A HISTORY OF THE PRESENT - TRACING THE EMERGENCE AND PERMUTATIONS OF *TEACHER QUALITY* IN AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS (1998—2007)

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FOR MY MOTHER.

Statement of Originality

I hereby certify that the work embodied in the thesis is my own work, conducted under normal supervision. The thesis contains no material which has been accepted, or is being examined, for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 and any approved embargo.

Carol Lindell

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Abstract

Despite a lack of understanding as to what it means to be an effective teacher, the term *teacher quality* has become prominent in education policy across all Anglophone countries. This study explores key parliamentary reports to trace the discursive origins and historical manifestations of the concept during the period 1998 – 2007.

This study adopts Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? approach to policy analysis. The analytic framework questions how the problem of *quality* in education policy has been constructed, and the assumptions and presuppositions which underlie it. Based on the findings, the study considers how the problem could have been thought about differently.

The results of the present study reveal multiple discourses of 'quality' evident in 1998. Influenced by assumptions, conceptual logics, and discursive practices, by 2000 the discursive frame had narrowed substantially to become 'teacher centred', circulating around teacher education, teaching practice, and teacher attributes. Limited by the teacher quality construct, by 2007 discourse was found to be almost exclusively framed within regulatory processes and procedures.

This study argues that the concept of teacher quality in education policy has limited and constrained possibilities for thought, and in the process detracted from, and neglected other issues which may have greater or equal merit in providing a quality education system. The rendering of teacher quality has altered the trajectory of the discourse from one which viewed quality as equity, to one which is focused on what teachers do, and who teachers are.

This study argues in favour of moving beyond the constraints of the teacher quality construct, to (re)imagine quality in more complex ways; one in which the broadest possible debate can (re)consider the meaning of quality in education.

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List of Abbreviations

AARE	Australian Association for Research in Education
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACP	Australian Council of Professions
AFTRAA	Australian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ALP	Australian Labor Party
APST	Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
ATA	Authentic Teacher Assessment
CGS	Commonwealth Grant Scheme
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
EAG	Expert Advisory Group
GAMSAT	Graduate Medical School Admissions Test
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
NIQTSL	National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
RFM	Relative Funding Model
RQF	Research Quality Framework
TEMAG	Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group
TER	Tertiary Education Rank
TQAP	Teacher Qualifications Advisory Panel
TSA	Teaching Standards Australia

Chapter 1: Introduction

Despite enduring complexities in the research evidence around the concept of *teacher quality*, the concept has nonetheless become prominent in Australian education policy in the form of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST). In October 2018, launching the report *One Teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia*, the Expert Panel chair, Chris Wardlaw PSM alluded to a consensus that *teacher quality* is well understood, he stated,

> These recommendations provide clear and practical steps to maintain or improve the high standards of the profession … and streamline teacher registration across Australia (Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2018).

Media coverage of the release of the report, which was headlined *How Teacher Quality is Being Revamped*, quoted Chris Wardlaw PSM as suggesting that the recommendations would, "ensure only people who meet standards of quality and suitability can be teachers" (Brett Henebery, 2018).

The APST have become the mechanism with which to regulate those who can enter, and those who can remain in the profession. In the current environment teacher quality is both envisaged and constrained by what can be measured in the APST.

However, contrary to the allusion of consensus, there is a distinct lack of stakeholder agreement, both in relation to what constitutes teacher quality, and in the purpose and use of the APST. For example, it is argued that there may not be shared and observable defining features of effective teaching across all contexts (Strong, Gargani, & Hacifazlioglu, 2011), making the validity of a standardized model of teacher quality questionable. There is also concern that the APST have not been developed from a systematic review of education as a field of knowledge, but simply reflect the collective wisdom of those who developed them (Mayer, 2014). Others argue that the APST have become too regulatory in character, imposed by government as control mechanisms (Sachs, 2003b), and that rather, standards of practice, should be developed and overseen by the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2001; A. Hargreaves, 2000; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Sachs, 2003a). Thus, the concept of teacher quality remains a messy tangle of ideas, described as a "kaleidoscope of notions" (Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2011). Yet AITSL continues to defend the validity of APST, and

continues to allude to a problem with teacher quality and the need to improve. It is therefore important to understand the factors which have given meaning to the concept of teacher quality.

An important first step in understanding teacher quality in its present form – that which is represented and arbitrated by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership ([AITSL], 2014) in the form of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST) is to deconstruct the binary which is encapsulated within the good/bad teacher quality discourse, allowing the concept of teacher quality to be reinterpreted within the multiplicity of circulating themes and discourses surrounding teachers' lives and work.

This research explores key parliamentary reports in Australia during the period 1998 – 2007 to trace the discursive origins and historical manifestations of the concept. The findings elaborate some of the complexities underpinning the construct of teacher quality, and in so doing challenge the notion of the standardised contemporary understanding. The implications for educational theory and practice are discussed.

To augment the study, this chapter first sets Australian education policy within the global phenomenon of neoliberal governance and its associated education reform policy. This chapter then outlines the impact this has had on the trajectory of Australian education policy, before explaining the research aims and structure of this thesis.

Global context of the *neoliberal imaginary*

Over the last four decades neoliberal ideals of the market-dominated society have become reality for much of the world's population. The "neoliberal imaginary" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 37) has now penetrated all areas of social policy, and education has become one such market. As a result, education policy is being reworked on a global scale.

The most influential accounts of neoliberalism suggest neoliberal ideology evolved from the social experience of the global north (Harvey, 2005; Klein, 2007; Stiglitz, 2002), and is manifest in the political will of the capitalist class, especially financial institutions, to restore their revenues and power – a "single, fundamental principle" based on market competition supremacy (Mudge, 2008, p. 706). From this perspective, neoliberalism is broadly understood to be an agenda of ideas and ideals by and for powerful elites, reflecting the theory that policy emerges from within the realm of what can be said and thought, who can speak, when, and with what authority (S. Ball, 2006, p. 44).

However, it should be noted that neoliberalism is a contested notion, with various perspectives on what neoliberalism is and how it operates. Some conceive neoliberalism as *policy*, advanced through deregulation, monetarism and privatization (Brenner, Peck, & Theodore, 2010). Others conceive neoliberalism as a *process* in which similarly minded countries engage in economic and social transformation to remain economically competitive (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Whilst others conceive neoliberalism is a way of thinking, a *governmentality* (Foucault, 1991) in which the relations between people and their socially constructed realities are constantly (re)imagined and (re)interpreted (Barry, Osborne, & Rose, 1996; Lemke, 2002). Each of these systems of thought do not exist in isolation, but rather, the principles from each often combine to form a messy coexistence of ideas, applied in particular localized settings (Peck, 2013). To suggest otherwise "denies the polycentric, multi-vocal, heterogeneous and messy realities of power relations as they are enacted and resisted in a multitude of micro-locales" (Rose, 1999, p. 274). It is therefore problematic to consider neoliberalism as a hegemonic project displaying continuity across geographical contexts, as it more commonly presents as nuanced systems of thought exemplified by discontinuity and heterogeneity.

In the Australian context, neoliberalism aims to achieve its goals by relinquishing direct provision of public services, and then relaxing direct control over services and institutions, instead replacing it with accountability mechanisms to ensure such organisations and establishments adhere to government policy (Gibbon & Henriksen, 2012). The resultant policy objectives aim to make existing markets bigger and create markets where there previously were none. In addition, neoliberalism creates mechanisms to syphon off any economic growth towards private shareholders, and at the same time reduce social entitlements, exporting any negative effects to vulnerable groups such as the unemployed (Dumenil & Levy, 2004).

Neoliberal theory cannot be separated from its practice. Practice is understood as the institutional systems and mechanisms necessary to implement its goals – those necessary to move toward a market free of controls or restrictions. This process has been described as an all-inclusive shift from "government to governance" (Ozga, 2009, p. 150), evidenced by the growth in data as a policy instrument (Thompson & Cook, 2014), and financialisation has become the hallmark of rich capitalist countries (Connell & Dados, 2014).

One noteworthy criticism pertinent to this research is that neoliberalism seeks simple solutions to complex problems (Gale, 2006), instead choosing to re-contextualise issues and promote evidence-based practice based on 'what works' (Simons, 2015). In such a paradigm technical rationality has become the most efficient 'common sense' approach, and is indicative of the trajectory education policy has taken under neoliberal governance (Tuinamuana, 2011) – a mechanism of government based on standardised efficiency.

The influence of neoliberal ideals on education policy

The influence of neoliberal ideals in educational policy reform is stark, and is evidenced in the application of its key concepts: deregulation, choice, competition, entrepreneurship, market, finance, and flexibility (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016).

Education policy reform is also deregulating and dismantling centralised educational bureaucracies. In their place are newly devolved systems, which neoliberal policy reform claims introduces significant degrees of autonomy in the management and administration of schools. However, these devolutionary reforms have been criticised as having introduced autonomy which is more apparent than it is real – appearing to give power, while systematically advantaging some and disadvantaging others, and in effect reproducing the classic lines of social division of labour (S. Ball, 1994).

The application of the market logic in education has resulted in a competitive environment where schools actively compete for quality students – those who are considered academically able (Windle, 2009). This has resulted in teachers and school administrators devoting increasing energy into impression management and promotional strategies in order to attract parents, and thus perform on external measures of quality. These ideals have shifted the definition of quality, from a focus on *outlays* to *outcome*s (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). According to Ball (1994) this resulted in teachers working within a new value context, where image and impression management are as important as the education process.

The combined effect of the market logic, competition, and choice has resulted in a system of exclusion, and has reasserted social reproduction privileges which had been threatened by increasing social democratic de-differentiation of schools (S. Ball, 1994). The reorientation of schools and teachers to these ideals are seen in the mechanisms of testing, accountability and coding of concepts, to measure the quality or 'effectiveness' of teachers through quantitative data (Clarke, 2014).

In response, a plethora of research has emerged which suggests significant social and economic value is generated by high quality teachers (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014; Hanushek, 2011; Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2008), reflecting the neoliberal *human capital* approach to national prosperity. Policy makers around the world have come to rely on the concept of teacher quality as the magic bullet and major vehicle for improving student achievement (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009; OECD, 2005).

It is easy to understand then, that running parallel to the market logic, is a transformation in the role of the teacher. This has changed from one in which the teacher took responsibility for teaching, whilst the student took responsibility for learning (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014), to one where the teacher is now responsible – and accountable – not just for teaching, but also for student learning (in the form of measurable outcomes), and for an ever increasing range of social problems. Various policy interventions aimed at attracting competent candidates, retaining highly qualified teachers, and ensuring students have access to high quality teaching have ensued. The concept of teacher quality has become the mantra of the new millennium, and consequently teaching practice, teacher education, and teachers themselves have become increasingly abstracted and recoded as numbers and test scores(Taubman, 2009) .

According to Ball, the marketisation of education has transformed education, teaching, and teachers into commodities in a performance managed system (Ball, 2012). These changes in ideals are cross-cultural and transferable in character, exemplified in the hegemony of education policy in various Western countries under neoliberal governance. For example in the United States policy *No Child Left Behind Act* (U.S. Congress, 2001), in Scotland, in the *Curriculum for Excellence* (Education Scotland, 2013), and in Australia, in the *Smarter Schools: Improving Teacher Quality* initiative (DEEWR, 2010).

Australian education policy context

Consistent with these changes, the trajectory of education policy in Australia has also changed. It has been transformed into an outputs focused policy agenda which arguably behaves more like the private sector (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), with the *quasi-market* being used to describe the market forces and private decision-making involved in its provision (Le Grand & Barlett; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998). The most dramatic effect is seen in the changed purpose of education, which has gone from being positioned as a social service, and a vehicle for personal growth and fulfillment (Cole, 1950), to being located as the vital

instrument in creating human capital (Connell, 2013) for national prosperity (Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

In the 1980s, Australian educational policy was concerned with the *quality of education*. In this paradigm quality was envisaged as *social equity*. The social equity focus can be seen in the highly influential Karmel report *Quality of education in Australia* (Quality of Education Review Committee, 1985), in which it stated, "as enrolments in upper secondary education grow and the demand for places in higher education increases, the equity with which those places are allocated becomes increasingly important" (p. 95). The 1985 report had been influenced by the earlier Karmel report *Schools in Australia,* in which educational policy was designed to achieve equality of opportunity for students, and diversity in schools provision, by addressing disadvantage. Programs were recommended for socio-economically disadvantaged schools, Aboriginal education, migrant education, isolated children, and schools in country areas, teacher training, and special education for students with a disability (Karmel, 1973). The federal government provided finance to the states to achieve these equity objectives which had inputs-based guidelines for spending.

However, following the international trend, by the 1990s there was a renewed emphasis on the economic aspects of education and training, underpinned by human capital theory. This helped to reshape conceptions of quality in education and of teaching and teachers, and rather than being framed in terms of social equity, quality became linked to return on investment (economic policy), national prosperity (human capital potential), and the effectiveness of the education system in achieving these goals. Once the education system became held to account for its 'effectiveness', the focus of 'quality' changed from *equity* to *what works best* – the effectiveness of teaching and teachers. This is reflected, both at national and state level, in the plethora of educational policies which displayed the same premise-shifting the discourse from equity to economic rationalism. For example, the report *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices*, suggested efforts to provide for "accountability in education have been generally less effective than in other industry sectors where the issue of efficiency can more easily be related to the productivity of workers" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 121).

Somewhat predictably, alongside these changing values was a quest to (a) define teacher quality and (b) to construct a tool with which to standardise and measure it. The resulting 'standardised framework', seen in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)

(Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014)(AITSL) was introduced in 2014, and subsequently updated in 2017(AITSL)

The APST have become the centrepiece of Australian education reform. The standards are considered to reflect the practices, knowledge, and levels of professional engagement the AITSL judge teacher quality to be. Thus, in the current environment 'quality' is both envisaged and constrained by what can be measured in the APST.

The NSW Department of Education claim the APST "map out a career long continuum of classroom practice, capabilities and expertise that we'd expect to see demonstrated by teachers" (2017, p. 4), and represent what "you can expect to see good teachers doing in the classrooms (2017, p. 2). Whilst AITSL claim the standards:

> build on national and international evidence that a teacher's effectiveness has a powerful impact on students, with broad consensus that teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor influence on student achievement (AITSL, 2011, p. 1).

Similarly, Teaching Standards Australia (TSA) claim such standards represent "what quality teaching looks like" (NSW Department of Education, 2017, p. 1). The important point to note is that the stated purpose of the APST alludes to the problem of teacher quality and the need to address it – in other words the APST sustain and validate the contemporary focus of Australian education policy on teacher quality.

However, quality always requires a value judgment, and the research literature clearly shows that conceptions of the *good teacher*, who they should be, what they should know, and what they should be able to do, remains contested and therefore highly problematic. Even after decades of educational research, there is no certainty, nor even a consensus view, about what is meant by the key term teacher quality, and therefore what education systems, and teacher education programs, are ostensibly trying to achieve. Despite this, teachers' quality continues to be measured against the APST in "an incoherent but insistent way" (Connell, 2009).

Consequently, there is a reduced emphasis on equity in terms of defining teacher quality, or as an established feature and aspiration of education systems. Instead, a trend has emerged in which discussions of quality teach*ing*/teach*ers* now includes terms such as the following: stakeholders, strategies, effectiveness, responsibilities, and opportunities – a trend in which teachers and schools are given responsibility for dealing with more and more social problems. This provides the potential for educational 'problems' to be constructed in such a way as to

facilitate or justify policy responses. This reality underpins the never ending crisis of quality in education, schooling, teaching and teachers. It is, therefore, important to understand the factors which have have influenced and given meaning to teacher quality and allowed the concept to become so dominant despite the criticisms.

Research aims and questions

The primary aim of this research is to examine how the concept of teacher quality emerged and evolved in the Australian context, by exploring three key parliamentary reports (1998 – 2007). The research questions are as follows:

1. What factors have shaped the emergence of teacher quality in Australian education policy?
2. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality?
3. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And more specifically, on teachers?

Chapter overview

This thesis is organised over nine chapters. It begins with this Introduction which sets the context of the study.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature to reveal the competing discourses around what it means to be a good teacher – who they should be, what they should know, and what they should be able to do. This chapter reveals that the construct of teacher quality has been influenced by historical, political, social and economic circumstances, and remains highly problematic and contested.

Chapters 3 and 4 outline the study design – the conceptual frameworks and the methodology. The approaches adopted by the study are justified, and the relationships between the research questions and the chosen approaches explained. The study is guided by Foucauldian theory and utilises Bacchi's (2009) 'What's the problem represented to be?' analytic tool. The design is considered most appropriate for the purpose of exposing the situated meaning of teacher quality, and to identify counterpoints and antagonistic discourses – "the dominant and the silenced, the 'truthful' and illegitimate" (S. Ball, 1994, p. 4).

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are set out chronologically. These chapters reveal how quality in education has been conceptualised and problematised in each of the three key documents.

Each chapter uncovers the conceptual logics and discursive practices contributing to the problematisations around quality in education. As the trajectory of the discourse progresses, a cumulative argument sheds light on the conditions which enabled teachers to be conceptualised both as the problem and the solution, and subsequently enabled the construct of teacher quality to emerge. These analytic chapters demonstrate how discursive frames legitimise certain discourses whilst silencing others, allowing particular *regimes of truth* to become dominant.

Chapters 8 presents a discussion of the research findings – the erratic and discontinuous process whereby the past became the present. The data from the analyses are used to discuss and elaborate on the research findings – those which have influenced and shaped the emergence of teacher quality in Australian education policy.

Lastly, Chapter 9 responds chronologically to the three research questions that guided the study. This chapter sets out again the main findings of the study in light of the theoretical perspective guiding the study and outlines the implications of the findings for both policymakers and teachers. I argue in favour of moving beyond the constraints of the teacher quality construct, and propose quality be (re)imagined in a more complex manner: one in which the broadest possible debate can (re)consider the meaning of 'quality' in education.

In summary

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the research study. This chapter has set Australian education policy, and more specifically the concept of teacher quality, within the global context of the neoliberal imaginary. The next chapter presents a review of the literature. It is organised to provide a conceptual framework of interconnecting ideas around teachers and their work. The aim of the literature review is to deconstruct the binary encapsulated within the good/bad teacher quality discourse and disrupt preconceived ideas so that they may be re-imagined in more complex ways. This is an important first step in problematising teacher quality in its present form.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review follows on from Chapter 1, in which the concept of *teacher quality* in Australian education policy was set within the context of the global education reform movement under neo-liberal governance.

2.1 Purpose, rationale and structure of the literature review

The purpose of this chapter is to present a literature review which provides a conceptual framework of the discourses surrounding teacher quality, both past and present. The rationale for undertaking a conceptual review, rather than a critical review is that it aligns with the research methodology. A critical review is one which traditionally critiques various claims relevant to the research topic (Jesson, Matheson, & Lacey, 2011) whereas a conceptual review is more appropriate to organise and separate interconnecting ideas (Jesson, et al., 2011). This is considered especially useful where the intention of the study is to problematise preconceived ideas so that they may be re-imagined in more complex ways (Singh, 2011). Thus, in providing a conceptual framework, this conceptual review seeks to deconstruct the binary which is encapsulated within the good/bad teacher quality discourse, allowing the concept of teacher quality to be reinterpreted within the multiplicity of circulating themes and discourses surrounding teachers' lives and work. This is an important first step in problematising teacher quality in its present form – that which is represented and arbitrated by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership ([AITSL], 2014) in the form of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST).

2.2 Introduction

This review will proceed by firstly outlining the historical notions of what constitutes quality in a teacher. It will then examine what is meant by teacher professionalism, with its implicit notion of quality. The review will then examine the interconnected concepts of teacher quality; who the teacher is; what the teacher does, and the effect teachers can induce. The review will then consider the APST as these represent the current arbiters of the meaning of teacher quality in education policy, before exploring the regulatory frameworks which have accompanied their introduction, and the problematic nature of a standardised framework. The review then considers the impact of mediatisation and politicisation on the construct of

teacher quality. Finally, the review considers some of the implications and unintended consequences of the teacher quality concept in educational policy.

