voices of those who might consider themselves as ‘excluded’ from the ‘formal’ structures of policy development. However, the extent to which democratic performance is increased in practice is dependent upon a range of other factors.

One factor is the mechanisms used in order to collect and order responses, while another related factor involves the way that these responses are then represented in the policy space. Central to this is the issue of whom or what governs the consultation exercise and what their interests are in taking on this role. This actor becomes the ‘gatekeeper’, deciding who is allowed to participate and who is not, while at the same time acting as a ‘spokesperson’ for this wider network of ideas and opinion. This has obvious implications for the democratic function of consultation. The following quotation provides some insight into the consultation process from the perspective of the ‘gatekeeper’:

The way those voices were allowed in was through our networks... Yes I did have focus groups where there were probationers. There were mentors, class teachers, head teachers of schools, primary, secondary... So I did speak to them but I *filtered* what they said to construct the report. Now I did that honestly... (Respondent O)

Highlighted here is the process of *translation* and the way that responses and views were *filtered* in order to create a report for the subgroup; the content of the report can therefore be considered an *interpretation* of the views of ‘mentors, class teachers, and head teachers’. Importantly, this is another space where institutional interests can enter the process and be translated into the policy agenda. While this actor stated that voices were

filtered ‘honestly’, it is important to remember that experiences and institutional interests will always shape the interpretation of consultation data, and this limits the extent to which we can call it a form of democratic participation.

This translation has greater implications beyond the participants and the ‘gatekeeper’. Each interpretation travels to the wider sub-group, and then the NPG. The policy agenda travels through and between multiple informal and formal spaces, but distortions are (re)interpreted, silenced or strengthened by actors in the formal network, which highlights that invitations to participate in consultation processes do not carry the same weight as membership of the formal policy networks. An Education Scotland actor demonstrates the complexity of this:

There are so many people involved in this whole process from that group. Each individual [in the sub group]... is interpreting... having their own construct, taking their own networks and hearing them and trying to represent. And there are so many different things coming to the pot. And then it goes to another group then something happens to it... Every time the message is filtered through somebody else, you’ve got to be aware of the fact that, you know, it is their understanding of what has been heard and said and so on. (Respondent O)

This extract illuminates a number of interesting features in the process of policy translation in *informal* networks. First, different actors filter consultation at different levels as it travels through their own institutional, professional and personal networks. No limits were set to how far these networks could extend, and ‘consultation’ took many forms. Some sub-groups held focus groups with practitioners, while others organised seminar events for colleagues. Some institutional actors used more informal methods of consultation, such as sharing draft reports and proposals by email and requesting electronic feedback, while others held more formal events such as closed meetings.

Actors who are well connected in these networks, such as the chairs of the sub-groups and the NPG chairs, are in powerful positions. They decide what enters the *formal* network and what does not. Responses will be filtered by their own understanding of what was intended, but it is also possible that some ideas were silenced that did not fit with their institutional interests and agendas. Furthermore, because this is a closed process, there is limited accountability. Although widespread consultation was initiated, this does not guarantee that the multiple voices of the respondents will influence the formation of policy

by the NPG. This messy and restrictive multi-layered consultative process is typical of public policy-making processes around the globe. However, it does not sit comfortably within the '*mythical*' image of Scottish education policy processes as inclusive, democratic and representative (Humes & Bryce, 2013; Menter & Hulme, 2008; Raffae, 2004).

Particularly interesting is that this actor picks up on the complexity of the process and the way in which voices can become distorted by formal members of the policy network. Fenwick and Edwards (2010, p. 140) warn that consultation can be dangerous for governing, as it "may elicit responses that undermine the very policies to be promulgated". In other words, the process of consultation can work to distort the policy agenda away from its original intentions; actor resistance in the space of consultation then becomes detrimental to the reform agenda. Although consultation is an important stage in democratic policy-making, it can be a risky business for government unless it is tightly controlled. However, consultation occurred in multiple, informal, diverse, and slightly messier spaces; it can therefore be assumed that civil servants were not able to govern this space in the same way as the more formal spaces.

These limitations raise important questions around the purpose of consultation. One is that it is not just about what comes back to the NPG, but also what travels to this wider network. It is possible that consultation was used as a mechanism for communicating key messages and raising awareness amongst other actors in the wider educational community, particularly the teaching profession. We should also be mindful that the act of consultation helps to strengthen the image of Scottish policy processes as open, inclusive and democratic, and might therefore be considered as a political tool employed by the Scottish Government. The danger here is that consultation can appear more tokenistic than genuine, which has consequences for the way that the wider education community perceives the policy.

5.1.3 "Drafting, re-drafting and re-drafting the re-drafts"

The bulk of the work carried out by the sub-groups consisted of writing and re-writing draft papers for circulation through institutional and personal networks, collecting and translating feedback from these networks, and feeding this back into the sub-group reports. Given the number of opportunities for actors to translate institutional interests into the policy agenda, this might be considered as one of the spaces where the 'real' policy was

made. The following quotations help to describe this process from the perspectives of two players involved in it:

We aimed to have three iterations of our papers, so the very first one was intended to be almost putting all the ideas out there and then we had a dissemination event, and then we amended the paper and we had a second one, and then we had another dissemination event. And then we had the third one. That was the final one. So each of those paper iterations went to the National Partnership Group. So that was the way that we did it. (Respondent R)

So there was this sort of starter paper that was, you know, put to us for discussion and feedback. And that's what kept happening. We kept getting feedback and the paper was modified slightly. And then more feedback was given. And that was the process that worked. That was the strategy that was used. (Respondent O)

As suggested by these actors, the creation of sub-group draft reports was a complex, iterative process, in which sub group members drew on multiple networks for the further refinement of policy ideas. The 'drafting, re-drafting and re-drafting of re-drafts' was therefore heavily linked to the process of consultation described in the previous section, using consultation to inform the content of the reports. This circular process of sharing, translating feedback, and re-drafting can be conceptualised as multiple and overlapping stages of *policy translation*.

Along with consultation exercises, the process of writing and re-drafting sub-group papers is a mechanism for opening up the development of policy to all actors within the sub groups. However, the extent to which this occurred in practice appeared to be heavily dependent upon a number of factors⁶². Within each sub group, there were specific actors who were involved in writing the draft reports and papers. This suggests that some actors and institutional interests were excluded from this space; this is another example of where 'network design' was used as a form of meta-governance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005b). Data from my interviews clearly indicates that, in the main, this role was assigned to sub-group chairs and members of the civil service. However, some individuals mentioned that other institutional actors became more involved at different points with particular sub-groups (e.g. GTCS and Education Scotland). When asked about civil servants writing the reports:

⁶² I discuss this further in sub-section 5.4 'Individual Participation'

[It was] a difficult job because the members of the sub groups... we were meeting in a short timescale... I think that was an issue. We were not all in the same group at the same time. And some of us did a bit of writing but not all of us. I think it was a difficult model so inevitably the chair and the civil servant attached to that group were responsible for it. And, you know, fair enough. But I think you've got to be careful then that you're representing the views of the sub group. Or if you are altering them, then have a discussion. (Respondent J)

This actor states that other members of the sub group were involved in writing the reports, but that the *responsibility* for writing the reports appeared to fall with the chair and civil servants. This response also reveals a concern (voiced by many others) around the representation of sub-group member views in the translation process and indicates that there was perhaps a lack of transparency in this process. By suggesting that there should be discussion, this actor appears to be saying that there was a lack of consultation with the larger sub group before the chair and civil servants altered their views in order to create a report. This is not suggestive of a process that is participative; actor participation in the creation of sub group reports feels more tokenistic, which is a recurring theme within the data. Finally, it suggests that the process of developing reports in partnership was constrained by the time-scale and impacted further by the fact that not every member could attend all the meetings. A member of one of the sub-groups commented:

Everybody round all of these groups, by the very nature of their work, were people in full time busy jobs so the challenge of freeing up diary time to enable everybody to attend [the meetings] was really difficult. And I know that the civil servants who supported the groups... it was a real challenge for them when they would send an email to say here are the possible dates for the next meeting... To get everybody available on one date was almost impossible... They had to work with what they had. (Respondent D)

This is important point, raised a number of times by different actors, highlights the limitations of looking at membership lists to identify the range of institutional interests at play, reminding us that not all actors listed as part of the membership of the network attended meetings with the same frequency. It is assumed that meeting attendance is crucial for types of network participation and unequal attendance could lead to an imbalance within the network, with some institutional actors having more opportunities for interest translation than others. However, as I have argued throughout this chapter, there were many different ways that institutional actors could participate in and *influence* the policy process and some of these do not necessarily require their representatives to be

physically present in formal NPG and sub group meetings. Institutional actor and representative participation (a central theme of this thesis) played an important role in the drafting of draft policy documents.

Perhaps the most concerning observation is the lack of transparency around the re-drafting of sub-group member views:

Respondent T: I think also there were issues sometimes where... something had been written as a contribution towards the plan, and then it was rewritten
(Respondent T)

Respondent J: Yeah there were things like that going on (Respondent J)

RT: And actually [laughs] what was highly amusing was the bit that was rewritten was the bit that [name removed] had given them. So they've just re-written the Chief Executive of [name of organisation removed] part! I think editing was an issue. Editing rights was an issue. And sometimes wondering where something had come from that was in a report, thinking who had written that or how did that come from the group. That's from my experience. I think there were issues like that... Or something that appeared that hadn't actually been there before.

As well as highlighting the problems around re-writing or editing another actor's view, these participants suggest that some things appeared in draft reports that had not previously been discussed in meetings. This raises a number of questions around democratic participation and power, which have implications for the extent to which we can say that this is a process based on partnership. Access to parts of the process restricted to specific actors was a concern by another actor:

But in the meantime other people, Education Scotland representatives [names removed] were working on it, between these meetings. So when you got the next paperwork that came from Edinburgh, there were dramatic changes to it. But it wasn't always things that we had discussed. Now... there were certain things that were agreed but there were things they were learning as they were going along. So the paperwork you would get in January would be quite dramatically different... February... and again. (Respondent G)

This actor emphasised the lack of transparency within the sub group and suggested that new ideas or views were allowed to enter the process at the discretion of particular actors. We know that those with the authority to do this were the sub group chairs and civil

service, but here we are also reminded that other actors, in this case, representatives of Education Scotland, temporarily adopted this influential role.

Another member of the same sub-group felt strongly that the group *did* operate in an open and transparent way:

It's obviously about power sharing... It was very much about opening and sharing and we had key principles of partnership that we agreed to at the first meeting...
(Respondent R)

The construction of written documents, such as sub group reports, in 'partnership' is no easy task, and an arguably unrealistic expectation of the groups. It is logical that a small number of actors would have to take responsibility for writing the text. However, these tensions are indicative of the lack of transparency in the overall process. Disorder and unequal participation is to be expected in any policy network (Ball, 2012), however, it is not clear why we feel the need to present simulacra of order; in this case it only serves to hide a multitude of democratic problems.

5.1.4 Tripartite chairing model

Although the tripartite chairing model might be described as a formal structure, I argue that there was an element of informality around the way that it operated. The following quotation from a chair of the NPG provides an example to this point:

As well as the National Partnership Group we meet out with that as chairs. And we also meet as a group with co-chairs, of the sub groups, the chairs are kind of constantly in communication with each other⁶³.

The chairs of the NPG and its sub groups would meet independently of the NPG. These meetings were not 'minuted', or if they were, the minutes were not made available. Furthermore, GTCS players were invited to these meetings, which suggests that the GTCS were provided with more opportunities to *influence* the policy agenda than other institutional actors. It is possible that the three chairs required agreement from the GTCS before decisions could be taken. Alternatively, in line with Rhodes (2006) 'resource-

⁶³ Respondent number not provided for further participant anonymity

dependency' theory, the three chairs may have required advice or knowledge from the GTCS before moving forward.

It is important to note the institutional interests represented in this space by NPG chairs, sub-group chairs, and additional members were the: Scottish Government, ADES, STEC, Education Scotland and the GTCS, albeit on a more informal level. Of these, two of the Education Scotland actors had additional ties to higher education.

5.1.5 Communication flow between the sub-groups and the NPG

Each sub group chair formed a connection constituting the flow of information between the NPG and their sub group, and these connections should be considered as spaces for policy translation. However, the extent to which this could occur was dependent on the nature of this communication. When asked about the relationship between the NPG and their sub group, one actor raised concerns:

I was only really aware of the connections there in terms of the chair on the sub-group feeding back any information she'd got back from the National Partnership Group meetings. So it was heavily dependent on feedback, which is fine except as you can imagine, feedback is as good as the person gives. You know, it wasn't a minute, there wasn't anything written. We would be fed back some information but I don't think that was systematic across the groups... The relevance of the National Partnership Group level, to me in the sub-group, wasn't as strong as I think it could have been... or as connected. (Respondent G)

This was not a critique of the sub group-chair, but of the process used. It highlights a disconnect between the NPG and the sub groups, where there should be a transparent flow of information. It appears the sub-group chair blocked this channel. Nevertheless, this highlights an important space where there was *opportunity* for policy translation as reports and ideas move between the sub-groups and NPG.

5.1.6 "Other meetings"

Although the NPG was publicly sold as the space where decisions would be taken in *partnership* between key stakeholders, it appeared that this was not always the case. A significant volume of 'offline' communication and 'negotiation' occurred between

particular actors from the sub groups and the co-chairs of the NPG, and it would not be unreasonable to assume that much of the ‘policy-making’ was conducted *behind the scenes* (Judge, 2002). Information about the informal spaces within the NPG was hard to access; however, some actors intimated that there had been ‘other’ meetings with a smaller ‘inner’ group of members from the NPG.

While I was co-chair, sometimes I would have... it was usually that there were *other* meetings and then we’d talk with individuals and we’d then start talking about NPG. There were a few individuals from the NPG who I had *offline* conversations with⁶⁴.

Such moves are redolent of a core feature in the evolution of British post-war policy-making. In his considered comparative analysis of the evolution of policy and legislation with respect to the position of Catholic schools in the US, French and British traditions, Judge (2002) outlines three quite distinct approaches. In the United States, he suggests, policy was developed in and through the legislature, in France, ‘on the Streets’ and, in Britain, in the ‘corridors of power’. This historically conditioned approach in Britain has seen civil servants as not only conduits for policy enactment but, perhaps more significantly here, contributors to and shapers of such enactments.

One reason for this might be a perception that it is better to manage disagreements and differences of interest discretely rather than in the public domain, which may also explain the lack of public documentation around the NPG. However, such closed spaces limit opportunities for participation and cast a further shadow of doubt on the ‘mythical’ image of Scottish policy-making as democratic, open, and inclusive. This also raises a number of questions around the extent to which we can truly describe this as a ‘partnership’ model. To what extent can true partnerships be developed and strengthened more widely in Scottish education when participation is restricted and limited to those who are deemed to be part of the ‘other’ network?

The creation of ‘other spaces’ for policy-making also occurred within the sub-groups. When asked about the frequency of official meetings, one actor stated:

⁶⁴ The respondent code has been omitted here to protect his/her anonymity.

I'm not sure... As a *full* subgroup, maybe six times across the year. But we had a number of *additional meetings* to do specific pieces of work with a smaller representative sample of that group... Not a *representative* sample; a *smaller number* of people from the group. So we probably met... I did a lot of the work on the [framework], and we probably met four or five times for instance to do that piece of work. (Respondent D)

As well as revealing that there were *other spaces* in the sub groups where policy was actually developed, this quotation also highlights an important tension around representation. This actor intimates that it was not always necessary to have a 'representative model' in order to develop policy, suggesting that having a smaller, more *selective* network of actors was more effective. This individual does not disclose the criteria for selection to this intimate group, but it might be assumed that this was based on knowledge and expertise rather than the need for 'equal representation' across stakeholder groups.

My respondent data revealed significant tensions around where, when, and how policy decisions were taken. This raised a number of questions around the extent to which we can refer to participation as democratic. The legitimacy of the network was further reduced by a lack of information for affected actors about network activities and participation of representatives (Sørensen & Torfing; 2005). It is not surprising that official minutes were not provided for the 'other meetings' described above, but the consequences of this was that affected actors were unable to obtain information about their representatives' performance in the spaces where 'real' policy was made. What is more concerning however, is that very little information was made available about the 'formal' spaces of policy-making: official meetings of the NPG and its sub-groups, and I discuss this in more detail below.