2.3 Historical conceptions of teacher quality in Australia

In the 1900s the notion of teacher quality placed a high degree of importance on moral character, and good teachers were afforded the highest standards of social propriety (Cochran-Smith, 2005). By the 1940s the idea of teacher quality changed to a much broader mix, and whilst this still included moral character, it now extended to include ethical values, enthusiasm and compassion (Mitchell, Robinson, Plake, & Knowles, 2001). Between the 1960s and 1980s, the focus changed again to observing and documenting teachers' teaching strategies with a view to recording those which showed improvements in student' outcomes (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001). This became known as the process-product procedure (Mitchell et al., 2001), and marks the point at which student outcomes became linked to the quality of teachers. Between the 1980s and the 1990s the interest turned again to consider teacher quality as the knowledge, skills and attitudes teachers should have (Mitchell et al., 2001) in order to improve student outcomes.

As interest in the characteristics of teacher quality grew, so too did the body of research. Lortie's (1975) *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*, examined the life and work of teachers, and although teachers' work has changed significantly since then (S. Ball, 2012; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007), many of Lortie's findings are still relevant. For example, Lortie found that teaching was commonly perceived as an 'easy entry' career, a view that persisted through the next three decades (Cunningham, 1992; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007). Easy entry, in relation to the teaching profession was first noted in the 1960s and led to the mattress philosophy (Haubrich, 1965): the mattress being symbolic of a career seen as a soft option. The other major finding from Lortie's study was that teaching was characterised as a feminised profession; a view which was evident in the literature in the late 1970s (Sugg, 1978) and has been repeated often (Dehli, 1994; Mulvey, 2010; Richardson & Hatcher, 1983). This is suggested to be as a result of a combination of factors: economic development, urbanisation, the position of women in society around that time, and/or alternatively related to the low value afforded to childcare (Lortie, 1975; Maclean & McKenzie, 1991; Trotman, 2008). Whatever the reason, it left an enduring view of teaching as a low status profession suitable

only for women (Drudy, 2008), who were neither high achievers (Weis, 1987), nor ambitious (Gerbner, 1966; Troen & Boles, 2003).

Running parallel with changing notions of the quality teacher were changing ideas of teachers' work. Moore (2004) identified three discourses which he suggested circulated around the *good teacher* in most Western countries: the competent craftsperson, one which he suggests is favoured by governments, the reflective practitioner, commonly associated with scholars and universities, and the charismatic model, favoured in popular culture, such as movies. As Connell reminds us, what is meant by a good teacher is important conceptually, since these notions are embedded in the design of educational institutions, and in curricula, educational technology, and schools reform (2009).

2.4 Conceptions of professionalism

The quality teacher is also considered to have a professional identity (Mockler, 2011a, 2013). However, here too the concept has multiple interpretations. The literature provides no clear definition of professionalism. Eric Hoyle, who has studied professionalism for over four decades (1974, 1995, 2001, 2009, 1980; Hoyle & John, 1995), initially defined it as "strategies and rhetorics employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status, salary and conditions" (Hoyle, 1974, p. 14). In later work however, Hoyle and John's (1995) definition of professionalism changed to *a* process which enabled those outside the profession to meet the required criteria for membership. This conceptual premise can be divided into two schools of thought: the first being concerned with status – which Hoyle and John noted to be the self-interest and exclusivity of a self-governing club; the second, which they termed *professionality*, was more concerned with quality assurance - the "knowledge, skills, values and behaviours" of members (Hoyle & John, 1995, p. 16). More recently Hoyle has redefined professionalism as the "enhancement of the quality of service" (Hoyle, 2001, p. 146).

In relation to teacher professionalism, Hargreaves (2000) argued that professionalism had passed through four historical ages: pre-professional, the autonomous, the collegial and the post-professional. Goodson (1999) added two more: new professionalism, with its focus on practitioner control and proactivity; and conversely, managerial professionalism, which constitutes the inverse of new professionalism, shifting accountability to an external body as its key feature. Other scholars outlined a number of different concepts, such as: deduced or

assumed professionalism (Evans, 2011); occupational professionalism (Evetts, 2009); principled professionalism (Goodson, 2000); the 'democratic, transformative and activist' professional (Sachs, 2003a); post-modern professionalism (Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996); and enacted professionalism (Evans, 2011). Whilst it is not within the scope of this review to discuss each of these models of professionalism in detail, it is clear that the topic of teacher professionalism remains a contested domain. A more detailed discussion of teacher professionalism over the period 1960 – 1990 can be found in Marsh's (1996) *Handbook for Beginning Teachers*. It can be concluded that the noun *professional* is a concept grounded in a relational trust between clients and the profession (Gewirtz, Mahony, Hextall, & Cribb, 2009).

Neither is there consensus as to the purpose of professionalism (Gewirtz et al., 2009). First, the purpose of occupational professionalism is typified by collegial authority and professional judgement (Evetts, 2009; Furlong, 2011; Gewirtz et al., 2009). This is argued to enable teachers to meet the individual learning needs of their students (Connell, 2009; Gale & Densmore, 2003; Gewirtz et al., 2009; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). The second model, professionalism as ideology, is one whose purpose is regarded with suspicion by the neoliberal audit culture as it is seen as an anti-competitive monopoly (Stone-Johnson, 2013; Tomlinson, 2005), and associated with industrial unionism (Larson, 2013). Third, professionalism as an organisation, is typified by mechanisms of accountability and control based on management theory (Evetts, 2009), and fourth, the democratic, transformative and activist professionalism promotes and acknowledges the complexities of teachers' work and identities, including tensions between standards of accountability and autonomy (Sachs, 2003a).

The term *quality professional* is also applied to teachers to describe a fragmented and dual focus: being a professional and behaving professionally (Helsby, 1995). Being a professional is described in terms related to status, working conditions and pay, whilst behaving professionally relates to tangible acted, observable, measurable behaviours and actions, and also intangible dispositions such as commitment, dedication, and skilled practice (Helsby, 1995; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996).

What is noteworthy is the more recent use of the term as a verb: professionalisation (Demirkasimoglu, 2010; Gibbs, 2018). Professionalisation, refers to a strategy to increase the status of its members (Demirkasimoglu, 2010), suggesting the definition and purpose of

teacher professionalism has changed yet again, and interestingly seems to incorporate Hoyle's historical concept of professionalism first identified in 1974 as "strategies and rhetorics employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status, salary and conditions" (Hoyle, 1974, p. 14).

Given the ambiguity surrounding the term 'professionalism', there is an understandable scepticism surrounding attempts to define a 'quality profession' (Blackmore, 2004; Connell, 2009; Evans, 2011; Goodson, 2000; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009; Mausethagen & Granlund, 2012; Sachs, 2003a, 2003b). This struggle for meaning is encapsulated in Troman's (1996) assertion that professionalism should be understood as a "socially constructed, contextually variable and contested concept…defined by management and expressed in its expectations of workers and the stipulation of tasks they will perform" (p. 476).

Furthermore, it is suggested that extensions to the term, such as professional learning and professional development have resulted in qualitative shifts in aspects of teacher professionalism (C. Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney, 2007). For example, professional development has become codified and is considered a catalyst in transforming theory into current best teaching practices and, thus, raising teacher quality (Kent, 2004). Such standardised professional learning, focused on accountability, management and codification, is considered by some to be too limited in scope and over bureaucratic (C. Fraser et al., 2007), and that it should instead be democratic in nature, fostering teacher agency and self-efficacy through critical collaboration (K. Fraser, Gosling, & Sorcinelli, 2010).

Thus, upholding Troman's theory, the literature demonstrates that alongside the increasing internationalisation of education policy (Lingard, 2010), with its focus on teacher quality, is a form of professionalism which has become colonised by governments and redefined within a managerial discourse of competency-based, outcome-oriented visions of a profession (Robertson, 1996). Evans (2011) describes this new model as one which demands, requires or prescribes professionalism alongside rhetoric to improve status – a paradox , and noted to be a far cry from the historical notion of teacher quality, which valued moral and social values, and ethical care (Cochrane-Smith, 2005; Mitchell et al., 2001).

2.5 The kaleidoscope of notions surrounding teacher quality

Similarly, the term teacher quality is a contested concept, one which has acquired a very high profile in Australian public debate (Dinham, 2012). It is important to note that over the last two decades, and despite their differences, two separate concepts – teacher quality and teaching quality, have become interwoven (Mockler, 2011a). These two concepts are now used interchangeably (Mockler, 2013), most often under the one banner of teacher quality, and as a result have become ambiguously defined (Adams et al., 2015).

This shift is subtle, but an important one. Underpinning the concept of teach*ing* quality, is the belief that fostering teacher's professional learning, and pedagogical and curricular innovation, in a collaborative environment, will ultimately lead to and determine good teaching practice (Mockler, 2013), i.e. - pedagogy (Belsito, 2016). On the other hand, underpinning the concept of teach*er* quality is a more personal approach which relates to "specific teacher characteristics" of individual teachers (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007, p. 1058). This is the belief that quantifying and measuring teachers' inputs as part of "education and experience" (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007, p. 1060), and their dispositions (Burant, Chubbuck, & Whipp, 2007; Sherman, 2006; Shum, 2012; Usher, Usher, & Usher, 2003; Wasicsko, 2001), will ensure quality outputs defined as student outcomes (Cheung & Cheng, 1997; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Department of Education and Training, 2016; Donnelly, 2014; K. Rowe, 2003a).

Whilst many researchers have attempted to identify the characteristics of teacher quality and teaching quality (Abell Foundation, 2001; Barrett et al., 2007; Davies, 2010; Dybowski, Sehner, & Harendza, 2017; Felder & Brent, 1999; Frome, 2005; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007; Harrisa & Sassb, 2011; Hopkins & Stern, 1996; Hunkin, 2017; Leigh, 2008; McLeod & Reynolds, 2007; Phillips, 2010; Rice, 2003; Strong, 2012), the literature remains a messy tangle of ideas – one which has been described as a "kaleidoscope of notions" (Wang et al., 2011).

In the Australian Government report *Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes* (2016) the importance of both teacher quality and quality teaching (p. 3) is acknowledged. Yet the potential for overlap between teacher quality (selection processes for teachers' personal characteristics), and teaching quality (through teacher education and assessment) is apparent in the report's recommendations. These were as follows: (a) to ensure stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses, (b) rigorous selection for entry to teacher education, (c) improved and

structured practical experience for teaching students, (d) robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness, and (e) improved national research and workforce planning.

Similarly, the literature exhibits a kaleidoscope of research dealing with the concept of teacher quality. This consists of three separate but overlapping elements. First, teacher quality is seen as a set of cognitive resources, made up of teachers' knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and dispositions (D. Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008). The second considers teacher quality as 'what teachers do' - their teaching practice (Lampert, 2010), and third, teacher quality is conceptualised in terms of the 'effect teachers have', which in the context of contemporary educational policy assumes quality is reflected in, and thus can be measured by, student outcomes (Kennedy, 2008).

The outcomes question (Cochran-Smith, 2001), equates teacher quality with teachers' effectiveness in raising student outcomes (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, & Ravina, 2011; Slater, Davies, & Burgess, 2012). Consequently, the logic within the quest to improve teacher quality has become focused on student outcomes (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Hattie, 2009; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010; Slater et al., 2012). Similarly, Strong, Gargani and Hacifazlioglu (2011) perceive teacher quality as having four very distinct elements: teacher quality as qualifications; teacher quality as personal characteristics; teacher quality as teaching practice; and teacher quality as effectiveness in achieving student outcomes.

As the teacher is regarded by many as "the single largest factor affecting the academic growth of the student" (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007; Dutta, Halder, & Sen, 2017, p. 143; R. Ferguson, 1991; Kennedy, 2010; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005) the dominance of the teacher quality concept in education policy discourse is seemingly assured.

Thus, in summary, the concept of teacher quality, as dealt with in the research literature, can be envisaged as having a conceptual framework of three separate but overlapping parts: conceptions of who the teacher is (qualifications and dispositions); what the teacher does (pedagogy); and what effects the teacher can induce (student outcomes). The next section of the review examines each of these in more detail.

2.5.1 Who is of teacher quality? - Certified competence

From a cognitive resource perspective, teaching quality assumes that teachers' knowledge and skills are central predictors of teacher quality. Thus, in education policy terms, teacher quality is firstly considered as a factor of the individual teacher's ability to be certified. *Certification* is the assessment of teaching competency by the standards setting organisation, which commonly involves a component of teaching experience. C*redentials* on the other hand are the attestation of a qualification, which in teaching is either a multiple or single subject credential typically awarded at the completion of an undergraduate or postgraduate initial teacher education qualification. Thus, in Australia, in the present climate, to become certified, the teacher must have the relevant educational credentials and meet the graduate level of the APST.

There are criticisms that such measures operate as barriers to entry, as the relevant regulatory authorities, acting as gatekeepers of credentialing standards, effectively decide who can be admitted, and who will graduate - thus determining what sort of people can become teachers (Osborne, Von Hippel, Lincove, Mills, & Bellows, 2013). Furthermore, critics argue that this policy trajectory is being followed despite the effect of certification on teacher quality being ambiguous (Angrist & Guryan, 2005).

Evidence of this policy trajectory can be found in Australian educational policy (Adrian Piccoli MP, 2014); in the United Kingdom (Michael Gove MP, 2012), and similarly in the United States (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013). For example, in a 2013 Australian government media release, issued by then Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research, Chris Bowen, and the Minister for School Education, Peter Garrett, it was proposed that higher entry requirements and interviews, values and aptitude tests, and literacy and numeracy tests (Garrett & Bowen, 2013) could be introduced in an attempt to ensure teacher quality. Critical accounts have argued that framing the discourse in this way may be counterproductive, as it assumes as a starting point a teacher quality problem, and may fuel the blame game (S. Ball, 2012; Levin, 2004; McInerney, 2006), as it serves to encourage negativity in news media coverage (Goldstein, 2011; Goldstein, Macrine, & Chesky, 2012).

The literature also shows that attempts to raise teacher quality through regulatory frameworks such as certification, registration and licencing (Angrist & Guryan, 2005;

Berliner, 2005; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000; Hawk, 1985; Kane et al., 2008; Mitchell et al., 2001), have been accompanied by an accelerating use of standardised tests to measure teacher competence/effectiveness (Angrist & Guryan, 2005), which bring a further set of problems, returned to later in the review.

2.5.2 Who is of teacher quality? – Desirable dispositions

Teacher quality is also conceputalised as including "appropriate dispositions to succeed in the ITE programe and to become outstanding educators" (AITSL,2018b). Certainly, some research literature suggests teachers who achieve the largest gains in student outcomes demonstrate particular beliefs about their students, such as a belief in their worth, their ability, and their potential (Usher et al., 2003). These teachers are suggested to have high expectations of their students (Frome, 2005), and enjoy high self efficacy (Bryant, 2007; Denzine, Cooney, & McKenzie, 2005; Di Fabio, Majer, & Taralla, 2006).

Furthermore, a number of studies note teacher behaviours are a symptom of dispositions, and therefore teacher effectiveness is inextricably linked to teacher internal attitudes, beliefs and characteristics (Caine & Caine, 1997; Deiro, 1996; Sherman, 2006; Shum, 2012; Usher et al., 2003; Wasicsko, 2001). It is somewhat understandable therefore that the notion of teacher dispositions as a determinant of teacher quality is acknowledged in both Australia by the ATSIL and in the US by The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC 2011). Both institutions explicitly associate teacher dispositions within the prescribed teaching standards for newly qualified teachers.

However, the practice of selection based on dispositions is also suggested to work as a mechanism for limiting entry into teacher education (Osborne et al., 2013), and moreover, that selecting teachers based on dispositions suggests the dispositions are static. This approach provides an endorsement of the notion of teaching as a role rather than an identity (Mockler, 2011b). Despite the problematic nature of this conceptualisation AITSL has introduced selection measures based on desirable dispositions, such as interviews, values and aptitude tests (Garrett & Bowen, 2013).

2.5.3 What does a quality teacher do? – Initial teacher education for quality teaching

Thirdly, the conceptual framework considers teacher quality *as what teachers do*. The literature shows initial teacher education is positioned as a mechanism for achieving political aims and political agendas (Bates, 2005). This logic is supported by a range of international studies which highlight the importance of initial teacher training for student learning (Barrett et al., 2007; OECD, 2005; Tatto et al., 2008; World Bank, 2012). These studies are based upon an assumption which resembles a mathematic equation: initial teacher education equals improved teacher effectiveness equals improved student outcomes. This logic explains the close relationship between teacher quality, initial teacher education, and preparation programs found in the literature (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Mayer, 2014; Rowan, Mayer, Kline, Kostogriz, & Walker-Gibbs, 2015; Scholes et al., 2017). Other studies follow a similar logic, that is, quality teaching affects student performance (Cheung & Cheng, 1997; McRae et al., 2000; K. Rowe, 2003a, 2003b), and therefore teacher education should develop teacher quality (Mayer, 2013; E. Rowe & Skourdoumbis, 2017; Sachs, 2016).

Yet despite this logic, there remains a lack of clarity in the literature as to what constitutes 'quality teaching' (Dinham, 2012; Frome, 2005; Wang et al., 2011), and, thus, what it is that teacher education is aiming to achieve. Despite this, there is a profusion of reform policy and initiatives in teacher education which contribute to the illusion that there is a particular reform target (Wang et al., 2011). As a result, several discourses have been identified which circulate around ITE: its structure, its function and form, characteristics; professional experience; outcomes, and accountability.

Firstly, in relation to the structure of teacher preparation programs, it is suggested that, traditionally, they have not been developed based on one unified concept, but rather are formed as a type of composite (Sykes, Bird, & Kennedy, 2010). Criticism of this 'un-unified concept' has become the focus of government intervention in ITE, stating it shows "significant evidence of system failure" (TEMAG, 2014, p. 29). However, given the lack of clarity as to what it is that ITE is striving to achieve, it is understandable that government attention has resulted in an assortment of reform efforts, with the empirical support for each approach on teaching practices being limited (Wang et al., 2011).

For example, in response to increasing media and political pressure, teachers' classroom management abilities have become the focus of ITE programs. As a result, teacher educators have placed more emphasis on these perceived problems, often through fragmented course structures, at the expense of teacher education, which paradoxically acknowledges the complexity of the job, and emphasises quality teaching as a means to successful classroom management (Gore & Parkes, 2008).

Another reform effort can be seen in the fragmenting of pathways into teaching (Furlong, 2005, 2011). In the UK school-centred teacher education (Furlong, 2005; MacBeath, 2012), such as the *Teach for All* program (which includes over 45 programs with independent partner organisations) offers apprentice style traineeships as alternative options to meeting teacher registration requirements (Mutton, Burn, & Menter, 2017). Similarly, in the US, deregulation has seen teacher preparation taken out of universities (Hartsuyker, 2007a), and in Australia the discourse is comparable. Disagreements abound about school and university supervision of teachers on practicum (Hartsuyker, 2007a; Zeichner, 2006).

Such interventions demonstrate a distinct lack of clarity as to what it is that ITE is trying to achieve. This is arguably a consequence of three things: politicisation, mediatisation (these are examined later in the review), and the plethora of research. The last factor, the plethora of research, has inadvertently served to complicate and create uncertainty surrounding the function and form of ITE (Vick, 2006), which at the present time is defined as the quest for quality (Lesley, Gee, & Mathews, 2010; Scholes et al., 2017). However, as the literature attests, there is no stable image of teaching quality (Wang et al., 2011) as it changes with ideology, context, and teach*er* characteristics, and therefore disagreements over function and form abound.

For example, in relation to ideology, it is argued by some that initial teacher educators are too progressive in their use of contemporary pedagogies and that schools are failing because of experiential constructivist pedagogy, a path which is being pursued by the cultural warriors of the left (Donnelly, 2004, 2014). In relation to the form of ITE, the research is awash with studies which purport to identify quality teaching characteristics, only serving to authenticate the criticism that it is un-unified. The problematic nature of this is outlined later in the section entitled 'what works best' (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2017).

Furthermore, the literature surrounding teaching quality is also awash with debates about professional experience as part of ITE (Coffey, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Holzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Latham & Vogt, 2007; Mule, 2006; Sim, 2006; Southgate, Reynolds, & Howley, 2013; White, Bloomfield, & Le Cornu, 2010): a process which is considered to be especially problematic, as disparate stakeholders all lay claim to having the 'the answer' to how teachers can best be inducted into the profession (Southgate et al., 2013). It has been suggested that as a result of the plurality of social systems, which are characterised by multiple framings, by various stakeholders, each with their own agenda, demands and purpose, professional experience has become 'a wicked problem' in ITE (Southgate et al., 2013, p. 1). As such, establishing an empirical basis professional experience could be described as "methodologically complex and pragmatically fraught" (Southgate et al., 2013, p. 21).

Set within a current neoliberal accountability agenda (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Gore, 2001; Ludlow et al., 2010) such disagreements circulate around what the desirable outcomes or principles of ITE actually are (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002), which on one hand is seen as the ability of graduates to meet teacher accreditation standards (Darling-Hammond, 2009), and on the other hand, a conceptualisation which combines equity with quality (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Connell, 2009; Lesley et al., 2010), that is, ITE which embraces the complexity of providing a quality education to all children, regardless of context.

Demonstrating the difficulties in defining the structure and characteristics of ITE, two large meta-analyses of the literature came to opposing conclusions. Hattie (2009) argues that the impact of teacher education on student outcomes is negligible, whilst conversely Glewwe et al. (2011) found that more knowledgeable teachers show a consistently high impact on student outcomes.

Thus, as there is no definition, and little or no consensus about what it is teacher preparation is trying to achieve, it is a little perplexing that teacher educators involved in ITE have become accountable for graduate outcomes (Baroutsis, 2016). Critics argue that rather than ensuring teaching quality, accountability, especially when linked to funding, has simply eroded the autonomy of universities and teacher educators as they become increasingly expected to use AITSL templates to standardise student assessment (ATA) (Allard, Mayer, & Moss, 2014). The standardisation of ITE includes the type of evidence to be collected to demonstrate "classroom readiness" (TEMAG, 2014, p. 8).

2.5.4 How effective is a quality teacher?

This part of the conceptual framework perceives teacher quality in terms of their effectiveness or performance – what teachers can achieve through their practice (Lambert, 2010). Again there are several notions arising from this perspective: one is in relation to the knowledge, skills, and values that school students need to develop according to curriculum & standards (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002); another is in relation to the knowledge, skills and values school students need to participate in the global economy (Tatto, 2007; Zhao, 2010), and another is to measure school student outcomes as comparative; between teachers, schools, states; and countries (Gorur & Wu, 2014; Riddle, 2017; Thompson, 2013).

The first step in the process of measuring teacher 'effectiveness' was to separate good teaching, from effective teaching (Berliner, 1987). 'Good' teaching is characterised in terms of the ability of the teacher to meet the standards and expectations of the field. The term *good* in respect to teaching can be sub-divided into three conceptual parts: (a) the logical acts of defining demonstrating, modelling, explaining, correcting; (b) the psychological acts of motivating, caring, encouraging; and (c) the moral acts of honesty, compassion, respect and fairness (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005) – good is normative. In the normative conception, teachers' competence then comes from their logical, psychological, and moral acts of teaching. The latter category on the other hand, effective teaching, is about the effectiveness of the teacher's practice to achieve desirable goals. Effective teachers are those who:

> achieve the goals which they set for themselves or which they have set for them by others (e.g. ministries of education, legislators and other government officials, school administrators)…Thus those who investigate and attempt to understand teacher effectiveness must be able to link teacher competence and teacher performance with the accomplishment of teacher goals (that is, 'teacher effectiveness'). (Anderson, 2004)

This is also sometimes referred to as 'successful' teaching (Berliner, 2005), and comes with the caveat that teacher effectiveness can only be assessed in terms of the behaviours (learning) of students, *not* the behaviours (teaching practices) of teachers (Anderson, 2004). The World Bank (1990) stresses this in its statement: "countries must emphasise students' learning as the key policy objective" (p. 54). Teacher quality is, therefore, perceived as both

good and effective (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005), and more importantly, the teacher should be able to demonstrate both.

Thus, the process of separating the good from the effective, means effectiveness can be tested and measured in terms of student outcomes. Accountability mechanisms facilitate this, and in response to what has been termed a real or imagined crisis in education (Berliner & Glass, 2014) in 2007, the Rudd/Gillard Labour Government introduced the "Education Revolution" (DEEWR, 2008). The central focus of this was the linking of accountability with quality and the subsequent creation of a testing mechanisms, namely the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the associated MySchool data (Thompson, 2013).

There are a number of criticisms of linking test scores to teacher effectiveness to be found in the literature: first, there is the concern that the practice leads to teaching to the test (Chesters, 2015); second, that the practice develops a focus on 'surface' learning rather than 'deep' learning (Hattie, 2015); and third, that it remains unclear whether the test results reflect the quality of the teacher, the quality of the teacher's practice, a reflection of the resources available or, of the impact of the wider context (Berliner, 2005). Some suggest there is no clear link between student outcomes and teacher effectiveness within specific classrooms (Riddle, 2017). Connell (2009) adds that "whether an individual teacher appears to be performing well depends a great deal on what other people are doing…It is often the group of teachers, and the institution they work in, that are effective or not effective" (p. 222). Other scholarly work suggests that instead of the current focus on the following: what works best (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2017); best practice, graduate teacher tests; and/or test scores, as the magic bullet for ensuring teacher quality, the challenge should be to assess the collaborative and collegial dimensions of teachers' work (Allard et al., 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2013).

Echoing findings in the UK and the US (Thompson, 2013), there is also growing evidence in Australia that testing teacher effectiveness is having unintended negative consequences for student learning (Thompson & Harbaugh, 2013). These are noted to be: a narrowing in the curriculum, increasing student and teacher anxiety, 'teaching to the test', and classroom environments which are less inclusive than before (Comber, 2012; Comber & Nixon, 2009; B. Jones, 2008; Lingard, 2010; Polesel, Dulfer, & Turnbull, 2012; Thompson & Harbaugh, 2013). Responding to these findings, others posit that rather than increasing teaching quality,

the testing regime has resulted in a return to teacher-centred instruction (Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000; Barret, 2009). In a major survey of teachers, it was found that teachers not only perceived NAPLAN and MySchool as "a policing tool" (Polesel et al., 2012, p. 8), but it was also a high stress process for both teachers and students alike (Mockler, 2014; Thompson & Harbaugh, 2012).

Despite this, others advocate the quality of teaching, and the effect of the teacher is '"by far" the most salient influence on student's cognitive, affective, and behavioural outcomes of schooling (K. Rowe, 2003b, p. 15) and that, therefore, the effective teacher is one who can achieve goals by "high stakes testing to increase accountability and…by extension quality" (Thompson, 2013).

To summarise, the literature thus far shows that conceptions of the good teacher, who they should be, what they should know, and what they should be able to do, remains problematic and contested, and therefore there remains uncertainty about what is meant by the key term teacher quality. What has emerged from this confusion is an over reliance on problematic student results in standardised testing regimes as a proxy measure of teacher quality. Similarly, there is no clear *meaning* for the noun 'professional' except that it is understood as a concept grounded in a relational trust between clients and the profession (Gewirtz et al., 2009). Neither is there consensus as to the *purpose* for the term professional of professionalism (Gewirtz et al., 2009). The literature shows however, that alongside increasing internationalisation of education policy (Lingard, 2010), with its focus on teacher quality, has come a form of professionalism defined within a managerial discourse of competency-based, outcome-oriented visions of a profession (Robertson, 1996).

2.6 Arbiters of standardised teacher quality - APST

Collectively the previous sections have provided a conceptual framework which characterises teacher quality: in other words what a quality teacher should be, should know, and be able to do. The literature has also demonstrated that even under the best circumstances it would be difficult to define teacher quality, thus making any political mandate to do so likely to lead "to silly and costly compliance-orientated actions" (Berliner, 2005, p. 207). Despite that, the APST were developed by AITSL and implemented in 2013.

The resulting concept of teacher quality contained within the APST (2014) consists of three parts; professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagment. These domains are further categorised by four professional career stages (*Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead*).

Within this conceptual framework, teacher quality is conceived as attributable to someone who has the necessary qualifications, and is capable of guiding students from diverse backgrounds with a differentiated hands-on cooperative approach to learning, personalized to the students interests (P. Ryan & Townsend, 2010). In addition, 'quality teachers' must simultaneously decontextualize skills and knowledge so that students can be subjected to testing (ACARA, 2014), and be engaged with the teaching profession and the larger school community.

The effectiveness of 'quality teachers' in meeting these requirements is indirectly measured by standardised tests, such as those within NAPLAN, and which are published on the *MySchool* website. The tests not only function as a measure the effectiveness and quality of teachers, but also by association, lead to judgements about the schools they work in. Thus, both teachers and schools are commodities, held accountable in the education market environment. The APST, which were implemented in 2013 in all states and territories in Australia, are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2013)

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)						
Professional Knowledge		**Professional Practice**			**Professional Engagement**	
1.Know students and how they learn	**2.** Know the content and how to teach it	**3.** Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning	**4**. Create and maintain supportive and safe environments	**5**. Assess provide feedback and report on student learning	**6.** Engage in professional learning	**7**. Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Whilst there is an argument that framing teachers' work in terms of what they should know, and be able to do, is a valid way of capturing the complexity of teachers' work (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005), others question whether the APST have been developed from a systematic view of education as a field of knowledge, or even reflect the reality that is teaching - described as an improvised assemblage of a very wide range of activities (Connell, 2009, p. 219). Rather, there is concern that APST are simply a reflection of the

collective wisdom of those who have been invited to develop them (Mayer, 2014), instead of being built around teachers' professional judgement, and the social, collaborative and collegial work they do (Darling-Hammond, 2013). Despite the scholarly research describing the lack of consensus around teaching quality as a "kaleidoscope of notions" (Wang et al., 2011), AITSL defend the validity of the current teacher standards (Mayer, 2014), stating "The research findings are robust" (AITSL, 2010).

There is also criticism that these standards encourage teacher conformity (Connell, 2009), even though conformity to some extent is very traditional, as it outlines the mix of knowledge, pedagogical skills, organisational know-how, ideology and social conformity that has always been associated with the mass school system (Connell, 2009). What is different however, is the inclusion of managerial discourses about goals, procedures, strategies and stakeholders, effectively constructing the good teacher as an entrepreneurial self, concerned with their own advancement in a market society (Connell, 2009).

Two schools of thought have developed around the use of APST. On one side are those who advocate that standards of practice should be developed and overseen by the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2001; A. Hargreaves, 2000; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Sachs, 2003a) - termed *standards for quality improvement*. On the other side of the binary, standards are criticised for being regulatory in character, imposed by government as control mechanisms – a bureaucratic standardised procedure which reduces autonomy (Sachs, 2003b).

Those who advocate for regulatory standards, tend to constitute teacher training as a policy problem (Cochran-Smith, 2004) - commonly represented as teacher quality. The National Plan for School Improvement reflects such a position, using a gatekeeper approach to regulate those who enter the profession, ensuring quality by selecting to ensure "the best and brightest people…are teaching in classrooms" (Australian Government, 2013). The APST is seen as the mechanism through which this goal is measured and controlled – an arena where *teacher centrality* (Connell, 2009; Larsen, 2010; Mockler, 2014) becomes both the problem and the solution. Thus, it is not the notion of professional standards per se that is in question, it is the nature of their design, their implementation and their ownership which is controvesial (Tuinamuana, 2011).

2.7 Regulated teacher quality

At the same time, the literature shows the concept of teacher quality has digressed into discourses surrounding methods of regulation. These have become increasingly linked to audit cultures through accountability and compliance structures, aligned with neoliberal logic in which such things are presented as the key to improvement (Mockler, 2014). Regulatory frameworks have gained significant traction alongside the introduction of APST and include systems of certification, accreditation, and registration.

First, and as aforementioned, recent trends have sought to restrict entry into ITE. This represents a basic compliance structure aimed at selecting those who are considered "the best and the brightest" (TEMAG, 2014; Weldon, McKenzie, Kleinhenz, & Reid, 2013), and implies teacher quality is a function of teacher credentials and dispositions (Bowles, Hattie, Dinham, Scull, & Clinton, 2014), and, therefore, these can be identified, measured and sorted. Demonstrating this, AITSL has "revised Accreditation Standards and Procedures, which requires ITE providers to apply selection criteria for all entrants that incorporate both academic and non-academic criteria" (ATSIL, 2018b). There is an inherent contradiction in this logic – in that it completely discounts the impact of ITE and ongoing professional development.

Second, is a type of regulated 'weeding out' of those who do not comply with the standardised framework. Here the strategy in pursuit of teacher quality, is to regulate and standardise evaluation of teachers' practice, the intention being to discard those who do not meet predetermined qualities, dispositions, or outcomes. This strategy has been assisted by the Bologna process (European countries meet to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher-education qualifications), which framed quality as a technical act of quality assurance (Saarinen, 2005), which in itself is argued to have been introduced more as a regulatory device than as a quality assurance measure (Morley, 2003).

Third, ATSIL standards and procedures are also applied to ITE and continuing professional programs. Those institutions who wish to become accredited by AISTL (2018a) must comply with certain conditions. First, they must take on the task of striving to define more advanced levels of teacher quality, and second, (tied to the qualifying standards for accreditation), use funding mechanisms which have become increasingly designed to force universities to compete for budget funds as well as student fees (Connell, 2013). The associated

accountability mechanisms result in league tables being compiled, and dependant on results, universities are named and shamed in the media. This commodification of education is argued to be deeply corrosive, having undermined respect and trust in the jockeying for position in a competitive market (Connell, 2013) and does very little to further 'quality' in education (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

Such regulatory approaches require managerial tools to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of systems, institutions and individuals (Sachs, 2005). This process places teachers not as developers of learning, but as deliverers of outcomes. It is argued that those who focus only on the technicalities of teaching, but do not also engage teachers in the greater social and moral issues of society, promote a diminished view of teaching and teacher professionalism that has no place in a sophisticated knowledge society (A. Hargreaves, 2003, p. 161). This, Bottery (2004) suggests, eliminates the legitimacy of professional judgement, and impacts teacher morale, he states,

> For the individual, in a regulatory environment when the achievement of constantly changing external targets in made the overriding objective, morale can be dramatically lowered for such targets create constant feelings of self-doubt (at having to replace carefully acquired professional judgments with externally imposed targets) anxiety (at having to constantly attain targets), of guilt (at being unable to achieve increasingly difficult targets), and of complaint and blame (as consumers are led to believe that the focus of their education aspirations should be on dissatisfaction with producers' attempts to reach such targets). (Bottery, 2004, p. 91)

In summary, regulatory frameworks have gained significant traction alongside the introduction of APST. At the same time, the concept of teacher quality has digressed into methods of regulation characterised by systems of certification, accreditation and registration. These systems work to first restrict entry into ITE, through a compliance structure aimed at selecting those who are considered "the best and the brightest" (TEMAG, 2014; Weldon et al., 2013). Second, the system applies a regulated weeding out of those who do not comply with the standardised framework, and third, ATSIL regulates ITE and continuing professional programs by ensuring accredited AISTL institutions comply with certain conditions.

2.8 The problematic nature of identifying *what works best*

It is apparent that although teacher quality is a contested term, it is frequently found with adjectives such as good, effective, and competent (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Wallet, 2015), implying a particular definition and consensus of opinion of what works best (Strong, 2012). The NSW Department of Education claims "what works best is based on evidence based practices to help improve student performance" (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2017). This is misleading, however, as Berliner (2005) notes, "quality always requires value judgments about which disagreement abound" (p. 206), and as such, especially given enduring complexities in the research evidence (S. Ball, 2012; Connell, 2009; Parker, 2012; Rice, 2003; Stoel & Thant, 2002), disagreements endure as to what works best.

Strong, Gargaini and Hacifazlioglu (2011) raise three key questions about these assumptions: Is it possible to identify effective teachers? What criteria should, or do, judges use? How useful are such criteria in predicting quality teaching? The results suggested quality teaching cannot be identified by teacher performance alone, which is itself problematic, as it is not the single defining influence – it disregards contexts of teaching (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005). Therefore, they conclude, there may not be shared and observable defining features of effective teaching across contexts (Strong et al., 2011).

Endorsing this view, the literature demonstrates that the concept of teaching quality is a complex web of characteristics, making any attempt to research, interpret, define, measure, or legislate it, very difficult. As a result of this complexity, often research chooses to explore one characteristic in isolation, for example: qualifications (Stronge, Ward, Tucker, & Hindman, 2007); teacher education (Gore, J., Griffiths, & Amosa, 2007; Harrisa & Sassb, 2011; Zeichner & Bekisizwe, 2008); dispositions (Jung, 2006; Usher et al., 2003), dispositions required to understand diverse learners (Major & Brock, 2003; Villegas, 2007), experience (Tsui, 2009), certification (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000), beliefs and attitudes (Wasicsko, 2001), and subject knowledge (Abell, 2007). This results in research commonly promoting the importance of one characteristic over another.

Taking one characteristic as an example, there is a wealth of literature which suggests teacher certification as a prerequisite of teacher quality is ambiguous (Boyd et al., 2007; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000). Despite these findings some research shows that in mathematics, students achieve higher grades when their teacher is certified (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000; Hawk,

1985). The correlation is less clear in subjects other than mathematics (Rice, 2003). Contributing to the lack of clarity, Darling-Hammond (2000) found that the combination of certification with teacher preparation was a stronger correlation with student achievement, rather than certification alone.

Likewise, subject knowledge seems an obvious pre-requisite for teacher quality, but again the research is inconsistent (Floden, 2005). Some findings suggests pedagogical knowledge and verbal ability to be more significant than subject knowledge in increasing student outcomes (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Wayne & Youngs, 2003), and especially at high school level (Harrisa & Sassb, 2011). A further distinction is made between secondary and primary teachers (Santibañez, 2006).

In relation to diverse learners, which necessitate teachers to be "sophisticated in their understanding of the effects of context, including learner variability on teaching and learning" (Mayer, 2013, p. 9), the research finds quality standards, which are based on "prescription, target-setting and evaluation techniques, strip away the subtleties and complexities of the teaching role" (Storey, 2006, p. 218). This makes the evaluation of teacher quality difficult as the "context specific nature of quality teaching and professional judgment" (Mayer, 2013, p. 7), and the contribution of any individual teacher to output (Connell, 2009) is not able to be meaningfully considered. This is despite research showing that teachers' knowledge is not only applied to specific contexts, but more importantly it can 'gain strength from those situations' (Bereiter, 1993, p. 53). Such knowledge casts doubt over the implementation of a form of standardised teacher quality which favours the technical-rational approach over the reflexive dimensions of teachers' work (Mockler, 2011b), as it overlooks the importance of seeing teaching as situated in context, and collaborative and social in nature (O'loughlin, 2007).

Technical rationality, with its emphasis on certainty and objectivity, in other words, the scientific-method of measurement, efficiency and control, and which is argued to only have value in non-human phenomenon (Fay, 1975), has been transferred into understandings about education and teaching (Tuinamuana, 2011). The weakness of technical rationality is argued to be in its inability to recognise the complexity of teachers' work, and the strongly contextualised situations in which "moral, social and political decisions about subject, person and groups are made and remade in the everyday life of teachers and student teachers" (Winter, 2000, p. 155).

Clouding the issue further, is research which found teachers dispositions; those who exhibit specific beliefs about effective mathematics instruction such as making connections between mathematical concepts (Muijs & Reynolds, 2002), and teacher expectations of their students (Petty, Wang, Dalton, & Harbaugh, 2013), also correlate with student gains in mathematics. This suggests that focusing on only the characteristics which can be correlated with student outcomes and standardised tests, tends to sideline the more pastoral dispositions (Connell, 2009).