5.1.7 The power of the minute taker

At each meeting of the NPG and its sub-groups, a set of minutes was taken by a member of the secretariat. These are recordings of discussions and can be recognised as formal representations of the action of institutional actors and the process of decision-making. As well as recording, they also shape the policy process by determining what is and what is not minuted as action points or noted for discussion at further meetings:

I asked at the third meeting did the team think we were fulfilling our remit. And the response was that that would probably be covered by the time we got to a different point on the agenda we would find probably that we were. And then the meeting ended and that was it. And that was the response. I was interested also that that comment wasn't minuted. It didn't appear in notes. And I did think about, you know, and probably I regret that I didn't mention that again, you know, that it wasn't minuted. But by that time I felt that [...] is there any point in this?
(Respondent O)

This suggests that the position of 'minute taker' was clearly a powerful position within the sub-groups. In each of the sub-groups, the actor responsible for taking minutes was normally a civil servant, which highlights once more the role of government in the meta-governance of the network. Even if network participation in this sub-group was a democratic process (and my research shows that it was not), the nature of minute taking shapes the output of participation.

Even where minutes were taken, information about actor participation was restricted for its external audience. If we consider that this external audience contains affected actors whose voices were meant to be represented within this process, this information restriction is significant.

Sørensen and Torfing (2005b, p. x) state that an important feature of democratic network legitimacy is the ability of affected actors to "form an informed opinion about their representatives' performance in the governance network" and to "express different opinions and criticize the representatives' performance in the governance network. This can be done through (in) direct access to information about the network. However, limited information about the work of the NPG and its sub-groups was made available to those outside the formal process.

Summaries of minutes were placed online following NPG meetings, but only for three NPG meetings⁶⁵. What's more, these summaries were particularly brief (average word count was 291 per summary) and did not include a list of attendees. It was also particularly difficult to locate them on the Scottish Government webpages. There were no summaries

⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that much longer minutes of sub-group meetings were written up after each meeting, but these were not made public. Furthermore, there were no summaries of sub-group meetings made available online. This is significant because this is where much of the policy agenda was actually developed.

of minutes for sub-group meetings, but information was available on sub-group remits and their membership. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that members of the teaching profession would know very much about their representatives' performance in the network. With limited access to information, it is difficult to see how members could criticise their representatives' performance within the network. These issues hold relevance for the function of the network as a whole and play into a much wider concern about a lack of transparency in the network and the way that it operated. The only other publicly available document that contains some information about network activity is the report that was created once the NPG had finished its work (Scottish Government, 2012). But this of course 'hides' much of the negotiations, decision-making, and discussions that were central to its formation.

5.1.8 Writing the final NPG report

The construction of the final NPG Report might be considered as one of the most important stages in this policy process. Not only does it formally mark the end of the NPG, but it was presented as a formal representation of the policy to be 'implemented'. For a short moment in time, in the final translation stage of mobilisation, the token had become temporarily 'black-boxed'⁶⁶ (Callon, 1986). This is where institutional voices appear to have become harmonised and "the few come to speak as the many" (Hamilton, 2012, p. 61) in a policy text. On the surface, this was the report that would inform the work of the NIB; although the extent to which this occurred in practice is unclear, given the limitations of its content highlighted by a number of respondents.

Here, a co-chair⁶⁷ describes the production of the final NPG Report:

When it came to actually writing the report, we come up against June of 2012, the report was meant to be done by August. I think we got it done by September, October. It largely fell to the co-chairs and the secretariat to produce the final report. And in essence that meant the secretariat was doing a lot of the drafting and redrafting. And there was a meeting where the secretariat and the co-chairs... We all met... and went through everything and basically decided what we felt we could

⁶⁶ 'Black boxing' is a key ANT concept that describes the stage where actors appear to join together and become stabilised, hence it is sometimes referred to as 'stabilisation'. It is important to note that this is only every temporary; networks can never be 'stable'. See Chapter 2 for further discussion about this ANT concept and its application in my research.

⁶⁷ Respondent number not provided to protect anonymity

go with and what we couldn't go with... There was a lot of editing. A lot of editing went on. The report went out to the NPG after that for them to comment on, etc, but we'd done a lot of *editing* and *culling*... (Respondent F).

This tells us that not only is this the most important stage for interest translation (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) but that the government played a significant role in governing this translation. The participation of *all* actors, including those who enjoyed a position of 'influence' within the network, was limited by the final stage of the process: the development of the NPG Report. Even in a process where responsibility appears to be devolved to a network of actors (albeit unequally), power is retained at the centre (Humes, 2013).

Looking at the entire process holistically, what made it into draft sub-group reports and what did not is irrelevant, as it is the final Report that actually matters: this is where institutional interests become 'black-boxed' or 'stabilised' (Hamilton, 2012; Callon, 1986). Of course, some of these interests have travelled from the sub-groups, enrolled in the sub-group reports, and mobilised within the final space of policy-making. The process of translation is 'in the hands of the people'; if there is no one to pick up an interest, it simply drops. In other words, if the final stage of policy-making is restricted to a small selection of institutional actors, it is likely that they will retain the ideas and visions that align with their own institutional interests, and disregard or 'cull' those that do not. The addition of new ideas is also entirely possible at this stage. That this actor makes multiple references to the amount of 'editing' and 'culling' occurring at this stage suggests that much of the work of the sub-groups was disregarded, or at best distorted, in the final stages of the process.

Given the role of the secretariat and sub group chairs in writing the sub-group reports, it is perhaps not surprising that authorship of the NPG Report lay in the hands of the tripartite chairs and the secretariat. However, given the significance of the final NPG Report and the role that this plays in framing the future policy agenda, the limited involvement of the wider network of actors is a disconcerting feature. An ADES actor highlighted the role of the government in the formation of the final report:

There's been a real challenge for the government in how they produce the final report, because I think it's blah blah blah... They're so mortified they've had to re-work it and re-work it in order to bring it out, and I still wonder whether it will read blah blah blah. (Respondent Y)

This actor does not seem to be overly concerned about the role of the government in creating the final report; indeed, it appears, from her/his perspective, that there was always an expectation that the government would produce the end report. However, this raises a number of questions around the purpose of the NPG. Could it be possible that the sub-groups and NPG were developed in order to *advise* the government with the government retaining control over the entire process including the output? If this was the case, then this holds significant implications for the extent to which this can be referred to as a partnership model.

Furthermore, we must not miss the importance of the language being used in (and around) the creation of policy text:

Respondent F: And the interesting thing in that process is of course, that... the secretariat, which is government, ended up with actually a *very influential hand*. Because some of the issues and things, and language didn't get... The final report didn't always have all the *nuances*... Certainly I was requesting some changes that didn't materialise in the final report.

Interviewer: Were you unhappy with the final report?

RF: I wasn't unhappy with it, but I wasn't...at the end of the day, I think I'd come to the pragmatic view 'well this is as good as we can get.' But I did feel some aspects of the *language* that...I've had an on-going and I think fairly good natured run in with [name removed; Education Scotland player] about [their] notion of learning accounts and the notion of accumulating credit is just like going to a bank...it's a very consumerist notion of education. And that's the sort of language that I think some aspects of it crept into the NPG final report, which I was not happy about.

It's interesting when you read the final document, the gathered together document; it just seems to have lost a lot of the colour. It's probably been put into civil service speak you know and you think.... I hope there aren't points that they've lost.
(Respondent M)

These actors were aware (as were others) that contributions to the NPG Report were diluted by the secretariat. To what extent can a document be said to be developed in partnership between institutional actors when the final stage involved it being translated into 'civil service speak'? The final stage of policy translation was not an open process. It

was exclusive and tightly governed by the secretariat. Given that this is a significant stage, if not *the* most significant stage, of the policy process, these findings call into question the entire purpose of a partnership model.

5.2 Network culture

In this sub-topic, I provide some insight into the *nature* of network participation by highlighting characteristics of *network culture*, within the NPG and its sub-groups, from the perspectives of actors operating within this space. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the importance of understanding the strong cultural dimension of policy networks (McPherson and Raab, 1988) as well as their *structure*. The previous chapter has shown how network structure can facilitate or constrain both individual actors and institutional actors. However, at the beginning of this research one of the key issues I wanted to explore was the way that members of the NPG and subgroups *participated* within these meetings. As I conducted my interviews it became clear that actor participation must be understood as existing within a particular network culture. Therefore, this thesis, as a critical policy analysis, seeks to understand the culture within which these network structures exist before discussing issues around institutional and individual participation.

5.2.1 Understanding network culture

McPherson and Raab (1988) highlighted the role of beliefs and common culture in networks demonstrating how networks function through personal relationships between ‘known’ and ‘trusted’ actors who have a shared world view and are part of the same ‘shared assumptive world’. Membership of this community requires the development of shared values and ideology, which Rhodes (2006) refers to as the ‘rules of the game’. These rules are co-constructed by network actors through a process of negotiation. However, as the majority of network members are part of the ‘traditional policy community’, which is its own network, it can be suggested that many of these rules will have automatically transferred from here. This means that new people coming into the network will not be aware of these rules and will therefore be at a disadvantage when it comes to their ability to participate.

In their work on dialectical approaches to policy networks, Marsh and Smith (2000) warn that these ‘rules’ act to limit who is included in the networks. First, they can shape network membership and restrict access to those who might not be considered as part of the ‘shared assumptive world’. Secondly, and perhaps more alarmingly, they can restrict the extent to which individuals can participate once they are part of this network and control whose voice is heard within this space. The culture of a network can act as a *constraint* or as an *opportunity* for the participation of its members. Marsh and Smith’s (2000) analysis serves as a reminder of the power afforded to members of the ‘traditional policy community’ in Scottish education (McPherson & Raab, 1988) or what Humes (1986) referred to as the ‘leadership class’.

The development of a ‘shared understanding’ of social norms and rules amongst network members facilitates network participation; however, it can also be problematic, particularly for actors who are not part of the ‘shared assumptive world’ that created them. My thesis considers these actors as ‘non-traditional’ policy actors, with the most obvious example being the individual teachers who were invited to become members of the NPG once the formal process had already begun. However, there were also other actors who considered themselves as existing outside of the ‘traditional policy community’, but were responsible for representing ‘traditional’ institutional actors, such as Education Scotland and STEC.

A consistent theme throughout this thesis has been the distinction between formal and informal networks. Informal networks, by their very nature, are difficult to enter as a researcher who is considered to be an ‘outsider’ to the policy community⁶⁸. Therefore, the information I provide here pertains to the culture of formal networks; I refer only to the culture within NPG and sub-group meetings as reported by their members. However, given the overlapping nature of networks, it should be assumed that some elements of formal network culture were also characteristic of informal networks.

5.2.2 A culture of consensus

Network culture acted as a barrier to democratic policy-making and the development and strengthening of partnership; both of these need a certain level of discord, disagreement and disruption. If the development of partnership is to be genuine, there needs to be a

⁶⁸ See Chapter 2 for discussion on methodological implications of being an ‘outsider’

certain level of harmonisation between institutional actor interests. However, a ‘culture of consensus’ restricts the extent to which this happens. I suggest that network culture has another function: to sustain the ‘simulacra of order’ and divert attention from the disorder beneath. A number of network actors implied that there was something ‘distinctly Scottish’ about the culture of the NPG and its sub-groups. I argue that this perception served a particular function within the network and it is not possible to discuss network culture independent of the concept of the ‘traditional policy community’. This community simultaneously shaped this culture at the same time as it is being shaped by it, and this cyclical process worked to maintain the status quo.

5.2.3 Barrier to democratic policy-making and partnership

Many members of the NPG and its sub groups described actor behaviour as ‘polite’, which might sound friendly, but was portrayed as particularly problematic:

It was too polite. We didn’t have the tussles...there were discussions but we didn’t really put things on the table that we might have done... Interestingly I think those issues came out more, for me, when the co-chairs and the secretariat were meeting... And when the co-chairs met with the chairs of the sub-groups and the GTC. And that’s when more issues came onto the table. But as we went into the bigger group, there was a little more caution... (Respondent F)

It can be argued that any form of democratic policy-making requires a certain level of disagreement and ‘tussling’ between actors in order for interests to become harmonised enough for a collective plan to be developed. However, the above extract suggests that this did not always occur during the NPG meetings. If we remind ourselves of the number of different institutional interests, conflicting views, and diverging agendas formally represented within this space, as well as the different levels of importance attached to teacher education reform for particular institutional actors, this lack of ‘tussle’ is surprising. That this necessary stage was missing in the *formal* space of policy-making might suggest that any agreement reached between actors was only reached at a superficial level. Politeness, as a characteristic of network culture, could be regarded as a barrier to participative and collective policy-making within this formal space acting as a ‘constraint’ (Marsh & Smith, 2000) on its members.

Taking the development and strengthening of partnerships as a separate issue from that of the development of policy, despite the linkage, one might assume that a certain degree of ‘tussle’ is also required here. As I argued in Chapter 4, the development of genuine partnership requires the harmonisation of different institutional actor interests. On the one hand, if the purpose of the NPG was to develop and strengthen partnership, as the official line of government states, this was not a particularly successful model. If, on the other hand, the intended purpose was to ‘deliver’ policy change, then this points to a fundamental flaw in the way in which it was allowed to operate.

This actor makes an important distinction between the ‘bigger group’ and meetings between the co-chairs, the secretariat and the GTCS. If the NPG is a formal space, then these smaller meetings with restricted membership should be considered as informal spaces, which operate within a different network culture that is less restricted by formal network rules. This suggests that conflict and argument were not avoided here and that there was less caution when compared to formal networks. This network culture might act as a productive environment for moving things forward supporting my assertion that the ‘real policy’ was made in informal spaces.

5.2.4 Simulacra of order and the Scottish ‘myth’

The following extract from a member of the NPG appears to suggest that the NPG actually served as a space to hide power struggles, tensions, divergent interests and competing institutional agendas:

Partnership is a daft concept at one level. You can hide all sorts of relationships underneath it. It’s an umbrella term which makes us all feel warm and comfortable. Within it there’s both the *explicit* and the *implicit tensions* and the *tussles* and the *coded discussions* where people are having a go at each other, but in a *very polite way*. (Respondent F)

What this actor is referring to is the ‘simulacra of order’ that the idea of partnership helps to create. They point to the ‘explicit and implicit tensions’, ‘tussles’ and ‘coded discussions’ that exist underneath, but suggest that such discussions occur in a ‘very polite way’. In the following extract, another actor shares a similar reflection on the constraining nature of network culture:

The National Partnership Group was fundamentally an implementation group [...] I don't think ultimately it implemented. Or it did not implement sufficiently robustly. [...] part of the reason for that, Anna, is deep seated in the culture of Scottish education. It's unlike other jurisdictions [...] it prides itself on being a consensus culture. Now it's vulnerable to all kind of suggestions of complacency [...] I think the culture of consensus is a real one and an asset to Scottish education that avoid many of the conflicts that we see in other parts of the British isles. But there's a high price paid for it and we've paid the price here, in that we have avoided making difficult decisions that may threaten special interest groups. [...] the culture of consensus and political coherence [...] proved inhibiting when it came to making decisions that may have been unpopular with certain groups. (Respondent L)

This actor highlights both positive and negative implications associated with the formal network culture, from which a number of issues can be drawn. First, it is important to remember the power of the 'shared assumptive world' (McPherson & Raab, 1988) to which this actor may belong. Although s/he appears to recognise many of the negative implications of a constraining network culture, s/he regards the need for consensus as an 'asset' to Scottish education. S/he appears to equate consensus to the avoidance of 'conflict', which suggests that consensus was reached in the absence of interest mediation. S/he also draws on the traditional distinction between Scotland and the rest of the UK, which is often used as a tool to position Scotland as being superior. Implicit in this claim around the 'myth' is that this superiority is both ethical and moral in nature, but this does not necessarily equate to effectiveness. This distinction utilises elements of the Scottish myth and buys into the misperception that all actors in Scottish education share the same ideology and values and that there is a constant level of agreement between institutional actors about the direction of policy change. This is an excellent example of where 'myth' is used both as a *mask*, to cover up the infelicities of the system, and as *sustenance* for actors to feed from.

It is possible that the drive for consensus exists because we have come to believe in Scotland that it is politically, ethically and epistemologically superior. However, it might be the case that attempting to reach this consensus has detrimental effects on the further formation and implementation of policy, particularly if some of the proposals are somewhat radical in nature and favour the interests of some institutional actors over others.

Indeed, this actor admits that the NPG 'paid a price' for this culture of consensus, as it restricted the network from making "difficult decisions that may threaten special interest groups", which implies that caution was exerted for fear of upsetting institutional actors.

Again, we can see here how network culture acts as a constraint on actor participation. However, this observation also reminds us of the different levels of *power* that each of these institutional actors holds in the space of teacher education reform. Drawing on Rhodes' (2006) work on policy networks, institutional actors should be seen as resource-dependent organisations, the relationships between which are characterised by certain degrees of power-dependence. It is clear that such relationships require a balance between caution and conflict.

The importance placed here on the culture of *Scottish education* cannot be ignored. As discussed in Chapter 1, there are a number of characteristics and values that have come to be associated with Scottish education, which are synonymous with claims about Scottish culture more widely. These claims are powerful and act as forces in space of policy formation. According to Menter and Hulme (2008), these characteristics and values may impact on the way that policy-makers see their roles within this process and in this way, can shape actor behaviour.

One member⁶⁹ of the NPG highlights the potential role of 'Scottish culture' in the policy process:

Some people have said to me that Scotland's got a culture where the folk... I don't know whether it's specific to Scotland or part of a wider set of issues, but it's certainly my experience that the *offstage* conversations are probably more meaty than the onstage... (Respondent H)

Originating from an English education context, this actor might be viewed as an outsider to the traditional policy community who does not subscribe to the shared assumptive world. It is therefore notable that they have also picked up on the role of 'Scottish culture' in shaping the behaviour of actors within the network.

5.2.5 Traditional policy community: The 'cosy consensus'

In Chapter 1, I introduced the key characteristics of the 'Scottish policy community' and in this chapter (section 5.4) I consider the implications that it had for individual actor participation and policy translation. In this section, I will demonstrate how this community

⁶⁹ Respondent number removed in order to protect anonymity

‘acted to’ shape and sustain the ‘culture of consensus’ that governed the activity of the NPG and its sub-groups. I argue that the nature of informal connections between actors in this community adds a further layer of complexity to what is already a complex process. This may be symptomatic of existing in a small country, or it could be connected to the deeper issues around Scottish national identity as discussed previously in this chapter.

Rhodes (2006) writes that when a network is established, its actors co-construct a set of rules that help to guide network behaviour. However, their entry to the network is not value-free and it is likely that they will come with attachments to particular views and ideas about the way that the network should operate. The majority of network actors can be considered as coming from the traditional ‘policy community’, which is described as a group of individuals who ‘matter’ (Humes, 2013, p. 100) and buy into a shared ‘assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). This world is characterised by a set of beliefs and claims about the nature and purpose of Scottish education. These beliefs and claims will influence and define the development of shared network rules. The problem with this is that it might work to disadvantage those actors who are not part of the traditional ‘policy community’ and therefore unfamiliar with its culture.

The following extracts from network members show how attachments to specific beliefs and ways of working can influence network culture. An ancillary aim of this section is to demonstrate how issues of ‘community’ and Scottish culture are interlinked; it is not possible to discuss one without the other.

Here, an NPG member speaks about this idea of the traditional policy community and outlines some key characteristics. The first highlights the ‘close-knit’ and collusive nature of this community:

I mean Scotland’s a small country. One of the advantages of working in Scotland is that.... I’ve got somebody from the EIS coming in later this morning to ask questions. I had someone... one of the head teachers’ organisations in touch with me this morning. I meet Graham [Donaldson] quite regularly. I was over in University of Glasgow last week... All of the key stakeholders know each other in Scotland, so there’s that opportunity. (Respondent N)

Moreover, in the following extract, the same actor highlights some of the benefits of belonging to a well-connected network. However, it is important to bear in mind that this is from the perspective of an individual who is indelibly part of this community and is

therefore likely to view it in a positive light. Others might view what they perceive to be beneficial, as restrictive. When asked if we are at an advantage in Scotland because of the size of our policy community, s/he responded:

Huge advantage, huge advantage. I mean... None of the main players in Scottish education are unknown to each other. The trade unions, the directors, the head teachers' organisations, Scottish Government, the GTC, the SQA, Education Scotland... the main players from the universities. We all know each other and *there shouldn't be something that we can't work out*. There's also a huge common... I mean, we disagree on lots of things and that's the way it should be, but *there's much more we agree on in terms of what we want to achieve*. There's little political difference. I talk to different political parties. There's not a great deal of political argument. There's argument about the way politicians present and drive some change but in terms of the essence political change... there's not very much, in terms of policy between the main political parties in Scotland. (Respondent N)

Both of these extracts show how network culture might be influenced by the socio-personal element of its membership. It is clear that this actor regards the 'cosy' and 'close-knit' nature of the policy community to be a positive feature of the Scottish education system. However, this description only serves to strengthen Humes (2013) critique of the traditional 'policy community'. Within a dense network, there are multiple channels for communicating information from one institutional actor to another. However, it may be particularly difficult for those from outside the traditional policy community to enter such a close-knit network. With particular relevance to network culture, it is easy to see how this kind of community can create a culture that some may perceive as a barrier to participating in the policy process.

Here again we can see how the 'simulacra of order' is developed and sustained. Also highlighted from this extract, in relation to network culture, is the actor's apparent assumption that there is widespread agreement about the direction of change between institutional actors and political parties in Scotland and this is directly related to the concept of the Scottish 'myth' and the simulacra of order that exists within Scottish education. Both allude to there being *some* disagreement between actors, but one implies that this can be worked out because they 'all know each other'. Again, I think questions needs to asked about the democratic anchorage of such a network, and the extent to which 'new' actors from outside the traditional community can participate.

A member of the NIB who had some involvement with the NPG⁷⁰, discusses some of the characteristics of the Scottish education policy community in relation to the NPG and NIB:

Respondent A: Scotland is a small nation so there's a 'clubbiness' there. I think it is partly a gender thing. And people know each other very well.

Interviewer: They have worked together before?

RA: Yes, they have, in different contexts. Sometimes it can be the same people moving around in different posts and so on. These people would socialise possibly out with and so on and there are lots of conversations, conversations out with ... I think that is what happens. [Prominent researcher in Scottish education] talks about 'cosy consensus'. And I think there is ... I think that is there.

This extract highlights the importance placed on achieving 'consensus' between institutional actors, the informal relationships that exist between players of different organisations, and the development of policy in informal spaces. These are all important issues that are discussed at various points throughout this thesis. However, I use this quotation here to specifically demonstrate how network culture can be sustained within a policy space.

This actor also raises an important point about the tendency for individual people to migrate from one organisation to another. For example, a Director of Education working within a local authority might then take up a position within Education Scotland or the GTCS. Although such a move requires a shift from representing one set of institutional interests to another, it is likely that they will retain some of the informal and formal connections that they have developed in their previous position, given the small size of the Scottish policy community. ANT offers a powerful analysis of this phenomenon. Social connections are much more than the development of informal relationships; they work to connect institutional networks. As they assemble together they create new associations and networks that continuously expand, becoming more or less durable (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 3). If we view the 'culture of consensus' as a feature that is promoted by these networks, we can understand how it stays alive and travels across space and time. As institutional actors and their representatives 'buy in' to this culture, they become 'enrolled' (Hamilton, 2012) in the network, which helps to expand the network and take it into different spaces.

⁷⁰ She attended a small number of NPG meetings and participated in consultation activities. Following this she became a member of the National Implementation Board for a short time.

5.2.6 Tension between ‘action’ and ‘discussion’

I now discuss how the culture of consensus shaped the participation of institutional actors. In the main, this manifested itself as conservative behaviour and a general resistance to change. This was particularly problematic, given that the overarching purpose of the NPG and its sub-groups was to develop plans for implementing some of the biggest changes that Scottish teacher education has seen. Conservatism and subsequent resistance to change could be considered as elements of ‘network culture’, but I include them in under ‘Institutional Participation’ as I feel it is a useful description of the nature of participation.

Another consequence of this kind of network culture is the amount of time that it takes to make decisions and move things forward. A number of individuals I interviewed shared these concerns and suggested that there was too much discussion within the NPG and sub-group meetings, and a significant lack of action. Indeed, Koppenjan (2008, p. 134) warns that striving for consensus can lead to “protracted deliberation processes that consume excessive energy and money but ultimately produce weak compromises...” and I think the word ‘compromise’ is important here. Compromise does not suggest the development of a shared vision, but the dilution of many. Perhaps this is a price worth paying for democratic policy-making.

The following extracts come from the same actor, who was a representative of STEC. Both reveal an element of frustration with the slow pace of change:

This sounds a terrible thing to say, but I have really noticed people spend a huge amount of time discussing things, and perhaps if the balance was a little different between discussion and action, we might get on a bit better. So I can’t imagine ... this would never have happened in England, we would have gone straight to implementation. The providers in England all know that they are in competition with each other so they wouldn’t have sat around.

There was so much time spent on discussion. And of course now we have got the implementation board, so I did rather cheekily say, to someone from Scottish government, ‘so what will we create after the implementation board has reported?’ It is like ‘come on, let’s just get on and do this’. The report should have been produced, here are the 50 recommendations, just get on and do it. In an ideal world, you wouldn’t have needed a National Partnership Group or the sub groups, or the

reference groups. You might have cut straight to the implementation board.
(Respondent V)

As we have seen in a number of quotations, this actor also suggests that there is something distinctly ‘Scottish’ about network culture and the approach that has been used. Second, they imply that there is a lack of competition between service ‘providers’ in Scotland. Scottish teacher education and provision for professional learning has not been victim to the same neoliberal forces as south of the border, however this does not mean to say that providers are not in competition with each other. There is a lack of ‘private for-profit’ providers in Scottish teacher education; universities deliver the bulk of this. Competition therefore exists between universities, but it is at a more hidden and subtle level.

Finally, this actor appears to be advocating for a model that omits out the initial stages of discussion, negotiation and bargaining (in other words, the NPG). However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the NPG stage allowed for consultation with a wide range of actors who were not included in the formal network. Whether or not this was effective in practice, it has potential to increase democratic function of the network by providing opportunities for different actors’ voices to be heard in the process. The NPG also served as an important space for the harmonisation of institutional interests, which I argue is a necessary requirement for the development of partnership. If this space were to be omitted, and the process went straight to the stage of ‘implementation’, then it is likely that institutional interests and territorialism would surface in a much more public manner, not dissimilar to what we see in English educational politics.

It is interesting to note that this individual gained much of their professional experience in England, and this might go some way to explaining why they felt that a streamlined model would be more effective and appropriate in this context. However, they were not the only person to suggest this to me:

And I think a sense that it was unnecessary as well. And that it was a lost year. And I suppose if we were looking back in hindsight and thinking there is a process of policy initiation and implementation was that really necessary? Could it have not just gone from taking Graham’s report and straight into an implementation board? But a lost year where there were those three groups, there is a clear sense of dissatisfaction about the whole process around it. Some dissatisfaction around the report, clear dissatisfaction around the leadership. From what I have picked up people felt that didn’t give enough of a steer. (Respondent A)

Similar to the previous extract, this individual⁷¹ felt that a more appropriate model might have been for the Scottish Government to skip the NPG and go straight to the development of the NIB. This actor comes from the Scottish context and understands the attachment to the shared assumptive world. This kind of action would not sit comfortably alongside the traditional image of the Scottish policy process. It is therefore surprising, and somewhat significant, that s/he suggests this as an appropriate model.

Both respondents appear to position the lack of action as a consequence of the ‘leadership’ of the NPG (in other words, the tripartite chairing model). It is unclear whether this was down to the structure of the model, the processes by which they operated, the institutional actors that it represented, or the individual people chosen to be chairs. Nevertheless, the overriding claim here is that the NPG and sub-groups were not provided with enough guidance or direction: “...there were too many people and it *drifted* on for too long” (Respondent N).

The use of the word ‘drift’ here is interesting and suggests that the NPG was moving slowly but also in no particular direction. It intimates a lack of leadership from the tripartite model. It is, of course, possible that the lack of direction and slow pace of progress were intentional. The lack of leadership therefore might be considered as a deliberate move to create a space that allows the Scottish Government to buy some time. Time is important for communication, raising awareness amongst actors, encouraging institutional actor ‘buy-in’ and the development of ownership. But it is also useful if there are complex issues to sort out. Given what my research has revealed about its limitations for effective policy-making, is it possible that the NPG was designed in such a way that it would ‘stall’ the policy process and restrict institutional actors from embarking on immediate change? To understand more about the implications of this specific network culture on the policy process, it is necessary to explore the participation of actors at two levels: institutional and individual. I describe the participation of institutional actors and the participation of individual actors (explicitly teacher actors) in the next two sub-topics.

⁷¹ This quotation came from a member of the NIB who also had some involvement with the NPG but was not listed as an official member and we should perhaps be mindful of their position when interpreting this extract. However, it is possible that not being a member of the NPG provides the kind of distance required for critique.

5.3 Institutional participation

The broad aim of this section is to explore the nature of institutional actor participation within the NPG and the three sub-groups⁷². Thus far, I have described and analysed network design, network membership, network culture, and the different ‘spaces’ where policy translation occurs. I now consider the way that institutional actors participated within the physical and cultural structures of these networks in order to represent particular positional goods. I present diagram 1.1 below, previously used in Chapters 3 and 4, as a reminder of actor positioning within the NPG and its sub-groups.

⁷² It is important to stress that it was only possible for me to describe the culture of ‘formal’ spaces of policy translation, such as NPG and sub-group meetings; it was difficult to gather enough information about what happened within these informal spaces. When I discuss institutional participation therefore, I intend this to be understood as occurring within formal spaces of policy translation, such meetings of the NPG and its sub-groups, although it is entirely possible that these characteristics also apply to informal spaces.

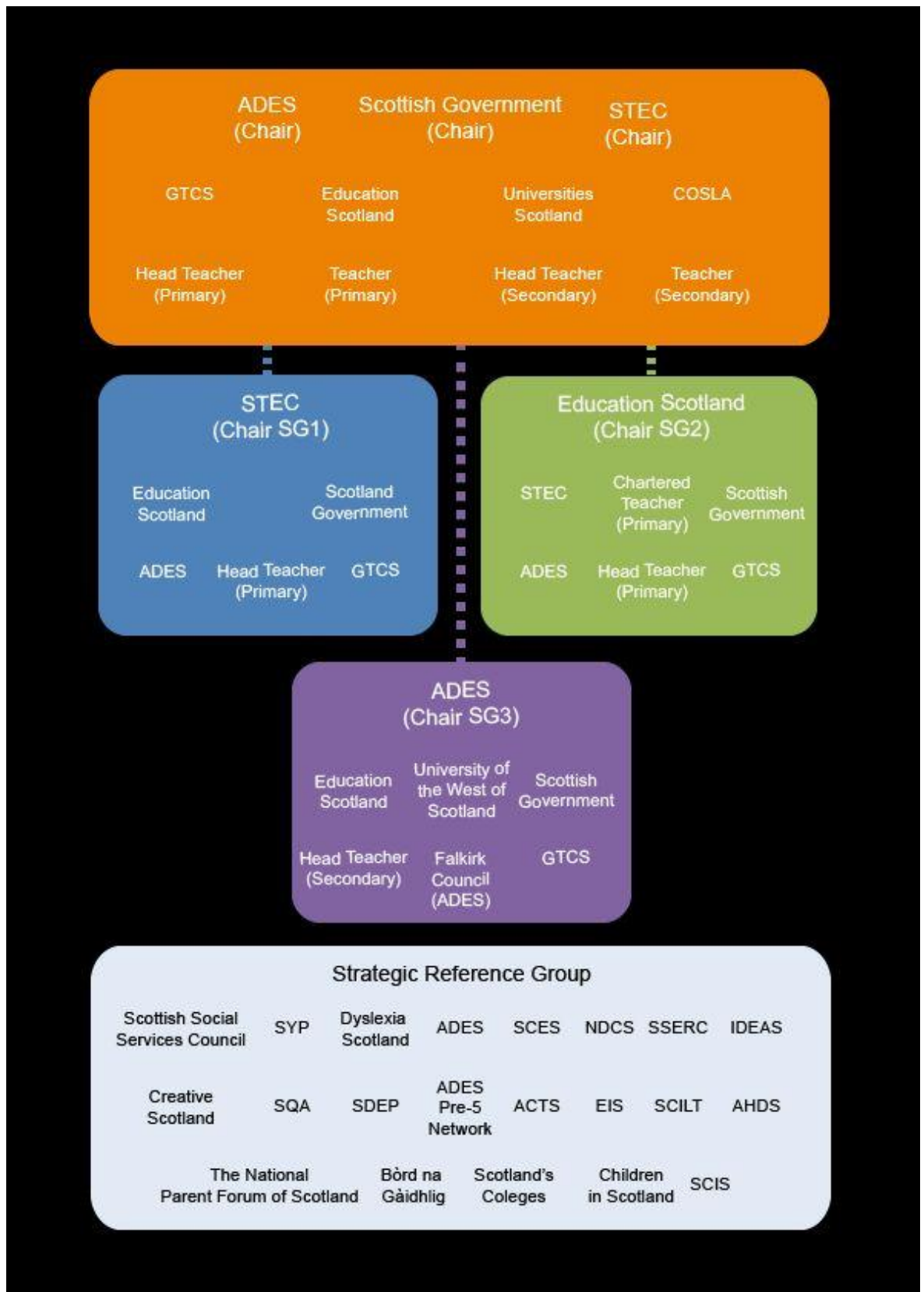


Figure 3. Institutional membership of the NPG, sub-groups and the strategic reference group

In this section, I discuss three types of institutional participation: conservatism and resistance to change, territorialism and the protection of proprietorial interests, and the subtle subversion of sub-group remits. It is important to stress that these are not distinct

categories of participation, and I intend them to be understood as entangled and fluctuating descriptions of network behaviour.