Dispositions are defined as the attitudes, values, and beliefs which together shape the decisions teachers take and the words teachers choose (Eberly, Rand, & O'Connor, 2007). Others suggest the term extends to include ethics behind teaching behaviour, such as fair treatment toward all (Covaleskie, 2007) including the underpinning morals (Burant et al., 2007; Sherman, 2006). Lang and Wilkerson's (2007) research found that it is the influence these attitudes, values, beliefs, and ethics, have on the application and use of knowledge and skills which is important, such as on caring, enthusiasm, and respect for diversity (Major & Brock, 2003). Certainly the research demonstrates that teachers who achieve the largest gains in student outcomes have particular beliefs about their students, such as belief in their worth, ability, and potential (Usher et al., 2003), and have high expectations of them (Frome, 2005). These dispositions are also correlated with teachers who enjoy high self-efficacy (Bryant, 2007; Denzine et al., 2005; Di Fabio et al., 2006), which is also argued to be an influencing factor in quality teaching (Dybowski et al., 2017). This suggests teacher quality is inextricably linked to internal attitudes, beliefs and characteristics (Caine & Caine, 1997; Deiro, 1996; Johnson & Reiman, 2007; Wasicsko, 2001).

Teachers dispositions, whilst being recognised as difficult to define or measure (Johnson & Reiman, 2007; Usher et al., 2003), nonetheless form part of AITSL's (2014) teacher quality framework. They are also included in The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (2011) in the US, and the United Kingdom by the Department of Education (2011). Scholarly research also demonstrates the importance of teacher dispositions (Wasicsko, 2005). The resulting paradox is akin to holding two conflicting concepts at the same time (Noordhoff, 2012): an education policy based on teacher accountability, which cannot reliably measure dispositions, yet dispositions are seen as a determinant of the institutional recognition of teacher quality. Interestingly, much of the research into dispositions focuses on complying with the required state licencing standards, or with

validating them (Castro, 2010; Giovannelli, 2003; Johnson & Reiman, 2007; Major & Brock, 2003; Vannatta, 2004), and, thus, adds weight to regulatory licencing standards.

Thus, there is no consensus of opinion in the research as to the characteristics of teacher quality - it is noted to be complex (Connell, 2009). Gess-Newsome's (1999) use of a mixture-compound metaphor is helpful in deconstructing a singular conception of teacher quality as it illustrates the integrative and transformative features of the component parts. He suggests that whilst the ingredients in a mixture have their own characteristics, and are easily separable, the resulting compound is a new substance, totally distinct from its original ingredients. This exemplifies the limitations of research to define teacher quality; this is important as limitations can yield misleading interpretations for both policy and practice. Whilst it is fair to say that the research can provide valuable insights into the characteristcs of teacher quality, it can do very little to explain why it is that teachers with similar characteristics, doing broadly the same thing, can have very different effects on student learning. This is not meant to demean the contribution of the research, but rather serves to demonstrate and highlight the difficulty in conceputalising a framework of 'what works best', and thus who and what is a quality teacher. Yet, despite this difficulty, standardised APST as arbitrated by AITSL (2014), continues to be the litmus test of teacher quality, used to maximize 'effectiveness' (OECD, 2005, 2012b; Wise & Leibbrand, 2000).

In summary, therefore, whilst it has been suggested that within Australia there is unprecedented agreement about the need to implement a standards-based system, and that the "focus on teacher quality is consistent with current research about what matters most for student learning" (Ingvarson, 2010, p. 46), this literature review has revealed this is not the case – rather it has revealed three important conceptual problems. First, as it is difficult to determine the characteristics of teacher quality the validity of any construct remains questionable. Second, and as a consequence, it is difficult to conceptualize precisely what it is that teacher education is seeking to develop in order to deliver the desired teacher quality. Third, there remains deep divisions in regard to the intended purpose and use of a standardised framework (Beyer, 2002; Bourke, Ryan, & Lidstone, 2012; Codd, 2004; Connell, 2009; Louden, 2000; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Ni Chroinin, Tormey, & O'Sullivan, 2012; Sachs, 2011), either as standards for teach*ing* – which are aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning from within the profession, or alternatively as standards for teach*ers,* the main focus of which is to control quality by imposing external accountability regimes.

This serves to demonstrate that beneath the current discourse of teacher quality is a multi-layered concept. Fraser et al. (2010) provides insight noting researchers conceptualise this as: the type of work, the range of dimensions included in the work, the structural location of the work, and the approach taken to the work. As a result of this complexity, the resulting research often chooses to examine teacher/teaching characteristics in isolation, or at best in duos, and therefore there remains a high level of ambiguity about teacher quality with research commonly promoting the importance of one characteristic over another. This has left the status of any ensuing claims about teacher quality as being highly problematic.

2.9 The impact of the mediatisation and politicisation on perceptions of teacher quality

An examination of the literature surrounding teacher quality uncovered a wide body of research around the effect of the politicisation and 'mediatisation' of educational policy (Altheide & Snow, 1988; Hattam, Prosser, & Brady, 2009; Rawolle, 2010). This is defined as the processes and practices employed by political players and the media, in shaping and framing the discourse of political communication, thereby affecting not only the trajectory of the debate, but also the society in which that communication takes place (Lilleker, 2008). It is suggested that news media does not simply relay events, or offer a forum for rigorous debate, but rather it can be used as a tool in the framing of generalized themes, narratives, and political stances (MacMillan, 2002). These can be complicit in reproducing government agendas, and the blame game (S. Ball, 2012; Levin, 2004) even when they appear to critique government policy (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004).

Concern about the media's role in shaping and influencing education policy (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Snyder, 2008), and public discourse (Sandell, Sebar, & Harris, 2013), in relation to teachers in particular (S. Ball, 1990a, 2012; Mausethagen, 2013; Wallace, 1993), is not new. The extent and scale of mediatisation of education policy is suggested to be influential in constructing the perceived crisis in education (Berliner & Glass, 2014; Weis, 1987), and the decline in teacher confidence (Bryant, 2007; Maeroff, 1988) and teacher morale (Hattam et al., 2009). For this reason the influence of the media in the teacher quality debate has attracted the attention of many scholars (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004; Blackmore & Thorpe, 2003; Goldstein, 2011; Goldstein et al., 2012; Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Pina, 2007; Rawolle, 2010; Snyder, 2008), with media coverage of education policy

being described as "irrevocably inter-connected" with politics (Thomson, 2004, p. 252), amounting to what Lingard and Rawolle describe as de-facto policy (2004).

Using such practices as salience, omission, and sound bites (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004), the discursive field of teacher quality in the media is shaped and disseminated. Herein lies a dilemma. For although news media can provide an important arena for public debate (Thomson, 2004), and "constitute an important safeguard against the abuse of authority" (Levin, 2004, p. 282), it is also important to note, that news media communicates policy motivated by its own self-interest (Herman, 1988), using agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McQuail, 2010), and framing techniques (Kolandai-Matchett, 2009), to steer public attention (Sontag, 2003). It is argued that whilst news media is valuable in so much as it offers a public platform to contest the dominant discourse, much of the media's representations in relation to teachers is negative, misleading, ill-informed (Goldstein, 2011) lacking scope and depth (Guyton & Antonelli, 1987) and too focused on accountability standards (MacMillan, 2002). It is also suggested to be completely self-serving, driven by political or media agenda (Blackmore & Thorpe, 2003; Lingard & Rawolle, 2004) with an emphasis toward a proclivity for assigning blame (Levin, 2004).

The proclivity to blame teachers (Levin, 2004) increased in quantity and prominence between the 1990s and the early 2000s (L. Hargreaves et al., 2007; Vinson, 2003). This coincides with the period when teachers became personally accountable, by the government and the media, for many of the problems in education (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004; J. Cohen, 2010; Goldstein et al., 2012). *Teacher bashing* became the dominant theme (Baker, 1994), intensifying over the following decade, and by 2006 teachers were described as lax, incompetent, and third class (MacMillan, 2002). Providing an example, the media coverage of the review of Queensland's school curriculum blamed teachers' instructional methods as responsible for the declining standards in schools. The report cited teachers as "intransigent and needing increased regulation" (Thomas, 2006, p. 299). Hargreaves et al. (2007) suggest that about the same time, and certainly by 2002, media coverage had begun to invade teachers' personal lives. This was evident in the increasing coverage of court cases which featured teachers violent behaviour, as indicated within the frequent lexical choice of "jail, gun, rape, sex" (2007, p. 56). This was accompanied by an increasing use of terminology such as, *sacked, fears, and crisis*, suggesting a profession in crisis because of their conduct.

More recently, however, media reporting of teacher shortages and increasing workload has been cited as the catalyst for the emergence of the teacher as a victim working in, "a beleaguered profession" (L. Hargreaves et al., 2007, p. 56), undervalued and overburdened, stressed, leading a poor if not dangerous lifestyle (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004). The nature of the reporting becoming more sympathetic and supportive in tone (L. Hargreaves et al., 2007). This portrayal loops back to historical notions of quality teachers as those who have deep moral and personal commitment to their work, prepared to push themselves to complete exhaustion (J. Cohen, 2010).

Teachers in news media have become, what Blackmore and Thomson term "media-ted" (2004, p. 316), with some suggesting that teachers' complaints about the excessively negative, sensationalistic media coverage of education (L. Hargreaves et al., 2007) are well founded (J. Cohen, 2010; Keogh & Garrick, 2011; Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Thomas, 2003). Thus, as news media can facilitate political and media agendas by framing subjects in ways which facilitate public consent for education policy (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Rawolle, 2010; Snyder, 2008; Thomson, 2004), this discursive field is important to the construction of the concept of teacher quality.

2.10 Some unintended consequences of teacher quality in educational policy

Teachers are now positioned within a managerial framework, where teacher quality has been commoditised in a global education market (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). This carries with it the notion that teacher quality is accountable (Thompson, 2013; Tuinamuana, 2011; Winter, 2000) to the market (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). This is further demonstrated by the foregrounding of the organisational profession in Australian education policy (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), which, as aforementioned, is typified by mechanisms of accountability and control based on management theory (Evetts, 2009). The APST, initial teacher training, and continuing professional development have become the mechanisms by which the concept of teacher quality is developed, assessed, and measured. This gatekeeper model is based on compliance in delivering a standardised curriculum with a standardised teaching framework (S. Ball, 2003b; P. Ferguson, White, Hay, Dixon, & Moss, 2003; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009; Sachs, 2011) against standardised testing (Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2007; B. Jones, 2008; Thompson, 2013; Thompson & Harbaugh, 2012).

This review of the literature uncovered various unintended consequences which are argued to have arisen from the teacher quality concept. It should be noted, that the scope of this review does not allow for an exhaustive inventory of these, but rather, it is intended to give indication of some of the negative consequences being discussed in the literature.

First, the concept of teacher quality in its present form is argued to have positioned teachers as technicians, "rather than reflective professionals" (Somekh & Zeichner, 2009, p. 15), and as "recipe-following operatives" (Gewirtz et al., 2009, p. 7) within a strict regime of performativity (S. Ball, 2003b). Jones (2009) describes this as akin to being a "competent multi-skilled labourer" (p. 56) . The term *technician* can be found in the Australian context (Sachs, 2011) to denote a person who is competent (Connell, 2009) or quality (Taubman, 2009).

Second, the declining status of the teaching profession has been observed by various studies (Archbald & Porter, 1994; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007; Waddell, 2012). The media, with its agenda setting function (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McQuail, 2010), is widely considered to have contributed, to some degree, to this decline. The extent and scale of media negativity surrounding education, and teachers, has been facilitated by teacher quality policy and associated teaching bashing (Baker, 1994). This has been cited as influential in constructing the perceived crisis in teaching (Weis, 1987), and therefore in teachers, and the subsequent decline in teacher confidence (Maeroff, 1988).

Third, the concept of teacher quality in educational policy is suggested to have increased teacher workload, expectations and responsibilities (Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005). For example, teachers are now expected to have knowledge of child psychology to deal with behavioural problems (Groundwater-Smith, Cusworth, & Le Cornu, 2007; A. Hargreaves, 1994). This has been compounded by the impression that teachers are inadequately compensated for their work (Pillay et al., 2005) and are undervalued by the community at large (Everton, Turner, Hargreaves, & Pell, 2007).

Fourth, the resulting moral dilemma arising from tensions between the neo-liberal goal of creating human capital and the stated aims of the *Melbourne Declaration*, which is to provide the "intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians" (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008), underpinned by notions of equity, is argued to have created conflict

for many teachers' personal teaching philosophy (Burant et al., 2007; Covaleskie, 2007; Sherman, 2006). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) describe this as involving a reorientation of values from a focus on democracy and equality to the values of efficiency and accountability (p. 72). Whilst they are not suggesting the former have been abandoned, they do argue that they have been subordinated to "dominant economic concerns" (p. 20).

The literature suggests that at best this has resulted in deep confusion as teachers attempt to satisfy education policy, and teacher registration requirements, noted to be both inconsistent but insistent (Connell, 2009). At worst, it manifests in a moral dilemma between "being good and doing good" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 11), described as a misalignment between personal beliefs and practice (Santoro, 2013). This is argued to have had a profound effect on the lives of teachers (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014), and has implications for teacher identity, teacher education, and school practices and administration (S. Ball & Goodson, 2004). As Taubman suggests, "performance standards transform individuals into self-monitoring and monitored selves, who are urged or feel compelled to embrace constant self-improvement in their practice, which is aligned with standards that strip the individual of any autobiographical idiosyncrasy" (Taubman, 2009, p. 117). These changes are argued to have impacted on teacher identity as they have denied teachers the opportunity to develop the connection between who they are (self) and what they do (role), and thus retaining their integrity (Noordhoff, 2012).

Fifth, as a result, teachers increasingly feel anxiety and guilt (Ballet, Kelchtermans, & Loughran, 2006; Lortie, 1975), and low morale follows (Everton et al., 2007). Stress and burnout is repeatedly referenced in the literature (Hakanen, 2006; Parker, 2012; Pillay et al., 2005; Schlichte & Yssel, 2005; Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999) as being attributed to the feeling of low morale in the teaching profession. In attempting to explain the decline in teacher morale (Buchmann, 1986; Kohlberg, 1981; Shamir, 2008), a long list of factors are cited including: rising attrition (Buchanan & Prescott, 2013; Krieg, 2006); ill health caused by stress and burnout (Hakanen, 2006; Lloyd, 2012; Parker, 2012; Wisniewski, 1997); loss of professional integrity (Palmer, 1997; Santoro, 2013), dilemmas in forming a teaching identity (Bodman, Taylor, & Morris, 2012; Gunn Elisabeth Soreide, 2006; Mockler, 2011b; Reio & Thomas, 2005), decreasing autonomy (Gordon, 2009; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), growing expectations and responsibilities and changes in school structure (Fernet, 2012), changes in school culture (Schuck, 2005); attempts to define teacher characteristics

(Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996), low public status (Cunningham, 1992; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007), and the rise of neoliberal ideology and accountability (Dembele & Schwille, 2006; Taubman, 2009; Theall, 2010).

Given these levels of complexity, and the demonstrable tensions, it is unclear why the meaning of teacher quality as defined in educational policy has become so dominant and continues to define teacher recruitment, selection, and continuing professional development in Australia (Connell, 2009). The resulting concept of teacher quality in Australia has seen a shift from one which viewed teachers as responsible for teaching, to one which holds the teacher accountable for learning (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014). Whilst this is in keeping with the neo-liberal notion of education as a means to create 'human capital' (S. Ball, 2012), it is nonetheless a stark contrast to the historical notion of teacher quality as an attribute of an autonomous professional of high moral character, and education as being for personal growth and fulfilment (Cole, 1950).

The paradox is that the concept of teacher quality found in current educational policy interventions, implicitly denies, or at best works against, the professional autonomy that is required to achieve teaching quality – the stated policy goal.

2.11 Concluding remarks

The purpose of this literature review was to provide a conceptual framework of the discourses which have contributed, or continue to contribute, to the construct of teacher quality, and in so doing problematise its current form in educational policy – thus creating complexity in the way teacher quality is imagined.

To summarise, the literature demonstrated that conceptions of the good teacher, who they should be, what they should know, and what they should be able to do, remains problematic and contested, and, therefore, there remains uncertainty about what is meant by the key term teacher quality. Instead there is an over reliance on student outcomes in standardised testing as a proxy measure of teacher quality. Similarly, there is no clear meaning or purpose for the term professional of professionalism, but alongside increasing internationalisation of education policy has come a form of professionalism defined within a competency-based, outcome-oriented visions of a profession. What has transpired is a system of regulatory

frameworks which have gained traction alongside the APST, and as a consequence teacher quality has become characterised by systems of, certification, accreditation and registration.

What the review has revealed is a continuum of discourses surrounding teacher quality. At one end there are those who conceive teacher quality as a positive construct – associated with teacher autonomy and professional judgement. At the other end, a more negative construct is presented which advocates for teacher accountability and the need for policy intervention in order to ensure teacher quality. Thus, the review has shown that teacher quality is much more complex than the simple valid/invalid, reliable/unrealiable, good/bad dichotomy that is presented in the APST.

This is an important revelation, as it is serves to demonstrate that despite there being no definitive characteristics of teacher quality, nor any clear and agreed purpose for the construct, and notwithstanding the multiple stakeholders contesting the meaning being applied to teacher quality - a standardised form of teacher quality in the form of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST) have become dominant (Connell, 2009).

This raises important questions about why and how the APST discourse/construct of teacher quality has become so dominant. What factors have influenced and shaped the contemporary concept of teacher quality in education policy and allowed it to become so dominant? Moreover, given the plethora of ideas about what constitutes 'quality', it leaves us wondering what has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality? Whilst there is substantial literature that has addressed some aspects of the concept of teacher quality, to date no studies have examined the evolution of teacher quality in Australian education policy. This is a significant gap in the literature and one which is important to address for a number of reasons.

First, the review has demonstrated the limitations and inadequacy of the APST model to define, capture, or measure the complex web of variables that constitute teacher quality (Connell, 2009). Notwithstanding the difficulties in defining the tangible characteristics of teacher quality, the review also revealed this is further complicated by the impact of intangible assets such as beliefs, attitudes and dispositions; all of which are difficult to code, measure or standardise (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Rimm-Kaufman, Storm, Sawyer, Pianta, & LaParo, 2006; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Usher et al., 2003; Youssef, 2003).

Second, and closely linked to the above, the current APST conceptualisation of teacher quality favours the technical-rational approach over the reflexive dimensions of teachers work, whiich fails to engage with the reality that teaching is situated in context and is collaborative and social in nature (O'loughlin, 2007).

Third, despite a plethora of research into teacher quality, it remains unclear as to why, even when teachers meet all the current requirements of the APST, some succeed where others fail. Yet rather than engaging with findings like this, a limited standardised approach to teacher quality, continues to define teacher recruitment, selection, and continuing professional development in Australia (Connell, 2009).

Fourth, there are ongoing concerns about the dominance of teacher quality in education policy, and its ability to detract from other discourses (Connell, 2009), and in so doing deny the opportunity to explore other issues, problems, and solutions which may have equal or greater merit. For example, the OECD's (2005) own findings reported in *Teachers Matter,* identified students' social background and abilities as more detrimental to student outcomes than teaching; especially if education resources are deployed inequitably (Connell, 2009; Windle, 2009). Others have expressed concerns that important issues such as teacher status (Waddell, 2012), teacher education (Smyth, 2013), greater equity in education (Levin, 2012; Shad, Bennett, & Southgate, 2016), and the allocation of government resources, including teacher pay (Connell, 2009), have been undermined by the dominance of the teacher quality discourse.