I present extracts from interviews with a range of actors as examples of this behaviour, but it is important to remember that these are from the perspective of institutional actors, so there must be some caution around their interpretation. It is possible that some actors used interviews as a vehicle for communicating institutional interests and agendas. Examples of actor behaviour may therefore be distorted or strengthened in order to develop a particular institutional position. I will show how this in itself can tell us something quite important about institutional participation.

5.3.1 Conservatism and resistance to change

Scottish education is considered by a number of scholars to be deeply conservative in nature (Arnott & Menter 2007; Hulme & Kennedy, 2016; Humes, 2013). This conservatism is a consequence of actors belonging to a ‘shared assumptive world’ that is shaped by the ‘Scottish myth’ (see Chapter 1 for a wider discussion on this). This conservatism can manifest itself in the policy process as a resistance to change amongst actors and a lack of visible progress, both of which have implications for policy translation and the extent to which original policy intentions can be realised.

A number of actors felt that the participation of institutional actors was un-progressive and stated that the networks could have been more innovative. The following quotation comes from an interview with an ADES player, and serves as a useful example of this tension:

We could have been quite controversial... The group could have done some really radical thinking there, and then, you know, education is a very conservative world so it always regresses to the defence position, so you need to be radical in order to come back from that. (Respondent Y)

This actor highlights a lack of ‘radical thinking’ within their sub-group and attributes this to the ‘conservative world’ of education (Arnott & Menter, 2007). They suggest that ‘radical thinking’ is required to break the cycle. The link between conservatism and the culture of Scottish education was made within a number of interviews and this suggests that the discourse of the ‘shared assumptive world’ has been maintained by the network

and used as a tool to explain or justify network behaviour. Here, a STEC representative speaks about the perceptions of change:

Although education is meant to be about change, we're not very good at it. Well I mean, you know, how different do schools and universities and colleges look these days to ten years ago? ... The general tendency is to see horrible familiarity in what goes on in educational institutions... Yeah, it's change that goes backwards. Back to the future rather than forward to the future. (Respondent F)

This actor suggests that conservative behaviour has led to the development of an education system that regresses to the familiar. In the same vein, it might be suggested that it also leads to the sustainment of an education policy community that regresses to the familiar, with regard to its membership, traditions, and values.

The extract also hints at a fear of change amongst the Scottish policy community, which works to restrict the circulation of new ideas. On one hand, this might be viewed as a positive feature of Scottish education; it shields us from the movement of travelling neoliberal policy agendas that we have witnessed south of the border, such as the academisation of schools (Gunter, 2011), the emergence of school-led models of teacher 'training' (e.g. Schools Direct and Teach First), and the marketisation of teacher education more widely (Murray & Mutton, 2015). After all, one understanding of the word 'conserve' is to preserve something's integrity for future generations and it is important to remember that people who conserve things do not necessarily do so for malign reasons. The real issue here is not about conservation or non-conservation; it is about the ability to understand what might be better.

Nevertheless, there are drawbacks in this protective approach. Conservation can work to restrict and silence the traction of innovation that could be beneficial to school education and teacher education (but need not necessarily). This has obvious implications for the improvement of the Scottish education system. In the extract below, a sub-group actor who was a representative of ADES also reflects on the 'regressive' nature of Scottish education policy processes and positions it as a missed opportunity:

I thought... well I just felt our group was disappointing, at the end of it because there was an opportunity to think *radically*, and they *chose* not to. And what they produced was almost the same old same old and what Higher Education were planning to do anyway, and they missed a chance, I felt, to make a bit of a statement about [...] teacher education. And there's a number of, as you'll know,

there's a number of interesting things going on in in [...] teacher education and they *chose* not to... you know I would update them, every time, and em... they *chose* not to kind of take that on. (Respondent Y)

This actor stresses a lack of action as a *choice*. If 'conservatism' is viewed as a consequence of 'culture' we therefore understand it as something that works at a subconscious level. However, to describe it as a *choice* suggests that it was used *consciously* in order to *achieve* or *resist* something: 'they chose not to'. Network culture and the wider culture of the 'shared assumptive world' might play a role in the production and sustainment of conservatism, but there are a number of other interlinking factors that may act to shape this characteristic of participation, which I will now discuss.

5.3.2 Territorialism and the protection of proprietary interests

My thesis has suggested that some institutional actors may have developed a sense of ownership over particular areas of teacher education. Over time, and under the cover of the 'simulacra of order', institutional actors have been allowed to strengthen their positions by laying claim to particular elements of teacher education. For example, universities are traditionally responsible for the provision of teacher education and professional learning; the GTCS have become responsible for their accreditation and schools/local authorities for facilitating practice. The agenda set out by TSF and the material and structural changes proposed by the NPG and its sub-groups, might have been perceived as a threat to the positions of institutional actors within the space of teacher education reform and Scottish education more widely. It is therefore unsurprising that institutional participation in the NPG and sub-groups was sometimes described as 'territorial' and 'protective'. One actor discusses the impact of these 'proprietary interests' below, suggesting that they slowed the process down:

Interviewer: Okay, and why do you think it has taken two years to get to this stage?

Respondent N: That's a good question... The dynamics of the group, possibly would be one reason. It took a bit of time for the group to settle. There may have been some... issues to do with *proprietary interests*; people being concerned to develop responses which protected or supported *their own positions*. And that applied across a range of groups.

While change can be viewed as a threat to positions and agendas, it can also serve to empower institutional actors by disrupting the distribution of power within the space of education, thereby providing new opportunities for re-positioning and interest translation.

Furthermore, the development of responses that protects or supports particular positions should not necessarily be viewed as a form of resistance; the act of interest translation can help to drive an agenda forward if the institutional interests are in line with the original policy intentions. These ‘proprietary’ interests referenced in interviews have been allowed to develop and strengthen over time under the cover of the ‘Scottish myth’. But at the same time, some believe that there is actually widespread consensus between institutional actors about the direction and nature of change. The circulation of ‘proprietary interests’ and acting to protect ‘positions’ does not sit comfortably within this ‘cosy’ and friendly image of the Scottish education policy space where everybody ‘agrees’.

At the beginning of Chapter 4, I suggested that, before genuine partnership can be developed, there must be a certain level of harmonisation between the interests of different institutional actors. Interest harmonisation is a complex process that requires institutional positions and interests to be voiced and mobilised within policy networks. I argue that it is an important stage of the policy process; not only is it a prerequisite to the development of partnership between actors, but it is central to the democratic performance of policy networks. However, one actor cited ‘proprietary interests’ as *barriers to reform*, suggesting that they only acted to lengthen the process. This suggests that there is a lack of understanding amongst some policy actors about the complexity of reform and what is required in order to create genuine partnership.

Proprietary interests will always exist in policy reform, across different spaces and in different contexts; it is the nature of the beast. Indeed, later in the same interview, the same individual commented that vested interests were unavoidable, stating: “I mean, it’s such a big and important change, it’s inevitable that there would be interests and that some of them would be vested, yes” (Respondent N).

If they are to facilitate rather than inhibit the function of a policy network, then perhaps one way to do this is to make them more *transparent*. This would certainly aid the process of interest translation.

However, even if proprietary interests are made transparent, the differences between them may be so strong that harmonisation is not possible. In this case, institutional participation may take the form of non-participation, disagreement and confrontation. However, it is difficult to imagine this radical behaviour occurring within Scottish education; it would shatter the illusion of consensus.

A number of other network actors shared similar observations about the traction of proprietary interests:

Oh I think there was ‘not in my backyard’. Yeah, absolutely ‘not in my backyard’... but an interest group makes it sound as if you know, something interesting that might come out because they might have an interest... But it was so... what we produced at the end was so... nothing. It didn’t even get as high as ‘blah’ (laughing). It was just so, let’s keep it the same, and not change it. (Respondent Y)

The phrase ‘not in my backyard’ suggests that members of the group recognised that reform was required but were reluctant to take responsibility for making these changes happen within their own institutions. One interpretation of this might be that, as well as there being a resistance to change, there was also an unwillingness within the network to work in partnership. Rhodes’ (2006) model of resource-exchange argues that, in order for a network to function, a level of adaptation is required from each actor. However, if some of the actors do not wish to risk the implementation of change within their own context, it is difficult to see how the network could be effective in taking things forward. Furthermore, this is likely to lead to the network overlooking new possibilities with the most likely end result being the ‘status quo’, which is what this actor is referring to when they state: ‘It was just so, let’s keep it the same, and not change it’.

In the following extract, a representative of STEC reflects on the implications of territorial and self-protective behaviour for the development of partnership:

I think some of these relationships, whether they are real or imagined, between the stakeholders are quite challenging. So I think there is a sense in which a lot of Scottish politics, and that can be politics with a small p instead of party politics, are quite adversarial and so there is this almost paranoia of everything is a zero sum game. So you get these stakeholders round the table, and I am not absolutely certain that they understand what a genuine partnership is. Because often you will see these parties, you can see that they are thinking partnership means ‘yes, we work together and there is a *finite resource*, so if you have *more of that resource*, I

have less, so I have got to *guard my interest*' and that seems to be one of the ways that people here approach the notion of partnership. Which I don't think is terribly helpful. (Respondent V)

This suggests that an unwillingness to work in partnership was not born out of mendacity, but emerged from self-protective territorial behaviour. This actor highlights the way that institutional actors guarded their interests, which reminds us again of the threat that a reform of teacher education posed for some institutional actors. Another actor suggested that territorialism was in response to very real concerns about funding. When asked about the group's resistance to change, s/he replied "I think there was an element of that and because change might mean that the funding moves and the funding is becoming so tight... It is self-protection isn't it" (Respondent V).

It is important to note that this actor was a representative of ADES and it is therefore likely that they are talking about change from the perspective of local authorities. Here they connect feelings of territorialism and interest protection to concerns around funding and budgets. Some of the changes proposed by the recommendations in TSF had implications for funding arrangements for initial teacher education, student teacher placements, and professional learning, amongst others. Such changes had potential ramifications for local authorities and universities, not only in terms of resource, but also in terms of power and the potential shift of control.

Another example of territorial, self-protective behaviour is how institutional actors can participate in ways that allow them to protect their institutional interests and positions:

So if you look at teacher education, we're responsible for all phases of teacher education, pre-service, in-service and career development... that is a significant development for the GTC. So I suppose one of the difficulties that we would have faced would be that we're sitting in a group which is trying to determine how a programme should be taken forward in areas that we're ultimately going to be responsible for... As I saw it, it was important for us to join that consensus and be part of that discussion. It's important for us to listen to those areas of development which other colleagues, other partners on the group thought were important. (Respondent N)

This extract highlights a significant tension within the network. Although the model was based on a vision of partnership, parts of the agenda were tilted towards specific

institutional actors. The government attempted to deal with this by aligning recommendations with particular institutional actors in their official response to the Report⁷³. But given the interlinked and fluid nature of many of the recommendations, it was inevitable that there would be some overlap between these and the remit of the NPG. It appears that this led to some parts of the agenda being discussed by the larger network that were perhaps only intended for specific institutional actors. This points to a problem with a model designed around principles of partnership, which was raised as a concern by a number of different actors in interviews. For example, as one respondent put it: “people think they need to be...sitting around the table. When it’s not always necessarily the case that people are around the right table at the right time” (Respondent F).

It is also clear that there are different levels of importance attached to teacher education reform for different institutional actors. Levels of investment in the reform vary between actors based on their position within the wider space of Scottish education. The GTCS might be considered as being highly invested in the ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ agenda, given that their core interests lie within the teaching profession. Furthermore, they have been made responsible by the government for taking much of the reform forward and this includes a number of recommendations outside the official remit of the NPG. On the one hand, this meant that a certain level of authority was afforded to the GTCS from the government to translate their interests into the agenda and begin to create change. On the other hand, it is important to remember that they were not provided with any chairing positions within the network (see section 4.5 in Chapter 4), which limited the extent to which they could govern the process of interest translation. Nevertheless, we see here how this might have been achieved within the network:

But it was also important for us to *remind* colleagues that in the end, some of these decisions.... Both about the ‘what’ and about the ‘how’ were actually reserved to the GTC with it recently being made independent... We did have to make the point a few times because there were a few occasions when the group, or some of the sub-groups started to drift off into areas where they wished to be putting in place areas of development, which really were the responsibility of the GTC. Now, I saw that as being quite helpful to have those discussions, provided there was an understanding of where responsibility stopped and started. So that was another tension and that applied across all of the partners in the group. (Respondent N)

⁷³ See Scottish Government (2011a).

Territorial and self-protective behaviour is evident here. It is clear that the GTCS's change in status – from government to independent – has had an effect on the way that they are positioned within the wider educational space. The GTCS was at a point of change and saw the Review and the NPG as a space where they re-establish themselves:

Interviewer: Were you aware of any vested interests in the group?

Respondent M: Oh yes, yeah, uh uh. Eh..very aware of vested interests. I mean we had two national bodies who had recently undergone huge change. One was the GTCS and the other was Education Scotland. And, there was an element of them vying for position and trying to make their mark, not just on the group but nationally. That definitely sort of leaked in to the group.

Interviewer: Did that make things difficult in moving forward?

RM: Em... it made it quite difficult to eh.... You had to be very firm in channelling people as to what the group wanted and not what their organization wanted.

This actor appears to be suggesting that some institutional actors (GTCS and Education Scotland specifically) saw participation in the NPG and its sub-groups as opportunities to strengthen their position within the wider space of Scottish education. S/he also appears to suggest that the GTCS and Education Scotland were in competition with each other to 'make their mark' on particular parts of the agenda. Given that this sub-group focussed on leadership, it might be assumed that competition existed around the development of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) and the identification of an institutional actor to take responsibility for leading this. It is therefore particularly interesting to note that, in the end, SCEL was created as an independent body.

5.3.3 Subtle subversion of sub-group remits

Network actors commented on a number of attempts by sub-group members to change the remits, thereby creating a danger of distorting the agenda. The ANT idea of translation (Callon, 1986) reminds us that, as a *token* moves through a network, it can either be picked up and strengthened, distorted to fit with institutional interests, or silenced. In my analysis, I have conceptualised the sub-group remits as *tokens* in order to understand the effect of

the subtle subversion or resistance of particular sub-group remits. My findings reveal that the two main reasons for this kind of behaviour were conservatism and territorialism.

At the beginning of the process, members of the sub-groups were advised that the remits were non-negotiable. They were informed that their job was not to come up with new recommendations, or to adapt the existing ones, but to think about how they could be implemented in partnership between the different institutional actors.

Such instructions might be considered as being more closely aligned with a top-down, or corporatist model of policy processes rather than the pluralistic model that is commonly drawn on to describe the Scottish 'style' of policy development (McPherson & Raab, 1988). 'Tight control' issued by the centre does not sit comfortably within the democratic and participative vision of Scottish policy-making, as promoted and sustained by the *Scottish myth*. We might wish to view this 'subtle subversion' as a form of democratic participation and resistance to a tightly governed policy process.

The following extract comes from a member of the NPG who was a STEC player and provides some examples of this resistance:

At the executive level we reiterated again and again that the NPG was an *implementation group* and *not a bargaining table*. However, drafts of sub group proposals on a number of occasions were tantamount to alternatives to Donaldson. They were not implementing Donaldson. They were telling us that certain recommendations were likely to be impossible to implement because some interest group or other would not like them or would resist them. Now, I did not think that the sub-groups had that license. I think it was the sub groups' tasks to come up with an implementation plan for each of the recommendations except for the occasional point where the government response had inflected the recommendation in a slightly different way. (Respondent L)

This quotation firstly reminds us of the distinction between the function and power of the NPG and its sub-groups. The NPG worked to govern the participation of institutional actors within the sub-groups, while the sub-groups worked *for* the NPG. Secondly, it raises a number of questions around the democratic functioning of the network and suggests that there was more concern for efficiency than for democracy. This also suggests that the sub-groups were never intended to be mechanisms for democratic network governance.

Much has been written about the importance of involving affected actors in the decision-making process. For example, Sørensen and Torfing (2009) suggest that it can reduce the risk of implementation resistance, as it allows for the development of a sense of joint responsibility and ownership. It is doubtful that these opportunities were available in such a tightly governed networked, and this may hold implications for the later stages of ‘implementation’.

The same actor continues:

...but instead, particularly in some of the early drafts from some of the sub groups, we got in my view, a *re-engineering* of the proposals. In some ways, a *reverse engineering*, taking us back to a pre-Teaching Scotland’s Future model... and that was for me one of the most unsatisfactory parts of the process. (Respondent L)

In many ways, a ‘reverse engineering’ of remits is understandable: it is human nature to adapt imposed change to fit in with existing structures. We find solace in the familiar. If we look at the enactment of Curriculum for Excellence for example, similar concerns were raised here (Priestley et al., 2015). A return to the status quo may also be considered as symptomatic of a ‘conservative’ culture, as discussed earlier.

Another network actor from the NPG reflected on the subversive nature of institutional participation but attributed this to divergent institutional interests rather than conservatism:

Some of those who came in brought their own agenda, which wasn’t always Graham’s agenda, and brought their own interests. So that took quite a while to sort. (Respondent N)

Bearing in mind that members of the sub-groups were brought in to represent particular institutional actors, it is perhaps unsurprising that they “brought their own interests” and “own agenda” to the network; this was their job. The mediation of interests is an important part of the process of policy translation and central to the function of a democratic policy network. What *is* surprising, however, is that this concern comes from an individual who was also representing an institutional actor within the NPG or one of its sub-groups: the GTCS.

The problem that they are highlighting is not there *were* institutional interests and agendas, but that these institutional interests and agendas were not in line with the TSF agenda set

out in the Report and translated into sub-group remits. What's more, the fact that this comes from a GTCS actor might suggest that they felt that their institutional interests were in line with 'Graham's agenda'. The Donaldson Review team engaged with the GTCS a number of times during the development of the Report (Matheson, 2015). This provided the GTCS with an opportunity to translate their interests into the agenda before it entered the NPG and sub-groups. In a sense, what this individual might be saying is that as well as being incongruent with 'Graham's agenda', other institutional interests were not in line with the agenda and interests of the GTCS. This might be seen as an attempt by this actor to position the GTCS as a harmonious actor within the overall TSF agenda.

The final point that I would like to make about these comments concerns its final line: "So that took a while to sort out". Not only does this suggest that interest translation was restricted or mediated, but that this GTCS actor had an active role in this process. This highlights the powerful rhetorical position of the GTCS in this policy space and serves as a reminder of the extent to which the process of policy translation was governed, an important theme in my thesis.

The same actor reflected once more on the 'resistant' and 'subversive' behaviour within the sub-groups. Here they appear to be suggesting that this was a consequence of the fear of change:

I think in this case, there's the added factor that there was the difficulty of change, which is the centre of your thesis, that some people were more challenged by that change, and some people would have wanted the change to be expressed differently. So, em... There was a bit of tension in the sub groups... And there were groups within those groups who seemed to be operating for different purposes.
(Respondent N)

This is often highlighted as a feature of Scottish culture. But this individual appears to suggest that tensions arose from the positions of institutional actors being challenged, and divergent views about the nature of change.

The following quotation comes from an individual who might be considered as someone who attempted to subvert the remits of their sub-group. This can help us to understand at least one reason behind this kind of participation:

Respondent Y: I suppose my view was that I found some of the recommendations in the Donaldson review *restrictive* in terms of going forward [...] I don't think blind acceptance of anybody's report as being the gospel according to (laughing...) is the way forward for any kind of mature education system that you should take the recommendations and say, well yeah that's a good recommendation but maybe that's not such a good recommendation, and that we should have had perhaps a bit more flexibility about that, which didn't exist.

Interviewer: Okay, so there wasn't room to discuss the recommendations in terms of...

RY: None at all. Scottish Government's support staff who were there were *very clear* about *that*. That this was about... taking those recommendations and implementing them.

This individual appears to be suggesting that the recommendations and remits were too rigid and there were no opportunities to feedback on their suitability, seeming to support my evidence for the 'policy delivery' rationale (see Chapter 4). However, this description sits at odds with previous descriptions that portrayed the work of the NPG and sub-groups as protracted and drawn out due to the level of resistance from institutional actors and attempts to distort the agenda. It is possible that the level of subversion in each sub-group differed. But it also highlights the *metagovernance* role played by the civil service. Sørensen and Torfing (2009) write that politicians can play a key role in improving the democratic anchorage of governance networks through the act of metagovernance. In the case of the NPG, the 'Scottish Government support staff', or civil servants, can be regarded as representatives of elected politicians. As such, they take on the role of metagovernor, which can either work to increase or reduce democratic anchorage. In this particular example, we can see how they worked to restrict opportunities for particular kinds of participation. This might be considered as a move to reduce the democratic function of sub-group networks. It certainly restricts the extent to which institutional actors can translate their interests into the agenda.

However, this view was not consistent throughout the NPG and its sub-groups. A member of sub-group three highlighted a different kind of issue with regard to remits:

I think the remit was quite clear. We had to *restrain* some of the members who were trying to go off and actually create the leadership academy and say well no, you can't do that [laughing]. We don't have the right people to do that. This is the next stage, we just need to make the recommendation and I think there's still a huge

amount of work to be done there. We had to be realistic about how much the group could achieve. (Respondent M)

This reminds us of the tension between discussion and action. Instead of attempting to subvert or distort the remits of the sub-group, these actors were apparently trying to *implement* them. This is the perspective of one actor, who may or may not have an interest in sharing this narrative, but in any case, attempting to move forward to this stage of the process indicates frustration at the pace of change. It may also suggest that they saw institutional benefit in being involved in its development and therefore wanted to push forward with its creation before further opportunities were created for other institutional actors to claim ownership.

The ‘subtle subversion’ of sub-group remits appeared to vary across groups, and this is significant. From my respondent data, it is clear that institutional interest translation in the sub-groups was restricted by particular actors (namely the civil service) and the NPG. There was an overwhelming need for institutional interests to be aligned with the policy agenda, but of course, there were divergent views. Some actors subverted the sub-group remit points because they did not align with their institutional interests (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) or threatened their position in some way. These restrictions suggest that the purpose of the sub-groups from the very beginning was to develop a plan for ‘policy delivery’ (Priestley, 2013). This has serious implications for the extent to which can we refer to the overall model as being based on the principles of partnership.

One final point that I would like to make about the sub-group remits is that there was some confusion within the sub-groups as to what the remits actually were. One actor confessed, “I’m not certain there was clarity round the sub group as to what our remit was... I’m not certain that everybody on that sub group had a shared definition of what partnership meant” (Respondent O).

If there is room for interpretation of remit points then this can lead to policy distortion, but it also increases opportunity for interest translation. The problem here is that partnership was the key concept that drove and shaped the entire policy agenda and the structures put in place to implement it. If there was no shared understanding of this critical driving feature between network actors, then entire goal of developing policy in ‘partnership’ seems unrealistic.

5.4 Individual participation: teachers

In this sub-topic, I move from discussing the nature of institutional actor participation to consider the participation of individual actors who were not formally representing an institutional position. My goal is to illuminate issues of power in the policy process by describing the experiences of actors who regarded themselves as having limited agency in the network. To do this, I focus on the participation of individual teachers within the NPG and sub-groups.

In my research, I define actor ‘agency’ as the ability of actors to shape their own participation in the policy network in order to achieve particular goals. I draw on the work of Priestley and colleagues (Biesta, Priestley & Robinson, 2015; Priestley et al., 2015) to conceptualise agency in the policy process as something that actors *do* rather than something actors *possess*. Agency is not dependent on personal ability; instead, it is facilitated or restricted by the ecological conditions within which the actor is operating (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). In the context of a policy network, ecological conditions include network structures, both physical (e.g. seating arrangements at meetings, inclusion and exclusion from various policy spaces, and access to network information) and social (e.g. network cultures, social rules for operating, awareness of rules and structures, and positioning across the network). All of these things worked to shape actor agency within the NPG⁷⁴.

Throughout the interviews, individuals who were representing institutional actors appeared to be somewhat unwilling to comment on their own individual participation within the NPG and sub-groups. Even when questioned about their own influence in the network, they would often steer this towards conversation about institutional representation, structures for reporting and communication between the NPG and sub-groups. Only a few actors commented on the extent to which they felt they or others could participate at various levels. There was however one exception to this: a small number of individual teachers spoke at length about their own participation within the network and this became a key theme in the data with a number of other actors who were prepared to comment on the participation of individual teachers.

⁷⁴ There is an interesting discussion to be had around the extent to which the requirement to represent institutional interests and goals can be seen as an ecological condition that facilitates or inhibits actor agency.

Importantly, individual teachers played a different role in the network to those individual actors chosen to represent institutional actors. Teachers do not represent positional goods and their participation is not driven by institutional agendas or territorial concerns. Furthermore, they do not enter a policy network with *de jure* or *de facto* positions of power.

Additionally, teacher participants must be analysed as a group due to the goal of the TSF agenda: to support teachers to become ‘agents of change’⁷⁵. I argue that in order for teachers to shape educational change in the way that the Report proposed, they need to be involved in the policy process. Furthermore, this involvement must take a particular form: they must be active contributors to the generation, formation and implementation of policy agendas. What better place to explore this policy intention further than within the process intended to implement it? If teachers are to shape and lead educational reform, then surely the inclusion of teachers in the NPG must be seen as an attempt to develop teachers as policy actors and place them in a position where they *can* shape and lead reform.

In this sub-topic, I share actors’ perceptions of their knowledge and understanding of network rules. I reflect on the way that actors talk about their role within the network and provide some examples of the way that other actors in the network perceived the participation of individual teachers. I suggest that negative perceptions, if shared, can have direct consequences on the extent to which individual teachers feel they might participate.

5.4.1 The co-construction of network rules

Before I discuss the participation of individual teachers, I want to quickly reiterate a concept discussed earlier in my thesis: the process of network rule co-construction between actors (see Chapter 2). Rhodes (2006) writes that when a network is established, its actors work together to create a set of rules and principles for operating. These rules are important because they help to guide the behaviour of actors within the network. I regard them as cultural and social structures that shape the nature of individual involvement by enabling

⁷⁵ The Report (Donaldson, 2011) states that teachers should be “key actors in shaping and leading educational change” (p. 4) and warns against them becoming “passive or reluctant receivers of externally imposed prescription” (p. 18).

or inhibiting particular forms of participation. I will show how these structures can work to *restrict* agency of individual actors in the policy process.

To best benefit from these rules and guidelines, actors must be aware of them and understand the implications for their participation and position within the network. Although network rules are co-constructed by network actors, this does not mean that each actor plays an equal part in this process. It is possible that some actors from the NPG and its sub-groups were excluded from this process and would therefore have been at a considerable disadvantage. As discussed earlier, a small number of individual teachers were invited to become members of the NPG and sub-groups once the networks had been in operation for some time. It is therefore unlikely that they were involved in this initial stage of network rule formation.

Throughout this thesis I have conceptualised the NPG and its sub-groups as formal networks, which exist within a much larger fluid network of actors in Scottish education. This larger network is fluid and always changing, but contains a number of smaller entangled networks from which the membership of the NPG was drawn. One of these networks is often referred to as the ‘traditional policy community’ and is characterised by its own tightly governed membership, its own network culture and its own distinctive rules (McPherson & Raab, 1988). Given the length of time that this network has been in operation, its network culture and rules have been stabilised (Callon, 1986) and become particularly dominant in shaping its members’ views and perceptions of the policy process and the way that it should operate.

A significant number of NPG actors can be considered as belonging to the ‘traditional policy community’ or (at the very minimum) as having ties to it. It is likely that they entered the NPG with attachments to particular views and claims about how the network should operate, which will have been shaped by their understanding of network rules and culture. Therefore, the co-construction of network rules starts from a position where the majority of members already have a pre-determined and shared understanding of the way that the network should operate. This has implications for the participation of those who are not accustomed to the traditional policy community’s ‘shared assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). The individual teachers who became network actors were not members of the traditional policy community (with the exception of one) and were therefore unfamiliar with its culture and rules, thus placing them at a further disadvantage.

My data suggests that their inclusion was tokenistic and symbolic, and this does not align with the policy vision of developing teachers as ‘agents of change’.

I therefore argue that the process of rule co-construction can provide important information about the democratic function of a policy network. If we are troubled by issues of democratic participation, we must explore the exclusion of teachers from this space and the implications that this had for their participation⁷⁶.

5.4.2 Knowledge of structures, procedures, culture and rules

In this first extract, a teacher reflects on their contribution in the network:

At the end of the process I wasn’t terribly sure how much contribution I made to it. I know I did make some but had I been more sure of what was expected of me, I could have probably been more use to begin with. But... I think that’s because of this process they used. (Respondent G)

It is clear that this actor felt that their participation was restricted within the network and suggest that this might be a consequence of the process used by the NPG. This actor did not have a strong understanding of their role within the network and appears to be quite frustrated about this. This suggests that in this case, participation was restricted by a lack of transparency around network processes and procedures:

...sometimes we were charged with tasks to do... we were tasked with having a look at something about the [words removed to retain participant anonymity]. And neither of us were terribly sure what was expected of us. And a bit of what I did then appeared on a further document. So it was quite puzzling. (Respondent G)

This reflection demonstrates the importance of developing a shared understanding of network rules and procedures. This serves as a clear example of the way that network rules and procedures can work to reduce the agency of individual actors within the network.

As well as confusion around roles and responsibilities, there was limited understanding around the design of the NPG:

⁷⁶ It is worse than the exclusion of teachers – because exclusion draws the boundaries and you know who is in and out – here there was a pretext that they were in, but they are not in at all.

I guess I didn't know the rationale behind why they were the chairs. That now makes sense when you say they represented different things... I hadn't realised that's why there were three chairs. (Respondent I)

The tripartite chairing model is a key feature of the network. The guiding principles behind its creation (the principles of partnership) are central to the entire process and purpose of the network. It is concerning that these principles were not be communicated to all network members at the outset.

The fact that these actors were brought into the process once it had already commenced might go some way to explaining their unawareness around roles, responsibilities, processes, and network design. However, that this information was not communicated to them even as they joined is deeply concerning. It is clear to see how a lack of transparency around these issues can impact on participation and this supports my earlier assertion that the inclusion of teachers was a symbolic and tokenistic move.

5.4.3 Perceptions of self in the network

Many teachers reflected on and shared negative self-perceptions. These negative feelings and frustrations impacted on network participation and shaped the way that individuals perceived themselves within the wider policy space.

Here, a teacher reveals a self-perception of 'otherness':

I didn't often say anything, because quite often the conversation, there wasn't really anything that I could actually add to it... *I didn't feel that there was very much that I actually added to being in the group.* [...] I do think in a primary school my vocabulary has decreased. The words you have to use in the classroom, and then suddenly I am in with all these people. (Respondent I)

One reading of this is that this actor did not feel particularly comfortable within this space. The term 'all these people' might be recognised as a mechanism that allows this actor to position themselves as 'different' from the other actors in the network. This reflection creates an image of an actor who feels somewhat restricted by their professional context.

Additionally, it appears that concerns around insufficient language, experience, and knowledge might have held this actor back. It is possible that this perceived inability to

contribute was, in part, an effect of the perception of self as ‘other’. However, at the same time, it is important to remember that this teacher was added to the network to address concerns about the lack of teacher voice. An alternative reading of this might be that they were not supported to participate. In this way, network processes, structures, culture and actor behaviour might all play a role in restricting actor participation and led to feelings of intimidation.