Fifth, and as a consequence of all of the above reasons, the concept of teacher quality is argued to have inadvertently contributed to a number of negative outcomes, including: a devaluing of the impact of teacher dispositions (Edwards & Edick, 2006; Shum, 2012) and the importance of teacher differentiation in achieving teacher quality in diverse contexts (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Moore, 2004); a demeaning of the role of teacher autonomy in teachers' self-efficacy and self-fulfilment (De Vries, Jansen, & Vande Grift, 2013); and effectively reducing teaching to simply a technicist role rather than an identity (Mockler, 2011b). It is also suggested to have contributed to low teacher morale (Phi Delta Kappa International, 2013); raised teacher attrition (Buchanan & Prescott, 2013; Stoel & Thant, 2002); increased teacher burnout (Egyed & Short, 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007); and contributed to teacher ill health (Hakanen, 2006; Parker, 2012; Vandenberghe, 2002). Yet, under the logic of neo-liberal governance, Australian educational policy continues to reflect

the global education reform's focus on 'quality teachers' as *the* solution to a perceived crisis in education, and teachers continue to be subjected to social and political litmus testing, in the form of registration requirements based on the APST which are noted to be both inconsistent but insistent (Connell, 2009) – having no established norm or ideal.

As Skilbeck and Connell remind us "judgements of quality and decisions about how to recognise quality are difficult" (2004, p. 7). Consequently, it is timely and relevant to explore the emergence and permutations of teacher quality discourses in education policy, and to examine the assumptions and evidence upon which the concept is based. This has significant implications for education theory, policy, and practice, and the associated effects on schooling, teacher education and continuing professional development, teacher selection, and teacher identity.

This study will use Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? approach to explore how the concept of teacher quality has come about. The study will examine how educational policy, over time, has represented problems which have contributed to the emergence and evolving concept of teacher quality. This study will contribute to the multiple critiques by providing a tracing of 'how we got here'.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

The previous chapter provided a review of the literature and revealed a continuum of discourses surrounding teacher quality. This has served to demonstrate that teacher quality is much more complex than the simple valid/invalid, reliable/unrealiable, good/bad dichotomy that is presented in the APST. This study aims to explore the factors which have influenced the emergence and evolving concept of teacher quality. This study will contribute to the multiple critiques by providing a tracing of 'how we got here'.

This chapter presents the theoretical framework and conceptual tools which will guide the study, and outlines the appropriateness of Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach to this study.

3.1 Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Tools

The theoretical framework outlines the paradigm within which the research is set (MacKenzie & Knipe, 2006). I begin by positioning the study within social construction theory. I then set the study within Foucault's theoretical orientation and discuss several of his concepts considered most appropriate for this study. Lastly, I situate Bacchi's WPR approach as a particular form of critical policy analysis, within a Foucauldian framework.

3.1.1 Constructionism

This study is framed by social construction theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Within this paradigm, concepts are understood as being socially constructed categories (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). These categories do not necessarily refer to real divisions (Burr, 1995) rather they are social categories which are "historically and culturally specific" (Burr, 1995, p. 4). This means that all understandings are, to some extent, relative, in the sense that they are products of particular times and places (Bacchi, 2009, p. 264). According to Adler (1997, 2013) from this perspective, objective facts are only facts by human agreements, which arise from social interactions of all kinds, particularly language (Burr, 1995).

Thus, constructionists see the social world, including people, as being constructed from social processes, each of which brings or invites a different kind of action from human beings (Burr, 1995). Constructionists view knowledge about society as something which is already

established and experienced as an objective reality – a realisation of objectivated social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

This study adopts "a mode of policy analysis that accepts politics as a creative and valuable feature of social existence" (Stone, 1997, p. x). However, as policy is understood as one way of constructing social categories, the constructionist views policies as open to contestation (Bacchi, 2009, p. 265). This perspective encourages us to "identify and examine categories and concepts that are embedded within particular policies and to see them, to an extent, as pliable and variable" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 264).

3.1.2 Foucault's conceptual tools

Within the broad social constructionist paradigm, this study draws on particular features of Foucault's work to approach the analysis of key policy texts. Foucault declared, "I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area" (Foucault, 1974b, p. 523). Hence, there is no grand ready-made system or pre-specified Foucauldian method that could be applied to policy analysis. Rather, Foucault's conceptual tools can be adapted and applied, based on their usefulness, to the particular research project and the context of inquiry. As this research aims to trace the emergence, permutations, and effects of the discourses around teacher quality in government policy, the Foucauldian conceptual tools considered most appropriate to guide this study are: power, governmentality, biopower, power-knowledge, discourse, the discursive subject, problematisation, genealogy, and history of the present. These Foucauldian tools have been chosen as together they provide the conceptual understanding of teacher quality in education policy as a socially constructed concept which embodies meaning and social relationships, and constitutes both subjectivity and power relations - a conceptual framework to guide a critical discourse analysis of policy problematisations over a specific period in time.

3.1.2.1 Concept of power

Foucault challenged traditional understandings of power in society, which is commonly thought of as *power over* - a conceptualisation which views power as a possession of powerful elites. Instead, Foucault theorised power to be more systemic, pervasive, fluid and complex, in all forms of social interactions. Foucault (1998) suggests "power is everywhere and comes from everywhere so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure" (p. 63). Foucault's

focus was not on overarching state power, but on more particular, and multiple power relations in society:

> I am not referring to Power with a capital P, dominating and imposing its rationality upon the totality of the social body. In fact, there are power relations. They are multiple: they have different forms, they can be in play in family relations, or within an institution, or an administration". (Foucault, 1988, p. 38)

Thus Foucault conceived power as less "agent specific" (Haugaard & Clegg, 2009, p. 3) than traditional understandings, likening it instead to "something which only functions in the form of a chain … employed and exercised through a net like organisation" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Foucault's notion of power is therefore not understood as unitary and its exercise binary (Foucault, 1977), but rather it is exercised from innumerable points through an infinitely complex network of micro-powers (Sheridan, 1982), within which individuals are "vehicles of power, not its points of application" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98).

Foucault also stressed resistance was concomitant with power (Foucault, 1978) and that power is not necessarily a negative force - something which compels individuals to do something. Rather Foucault sees power as having the potential to have a productive effect, in as much as it shapes an individual's conception of themselves and of their world. For example, he argued:

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes,' it 'represses,' it 'censors,' it 'abstracts,' it 'makes,' it 'conceals.' In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him, belong to this production. (Foucault, 1977, p. 194)

3.1.2.2 Governmentality

Merging concepts of governing with mentality, Foucault saw power manifest in *governmentality* (Foucault, 1991); a concept which stresses the interdependence between the practice of government and the mentalities, or rationales, upon which the practices of governance rely. Foucault's governmentality can, thus, be considered as the art, rationale, and modes of governing by which the state produces governable citizens (Foucault, 1991). Foucault states:

> We pass from an art of governing whose principles were derived from the traditional virtues (wisdom, justice, liberality, respect for divine laws and human customs) (prudence, reflected decisions, care in surrounding oneself with the

> best advisors) to an art of government that finds the principles of its rationality and the specific domain of its applications in the state (Foucault, 2007, p. 364)

As an expression of the values and preferences of society, government rationale changes over time. The concept of governmentality can therefore be understood as being specific to historical periods and power regimes, and thus govern*mentality* produces responses to social problems which are particular to the context in which they are set. For example, the rationale, or political reasoning underpinning neoliberalism is understood to be characterised by notions of the free market, decentralised power and individualisation, including ideas of private provision (and individual purchase) of services, individual liberty and choice (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016). Based on neoliberal rationale, government responses to identified social problems are not based on a sense of government responsibility, but rather they are viewed as the responsibility of the individual for their self-advancement and entrepreneurship (Cheshire & Lawrence, 2005).

Foucault's concept of governmentality highlights the link in liberalism between the governance of the self, and the government of the state. Peters (2007) describes this as the "exercise of political sovereignty over a territory and its population" (p. 165); an understanding of liberal governmentality as that which utilises the capacities of free acting subjects. The neo-liberal model of government has institutionalised this link within the free market culture, governing through notions of performance, accountability, and the capitalisation of the self – the entrepreneurial self (Peters, 2001); where the "individual becomes pertinent for the state insofar as he can do something for the strength of the state"(Foucault, 1994, p. 409). This gives rise to another manifestation of power - *bio-power* (Foucault, 1980, 1998). This form of power operates to have individuals enact their own self-government. It is therefore useful to supplement neoliberal governmentality with biopower.

3.1.2.3 Biopower

Biopower is a concept which grew out of Foucault's interest in understanding how power operates in a normalising context (Foucault, 1978, p. 144). Foucault suggests power operates within a framework of discipline and biopower (Foucault, 1978, p. 139), each utilising government techniques and apparatuses to modify subjects in order to make them manageable and productive:

> When life itself becomes an object of politics, this has consequences for the foundations, tools, and goals of political action. No one saw more clearly this shift in the nature of politics than Michel Foucault. (Lemke, 2011, p 32)

Biopower can be understood as "the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed" (Foucault, 1985, p. 139). Biopower has at one pole the techniques of discipline and punishment, such as the prison system, in which "discipline tries to rule a multiplicity of men to the extent that their multiplicity can and must be dissolved into individual bodies that can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and punished" (Foucault, 1976, p. 242), that is, in other words, the atomisation of a collective. Social institutions such as schools and hospitals similarly adopt disciplinary techniques to achieve certain objectives. At the other pole is biopower arising from the political concern with the problematic population. Foucault spoke of this as the "massifying, that is directed not at man-as-body but as man-as-species" (Foucault, 176, p. 243). Biopower provides an indirect means to penetrate subjects (Foucault, 1977, p. 25), what Miller and Rose term government "at a distance" (Miller & Rose, 1990, p. 9) – a process of eliciting desired behaviours through biopower rather than legislating or punishing them directly. Thus biopower can also be enacted through biopolitics (Lemke, 2011) – a type of biopolitical control seen to regulate populations from within a framework of governmentality, and enabled through technologies of government.

Bio-power is described by Foucault as "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations" (Foucault, 1998, p. 140), a form of self-regulation in keeping with the norms in the discourse. The principal of bio-power is enacted by subjects as they embody the knowledge or *truth* that discourse produces (Foucault, 1980, 1998). In other words biopower is understood as technologies of government by which subjects come to adopt the societal norms constructed by discourse (Foucault, 1998). According to Foucault sexuality constitutes techniques of biopower (Foucault, 1978). He argues that rather than sexuality being something given by nature, sexuality was categorised as normal and abnormal within the framework of power-knowledge apparatus - targeting both body and population together (Foucault, 1985). This demonstrates how bio-power is used as a technique in social control, which Foucault suggests is used to manipulate not only the subject's body, but the mind too (Foucault, 1977). Biopower can be invisible to the observer.

3.1.2.4 Power-knowledge

Foucault saw power and knowledge as insidiously related: a power-knowledge nexus where power produces knowledge, and accepted forms of knowledge constitute power. Demonstrating the dynamic process of Foucault's concept of power, it can be understood as being exercised through knowledge production, and imposed through *techniques* (processes and structures of government), rather than possessed (Foucault, 1977). Knowledge production can therefore be understood as a "function of power" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 52), operating not as communicating objective truth, but rather as a production of truth under certain conditions. Foucault states,

> Power produces knowledge…power and knowledge directly imply one another…there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1977, p. 27)

In keeping with constructionism, power-knowledge is understood as socially constructed from within the historic and cultural rules for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements (Foucault, 1974a). Power and knowledge are, thus, entrenched in the structures and processes which reinforce and legitimise its use (Foucault, 1994). Foucault argues this type of power is strongest when it is able to mask itself, "its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms" (Foucault, 1978, p. 86).

Foucault describes power-knowledge as techniques of government which establish systems for regulating the actions of others. In classical liberalism this has resulted in a paradox as it asserts the sovereignty of the free individual, but at the same time requires individuals to be regulated (Foucault, 2000). In relation to policy analysis, Bacchi and Goodwin (2016) suggest such techniques of government require analysis, as it is often through such techniques "that domination establishes itself" (p. 29).

3.1.2.5 Discourse

Foucault states "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (Foucault, 1998, p. 100). Foucault's concept of 'discourse' is not understood in the traditional sense, as simply about linguistic or semiotic characteristics, instead Foucault suggests discourse is much more than "just language" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49); it is the process of creating knowledge and truth (Foucault, 1974a). Therefore, in Foucauldian terms discourse can be

said to function to give meaning to "imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different from the actual world, and tied to projects to change the world in particular directions" (Fairclough, 2003p. 124).

Foucault sees discourse as a process, one which operates as a mechanism to define things and elicit effects (1974a). According to Ball (1990b) Foucault conceptualises discourse as constructing thoughts and language "in particular ways as to exclude or displace other combinations" (p. 17). In relation to this study, it is through communication practices such as policy and media that discourses disseminate particular definitions, and in turn operate to "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1974a, p. 54). This is important; as Foucault reminds us, "discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention" (Foucault, 1974a, p. 49). Thus categories, objects and subject positions can be understood as constructions created through power-knowledge – ones in which discourses not only "embody meaning and social relationships, they constitute both subjectivity and power relations" (S. Ball, 1990b, p. 2).

It should be noted, however, that Foucault's principle of *discontinuity* (Foucault, 1974a) maintains that there will always be disagreements, antagonistic relationships between discourses, and other possibilities of meaning, or as Foucault suggests, "other claims, rights and positions" (1990b, p. 2). Discourses are, thus, complex as they overlap and contradict (Foucault, 1972), and constitute competing claims to truth.

3.1.2.6 The discursive subject

Foucault's concept of discourse and its ability to create knowledge and truth (Foucault, 1977) underpins a process of subjectification and what Foucault terms - the *discursive subject* (Foucault, 2000). Foucault's discursive subject can be understood as a category of the human which is constituted as normal via the workings of the power-knowledge nexus through the operation of discourses (Foucault, 2000).

In this paradigm 'normal' is understood in terms of the behaviours and attitudes embodied in the 'knowledge', and, thus, knowledge operates to pervasively modify the behaviours of the *subject* (Foucault, 1977). The regimes of "discourse and forms of knowledge" (Foucault, 1994, p. 114) become embedded in the values and world views which shape subjects of a

particular kind (S. Ball, 1990b). For example, processes which become "enmeshed in social structures" (Foucault, 1994, p. 112), such as established "measurements, hierarchy and regulations" (S. Ball, 1990b, p. 2), operate to normalise, and make available, certain subject positions. Subject positions can, thus, be understood as being created by the norms circulating in discourse.

A point to note is that implicit within these normalised structures and processes are accepted abnormalities, or unacceptable practices (Foucault, 1994). This is important, as the process of normalisation can, therefore, be understood as operating to justify forms of regulatory or disciplinary rule when subjects do not exhibit the characteristics necessary for self-regulation.

3.1.2.7 Problematisation

Foucault conceptualises *problematisation* as the way in which particular issues are constituted in moral terms (1985); the "conditions in which human beings 'problematize' what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live" (p. 10). Foucault referred to this as "thinking problematically" (1977, p.185).

Foucault's concept of problematisation is a two-stage process. First, it is an inquiry into "how and why certain things (behaviour, phenomena, processes) become a problem" (Foucault, 1999, p. 115): an inquiry into the factors which have contributed to the loss of familiarity or which have provoked difficulties with the object of the problem. Second, it is an inquiry into how they are shaped into particular objects for thought (Deacon, 2000, p. 139) - thought being the modality through which our attention or concern becomes focused on the object being problematised.

Thus, rather than viewing problems as fixed, rigid, or pre-existing, Foucault's concept of problematisation views problems as "always and endlessly being actively constituted" (Bletsas & Beasley, 2012, p. 41). In the context of this study, policy is seen as a "problematising activity" (Bacchi, 2009, p. xi)

3.1.2.8 Genealogy and history of the present

Genealogy as its name suggests, is a search for processes of descent and of emergence (Foucault, 1984): an inquiry to trace the erratic and discontinuous process whereby the past

became the present. The aim of Foucault's genealogy has a specific intent: to conduct historical research in order to question and contest contemporary conceptions:

> In attempting to uncover the deepest strata of Western culture, I am restoring to our silent and apparently immobile soil its rifts, its instability, its flaws, and it is this same ground that is once more stirring under our feet. (Foucault, 1973, p. xxiv)

Foucault's genealogy aims to reveal the power relations upon which concepts depend and the contingent processes that have brought them into being (Dean, 1994). In this sense, Foucault's concept of genealogy is useful to trace the struggles and processes out of which contemporary practices emerged (Garland, 2014).

A particular type of genealogy is Foucault's concept of "history of the present" (Foucault, 1977). A history of the present sets out to uncover transformations and historical discontinuities, at a particular point in time that led to the emergence of new systems of thought and new ways of experiencing the world (Garland, 2014). It has as its starting point a specific observation, puzzlement or discomfiture about present practices or institutions that others may take for granted. A paradoxical term, history of the present is used to describe a process in which history becomes a means of engagement with the present. Asked about this type of genealogy in an interview, Foucault stated,

> I set out from a problem expressed in the terms current today and I try to work out its genealogy. Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present. (Kritzman, 1988, p. 262)

Thus, a history of the present is an approach which has an "unabashed contemporary orientation" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 119). The process begins with a question "posed in the present" (Kritzman, 1988, p. 262), which then aims to uncover hidden conflicts and contexts. It is a critical orientation in this sense, questioning accepted norms to expose the rationalities, or irrationalities, of the assumptions, or the accidental nature of the concepts upon which the norms are built - a process which re-evaluates a contemporary phenomenon (Garland, 2014, p. 365).

The value of a Foucauldian history of the present then is not so much as a search for origins, but rather a means to problematise or upset assumptions which suggest a natural evolution of a concept over time by identifying specific points in time when decisions were made, and particular directions were decided upon (Bacchi, 2009). It aims to show the plural and

sometimes contradictory past, and reveal the accidents, false appraisals, deviations, and faulty calculations which have led to commonly held beliefs which continue to have meaning (Foucault, 1974a).

Moreover, a history of the present extends to the influence and discursive practices connected to the production of knowledge – what has become the taken for granted truth of the present. This way of conceptualising the truth considers it not as absolute, but as having emerged from within the realm of "what can be said and thought, who can speak, when, and with what authority" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 44).

3.1.3 Critical policy analysis

This study is situated within the broad field of critical policy analysis. Critical theory sees knowledge as socially constructed, contextual, and dependent on interpretation (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). In keeping with Foucault's concepts of problematisation, power, discourse, and the discursive subject, critical policy analysis views policies as a never ending process of problem formation, constructed in particular ways to elicit particular effects (Fischer, Torgenson, Durnova, & Orsini, 2015). This approach to critical policy analysis considers policy in three ways: as discourse, as text, and as effect.

3.1.3.1 Policy as discourse

Policy as discourse has historically focused on identifying the dominant discourses at work within policy texts, and describing the effects and uses of discourse (Bacchi, 2000). However, this line of inquiry fails to explore the many influences involved in its production, dissemination, and feedback on its final form. Similarly, whilst *influences of power* are important in an analysis of policy as discourse, the discursive process cannot simply be reduced to certain key players holding and exerting power (S. Ball, 1990b). Rather, policy discourses are influenced by values, beliefs and biases which have been informed and influenced by history, context, experiences, personal interpretations, and importantly by the policy discourses that have gone before (S. Ball, 2012). An important point, therefore, is that policy as discourse can be disseminated in such a way as to evoke or appeal to these historically held values and beliefs (Altheide, 2004), and in so doing, produce a particular effect (Bacchi, 2000), namely, a situated usage.

Policy as discourse is important to this research as it demonstrates that whilst the meaning of concepts may seem at first glance to be logical, the situated use in the discursive field of education policy is much more complex as it encompasses contradiction, tensions, and multiple understandings or meanings - all influenced by historical and social contexts.

3.1.3.2 Policy as text

In the same way, *policy as text*, although influenced by literary theory, is also subject to the constraints of contradiction, tensions, multiple understandings or meanings, and influenced by historical context. Thus, when exploring policy text it must be remembered that the text is also subject to discourse in the Foucauldian sense - regulated by institutional practices and frameworks, rather than in the literary sense.