The gap between educational policy and educational practice has been well documented in literature. For example, concerns have been raised about policy agendas and initiatives not reflecting the realities of the classroom, with ‘policy-makers’ often accused of being ‘out of touch’. The ‘classroom’ and the ‘policy process’ are often seen as two distinct spaces, governed by their own rules, which has implications for actors who participate in both. In the following extract, a teacher reflects on the difficulty of moving between these two different spaces:

In the morning I would be organising and managing three maths groups, or looking at three different things, and language, hearing reading groups as well. Keeping the rest of the class quiet. [...] You don’t think about anything other than what you are actually doing. And then to be able to take a step back and think about the structures that allow that to happen and how to... I think I found it quite difficult going from within the classroom and then an hour later, sitting at a board table ... with paint on my face and whatever else. (Respondent I)

It is clear that this actor perceives these two spaces as being quite distinct. Here we see again how this actor positions themselves as ‘other’ when removed from the classroom and placed into a boardroom in the space of an afternoon.

The following extract also highlights the perceived difference between these two spaces:

We had coffee. It is like a different world. You have got your briefcase. You have got your coffee and shortcake and [no pupils] screaming in your ear so... it was different. (Respondent I)

Although this demonstrates perceived physical difference between two physical spaces at perhaps more of a superficial level, it actually signals much more than this. This should be recognised as another part of the policy process that inevitably ‘others’ the outsider. It is an example of the way that bringing practitioners into the policy space, without appropriate knowledge of network rules and culture, only worked to reinforce their otherness and in

turn, this otherness disempowered them. The material, non-human actors within this space – the briefcase, the coffee, the biscuits – all play a role in distancing this human actor from the network. Here we see how non-human actors within a policy network play an important role in the restriction or facilitation of actor participation and policy translation (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). These objects become symbols of alienation.

Related to this idea of perceived power dynamics within a policy network, an Education Scotland player suggested that practitioners at an early stage in their career may not feel that they are able to speak openly and critically in formal network meetings:

If you were a probationer, you may not feel empowered to give an honest point of view because you want a job. If you've got a director of education sitting there and you want a job, you're not going to be critical because of the power dynamics and the fact that you want a job, you know. And so you need to be able to create an environment where an honest, open discussion with no repercussions is created. (Respondent O)

Presumably this issue, and the implications that it raises, extend beyond probationary teachers to other actors in a policy network, working in different areas of education. Given the range of members in a policy network, the likelihood of participating in front of actors who might become potential future employers, or be connected to them, is high. This actor appears to be suggesting that the only way to overcome this is to change a network's structure and culture, which contributes to a much wider discussion about how best to create mechanisms to enhance democratic participation.

5.4.4 Perceptions from others

This extract from a GTCS actor speaks to other actors' perceptions of individual teacher participation, although is not representative of all NPG members:

Yeah and, you know, there were teachers on the National Partnership Group, with all due respect to them I think they were out their depth because I'm not sure they were able to bring an awful lot to the table. And certainly I don't think they were asked enough questions either. You know, maybe they did have more to, maybe they were hiding things under their, light under their bushel. But [laughs] I think they could have been asked to be more involved in that. (Respondent T)

This actor reflects that the individual teachers that were selected were unable to contribute to the process and implies that this was because they were lacking in some way, perhaps in

knowledge or experience. However, as I have shown, there was a lack of transparency around what and how they were expected to contribute. There was also a proactive failure to initiate teacher participation and position them in such a way within the network that their voice might be given space, reinforcing their ‘otherness’. In the latter parts of the extract s/he suggests that the absence of contribution was a consequence of not being involved by other actors in the network: “I don’t think they were asked enough questions” and, “I think they could have been asked to be more involved”. Given that these individual teachers were brought into the process to address concerns about the lack of teacher input, it is surprising that network actors did not make an effort to involve them and support them to participate.

I would argue that this highlights an issue in the way that the network worked rather than the ability of teachers to contribute. It suggests that actors within the NPG and its sub-groups were unable to engage effectively with individual teachers in the network. This indicates one of two things: the inclusion of individual teachers in policy networks was a novel feature for many of the network actors, which meant there was a lack of understanding around how best to support participation; or, the involvement of individual teachers was a tactical move to create a perception of ‘teacher engagement’ in order to sustain an image of Scottish education policy-making as representative, inclusive and democratic.

One ADES representative reflected on their experience of individual teacher participation within the network:

For a group at that level what you need to make sure is that you’re actually ascertaining the views of teachers or people that are involved with it. I don’t think having teachers on the group necessarily makes that happen...because quite often they don’t speak on sort of high level groups like that. I mean we had [details removed to secure anonymity] ... You could probably count on one hand the amount of times [they] opened [their] mouth, if that. So I think that’s quite a difficult way of involving teachers, I think you are better using focus groups and making sure that their voice is getting fed in through a sort of range of different activities. Being on the group doesn’t mean you’re represented necessarily.
(Respondent M)

This actor recognises the way in which network structures, including its culture, have worked to reinforce the ‘otherness’ of this teacher, yet s/he takes no responsibility for it when in fact it is the system that s/he is part of that creates the problem. This is a

particularly negative description of individual teacher participation and hints at an unsupportive network culture. If shared more widely, it is easy to see how such perceptions could inhibit involvement and restrict actor agency. However, we know that one teacher was unsure about *what* they could contribute, while another was unsure about *how* to contribute. It is possible that this extract tells us more about the restrictive nature of network processes and network culture rather than the ability of individual actors to participate.

The final extract comes from an interview with an Education Scotland actor. I include it here to provide an insight into the key issues discussed above from the perspective of someone who was involved in the process:

I think a lot of it comes down to self-confidence and how people or the organisation is perceived. That almost allows people a bit more power if you like. I don't know if power is quite the right word. Without naming names, if you have been in a very senior position in Scottish education for 20 years and you speak, whereas if you are a class teacher for two years ... people will perceive you differently. I don't mean negatively, I just mean differently. I don't think they had more power, but they had more confidence and they were more assertive and some speak for longer and some people too long and too often. But you are going to get that. And it is again a process thing. If some people, and again I go to many meetings, some people come into a meeting and they are efficient and careful and selective about what they say. Some people come in and just want others to hear their views. (Respondent E)

There are a number of points that can be drawn from this. First, this reminds us of the importance of institutional affiliation and the way that this can create *de jure* or *de facto* positions of power. Secondly, s/he makes a distinction between actors who might be considered as being a member of the 'traditional policy community' and those who are not, confirming my previous assertion that this distinction shapes the way that other actors within the network perceive them. Thirdly, they highlight the way that confidence and assertiveness can shape individual participation and appears to suggest that actors who "come from a senior position in Scottish education" have more confidence, which enables them to actively contribute in meetings.

This actor clearly recognises the disempowerment of teachers within the policy process; s/he understands the problem and appears to take responsibility for it. However, at the same time, s/he blames the individual for lacking in confidence, when in fact it is the network structures that restrict their agency and potentially create feelings of intimidation.

My research data suggests that there were no obvious attempts to induct individual teachers into the policy process. In the same vein, this strongly suggests that there were no attempts to enact the policy aspirations of the operationalised network: the development of teachers as agents of change.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented findings on the nature of policy translation within the NPG and its sub-groups. It began by identifying various formal and informal spaces where policy was made. These spaces are where the ‘token’ (the original policy intentions from TSF) circulated, coming into contact with and being picked up and transformed by various actors and interests. During this process, institutional actors were able to translate their institutional interests into the continuously transforming policy agenda. Some of these spaces were ‘official’ in nature and could be considered as inclusive and relatively open to all members of the network. Others were hidden and only open to specific individual and institutional actors and it was here where the ‘real’ policy was made. I argued that these findings have implications for the extent to which this can be regarded as a democratic form of policy-making, and questioned the extent to which this aligns with the ethos of ‘partnership’.

Moving on to explore the participation of institutional actors, I argued that participation must be understood as existing within a specific network culture, which can work to facilitate the participation of some institutional actors, but restrict the participation of others. I described the ‘culture of consensus’ and the way that this manifested within the NPG and sub-groups, resulting in a lack of action and a conservative attitude towards change. Although institutional actors clearly held divergent views, there appeared to be a need to present an image of consensus within the formal spaces of policy implementation, which was restrictive in terms of developing genuine partnership.

I then presented findings on the nature of institutional actor participation and described three types of behaviour that shaped the process of policy implementation: 1) conservatism and resistance to change; 2) territorialism and the protection of proprietorial interests; and, 3) the subtle subversion of sub-group remits. Although some of these behaviours might be products of a conservative culture, they can also be understood as acts of interest

translation and mechanisms for securing particular positions within the space of teacher education.

The final section in this chapter discussed the participation of individual teachers within the NPG and its sub-groups. In the absence of formal representation from teacher unions, the invitation of individual teachers might be recognised as an attempt to represent the voice of the teaching profession. However, the extent to which they could participate alongside representatives of institutional actors was restricted by a number of factors: network culture; knowledge of structures, processes and rules; the perception of self within the network; and, the others' perceptions of them. Given that the overall aim of TSF was to develop teachers as 'agents of change', who can lead and shape educational reform, their treatment within the network highlights a significant tension between the overall intentions of the policy and the process that was used to implement it.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

In this final chapter, I provide an overview of the study and its findings. I begin by presenting an overview of the research, including key theoretical concepts and methods employed and return to each question, providing a summary of my findings and their implications. I follow this with a reflection on the research design and consider the extent to which my methodology delivered the data that I required. In the subsequent section I highlight future research possibilities, and different ways that this research could be taken forward. In the final section, I provide an overall reflection in which I consider the contributions that this research has made. Here I discuss three key themes: transparency in the policy process; the culture of consensus and its role in restricting the potential for educational reform; and, the restriction and underrepresentation of the teaching profession within the policy network. This final reflection is intended as guidance for policy-makers, but it will also hold relevance for others working in and researching Scottish education.

6.1 Overview of the research

The overall aim of this research was to explore policy processes in Scottish education, using the implementation of ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ (TSF) as a case study. Many studies in this area tend to focus either on how policy is distorted or resisted as it is enacted at school level (e.g. Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2010) or the content of or intentions set out in the original policy text (e.g. Menter & Hulme, 2012). However, there is little research that explores the space between enactment and development; the space where the content of policy is further developed or refined by institutional actors before it is enacted. It is here that policy intentions can become distorted, strengthened or silenced in subtle and hidden ways by the actors and organisations that are required to put them into action.

In Scottish education, this stage in the policy process normally takes the form of a partnership group, consisting of various stakeholders who will play a role in the implementation of changes proposed by the policy. On one hand, this might be recognised as a method for increasing democratic participation in the policy process, by ensuring that affected actors have an opportunity to have their voices heard (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008).

This aligns with the mythical image of Scottish policy-making as ‘consultative’ and ‘democratic’ (Humes, 2013; Kennedy & Hulme, 2015; Menter & Hulme, 2008). On the other hand, it could be regarded as a strategy for ensuring that affected actors are on board with the proposed changes and aware of the role that they must play in their ‘delivery’, which would be more reflective of a tightly governed, top-down policy process.

Within the context of TSF, a ‘National Partnership Group’ (NPG) was established by the Scottish Government and tasked with deciding how to implement the recommendations set out within TSF. The NPG, its membership and the way that it operated, were the main foci of this research. Drawing on the work of Ball (Ball, 2012; Ball & Exley, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012) and Rhodes (Rhodes, 2006, 2002, 1997; Rhodes & Marsh, 1992) I conceptualised the NPG as a policy network. This network was made up of representatives of key bodies (referred to as institutional actors) in Scottish education, including the Scottish Government, GTCS, Education Scotland, local authorities, universities and individual classroom teachers. Incorporating key ideas from the literature around democratic network governance (Sørensen, & Torfing, 2005a, 2005b, 2009; Tonnessen, 2015) allowed me to explore the form and function of the network and consider the extent to which the process could be regarded as democratic. Drawing on key literature written about the ‘assumptive world’ of the ‘policy community’ (Humes, 1987; McPherson & Raab, 1988) and the Scottish ‘myth’ (Gray et al., 1983; Humes & Bryce, 1999; Menter & Hulme, 2008; Paterson, 2003) helped to explain the restrictive culture of the NPG and its sub-groups, and the way in which it enabled some actors to participate at the expense of others. Adopting elements of actor-network theory (ANT), namely the concept of the ‘token’ (Edwards, 2009; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998) and the translation model of change (Callon, 1986; Hamilton, 2012), I considered the NPG as a space for policy translation and explored the techniques employed by institutional actors to strengthen, distort or silence various parts of the policy agenda. Much has been written about the way that policy is adapted as it moves from prescription to enactment (e.g. Ball, 1994; Ozga, 2000; Rizvi & Kemis, 1987). Elements of ANT have been used within this study to provide some further insight into how this adaptation, or translation, occurs.

In order to find out more about this process, this research focussed on three core questions. Drawing on the analysis of data gathered from various documents and interviews conducted with members of the NPG and its sub-groups, I provide summary reflections for each of these questions below.

6.1.1 Question One: Who or what was included in or excluded from these spaces?

Spaces of translation

The overarching aim of my research was to identify and explore spaces within the policy process where translation occurred and where it did not. Therefore the first step in answering this question was to find these spaces, with the following step being to identify the institutional actors in them. Viewing a policy agenda as a ‘token’ that travels through various stages of translation can help us to understand how policy agendas become disrupted, distorted and sometimes silenced on their journey to ‘implementation’. I have described this in detail in Chapter 2, but the important point for this discussion is that nature of translation and the extent to which a policy is ‘implemented’ is heavily dependent on the interests that it comes into contact with.

Following the analysis of interview data and various documents as outlined in Chapter 2, I discovered a number of different formal and informal spaces for policy translation. A number of these spaces were stages in the policy process that were interwoven into the work of the NPG. Some of these spaces were relatively open and inclusive, apparently providing multiple opportunities for interest translation. However, they were metagoverned (Sorensen & Torfing, 2009) by actors in influential positions, including the civil service. The ability of actors to influence the policy agenda in these spaces was limited and their participation perceived as ‘tokenistic’. In addition to this, respondents referred to ‘other meetings’ to which only specific actors were invited; this is where the ‘real policy’ was made. It was not surprising to discover that there were varying levels of awareness around the existence of these spaces, with members of the traditional ‘policy community’ knowing much more than individual teachers. This highlighted a lack of transparency around the process as a whole, which is an issue that I discuss throughout Chapters 4 and 5.

I argue that the construction of the final report was the most important stage of the policy process as it not only marked the end of the NPG, but was presented as a formal representation of the policy to be ‘implemented’. The NPG Report represented the final stage of translation: *mobilisation*, where a ‘token’ becomes ‘temporarily ‘black-boxed’ and stabilised (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Hamilton, 2010). This is where the work of the

NPG, its sub-groups and various consultation exercises should have been brought together to inform the continued implementation of TSF, as was intended and promoted in official discourse, but in actual fact, the only actors involved in this stage were the co-chairs of the NPG and the civil service. Their work was then translated into ‘civil service-speak’ in the final edit. This raises some important questions about the extent to which we can refer to this as process developed in partnership and calls into question the ostensible purpose of the NPG. The findings suggest that the government’s role in this final stage was always intended and in some ways inevitable, but if this was the case, then this should be transparent from the outset.

Criteria for membership

The NPG and its sub-groups were considered as the ‘formal’ spaces of translation, and as an ‘outsider’, were the easiest to access. In Chapter 3, I presented network maps of the institutional membership in order to emphasise the number of divergent interests represented within one space and to highlight the messy and complex nature of the process. Throughout this thesis I have argued that the development of collaborative partnership requires a harmonisation of competing interests, a process that is constrained by hidden power struggles and cultural forces. The development of a visual representation of institutional interests helped to reveal the enormity of this task. The selection of institutional actors appeared to be driven by the political need for equal representation, which had significant implications for the way that the network operated. There was an assumption that equal representation of institutional actors would result in the development of partnership; but my findings showed that the development of partnership was far more complex.

It was interesting to note that some individuals did not know why they were selected to be members of the NPG or its sub-groups, which again highlights the lack of transparency in the process. There is a question around the extent to which genuine partnership can be developed if some of the actors who are included in it do not know why they are there. It appeared that membership of individual actors was determined by institutional affiliation rather than knowledge or experience, and concerns were raised about whether the ‘right people’ had been invited. The majority of the network membership consisted of members from the traditional ‘policy community’ (Humes, 1987; McPherson & Raab, 1988), which had significant implications for the way that the network operated. A number of actors

commented on recognising fellow members from various other boards and partnership groups in Scottish education, highlighting this as a positive element. However, my findings suggest that it created a restrictive and conservative culture that made it difficult for new actors, ('outsiders' to the policy community) to enter and for new ideas to gain traction. While this was raised as a concern for democratic participation, a conservative culture might be recognised as a mechanism for preserving the values of Scottish education by shielding us from the movement of neoliberal policy agendas. It is also possible that conservative culture served a vital function in this process by providing a necessary structure for initial deliberation, upon which further participation could be based. I return to this point when I discuss my third research question.