Therefore, concepts cannot be explored as singular entities of policy as discourse or policy as text as "they are implicit in each other" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 43). They are a type of *regulated practice*, which together constitute frameworks of sense and obviousness within which policy is thought, talked, and written about. It is in this discursive arena that relationships and the interconnectedness of discourse production can be explored. A discursive arena is defined as an arena in which society engages in rational discussion, with a willingness to deliberate, the purpose of which is to form a consensus of opinion (Habermas, 1992).

3.1.3.3 Policy as effect

The concept of *policy as effect* requires an appreciation that policy constitutes certain subject positions. Drawing on multiple elements of Foucault's analytic toolbox, this way of thinking accepts that discourse is a process of using words in particular ways to construct particular meanings (Bacchi, 2009; Foucault, 1974a). These meanings (the production of knowledge) in turn have effects on the discursive subject (Foucault, 1974, 1977, 1982, 1994a, 1994b). Thus, policy as discourse, policy as text, and policy as effect, are critical parts of policy analysis, and of this research. For these reasons policy formation and dissemination cannot be considered to flow in one direction, nor is it not applied in a vacuum, rather policy should be examined with a simultaneous concern for the outcomes of policy in context (Ball, 2006).

For example, Ball's notion of policy as effect, sees education policy as the main vehicle of class differentiation and class advantage, with the market allowing parents to manage and control their children's educational experience (S. Ball, 2006). The challenge for this research is to consider the misconceptions and expectations that the discourse of the market

produces. In other words, to "look for the iterations embedded within the chaos" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 43).

Critical policy analysis is, thus, not a technical analysis of the diagnostics, implementation, and evaluation of policy, but rather it is a critical analysis of policy discourses and their agendas (Bacchi, 1999, 2000, 2009, 2012a; S. Ball, 1990a, 1993, 2006, 1990b; S. Ball & Goodson, 2004; Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992). Critical policy analysis interrogates the discourses that surround policy problems, allowing knowledge to be delineated. This process exposes the situated meaning of concepts and "identifies and counterpoints antagonistic discourses – the dominant and the silenced, the 'truthful' and illegitimate" (S. Ball, 1994, p. 4). This facilitates an understanding of how concepts have arisen not from language per se, but from institutional practices, power relations and social positions (S. Ball, 1990b). Education policy, both as text and discourse, can therefore be conceptualised as establishing the rules of the game (Rawolle, 2010), and thus, policy problematisations should be seen as ways of thinking which have emerged and developed from the practices of government - rather than from people as individuals (Bacchi, 2012b).

Two prominent Foucauldian-informed policy analysts are Carol Bacchi (1999, 2000, 2009, 2012), and Stephen Ball (1990a, 1993, 1997). Bacchi's (2009) unique contribution to the field of critical policy analysis is her methodological approach inspired by Foucault's conceptual tools; the What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach. This approach offers both a conceptual framework, grounded in Foucault's theorising, and a clear analytic method for conducting the analysis.

3.1.4 Bacchi's What's the problem represented to be? approach

Carol Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to Be (WPR) approach has been used to analyse a number of policy texts both internationally and in the Australian context. These include: equal pay policy in Finland (Saari, 2011); cultural policy in Scotland (Stevenson, 2013); ethnic integration policy in Denmark (Agergaard & Michelsen la Cour, 2012); and in Australia, education policy (Bletsas & Michell, 2014; Logan, Sumsion, & Press, 2013; Southgate & Bennett, 2014); subjectification effects of health policy (S. Alexander & Coveney, 2013; Henderson & Fuller, 2011); disability policy (Marshall, 2012); and economic policy (Goodwin & Voola, 2013). In this sense, the value and efficacy of Bacchi's WPR

approach has been demonstrated, not only in education policy, but across a diverse range of policy texts (Bacchi, 2012c, p. 1).

A critical feature of the WPR approach is that,

> it has an explicitly normative agenda. It presumes that some problem representations benefit the members of some groups at the expense of others. It also takes the side of those who are harmed. The goal is to intervene to challenge problem representations that have these deleterious effects, and to suggest that issues could be thought about in ways that might avoid at least some of these effects (Bacchi, 2009, p. 44).

The WPR approach consists of six questions which guide the analysis of how policy discursively constitutes 'problems'. These questions are as follows:

1. What's the problem represented to be in specific policy?
2. What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the problem?
3. How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?
4. What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?
5. What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?
6. How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?

Bacchi (2009, p. xii)

The WPR approach is influenced by a Foucauldian conception of problematisation, as outlined above. In this regard, Bacchi (2009) suggests,

> *Every policy,* by its nature, constitutes a problematisation…because *every policy* constitutes a problematisation, it is fair to say that, in effect, we are governed *through* problematisations rather than through policies [emphasis in original]. (p. 31)

One important aspect of the WPR approach is in the way Bacchi's notion of problematisation deals with "modes of governance", "regimes of governance" and "govern –mentality" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 265). Bacchi (2009), rejects the idea that a set of particular circumstances provoke a reaction from government, instead placing the emphasis on the nature of the problems and how policies come to be assumed as necessary responses (p. 266). Consequently, the scope of the analysis becomes much broader than just a problem of governmentality, as it extends to struggles around difference, such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity or race, and everyday life (Bacchi, 2009, p. 266). This deviation means that instead

of problematisations being relatively rare, appearing in specific situations where governments become a problem (Bacchi, 2009, p. 31), they are ubiquitous.

Bacchi's WPR approach rejects an unquestioning acceptance of policy making as a means of responding to societal issues, as this operates to obscure the problematicity inherent in the political process of redefining issues as 'problems' to be solved (Turnbull, 2006). For whilst an identified societal problem is always a "construction that furthers ideological interests" (Edelman, 1998, p. 18), it also becomes obscured by the political language that is used as a tool for objective description (Edelman, 1998).

In keeping with Foucault's history of the present, Bacchi's WPR approach provides an analytic method to interrogate the institutional, physical, and administrative mechanisms which enhance and maintain the contemporary object of study, before attempting to upset assumptions about its natural evolution (Bacchi, 2009). The WPR approach also views discourse as actively shaping the 'problems', not simply responding to them (Bacchi, 2009) – a process which Fairclough (2003) suggests gives rise to "particular ways of representing aspects of the world" (p. 124). Bacchi utilises Foucault's concept of discourse as

> A group of related statements, signs and practices that creates the objects/s and domains it purports to describe, giving those objects and domains status as 'truth' or 'knowledge'. Discourses set limits on what it is possible to say or think about the objects/s they create, though they can and do contain tensions and contradictions that open up spaces for challenge and change. (Bacchi, 2009, p. 274)

Thus, the WPR approach sees discourses as complex as they overlap and contradict and constitute competing representations of policy problems (Bacchi, 2009): a process in which interested parties struggle to influence the normalities and abnormalities, the purpose and definition of concepts. Bacchi (2009) cautions that it is precisely *because* discourse has such effects that they require critical scrutiny, not replication. Therefore, in order to uncover the creation and meaning of these discursive norms, it is necessary to explore the realms of influence which are intrinsically linked to the systems of power which induce and sustain it (Davidson 1986).

As noted above, the WPR approach examines how discourses operate as constructive phenomena, shaping the identities and practices of human subjects (Luke, 1997). Bacchi's WPR approach applies this understanding of policy as effect, to extend the policy analysis

beyond an exploration of what is said or written, to explore what the discourse *does* – the effect (Bacchi, 2009). To this end Bacchi's WPR approach explores the impact of policies on subjects, as well as the processes which subjectify them (Bacchi, 2000), and considers discourse as central to the formation and construction of subjective identities. The discursive process can, thus, be described as attempting to "speak certain types of subjects into being" (Southgate & Bennett, 2014, p. 25), thus, affecting the subjects we become (Foucault, 1977).

Lastly, Bacchi's WPR approach foregrounds the need to analyse the dynamics of power, and how they operate in policy making, as they can often be used to privilege or subjugate other knowledges. The relationship between power and knowledge is, therefore, central to the WPR approach and leads to a questioning of what kind of knowledge is being considered 'true'.

The WPR approach facilitates the particular aims of this research, which are focused not on looking for the perfect answer to a given problem, but on examining how the problem has been presented, analysed, and constrained (Deacon, 2000, p. 127), and what the effects of this are. The WPR approach embodies the critical juncture between understanding policy as a discursive formation responsible for power and knowledge production, situated within a web of circulating, relational power and resistance. The WPR approach considers such knowledge not as truth, but rather what is accepted as truth, that is, as a cultural product (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 35).

Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach offers both an original methodology and scholarly paradigm by providing a mode of critical enquiry which simultaneously engages with social constructivist accounts of power, subjects and social change. The application of the Bacchi's WPR six questions can therefore contribute to an emancipatory agenda (Pereira, 2014) through an analysis of policy as discourse (Bacchi, 2000) and the critical rethinking of taken for granted truths.

Bacchi's six questions facilitate the exploration of the sources and content of discourses as means of understanding a phenomenon, including the consideration of the effect of such discourses through the following: the systems of thoughts, ideas, practices, and courses of action; the continuities and discontinuities within the discourses which have produced, contested, defended, and disseminated concepts; the assumptions upon which these are based; the structural elements of the discourse (processes and activities) which enable or

constrain interaction in social context; and what has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the concept under inquiry.

3.2 Concluding remarks

In summary, in the context of this study concepts are understood as being socially constructed categories. The deployment of Foucault's theories through Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach facilitates a critical policy analysis in which policy problematisations are seen as having been produced through discourse and the power-knowledge nexus, to become normalised. This produces an effect as the norms in the discourse become internalised producing discursive subjects. Setting the study within this paradigm facilitates an exploration of the emergence and permutations of the teacher quality discourse. The paradigm allows the concept to be understood to embody meaning and social relationships, and to constitute both subjectivity and power relations.

Chapter 4: Methodology: Operationalising the WPR approach

The previous section outlined the theoretical frameworks and analytical tools which guided this study. The study is set within social constructionism, deploying Foucault's theories through Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach. Setting the study within this paradigm facilitates a critical policy analysis and allows the concept of teacher quality to be understood to embody meaning and social relationships, and to constitute both subjectivity and power relations.

The next section describes how I deployed these tools: the methods used during the research. Providing a detailed description of the methodology and specific methods used in this study will establish the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992). In qualitative research, trustworthiness as a concept is defined as the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the research (Shenton, 2004). In ensuring the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992), the researcher makes the research conclusions readily accepted as credible, and legitimate.

I begin by outlining the research design, before explaining the rationale and process of document selection. I then describe how the analytic process was undertaken with a description of the relationship between the research questions, the theoretical framework, and Bacchi's WPR approach.

4.1 Study design

The research is a genealogy of the concept of teacher quality: a search for processes of descent and of emergence (Foucault, 1984). It is designed as a specific type of genealogy, a history of the present (Foucault, 1977), as this has as its starting point a specific observation, puzzlement or discomfiture about present practices or institutions that others may take for granted. It is designed as a critical analysis of policy discourses and their agendas (Bacchi, 1999, 2000, 2009, 2012a; S. Ball, 1990a, 1993, 2006, 1990b; S. Ball & Goodson, 2004; Bowe et al., 1992), as these allow knowledge around teacher quality to be delineated. This process exposes the situated meaning of concepts and "identifies and counterpoints antagonistic discourses – the dominant and the silenced, the "truthful' and illegitimate" (S. Ball, 1994, p. 4). This design is considered most appropriate for the intended task of tracing the emergence

of the contemporary concept teacher quality through a qualitative, critical discourse analysis of policy texts.

4.2 Policy document rationale and selection

The rationale for conducting a document analysis was threefold. First, document analysis facilitates and requires that the data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Second, policy texts are considered appropriate for this study as they represent history, goals, objectives, and substantive content (Bowen, 2009), and can, therefore, bear witness to past events (as they also provide background information and historical insight) (Bowen, 2009); they can provide data on the context within which the research operates - the complex of power and knowledge (D. Jones & Ball, 1995). Third policy documents are representative of primary manifestations of circulating discourses (Fairclough, 2003), the assumptions that underlie policy reforms (McMulloch, 2011, p. 250), and also conflict and struggle in creating meaning (Bacchi, 2009). For these reasons I have selected policy documents as they facilitate an exploration of "how something came to be" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 11).

The initial step in the process of document selection was designed to identify policy documents which played an important role in applying meaning to a concept (Bowen, 2009) – in this case teacher quality. An initial search was conducted for the period 1975 – 2007 for parliamentary reviews and policy documents. This provided an extensive initial list of documents (shown in Appendix 1).

In order to reduce the extensive list of documents I returned to the literature review for references to key policies with a particular focus on teacher quality. The literature had revealed the 1990s to be a period when neoliberal policy borrowing (Mayer, Cotton, & Simpson, 2017) - referred to as a "monistic neo-liberal agenda" (Thomson, 2001, p. 183), coincided with increasing claims about a problematic teacher education system (Cochran-Smith, 2008). This period was also cited as the beginning of significant federal intervention in teacher education in Australia (Tracey, 2001): a period where teacher quality started to emerge. The scope of my search was limited to the date the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST) were endorsed (2010), as this implied a consensus about the construct of teacher quality. This suggested an initial search period of 1990 - 2010. Having established the time period, a second step then searched for education policies using the search terms

education policy/teacher education/quality/teaching quality/teacher quality* between 1975–2007. These search terms were used as the literature had suggested quality teaching/quality teacher had become interchangeable. The results confirmed the era suggested by the literature review. Thus, purposive sampling (L. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 156) from this moment in time was considered most appropriate as it allowed a focus on data which was 'rich' and of particular interest to the research (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2013).

Having ascertained 1990 to 2010 as the initial scope for selection, the next step was to conduct a document search from the following databases using 'education policy' or 'parliamentary review' with the truncate search 'teach#', ensuring all possible variations.

- www.aph.gov.au
- www.apo.org.au
- www.trove.nla.gov.au

This step yielded 36 documents. A decision then had to be made about the inclusion/exclusion of the documents into the research data. This was done in three stages.

First, the policy texts were skimmed (Bowen, 2009) and sorted into national, state, and focus/scope of the document. Only comprehensive reviews of educational policy were selected as they were considered most appropriate to the study (as they acknowledged a wide variety of quality issues) and kept the sample consistent. Those which had a very narrow focus/scope on a specific curriculum area, for example, a review of *ICT* competency framework for teachers, or a review of the quality of teaching and learning specific to the science syllabus, were discounted.

The next step was to subject the remaining documents to a citation analysis: a type of bibliometric method which employs a quantitative analysis of their citation counts, using the data to construct a citation graph (Thomson Reuters, 2008). This was used to establish which documents had been most cited, as a proxy for those that were most influential in the field. This process began by searching the following databases:

- JSTOR Education Subset, and A+ databases
- Informit
- Web of Science
- ProQuest Education
- Google Scholar
- Scopus
- PlumX

This quickly became problematic as the search terms, which were now titles of parliamentary reports and reviews, gave varying results, with some citations found to have errors. For example, an extra space between words, or varying words such as 'on' instead of 'in', and 'enquiry' instead of 'inquiry', meant the citation count contained errors. To address this, I conducted several search terms for each policy across the various databases, and found the ProQuest, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases to have the most reliable results. Figure 1 shows the results of the bibliometric analysis.

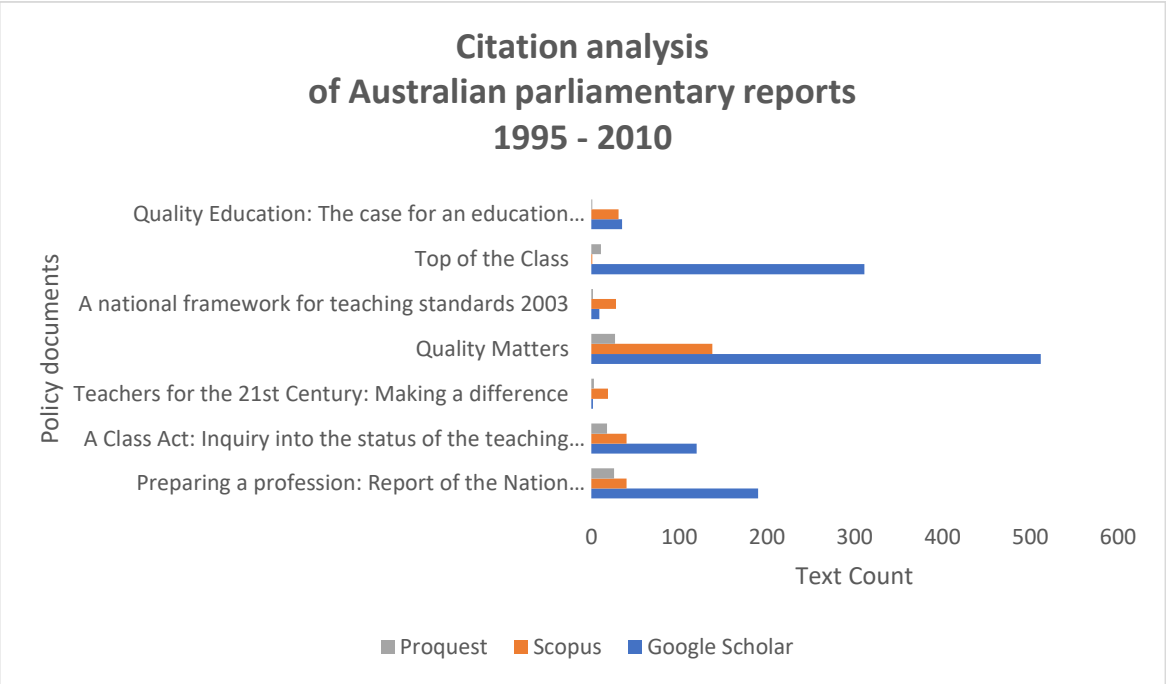


Figure 1: Citation analysis of Australian parliamentary reports 1995–2010

Next the raw data from these documents were uploaded to NVivo and initially analysed for the key terms: *quality, teacher quality, quality teacher, dispositions, and teacher attributes* (see Figure 2). Based on the count of the specific terms being used, this reduced the document list to four. The report *Preparing a Profession: Report of the National Standard and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education* was then eliminated for two reasons. First, it was found to have substantially less references to the key term teacher quality, than two of the other documents, which is important in a study of a particular phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). Second, it was compiled by

the Australian Council of Deans of Education. To support the analyses of shifts in national government policy, the decision was taken to focus on national government enquiries.

Applying these criteria produced three documents based on the following: 1) their usefulness (citation count teacher quality); 2) their relevance (most influential in the field); and 3) all three documents had been commissioned by the Commonwealth of Australia (for consistency).

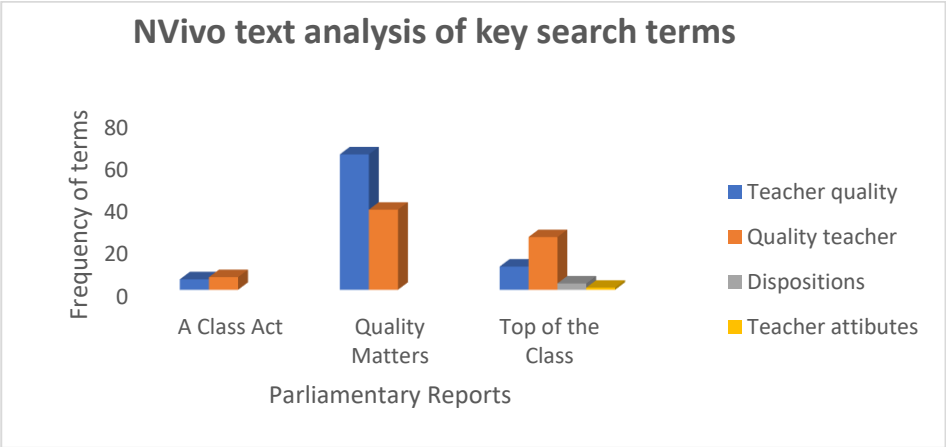


Figure 2: Nvivo text analysis of key search terms

The first report, *A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession* (1998) aimed to examine the tertiary levels of trainee teachers, and the research literature on the quality of Australian teacher education to identify features which significantly affected the quality of classroom practice. The second report, *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices: Report of the Review of Teacher Education* (2000) was commissioned to consider and advise on the initial preparation and continuing development of teachers with a particular focus on issues and strategies for improving the quality of teachers at all stages of their careers. The third report, T*op of the Class: Report on the Inquiry into Teacher Education* (2007), aimed to ascertain who had responsibility for which elements of teacher education, and to report on whether the current system was the most effective way to ensure the preparation of high quality teachers.