Membership: inclusions and exclusions

While the size of this partnership group might be taken as an indication of inclusivity, there was one important institutional actor missing: teacher unions. Given that the NPG and its three sub-groups consisted of thirty-eight representatives, it is significant that not one of these individuals formally represented the voice of teacher unions. I considered a number of factors that may have led to this decision, including the possibility that the exclusion was at their request in order to retain distance from the reform and to avoid appearing collusive with institutional actors including government and local authorities. A number of respondents, including representatives of the GTCS, raised concerns, suggesting that it could lead to resistance at later stages of implementation and disengagement across the profession. Meaningful and sustained implementation of TSF requires significant 'buy-in' from the teaching profession. As the official voice of the teaching profession was excluded from the early stages of the process, there were limited opportunities for interest translation, which had implications for the extent to which teachers could become *enrolled* in the evolving network (Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998).

However, there was a 'compromise solution': one member of the NPG who was brought into the group as an individual teacher, was a former president of the Education Institute of Scotland (EIS). This actor had a dual role: to formally represent the teaching profession while *informally* representing the interests of teacher unions. This can be recognised as a tactical and political move by government. In a process of 'resource exchange' (Borzel, 2011; Rhodes, 2006), government were able to draw on the knowledge and expertise of

teacher unions, making it more likely that they would ‘buy-in’ to the agenda. At the same time, teacher unions were able to assert indirect influence over the translation of the ‘token’, while retaining a distance from reform in order to retain credibility should union action be required.

Despite the importance placed on strengthening ‘partnership’ amongst different bodies in Scottish education, the inclusion of individual teachers did not appear to be a priority during the establishment of the NPG. These actors were only invited to join the network once several meetings had taken place and when concerns were raised about their exclusion. This post-hoc addition had implications for the extent to which they could participate and shaped the way that they perceived themselves within the network, with one teacher stating that they were an ‘afterthought’. Even after the inclusion of additional teachers, concerns were repeatedly raised about the underrepresentation of teacher voice. This is reflective of a wider issue in Scottish education, where teachers tend to be excluded, or at best under-represented, within the formal spaces of policy-making.

6.1.2 Question 2: How do individual actors represent the interests of an institutional actor within this space?

Fragmented actors and divergent interests

The second research question allowed me to move beyond issues of network membership and consider the different factors that enabled or restricted actor participation. Institutional actors are, by their very nature, fragmented and complex and do not always constitute a united voice. To position them as single actors does not reflect their complexity. Each institutional actor varies in terms of its size, structure, and the role that it plays within Scottish education. For example, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) represents thirty-two different local authorities, each of which operates in different geographical, cultural and economic contexts and responds to different pressures. To what extent can one individual actor speak for thirty-two agendas?

Representing the teaching profession

Teacher unions are normally invited to represent the voice of the profession in the space of policy-making because they publicly promote themselves as an institutional actor that has a structure of democratic accountability. However, this concept is problematic. A question should be asked about the extent to which one teacher union *can* democratically speak on behalf of *all* Scottish teachers. Furthermore, although teacher unions have retained a considerable degree of power within Scottish education, they are, by their very nature, vulnerable to political influence, which has implications for the extent to which they can be democratically accountable.

In their absence, I considered the possibility that individual teachers were brought in to represent the profession. Although there was a lack of clarity over whether this was intended, their ability to represent the voice of teachers was continuously raised as a concern by different respondents. On a practical level, there were no structures or systems put in place to help teachers gather the views of the profession or to share them. Some teachers were worried by the suggestion that this might be the role that they were expected to play and lacked confidence in their ability to do so. Moreover, there was some uncertainty around whether they were ‘permitted’ to discuss the work of the NPG within their school, with one teacher confessing that colleagues, including their head teacher, would be suspicious of their role. This not only highlights the lack of transparency around roles and responsibilities, but also around what can and cannot be communicated to those outside the formal process. This served as yet another barrier to the representation of teachers’ views. It is clear that individual teachers cannot be held democratically accountable to the entire profession within a policy network, but nor should they be expected to be. Although I provided some alternative reasons for their inclusion in Chapter 4, my findings suggest that there was no clarity around the rationale for including individual teachers within the NPG or its sub-groups. Furthermore, it is important to consider the possibility that teacher views were not desirable within this process and that unsupportive network structures were therefore not accidental.

Network positioning: GTCS

Network chairing positions were highly sought after as they provided plentiful opportunities to translate interests into the policy agenda. Network chairs were also governors of the process, acting as ‘gate-keepers’ to policy translation. There were six

chairing positions available across the network, yet none of these positions were allocated to representatives of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). There was general consensus that the GTCS should have been represented at this level and that their exclusion seemed suspicious given their central role in teacher education reform. It was possible that the GTCS were excluded from chairing positions because they had already been given considerable responsibility for further developing a number of ideas from the TSF agenda. This may have been one way for the Scottish Government to restrict their power. In the same vein, the GTCS may have wanted to distance themselves from a governing role, in order to not appear overly powerful within education reform. Despite this restriction, the GTCS retained a certain level of influence and emerged as one of the most influential institutional actors in the network. This appears to suggest that chairing positions are not necessarily required in order to exert influence over the process of policy translation. Their retained power might be indicative of their overall position in Scottish education and the extent to which the government and other institutional actors depend on their resource (Rhodes, 2006).

6.1.3 Question 3: How do institutional actors translate their interests into the policy agenda?

Network culture

While the previous two questions explored issues around *network structure*, the final question attempted to understand the different ways that individual and institutional actors *translated their interests* into the policy agenda from within this structure. Drawing on the ANT model of translation (Callon, 1986; Edwards, 2010), this research argues that interest translation occurred through the different ways that actors *participated* in the NPG and its sub-groups. This participation took different forms, but must be understood as existing within a particular *network culture*. Literature discussed in Chapters 2 and 5 of this thesis (Marsh & Smith, 2000; McPherson & Raab, 1988; Rhodes, 2006) suggested that the culture of a network can either enable or restrict the actor participation and this research confirmed this, revealing the different ways in which this occurs.

The culture within these networks appeared to mirror the traditions and values of the ‘shared assumptive world’ of the ‘policy community’ (Humes, 1986; McPherson & Raab,

1988). Given that much of the network membership consisted of members from this group, it was not surprising that the ‘rules of the game’ (Rhodes, 2006) were simply transferred from one network to another. This was problematic for actors who were new to the process and considered as ‘outsiders’; the majority of whom were individual teachers. This culture only served to benefit those who considered themselves as members of the ‘policy community’ and had been involved in similar processes before. These actors had a better understanding of their roles and the way that the network operated; they knew how to behave and what to say in order to translate their institutional interests into the ‘token’. Actors who were new to the process often held back from sharing their views in meetings and discussions. As well as a lack of understanding around processes and network rules, these actors were unsure about the worth of their contribution and positioned themselves as ‘other’. The *materiality* of NPG meetings – objects such as coffee cups, shortcake and briefcases - only served as reminders of the difference between the world of policy-makers and the day-to-day realities of classroom teachers.

I described the network culture as a ‘culture of consensus’ and as an example of the way that the Scottish ‘myth’ acted as both *sustenance* and *mask* within the network. The behaviour of actors within the formal spaces of policy-making (e.g. meetings of the NPG and sub-groups) was often described as being ‘overly polite’, ‘conservative’ and ‘distinctly Scottish’. The implication of this was that difficult issues that could potentially unearth divergent interests were not discussed as they would challenge the ‘myth’ of consensus. In Chapter 1 I discussed a number of assumptions that are often made by members of the traditional ‘policy community’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). One such assumption is that everyone that operates within the context of Scottish education shares the same interests and beliefs about the nature of Scottish education and how it should be developed. This, in turn, creates a ‘simulacra of order’, underneath which lies great disorder. It is simply not the case that all institutional actors share the same worldview. However, the beliefs held by core members of the ‘policy community’ are strong, and work to create a culture that does not allow divergent interests to come to the fore.

This not only acted as a barrier to democratic-policy making, but also to the development and strengthening of partnership. This requires a degree of interest harmonisation, which can only happen if institutional actors are able to be up-front about their interests and agendas and disrupt traditional ways of working. However, this does not sit comfortably with the mythical image of ‘consensus’. One example of this can be seen in the way that

some institutional actors attempted to distort and change elements of the policy agenda, against the wish of others who raised concerns about them diverting from the ‘official line’.

Techniques of interest translation: institutional actors

My findings revealed that institutional actors used a number of techniques to drive forward or resist various elements of the policy agenda. These techniques can be drawn together in three distinct themes: conservatism and resistance to change, positional interests, and subtle subversion.

Conservatism manifested itself within the policy network as a resistance to change amongst various actors. A number of respondents raised concerns about the lack of visible progress, suggesting that the participation of institutional actors was un-progressive and resistant to the kind of ‘radical thinking’ that would be required to break the cycle. There was a fear of change across the network, which worked to resist and silence the traction of innovation. The implications of this for educational change are significant.

Related to this is the development of positional interests and statements of ‘ownership’ over particular areas of teacher education, which have developed under the guise of the ‘myth’. Educational reform was perceived by many as a threat to their positions, but it was also viewed by some as an opportunity. The disruption of power creates a situation in which institutional actors can re-position themselves. Institutional actors operated in a territorial and protective way in order to better position themselves within the space of educational reform and this can be understood as a form of interest translation.

The final technique is the subtle subversion of sub-group remits by members of the sub-groups. These remits were created by the civil service and were intended to guide the work of the sub-groups. However, some actors commented on a number of attempts by others to change the remits, thereby distorting the token to align more closely with their institutional interests. Given that this was a collaborative process, based on the ideals of partnership, it is not surprising that institutional actors brought their own agendas into this space. What this suggests is that the process was tightly controlled in order to ensure that institutional interests and agendas changed in order to support the core ideas set out by the policy

agenda. This is not reflective of a partnership approach to policy-making, but of an implicit suspicion of democracy. This has implications beyond this specific case study and raises questions over the continued tendency for government to establish ‘partnership groups’ and ‘implementation boards’ in the process of education policy development.

6.2 Reflections on methodology

In this section, I briefly reflect on the methodology employed in this research and consider the different ways that it was adapted in order to reflect the nature of emergent data. Exploring the translation of policy across different spaces is complex by its very nature. However, conducting this research in ‘real time’, while the process was continuously expanding and unravelling, added a further layer of complexity and required a certain level of flexibility in approach. At the beginning of this research, I decided to take a critical policy analysis approach (Taylor et al., 1997) and to draw on elements of ANT to conceptualise the spaces of policy-making. Critical policy analysis highlighted the importance of researching the *processes* by which policy is made and enacted, as well as the *content* of that policy.

The first lens that I applied was the ANT translation model of change (Callon, 1987; Hamilton, 2010) and the ‘token’ (Edwards, 2010; Gaskell & Hepburn, 1998). It is important to note that I do not subscribe fully to ANT, but used parts of it that seemed appropriate for my methodology. I argue that ANT provides us with conceptual tools for understanding the role that institutional actors play in distorting, strengthening or silencing elements of a policy agenda. More specifically, it provided me with appropriate terminology for describing the mechanics of this process.

ANT has received much criticism for its equal treatment of humans and objects and apparent disregard for human consciousness (see Chapter 2 for detailed critique). Although I do not necessarily agree with these claims, I found that this shift away from human agency surprisingly useful. The role of human actors within the network was to represent the interests and agendas of particular organisations. ANT allowed me to take a step back from the personalities and personal intent of individual actors and to consider them as representatives of institutional actors. In Chapter 2 I discussed the limitation of interview data, highlighting the tendency of respondents to either repeat the ‘official line’ or to use

the interview process as an opportunity to promote particular institutional agendas. However, an ANT approach allowed me to distance myself from the ‘human’ and to understand responses as ‘stories’ that provide insight into the way that actors would *like* to be perceived within the policy process and the interests that were

Due to the ‘real time’ element of the research, I had to start collecting data shortly after beginning my doctorate studies. This meant that I had limited time to explore different methodologies. Once I began interviewing respondents, I soon realised that my methodology was somewhat restrictive and that I required multiple lenses to capture the range of themes that were emerging from the data. In order to rectify this, I drew on a number of concepts and ideas from different theoretical perspectives and applied them to different parts of the policy process.

The first change that I made involved incorporating concepts and frameworks from the literature on policy networks. This provided me with appropriate theoretical tools for exploring the membership, structure and function of the NPG. Stephen Ball’s work (Ball, 2012; Ball & Exley, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012) helped me to understand the NPG within the context of network governance and steered me towards employing an adapted version of network ethnography (e.g. Hogan, 2014; Shiroma, 2014) as a method for revealing the range of interests circulating through different spaces of policy translation. The act of constructing network maps enabled me to better understand the structure of networks and to identify imbalances in actor positioning. This led me to the work of Rhodes and colleagues (Rhodes, 2006, 2002, 1997; Rhodes & Marsh, 1992) on policy communities, which aligned closely with McPherson and Raab’s (1998) analysis of the ‘shared assumptive world’ (McPherson & Raab, 1988). Rhodes’s (2006) concepts ‘power-dependency’ and ‘resource-exchange’ helped to reveal the interdependent nature of the NPG and its sub-groups, which goes some way to explaining why the ‘culture of consensus’ persists.

While incorporating these different concepts and tools enabled me to develop a better understanding of the structure, membership, form and function of the NPG; there was still something missing. Respondents repeatedly highlighted concerns about a lack of transparency in a number of areas, including the criteria for network membership, the processes by which important decisions were taken, roles and responsibilities and rules for participation. These concerns were suggestive of a closed, non-participative and

undemocratic process and the body of literature surrounding theories of democratic network governance (Sørensen, & Torfing, 2005a, 2005b, 2009; Tonnessen, 2015) provided me with the theoretical apparatus that I required to unpick this. Much has been written in this area about the democratic function of policy networks and the characteristics of democratic governance networks. Given the historical claims around the democratic nature of policy-making in Scotland, I felt that this body of work provided a set of key anchorage points (see Chapter 2) against which the structure and function of the NPG and its sub-groups could be considered.

6.3 Ideas for further work

Although my methodology required some adaptation during its application, it provided me with a valuable set of tools, concepts and ideas that could be used to examine different elements of the policy process. Future work could be undertaken to further develop my conceptual framework as a model for policy analysis. For example, the different stages of the ANT model of translation, *problematization*, *interessement*, *enrolment* and *mobilisation* (Callon, 1986) could be used to examine what Hamilton (2010) refers to as the different ‘moments’ of policy translation. I would have also have liked to further develop the idea as documents and other objects as ‘tokens’. Using a four stage model and having an awareness of multiple enactments of the ‘token’ would enable a researcher to trace a policy agenda as it unfolds in real time in and across different spaces, to explore the different mobilisations of it in various forms, and to identify the interests that shape it.

This model could be used to examine the development and implementation of a range of new policies in education and other areas of public reform. One example could be the development of health policy, which is increasingly politicised and vulnerable to the traction of private actors. It would be useful for this model to include the concepts and ideas that I have adopted from the literature on policy networks and network ethnography (Ball & Junemann, 2012; Ball & Exley, 2010, Kretchmar, Sondel & Ferrare, 2014; Shiroma, 2014) as this allows for diagrammatical mapping of mobilised networks, which can be useful for revealing the network of public and private actors that have become enrolled and are working to drive education reform in particular directions. In Scotland, recent education policy discourse, such as the National Improvement Framework (Scottish

Government, 2016a, 2016b), signals a significant shift away from the vision of the teacher as an empowered agent of change to a model of professionalism that seeks to measure the effectiveness of teacher judgement, positioning the teacher as accountable in the ‘age of measurement’ (Biesta, 2017). Policy ethnography is a conceptual device that allows us to see a series of ‘real’ changes in the governance of education (Ball & Junneman, 2012) and applying it in this context would help us to understand the global and local forces that are driving education in this direction.

It may also be interesting to use this model to look at policy processes in other countries. I had suggested in Chapter 1 that the ‘distinctive’ nature of policy-making in Scottish education might be in part due to the relatively small size of the country’s population. This model could be used to explore the way that policy is developed and implemented in other countries with a similar population, for example, Denmark, Finland, Norway or Ireland. This would allow us to consider whether there is something distinctly *Scottish* about the way that we make policy, or whether such claims do indeed have a mythical element.