Together, given their scope and status as national reviews/reports, these policy documents represent the primary manifestation of publicly circulating discourses regarding teacher quality in the following ways:

- They denote the "rules, opinions and advice on how to behave as one should", and the "framework for everyday conduct" (Foucault, 1985, p. 12) in relation to quality teachers – in other words, the regulatory structures of discursive subjects.
- They illustrate struggles for meaning both in the public debate and policy direction (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Snyder, 2008; Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997).
- These multiple texts represent both specific moments in time when teacher quality discourse became prominent in the public domain, whilst at the same time tracing and building a comprehensive understanding of the problem representation implicit in policy produced over time (Bacchi, 2009, p. 20).

The next step was to begin the analysis of the chosen documents and create an archive organised and sequenced both chronologically and thematically (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013).

4.3 Analysis

Three sequential levels of analysis were conducted on the selected documents. The first level was in preparation for the second and third – the application of Bacchi's (2009) six questions in the What's the problem represented to be? approach. The preparatory first level of analysis examined the content of each chapter of each of the reports, carefully tracing where mentions, ideas and concepts (or threads) of quality began to emerge. The second level of analysis applied the first question in Bacchi's WPR approach to identify how these threads coalesced or knotted into what could be identified as major discourses within the report, providing insight into what the problem was represented to be. The third level of analysis applied Bacchi's (2009) WPR questions two through six to explore the presuppositions and assumptions which underpinned the logic in each of the reports. This level of analysis also explored the effects of the dominant discourses, including major tensions that remained unresolved. Finally, in accordance with Bacchi's framework, the third level of the analysis considered how the problem could have been thought about differently.

My decision to use Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach, which is inspired by Foucauldian theory was based on its capacity to generate a 'history of the present' through a critical analysis of key documents and the discourses within them. Table 2, below, shows how it provides a framework and approach to generate answers to the three major research questions of this project.

Bacchi's WPR Questions		Research Questions
No. 1	What is the problem represented to be?	**1.** What factors have shaped the emergence teacher quality? **2**. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality?
No. 2	What presuppositions/assumptions underpin it?	**1.** What factors have shaped the emergence teacher quality? **2**. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality? **3**. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And more specifically, on teachers?
No. 3	How has this representation of the problem come about?	**1.** What factors have shaped the emergence teacher quality? **2**. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality?
No. 4	What is left unproblematic?	**2**. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality? **3**. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And more specifically, on teachers?
No. 5	What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?	**3**. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And more specifically, on teachers?
No. 6	How and where has this representation of the problem been produced? Disseminated? And defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted, and replaced?	Discussion & Conclusion

Table 2: Relationship between WPR questions and research questions

4.3.1 1st level analysis

The 1st level of analysis was in preparation for the 2nd and 3rd, and consisted of a content analysis (Bowen, 2009) of each of the key documents, involving two steps: skimming and exploring. I first skimmed the documents and made a manual mind map for each policy to "to hear what was said" (Auerbach, 2003, p. 43) (see Appendix 2). I then manually coded (Basit, 2003) the main discourses surrounding quality to build an initial understanding of the concept in context.

In order to make my text manageable (Auerbach, 2003) and capable of being electronically analysed, the data was then imported into NVivo (QSR International, 2013) computer assisted qualitative data analysis software and a project created.

As I was already familiar with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST) (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2017), and the concept of teacher quality contained therein, I then adopted a "priori approach" (G. Ryan & Bernard, 2003p. 88): one which looks for themes which come from the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied. It followed therefore, that my initial electronic analysis (Basit, 2003) should search for any mention of ideas or concepts related to teacher quality, some of which had been gleaned from the quality standards as communicated by AITSL - as they were arbiters of teacher quality in this context. Given these qualities or competencies were

deemed important enough to form the basis of teacher registration and certification, it was reasonable to assume that they would be evident in my data. However, it quickly became apparent that the specifics of the teaching standards were not the main themes in the documents being analysed.

As the main focus of the research explores the concept of teacher quality, I decided to use the search term quality as I had in my manual coding stage. This allowed me to first "look for the appearance of an idea" (Denscombe, 2004, p. 271), and in turn to identify where ideas and concepts (discursive threads) about quality emerged; this was an inductive process carried out through an initial electronic coding exercise.

The resulting coded 'discursive threads of quality' formed the basis of my 1st level data analysis (referred to as nodes in NVivo). Having coded the data, I then analysed the order and repeatability (counts) of particular statements related to quality. These were noted and mapped in each chapter of each report.

At the end of the 1st level of analysis I had compiled a table of ideas about quality for each chapter of policy text, an example of which appears below (Table 3). I also organised the identified threads thematically. Appendix 3 shows the thematic threads of quality found in all the chapters of the *Ramsey Review* (2000).

Chapter 1	Chapter 2, 3 & 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8
Quality of teachers' work	Quality teachers	Quality teaching	Quality in other professions	Quality	Teacher quality
Quality teachers and teaching	Quality assurance processes	Quality schools and systems	Quality teacher education	Quality teachers	Quality teacher, teaching and learning
High quality students	Quality preparation	Quality of tomorrow's teachers	Quality assurance	Teaching quality	Quality improvement
Quality teacher education and teaching	Quality teaching	Quality of teacher education	Teacher quality	Issues of quality	Quality pedagogy
Quality profession	Quality work	Quality focus	Quality focus	Quality control	Quality standards
Quality curriculum	Quality profession	Quality teachers	Quality people	Quality of what they do	Quality professional practice
Quality leadership	Quality practicum	Quality teacher preparation	Quality professional experience	Quality movements	Quality of student learning
Quality initial teacher education	Quality induction	Teacher quality		Quality management	Quality improvement
	intellectual quality	Quality applicants		Quality assurance	Quality educational practices
	Quality teacher education	Quality profession		Quality outcomes	Quality guarantees
	Quality mechanisms	Quality initial teacher education		Quality reviews	
	Quality initial and continuing teacher education	Quality professional experience		Quality standards	
	Quality performance	Quality educational leadership		Quality code of ethics	
	Teacher quality	Quality professional practice		Teacher quality	
	Quality professional practice	Quality student learning		Quality people	
		Quality teaching and learning		Quality initial teacher training	
		Hemorrhaging of quality		Quality teaching	
				Quality of new entrants	
				Quality profession	

Table 3: Discursive threads of quality in each chapter of the Ramsey Review (2000)

4.3.2 2nd level analysis

The 2nd level of analysis applied the first question in Bacchi's WPR approach "What's the problem represented to be?". This level of analysis identified the discursive threads which

coalesced into major discursive knots and came to represent the problem of quality in the reports.

4.3.2.1 Question 1: What's the problem represented to be?

My approach to the 2nd level of analysis started from the premise that what one proposes as the solution reveals what one thinks is problematic – "What is it hoping to change?" (Bacchi, 2009, p. x). For this reason, in each report, I began with articulations of the solutions and worked backwards to the discursive representation of the problems that these solutions set out to resolve. I began by developing overarching theoretical constructs from my coded threads identified in the first level of analysis. I filtered, selected and sorted the coded threads of quality until I had established the main quality constructs as: profession; practice; initial teacher education; teacher; assurance; outcomes and systems. Categories and sub categories were then added and coded as they became apparent. Examples of sub categories are: assurance (indicators), outcomes (performance), and systems (programs, mechanisms). I did this as discretely as possible whilst retaining fidelity to the integrity of the whole (L. Cohen et al., 2011, p. 239).

I was acutely aware that I had prior knowledge of the trajectory of contemporary education policy around teacher quality. In order to address the effect of this prior knowledge on my interpretation I undertook a process of self problematisation. This allowed me to remain open to plausible rival explanations and discontinuity in my interpretation. Passages of text surrounding the term quality and its synonyms (Basit, 2003) provided me with a deeper understanding of meanings being applied to quality in this context. Analysis of the documents made it apparent that the meaning of the term teacher quality was not universal – there were plural and sometimes contradictory meanings and viewpoints within and across documents.

Next, I had to identify those discourses which represented problematisations of quality. Keeping the coding units as defined as possible to make the analysis easier (Guest et al., 2013), specific attention was paid to the co-location of other terms and words (Saldana, 2009) around quality. The reverberate nature of coding – "comparing data to data, data to code, code to code, code to category, category to category, category back to data" (Saldana, 2009, p. 45), meant I had to condense and reorganise several times; a process which was cyclical rather than linear (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As I reorganised and reanalysed data, some previously coded text was later deemed marginal and was dropped (Saldana, 2009).

I developed positive and negative sentiment nodes. This process identified which were problematic constructs of quality as they were associated with crisis, change, deficit, or reform. I also developed subject position nodes to reflect the way teachers were being presented as passive or active agents, a process which uncovered pluralistic representations of the problem, that is, multiple problem representations inherent in each policy text (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5).

Repeating ideas related to the identified problematisations and associated passages of text were grouped and coded as more became apparent (Auerbach, 2003), a process which saw some discourses knot and coalesce to become major discourses representative of problematisations. I then used word counting techniques (Tesch, 1990), to note the frequency of particular terms and words being used around each problematisation. The counts allowed me to discern the internal strength of the identified discourse.

In summary, this second level of analysis explored how the discursive threads or ideas about quality (found in the first level of analysis), coalesced and knotted into major discourses to form specific problematisations of the concept of educational quality, and the quality of teachers being trained in initial teacher education and working in schools. A visual representation for each policy is presented in each of the analysis chapters. Figure 3 shows one example of the visual representation from the *Crowley Report* (1998). The strength of the discourse is represented by the size of the circle.

Figure 3: Discourses of quality evident in the Crowley Report (1998)

4.3.3 3rd level analysis

The third level analysis applied questions two through six of Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to probe more deeply into the problem representations identified in the 2nd level analysis. These questions allowed me to inquire into the deep-seated presuppositions and assumptions which underpinned the logic in the identified discourses. This level of analysis also allowed me to identify tensions between discourses, to consider any effects produced by the discourses, and to consider whether the problems could have been thought about differently.

As the concept of teacher quality is understood as being influenced from the past whilst being orientated toward the future, this part of the analysis allowed an obvious separation of the analytical (identification of discourses) and interpretive inquiry (illuminate meaning) thus,

aiding the discussion and contestation of the problems and solutions as they were represented to be.

4.3.3.1 Question 2: What presuppositions and assumptions underpin the problem representations?

Ascertaining meaning within a document involves understanding the underlying values and assumptions (L. Cohen et al., 2011, p. 253). Question 2 of Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach is specifically designed to explore these to identify the conceptual logic. I also explored whether key concepts and themes were unique to a particular moment in time or were evident across all policy texts, examining for interdiscursivity (Saldana, 2009); particular articulations which operate to achieve a relative permanence or stability of statements between documents (Fairclough, 2013).

The historical/political/social knowledge gained from the literature informed my exploration, and allowed me to make sense of the influences of social/historical context, together with "modes of governance" or "political rationalities" (Bacchi, 2009, p.6). As my 1st and 2nd level coding had de-contextualised some of the text segments (as they were detached from their original place in the text), the next step was to re-contextualise (Basit, 2003) in order to explore the surrounding text for rationales behind the problematisations. NVivo facilitated this step with relative ease, bringing together text within and among different nodes. I found inter-relationships between policy discourses which helped to identify presuppositions and assumptions which needed further categorisation. New categories were created, such as the discourses of economic rationality, deficit, crisis, and accountability, which built a 'common sense' account of the logic underpinning the documents and the dominant discourses and representations of the problem. These categories also revealed a nexus between policy documents – what stayed the same – and what evolved or disappeared.

This question allowed a secondary critical reflection of the repeatability of statements, and intertext discourses – serving as a clarification exercise (Bacchi, 2009, p. 3). It was both a critical strategy and historical process – one in which I elaborated the logics which had shaped the emergence of teacher quality as an object of thought.

The presuppositions and assumptions which were found reflected the findings of the literature review. For example, first the assumption of deficit was a reflection of cultural

assumptions such as the proclivity to blame teachers (Levin, 2004), and historical assumptions - mattress philosophy (Haubrich, 1965). Second, the assumption of accountability and of individual responsibility, reflected the political and social conditions, that of the entrepreneurial self (Connell, 2009), and the political priorities of the accountability regime (Clarke, 2014).

4.3.3.2 Question 3: How has this representation of the problem come about?

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), the context of the documents needs to be examined in order to be able to understand the meanings being applied in their time (p. 253). Bacchi's (2009) third question required me to explore the broad educational, social, political, and economic factors which had potentially impacted on each policy moment in historical time. This question also explored the limitations posed by the way in which discourse had been constructed to give meaning. This is important as it operates to maintain and provide the discourse's ongoing validity (Fairclough, 2003). As part of this question, previous Australian policies, and international policy influence on Australia's education policy were identified and examined.

To explore how this representation of the problem had come about, I first had to ascertain the role of the term quality as representative of the legitimate worth of education. I looked for discursive patterns of "commonalities and difference" (M. Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 9), contradictions, and changes in trajectory in the meaning being assigned to quality both within, and across policy texts. Relations between meanings and their contexts (Flick, 2006, p. 299) had to be clarified. As a result, new categories emerged, for example, quality as choice, quality as national prosperity, quality as equity, quality as leadership, and quality as relationships.

Next the analysis focused on how the problem of the more specific teacher quality had come about. To do this I first looked for consensus of meaning – "agreements, definitions, conformity, uniformity" (Glaser, 1978, p. 75). I then examined whether each parliamentary report, whilst representing a specific moment in time, also contributed to next. For example, as a result of specific decisions made in the *Crowley Report* (1998), a shift toward conceptualising quality in terms of individuals, a 'people' category (Bacchi, 2009, p. 11), emerged in the form of teacher quality. According to Bacchi (2009) these insights can illuminate how a problem "took on a particular shape" (p. 11), and serves to demonstrate

the ease with which the practice of interdiscursivity can operate to enable the *continuous* targeting of teachers, facilitating an easily accepted representation of truth (Bacchi, 2009).

The analysis also looked for any indication of relationships or implied causal effects between discourses, for example, between discourses of 'teacher dispositions' and discourses of 'teacher selection'. To test the trustworthiness of my analysis and eliminate and consider plausible rival explanations (K. Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Denzin, 1978), I again searched for synonyms for my category of 'teacher dispositions'. These included *beliefs*, *attitude*s, *conduct*, *character*, and *behaviours*. I then used matrix analysis to examine the data for relationships among these categories (LeCompte & Preissle, 2003). This allowed me to reassure myself that my categories, descriptions, and the relationships between them accurately represented the data, and so to ensure "the trustworthiness of inferences drawn from data" (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992 pg. 644).

A repeatability (counts) analysis of statements related to teacher quality allowed me to graph the changing discourses by percentage coverage of each document. This process allowed me to create a visual representation of the discourses associated with the concept of teacher quality which were gaining prominence over the period 1998—2007, serving to add to the interpretation of the meaning being applied to the construct of teacher quality, that is the change over time. As Figure 4 shows, the results were stark.

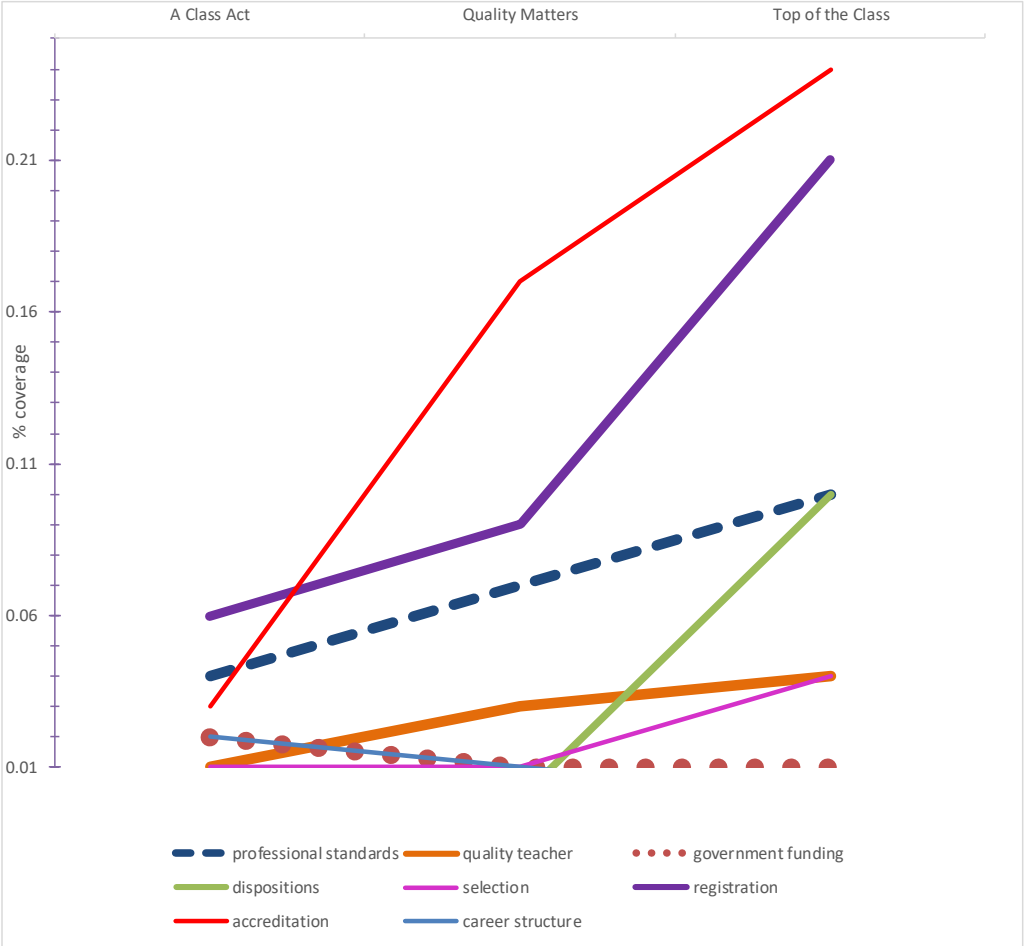


Figure 4: Discourses related to teacher quality gaining prominence 1998—2007

4.3.3.3 Question 4: What is left unproblematic?

Thus far the analysis had focused on the problem representations, the conceptual logics underpinning them, and how the concept of teacher quality had come about. As a critical approach, the research was also interested in conflict and power (L. Cohen et al., 2011, p. 254). According to Purvis (1985) a critical interpretation of documents from a feminist point of view would use documentary evidence to challenge male notions of truth and draw attention to the experiences of women. In a similar way, given the construct of 'quality' in education is fluid, the focus of this question was to identify the tensions, contested issues, contradictions and limitations in the way that teacher quality was being assigned meaning, to in turn challenge the notion of truth conveyed in any particular representation of the concept.

Passages of text were analysed cautiously, conscious that that they were not necessarily complete recordings of events that have occurred (Bowen, 2009). For that reason, words were not simply 'lifted' from the policy documents, but rather they were cross referenced to other discourses in the report which represented disagreements, antagonistic relationships

between discourses, and other possibilities of meaning (Foucault, 1972) - competing claims to 'truth'. The analytic process was used to understand the meaning and contribution of the discourse to the concept it was attempting to create.

My intention here was to reveal the plurality of ideas, tensions, and conceptualisations in the discourses which had been left unproblematic. The analysis found tensions between the following discourses: suggestions for increased government spending on education; suggestions for a greater emphasis on teachers' job security, teachers' remuneration and teachers' career paths; and suggestions for increased recognition of teacher professional judgement in achieving a quality education. I also looked for salient points, such as the changing purpose and use of a professional standards framework, and silences: things that should have been part of the discussion but weren't, such as the interconnectedness between social policy and education policy. I also explored for misrepresentations and/or simplifications as these can also signify tensions which have been left problematic (Bacchi, 2009). Many of the issues identified in this step were found to have been constrained by the presuppositions and assumptions identified in Question 2.