During the data collection phase of this study, I collected some data from members of the National Implementation Board (NIB), which superseded the NPG. However, I decided not to use this data as it took me away from the focus of the NPG⁷⁷. The NIB was established by the government for a different purpose, and it operated in a very different way to the NPG. It would be interesting to compare the network membership, culture and processes of the NIB and the NPG from the insights of those who were involved as members. Given that it was set up to continue the work of the NPG, it can be considered as an entirely different phase of the implementation process. A comparison would allow me to build on the findings from this study in order to develop a more complete picture of a policy process.

My final suggestion relates to the informal spaces of policy-making that I revealed in Chapter 5, but takes the idea much further. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, my use of policy network ethnography was limited by the ‘real time’ element of the research and the political sensitivities around this (see Chapter 2 for a wider discussion on methodological tensions). However, given that a considerable amount of time has passed since the publication of TSF, it might be much easier to gather detailed information about these

⁷⁷ It should be noted that although I did not fully incorporate this interview data into my dataset, conducting interviews with NIB helped me to further develop my understanding of the wider process.

spaces. Of particular interest would be the review process that led to the development of the fifty recommendations within TSF. A great deal of information was hosted online about the individual and institutional actors involved in this process. Borrowing concepts from the model of translation (Callon, 1986), this process could be conceptualised and interrogated as moments of ‘problematization’ and ‘interessement’, which is where the policy agenda is formed and initial links are made with actors and other networks. This would help us to understand where the policy agenda came from, and the role that various individual and institutional actors played in its creation.

6.4 Key contributions to education policy

In this final section, I present three key issues that have emerged as overarching themes of the thesis. I include recommendations for policy-makers, but these may also hold relevance for others working in and research education internationally.

Firstly, we need to be more *open* about the way that policy is developed and implemented. On the surface, the development of a partnership model appeared to reflect the government’s commitment to collaborative and democratic policy-making. However, my findings raise important questions around the extent to which the work of the network can be considered a collaborative and democratic process. The network functioned to benefit the participation of ‘insiders’; mainly members of the traditional policy community and did not support the participation of actors who were new to processes of policy-making, mostly individual teachers. I have highlighted a number of contributory factors, but at the centre of this is a lack of *transparency* around roles, responsibilities and processes. This was an issue for actors operating within the NPG and its sub-groups, but it should also be a concern for affected actors outside the process. The democratic legitimacy of a policy network also depends on the ability for its members to share information about their participation with the groups that they are representing Sørensen, and Torfing (2005b, 2009). To those on the outside, as well as some on the inside, this was a closed and exclusive process, which led to disengagement and a lack of interest around teacher education reform. However, this holds implications for the implementation of education reform more widely. We need to think more carefully about the design and metagovernance of policy processes; mechanisms and structures should be put in place to ensure that processes are visible and that policy actors can be held accountable by the

membership groups for which they operate. If this is not in the government's interest, then there should at least be a recognition that participation and democracy are not as central to Scottish education as we like to think.

As well as restricting the participation of specific actors, the 'culture of consensus' limited the extent to which partnership could be developed and strengthened between key institutional actors. Given that this was a central aim of the policy and the function of the NPG, this is significant. I have argued throughout this thesis that the development and sustainment of genuine partnership requires a degree of interest harmonisation, which can only happen if traditional ways of working are disrupted. My research revealed the disorder that lay beneath the 'simulacra of order': divergent institutional interests, unequal power relations and strategic institutional positioning. The policy process should create a context in which divergent institutional interests and conflicting agendas can be brought to the surface. Furthermore, this process should not be hidden; it should occur within the formal spaces of policy-making to which all actors have access. Without this change in culture, it is unlikely that the development and strengthening of partnership will ever leave the policy agenda.

The last point that I would like to discuss is the exclusion and restriction of the teaching profession from the network. Sustained and meaningful enactment of the key vision set out within TSF requires a significant culture shift amongst the teaching profession. Given that their voice was excluded from this fundamental stage of enrolment, it is unlikely that this shift will occur. Furthermore, the treatment of teachers within this space sits at odds with the overall policy vision set out in TSF: the development of teachers as "agents of change, not passive or reluctant receivers of externally-imposed prescription" (Donaldson, 2011, p. 18). It is concerning that the process established to enact this vision has enacted the opposite. If we are serious about including teachers within the space of policy-making, then we need to find new ways to achieve this. Across the globe, there has been a shift towards grass-roots, teacher-led forms of professional learning. In Scotland, this has taken the form of informal events, such as Pedagogoo and TeachMeet, and collaborative online media (Carpenter & Krutka, 2015). Teachers are using these spaces to critically engage with change and to share ideas, research and enquiry. Policy-makers should attempt to connect with teachers in these spaces; much can be learned from the discussions here. However, this would need to be done carefully; the reason why these spaces are effective is because they are organised *by* teachers *for* teachers. Another caveat is that this group will

not be representative of the wider profession. Nevertheless, it is a positive place to start and should be explored as a method for increasing teacher participation in the policy process.

To conclude, my research suggests that the process established to further develop and implement the recommendations from TSF was not fit for purpose. There was a tension between the process itself and the overall vision of the policy: to re-imagine teacher professionalism and to strengthen partnership. Although there are limitations in drawing conclusions from a single case study, my findings highlight the importance of a well-designed policy process. If policy-makers are serious about the achievement and sustainment of educational change, then there needs to be a realisation that policy process is just as important as the content of policy itself.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Initial communication with the NPG

School of Education
University of Glasgow
St. Andrew's Building
11 Eldon Street
Glasgow G3 6NH

12th December 2011

National Partnership Group
Scottish Government
Area 2A-South
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Dear Ms. Sunderland,

I am writing to you to request permission to engage with the National Partnership Group in a series of interviews. I am a first year PhD student in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow, supervised by Professor Ian Menter, Professor James Conroy and Professor Graham Donaldson. The primary aim of my research is to explore the processes involved in the implementation of the recommendations from Graham Donaldson's review of teacher education in Scotland, *Teaching Scotland's Future*. My research will also explore the concept of reshaping teacher professionalism in Scotland and the role of partnership in teacher education.

In the first phase of this study, I wish to construct a series of semi-structured interviews with the co-chairs of the National Partnership Group and the chairs of the three sub groups. In particular, this phase of the research aims to explore the function of and processes involved within the National Partnership Group. It is hoped that interview data will allow me to gain an overall view of the implementation process at a strategic level and to identify key issues with the intention of then carrying out a series of observations of meetings of the National Partnership Group and of its subgroups.

I would be grateful for your formal agreement to me approaching these key members of the National Partnership Group to request an interview with each of them. Following this, I will ensure that full ethical permission from the University of Glasgow has been granted prior to the carrying out of interview work. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Anna Beck

Email: a.beck.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Telephone: 07871544549

Appendix B

Plan Language Statement and Consent Form



Plain Language Statement

Interviews

Researcher: Anna Beck (PhD Researcher, School of Education, University of Glasgow)

Supervisors: Professor Ian Menter, Professor James Conroy and Professor Graham Donaldson.

Project Title: Policy processes, professionalism and partnership: an exploration of the implementation of the recommendations from Graham Donaldson's review of teacher education in Scotland, 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (Donaldson, 2011).

You are being invited to take part in a doctoral research study. It is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Participation is voluntary and if you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any point without providing a reason.

The primary aims of this doctoral research project are: to explore the policy processes involved in the implementation of the recommendations from Graham Donaldson's review of teacher education in Scotland; to explore the concept of reshaping teacher professionalism in Scotland; and, to consider the role of partnership in both. I wish to conduct a series of interviews with the co-chairs of the National Partnership Group (NPG) and the chairs of its subgroups, with a view to using obtained interview data to inform observational research of meetings of the NPG and of its subgroups.

In particular, this research aims to explore the function of and processes involved within the NPG. Specific areas of interest will be the purpose and structure of the NPG, and of its subgroups, and the processes by which progress is made. It is hoped that interview data will allow me to gain an overall view of the implementation process at a structural level and that analysis of this data will highlight areas to be explored further through observational research.

If your consent is provided, I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with you which will last approximately one hour. The interview will be recorded using an audio device. Following the interview, I will analyse the transcript of your interview to obtain main themes, which can then be used to inform later stages of my research.

The raw data obtained from observations will only be available to myself and my supervisors, including Professor Graham Donaldson, and will be securely stored in a locked cabinet within the University of Glasgow. If in electronic format, the data will be secured by password. The data will be archived for a fixed period and will be destroyed after five years.

In analysing and presenting the data, I will ensure that participants' comments will be made anonymous. I will seek permission by email prior to the use of any direct quotes, which will also be anonymised. I will not use individuals' names in reporting this data.

The results of these interviews will be used to write a doctoral thesis. The results may also be published in an academic journal paper and disseminated through presentations.

This doctoral research project is funded by the University of Glasgow and this study has been reviewed by the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

If you wish to receive further information about the study and/or a summary of results please use the details below to contact me, Anna Beck, or my principal supervisor, Professor Ian Menter.

Anna Beck
PhD Student
Room 573
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Glasgow G3 6NH

Email: a.beck.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Professor Ian Menter
Pedagogy, Policy and Practice
Room 312
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Tel: 0141 330 3480

Email: ian.menter@glasgow.ac.uk

If you have concerns regarding the conduct of this study, please use the details below to contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr. Valentina Bold.

Dr Valentina Bold

Room 221
University Of Glasgow
Rutherford/McCowan Building
Dumfries DG1 4ZL

Tel: 01387 702 021

Email: valentine.bold@glasgow.ac.uk

Consent Form

Interviews

Title of Project: Policy processes, professionalism and partnership: an exploration of the implementation of the recommendations from Graham Donaldson's review of teacher education in Scotland, 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (Donaldson, 2011).

Researcher: Anna Beck (PhD Researcher, School of Education, University of Glasgow)

Supervisors: Professor Ian Menter, Professor James Conroy and Professor Graham Donaldson.

If you agree to participate in this study then please read the following statements and sign your name below to indicate your consent.

- I have read the plain language statement for participants. I understand the procedures and I have been informed about what to expect.
- I agree to participate in this study on policy processes, professionalism and partnership.
- I understand that my interview will be recorded using an audio device and I consent to this.
- I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I therefore understand that I can withdraw from this study at any point and I will not be required to provide a reason.
- I understand that my participation in this project is for the purposes of research, and is in no way an evaluation of me as an individual.
- I understand that, although the main researcher will be able to identify participants from the interview data, my name will not be used in reference to the interview in any papers or reports that arise from the research.

- I understand that I can contact the researcher for this project, Anna Beck, or the principal supervisor Professor Ian Menter, to receive more information and/or a summary of the results, using the details below:

Name Signature Date
.....

Anna Beck
PhD Student
Room 573
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University of Glasgow
Glasgow G3 6NH

Email: a.beck.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Professor Ian Menter
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Appendix C

Interview Schedule for Co-Chairs of the NPG



Interview Schedule

Co-chairs of National Partnership Group

Purpose

1. First of all, can you tell me about the overall purpose of the National Partnership Group?
 - Overall aim

Structure

2. Could you tell me about the structure of the National Partnership Group?
 - Its members – different professions?
 - Sub groups?
3. What is your view on the nature of the tripartite chair?
 - Is it effective?
 - Potential barriers/advantages?

Communication

4. Have any issues arisen related to communication within the group?
 - Meetings
 - Relaying of information
 - Decision making

Processes

5. Could you tell me about the processes of the group?
 - Decision making process
 - Are certain areas prioritised
 - How often do you have meetings?
 - How long do meetings last?
 - How are meetings structured?

Progress

6. What progress has been made by the NPG so far?
- Specific areas?
 - What do you feel can be realistically achieved before the end of the NPG?

Implementation

7. In your opinion, what are the main issues surrounding effective implementation?

Flexibility

8. How much flexibility do you have as a working group?
- Do you have guidelines to follow?
 - How prescriptive are the recommendations?

Appendix D

Sample of interview schedule for a representative of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCs)



Interview Schedule

Member of sub-group 3

Purpose/Role

- Could you tell me what the original aim of the National Partnership Group was when it began?
- What did you hope could be achieved over the life span of sub group 3?
- Could you describe the nature of the relationship between the NPG and sub group 3?

Communication/ Discussion

- Could you tell me about your experience of communication within your sub group and also between your sub group and the NPG?
- How did your sub group communicate with the NPG?
- How often did your sub group meet with the NPG?
- Did your sub group have power to make decisions?
- Within your sub group, there was obviously a wide range of representatives/different stakeholders and perhaps different views. Was it ever difficult to find a balance between these views?

Structure/ Representation

- Could you tell me about the structure of your sub group?
- In particular, was there a particular aim with regard to the selection of members? Who was responsible for selection and structure?
- You were there to solely represent GTC Scotland?

Role of GTC Scotland

- The Professional Update began before the Donaldson Review, but is very much in line with his recommendations? Could you tell me a little bit more about this?
- How does this relate to enhanced teacher professionalism?

- Who are the important partnerships between with regard to the professional update?
- What stage is the professional update at now?

Independence of GTCS

- Could you talk a little bit about your recent move to independent status? In particular, has it improved opportunities for implementation of the recommendations from Teaching Scotland's Future?

Flexibility

- Could you tell me about your experience surrounding the flexibility within your sub group, for example, did you have set guidelines to follow?
- We know the recommendations were non-negotiable, but has there been some flexibility in the way that they have been translated? Were some recommendations for malleable than others?
- Was there scope for members to raise concerns that weren't directly related to the recommendations?

Partnership

- The model of the NPG and its sub groups is based on partnership, but it is quite an open term, what is your interpretation of partnership?
- What kind of partnerships are important for career long professional learning?
- What kind of partnerships are important for improving teacher education?
- What kind of partnerships are important for taking forward professional standards?

Teacher Professionalism

- Could you outline the ways in which your sub group has proposed to enhance teacher professionalism?
- It is quite an open concept, with many different definitions. What does professionalism mean to you and is this achievable?

Implementation

- In your opinion, what are the main issues surrounding effective implementation of the recommendations that your sub group has put forward?
- Are there any forces which may limit capacity for change?
- Is there anything that could help to promote implementation?

Progress/Future

- How do you see the future once the NPG has submitted its final report?
- Do you feel it has been successful?
- Has anything held back progress?
- **Have there been any missed opportunities?**
- What do you think will happen now with regard to taking forward the recommendations?
- Will the GTCS be represented within this?

Appendix E

Original coding framework

1. Representation

- 1.1 Group Design/ Member Selection
- 1.2 Bureaucracy
- 1.3 Expertise
- 1.4 Instability/ Fluidity
- 1.5 Changeability
- 1.6 Rationale
- 1.7 Nature of organisational representation
- 1.8 Who is missing?
- 1.9 Membership of NIB
- 1.10 Role of Graham Donaldson
- 1.11 External Criticism

2. Power

- 2.1 Positioning
- 2.2 Power-over/ powerful actors
- 2.3 Power as knowledge/ transparency/ understanding
- 2.4 Vested Interests
- 2.5 Perceived power of self
- 2.6 Power games/ bargaining/ exchange relationships

3. Processes within the network

3.1 Communication

3.2 Flexibility of recommendations/ remits

3.3 Procedures

4. Policy processes (wider reform)

4.1 Policy coherence/ whole agenda/reform

4.2 National commitment/drive

4.3 Translation of the token

5. Partnership

5.1 Within the NPG/NIB – between and within sub groups

5.2 Importance

5.3 How can this be achieved?

5.4 Nature of wider partnership in Scottish education

5.5 Building consensus

5.6 Personal relationships

5.7 Raised awareness and understanding of different roles and responsibilities in Scottish education

6. Professionalism

6.1 Actor definitions (tracing how this concept is described)

7. Policy Learning

- 7.1 What can the NIB learn from the NPG?
- 7.2 Actor perceptions of differences between NPG and NIB

8. Ownership/Engagement

- 8.1 Voice of the teacher – how do we ensure it is heard in the process?
- 8.2 Teacher buy-in/ developing a sense of ownership
- 8.3 Communication of TSF agenda/ raising awareness
- 8.4 Engagement of actors from all levels of education
- 8.5 Teacher disengagement from policy reform

9. External and Internal Drivers of Change

- 9.1 Conservatism/ lack of change/ lack of radical thinking
- 9.2 Change driven locally
- 9.3 Scottish ‘myth’
- 9.4 Local contextual forces (e.g. poverty)
- 9.5 International forces (e.g. OECD)
- 9.6 Political forces