According to Bacchi (2009), dividing practices can also reveal tensions between discourses. Guided by this, the analysis allowed me tease out how the reports had constructed and rationalised the norm of quality against its opposite. For example, an Institute of Teachers was constructed as a quality institution, and by implication - the union was not.

4.3.3.4 Question 5: What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?

This question demands a deep understanding and analysis of policy discourse, not just as an idea to solve a given problem, but also as legitimising particular practices (Bacchi, 2009). I now considered the effects of the policy discourses on the subject – the teacher. Guided by Bacchi's (2009) three categories of effects, I examined the discourses for surfaces of emergence (Foucault, 1974a): those where differences from the normative conceptual codes began to emerge.

The first category was 'discursive effects'. This looked for discourses which were attempting to create a version of teacher quality as truth. This is important as it gives rise to a legitimization to a particular representation of teacher quality and serves to silence alternative, competing claims. These discourses can signify "what can be said and thought, who can speak, when, and with what authority" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 44), and, thus, shape and determine

discursive effects. For example, the positioning of the creation of an Institute of Teachers as both possible and desirable (Bacchi, 2009), functioned to rule out of de-emphasise alternatives.

The second categorisation was 'subjectification effects' – referring to the subject positions made available or produced by the discourses. This step of the analysis was guided by Foucault's "dividing practices" theory (Foucault, 1982, p. 777), which is a discursive practice which serves to set one group of people against another. This gives rise to subjects thinking and feeling about themselves as different to others (Bacchi, 2009, p. 16). For example, subject positions of competent-incompetent, compliant-non-compliant, and professional-unprofessional were made available.

I questioned what it was that teachers needed to obtain, or be able to do, or believe to ensure they met the construct of a quality professional, of teacher quality and of delivering quality teaching. Human categories framed teachers as quality in three ways. In response, I created a humanist theme which I titled: *On what type of subject does this concept rely?* Initially there were two categories: 'collective' and 'individual' (shown in Figure 5). Subsequent sub categories were assigned as per their dynamics of division (Bacchi, 2009), and coded accordingly. These were as follows:

- Collectivist - as a member of a quality group (professional status or unionised)
- Individualist - as a provider of quality practice (pedagogy)
- Individualist – as in possession of quality dispositions (behaviours and attitudes)

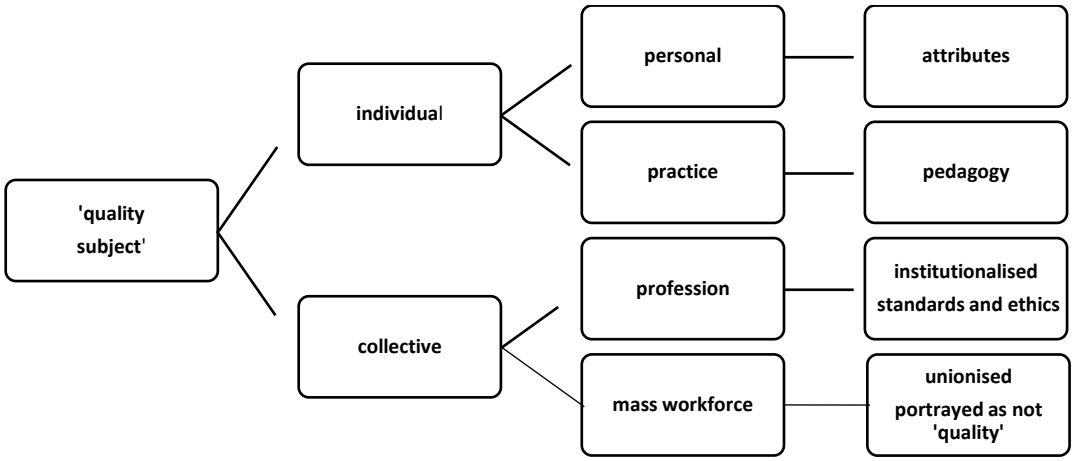


Figure 5: Categories of collective and individual teacher quality coded in the data

The third category was that of the 'lived effects' - the direct effect of the construct of teacher quality on people's lives. The analysis looked for processes and procedures (Bacchi, 2009) which would enable these effects as they indicate meaning. One such example was the standardised vision of teacher quality, which served to elicit lived effects such as desirable skills, behaviours, and values. Thus, these constitute the lived effect the discourse was attempting to achieve.

4.3.3.5 Question 6: How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be (or has been) questioned, disrupted, and replaced and or/replicated?

The final question focuses on that which has been de-problematized - the alternative viewpoints, counter discourses and those which have been silenced. The aim at this point of the WPR approach was to critique the problem representations with a view to following alternative trajectories and opening other spaces for challenge (Bacchi, 2009). These *spaces for challenge* are discussed in each analytic chapter, and in the discussion chapter.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations can often be overlooked when conducting document analysis as there is no direct interaction with the authors of the documents (L. Cohen et al., 2011). However, ethical issues can still arise when prominent institutions are named in the research and their reputations questioned. This research has been disseminated in a respectful manner to minimise any offence to authors' opinions and recommendations.

Legal issues such as copyright, freedom of information and data protection have been considered as these are highly relevant to historical and documentary research. However, as the documents being analysed in this study are freely available with full public access, any legal implications were considered null.

In summary, this chapter has outlined the research design and explained the rationale and process of the document selection. This chapter also provided a description of the relationship between the research questions, the theoretical framework, and Bacchi's WPR approach.

Using the lens policy as discourse, (Bacchi, 2000; S. Ball, 1993), the next three analytic chapters trace how the concept of quality in education evolves, and comes to represent several specific constructions of quality in relation to teachers and teaching.

Chapter 5: Tracing the problematisation of teacher quality in the *Crowley Report* (1998) – *A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession*

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study and set the concept of teacher quality within the context of the global neoliberal imaginary. Chapter 2 provided a review of the literature revealing teacher quality to be much more complex than the simple good/bad dichotomy that is presented in the APST. The aim of this study is therefore to understand the factors which have influenced the emergence of teacher quality and allowed it to become so dominant in education policy. Chapter 3 developed the theoretical lens through which my policy analysis will proceed.

I have suggested that the situated meaning of quality in Australian education policy arises from the way in which discourses, institutional practices, power relations, and social position, combine to construct meaning (Bacchi, 2009; S. Ball, 1990b). These constructed meanings are in turn influenced by historical and social context, including previous educational policy and personal interpretation. Thus the concept of quality in educational policy can be understood as having been produced and determined by "what can be said and thought, who can speak, when, and with what authority" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 44).

Using the lens of policy as discourse, (Bacchi, 2000; S. Ball, 1993), the next three chapters conduct an analyses of the three key documents. This chapter traces how the concept of quality emerges in the *Parliamentary Report: A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession* (Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998) hereafter referred to as the *Crowley Report* after its first author. The *Crowley Report* (1998) is important as it represents a discursive arena where multiple concepts or ideas about quality emerge and coalesce or 'knot' into discourses that come to represent several specific constructions of quality in relation to teachers and teaching.

This chapter begins by providing a background to the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the terms of reference. Three levels of analysis follow. The first level of analysis is in preparation for the second and third – the application of Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? approach. The first level examines the content of each chapter of the report, carefully tracing

where ideas (or discursive threads) of quality begin to emerge. The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's framework to identify how these discursive threads coalesce or knot into major discourses within the report and come to represent the problems. The third level of the analysis applies questions two through six of Bacchi's (2009) WPR framework to probe more deeply into these problem representations, and the subsequent proposals for change. These inquire about the rationales for the proposals: the deep-seated presuppositions and assumptions which underpin the logic in the policy proposals. The WPR framework also allows me to identify tensions in the discourse and consider any effects produced by the discourse. Lastly this level of analysis considers whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

5.2 Background

The initial inquiry into the status of the teaching profession was conceived in 1996 by the Conservative Liberal Government led by Prime Minister John Howard. It was undertaken by the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee in 1997, and chaired by Senator Rosemary Crowley, a member of the Australian Labor Party and former medical practicioner. Senator John Tierney, a Conservative Liberal Party member and former senior lecturer in education at the University of Newcastle, was deputy chair. The remaining Committee members comprised economists, teachers, and management consultants. The *Crowley Report* (1998) included submissions from three hundred stakeholders including the following: Catholic and independent schools, universities, principals' associations, education and research services, unions, the Council of Deans of Education, youth and family services, primary and secondary teachers, students, and professional associations.

Included with the published *Crowley Report* (1998) was a six-page *Minority Report*. The *Minority Report* was written by Conservative Government Senators Tierney, Ferris and Synon to formally document their counter position to the recommendations put forward by the predominantly Australian Labor Party (ALP) and Democrat Crowley Committee.

5.3 First level analysis: Identifying the discursive threads of quality in chapters of the *Crowley Report* (1998)

5.3.1 Chapter 1: "Terms of Reference"

The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) terms of reference were to consider "the status of teachers and the development of the profession during the next five years" (p. vi), and to make recommendations in relation to six issues, the first four of which made no reference to quality. These four were as follows: 1) to describe community attitudes towards teachers and the ways in which schools operate; 2) to examine the expectations of teachers regarding their careers, and in particular those issues which bear most significantly upon job satisfaction, stress and their ability to carry out their work efficiently and effectively; 3) to develop a national profile of Australia's teachers according to age, gender, qualifications, experience, salary levels and career history; and 4) to assess the levels of supply and demand for workforce planning.

The term quality, and the related synonym *best practice*, were used in points five and six of the terms of reference. These were as below:

> 5. Examine the tertiary entrance levels of teacher trainees and the research literature on the *quality of Australian teacher education programs* [emphasis added] and identify those features which bear significantly upon the *quality of classroom practice* [emphasis added].
>
> 6. Describe *best practice* [emphasis added] in the induction of newly-trained teachers into schools, and identify any significant shortcomings in induction or on-going professional development which require urgent attention. (1998, p. vi)

The discursive threads of quality found in the Terms of Reference are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Discursive threads of quality found in the Crowley Reports' Terms of Reference

Discursive threads of quality found in the Crowley Report's Terms of Reference
Quality of teacher education programs Quality of classroom practice Best practice induction/professional development

5.3.2 Chapter 2: "Taking Teaching Seriously"

Chapter 2 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) began with the assertion that there were two crises "infecting the profession" (p. 8), these were noted to be: a widespread "crisis in morale amongst teachers" (p. 1) and a "crisis of confidence in the private and public discourses about teaching and education" (p. 6). The report stressed that the "serious" (p. 5) crisis of

morale among teachers was as a result of teachers' perception that governments' were in retreat from education, and that reflected the "value" (p. 5) placed on teachers. This chapter noted that the effect of decreased funding of education had meant teachers frequently struggled to "do more with less, while their efforts were frequently undermined by ill-informed or gratuitous criticism" (p. 5), and that this worked "against *quality teaching*" [emphasis added] (p. 2).

In addition to acknowledging that alarmist media reports, feminisation of the profession, unsupportive minister, the absence of support services, the lack of career progression, and shrinking budgets (p. 1) made teaching a "complex and demanding activity" (p. 1). This chapter also stated there was "extraordinary unanimity of views about the key issues" (p. 5), which had been "revealed in over 300 submissions" (p. 5). These were noted to be "the complexities of contemporary schooling, whether in curriculum, technology, school based management or student welfare" (p. 5), as these had meant demands on teachers' "skills, time and energy were at an all-time high" (p. 5).

The *Crowley Report* (1998) indicated that the aforementioned crises were undermining *quality assurance* and drew attention to the unique placement of government in relation to teaching and teachers. The report stated,

> Governments, representing the public interest have been largely both producers and users of the product/service called 'teachers'/'teaching'. Governments also significantly determine the conditions under which these products/services are used – that is, the conditions in schools. This makes the issue of *quality assurance* [emphasis added] peculiarly problematic … governments not only influence both the product (teachers) and the conditions under which their services are used (schools) but are responsible for paying for both of them! (p. 13)

This chapter stated that based on the evidence presented, the report was in a position to recommend some broad strategies to enable the teaching profession to become the "fully credible, standards based and properly recognised profession that is required" (p. 16), emphasising that "the limited state-based registration mechanisms which currently exist are inadequate for assuring *teacher quality*" [emphasis added] (p. 18).

It is important to note, that this chapter stressed "there was no major crisis of *quality in Australian's teaching force*" [emphasis added] (p. 6) but rather, the impact of "budgetary constraints" (p. 5) on education was

> little short of desperate, and one which demands a concerted effort by governments to fund schools at a level more commensurate with the demands placed upon them, and to place *quality teaching* [emphasis added] at the heart of a *quality education provision* [emphasis added]. (p. 5)

In this regard this chapter suggested governments should exercise their educational responsibilities for students through a focus on

> the *quality and well being* [emphasis added] of teachers … it is the Committee's strong belief that the most powerful leverage for improving education lies with a skilled and *high quality teaching force* [emphasis added]. Any effort applied to enhancing teaching will multiply the effects on student learning. (p. 8)

This chapter suggested that, therefore, school reform would be best approached by a focus on teachers and their professional standards, as standards are essentially concerned with "*quality assurance*" [emphasis added] and accountability (p. 12). The report explained that "*quality assurance"* [emphasis added] is generally understood as the process by which users (but also producers) of a service or product can be confident of its consistency, reliability, safety and to some extent its "value for money" (p. 12). The report suggested this made the issue of quality assurance peculiarly problematic because of the aforementioned unique placement of government.

The *Crowley Report* (1998) declared that both government and the teaching profession were mutually responsible for the standard of Australian schooling, and so as a solution to this peculiar problem, the report deemed it necessary to clarify which standards were more properly the province of which group: where the accountability lines should be drawn, and responsibilities separated. This chapter suggested that governments should be responsible for "the *quality of the resources and the working conditions* [emphasis added] in schools" (p. 13). However, the report recognised that a highly resourced school could not ensure a "*quality education* [emphasis added] without teachers who can perform to the relevant professional standard" (p. 15), and that, therefore, a registration body should be responsible for certifying the '*quality and advanced standing* [emphasis added] of individual teachers" (p. 18). The report stressed that teachers "must enjoy a strong sense of ownership" (p. 18) and "exercise a powerful influence over the deliberations and actions of the body" (p. 18).

However, having stressed that teachers should have autonomy over their own professional standards and registration body, this chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) declared that there were a number of reasons why governments should also be involved. It stated,

> Education, and a quality school system, remain a fundamental responsibility of government. Governments are the major employers of teachers, and it is in the interests of governments that their employees are highly skilled and effective. It is a simple matter of equity that young people, regardless of where they reside, should enjoy the benefits of quality teaching. Given the mobility of many Australian families, it is important that there is consistency of teaching quality in all Australia's schools, government and non-government. In helping to establish a national professional teaching standards and registration body, governments would be able to demonstrate their commitment to appropriate quality assurance of teacher knowledge and skill across Australia's school systems. (p. 20)

In summary this chapter of the report stressed that whilst there was no crisis in the quality in teaching, there were however a number issues such as the perceived government retreat from education, and teachers being subjected to gratuitous criticism whilst being expected to do "more with less" (p. 5), which were impacting the quality of the education system, teacher status, and teacher well-being. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 of the Crowley Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 of the Crowley Report
High quality preservice training
Quality teaching
Quality assurance
Quality and well-being
Quality of resources
Quality school system
Teacher quality

5.3.3 Chapter 3 and 4: "Status and Professionalism" and "Perceptions of Teacher Status"

Chapter 3 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) entitled "Status and Professionalism" considered the "factors which enhance teacher status and professionalism and those which undermine it" (p. 23).

This chapter firstly defined the concept of status: both group status and individual status. This was considered an important distinction, one which the report went to some length to emphasise, declaring it demonstrated an apparent contradiction between "the esteem in which individual teachers might be held and that in which teachers as a group might be held" (p .28). The report then used this distinction to justify the proposal that teachers needed to be assigned group status, suggesting that if teachers were members of a professional group, they would be "presumed to possess the *appropriate qualities* [emphasis added] until proven

otherwise" (p. 28). The report does not define appropriate qualities, rather it alludes to "highly valued and specialised knowledge and skills" (p. 28).

This chapter then considered the factors which impacted teacher status, suggesting that "increasing casualization" (p. 32) of the workforce negatively affected status as it was:

> traditionally associated with low status occupations and its widespread introduction into teaching can be expected to have an adverse impact on general community perceptions of teachers' status and on teacher morale, not to mention the *quality of education* [emphasis added] in our schools, to which continuity and stability of staffing make an important contribution. (p. 32)

Next this chapter considered the link between status and salary. The Department of School Education, NSW said in their submission that:

> if we wished to attract and retain sufficient numbers of *high quality graduates* [emphasis added] we needed to raise the status of teachers within the community ...therefore...we needed to show the real value of teachers' work by increasing their salaries in real terms. (p. 34)

This chapter then considered the role of unions and their contribution to enhancing or undermining teacher status. Teachers and trade unions pointed to the inappropriateness of teachers having to "demonstrate productivity gains and to trade off conditions in return for salary increases" (p. 37). The submission from the Australian Council of Trade Union maintained that such an approach to wage bargaining had:

> added to the frustrations of teachers as they are faced with choices which include further reducing the *quality of teaching* (emphasis added) and also making colleagues redundant in order to justify a wage increase. (p. 37)

Chapter 4 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) appraised perceptions of teachers' and schools "in the general community, among parents, among students, and among teachers themselves" (p. 41). The submission from the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania pointed out:

> There is an interesting distinction that is made in people's minds that when they are asked about the *quality of schools and of teachers* (emphasis added) and they are asked about their local school, they speak very highly of it. If they are asked about government schools in Australia as a whole then that rating drops in the order of 25 or 30 per cent. (p. 42)

Attributing this discrepancy to the "negative reporting and stereotyping by the media" (p. 42), and the "politicization of education" (p. 95), the *Crowley Report* (1998) quoted survey results to validate this view. The survey found:

> 48% of all respondents gave Tasmanian government schools state-wide an A or B rating (out of five possible ratings, with A being the highest); for local schools the figure was 63%. Two thirds of these respondents considered *teacher quality* [emphasis added] a major contributor to their high rating. (p. 49)

Thus, this chapter built a strong argument to suggest negative reporting and stereotyping by the media impacted on perceptions of schools and teachers as a whole, whereas such negativity could be overridden by an individual's exposure to local schools and teachers. This chapter did however point out that media can impact the level of parental support given to teachers. The *Crowley Report* (1998) acknowledged that

> Whilst there was a general consensus in the evidence presented to the Committee that most parents are either supportive of teachers or indifferent to them - a view supported in general literature - this evidence also showed that a very small number of parents are openly hostile and/or aggressive towards their children's teachers. Their impact on teachers is out of all proportion to their numbers. They are a major contributor to teacher stress and to declining morale. (p. 53)

Whilst the report conceded the factors influencing parent attitudes are to some extent beyond teachers' control, the report also suggested improvements could be made to communication between parents and teachers, as currently the "degree and *quality* [emphasis added] of such involvement is very variable" (p. 59).

Lastly this chapter recognised the many positive views of teachers and their work, for example the submission to the Committee from the Australian Council of Deans of Education stated,

> There is an enormous amount of *high quality work* [emphasis added] taking place in schools by teachers, in faculties by teacher educators that this country ought to be proud of and should do a lot more to acknowledge than it does. (p. 75)

In summary, this chapter suggested low wages and casualisation of the workforce had negatively impacted teacher status, which in turn affected the quality of graduates and the quality of education. It also suggested that despite high quality work taking place in schools, the media often portrayed teachers in negative light and that this too had negatively impacted teacher status. It suggested that developing a professional group as opposed to a unionised workforce, would presume teachers' possessed the appropriate qualities until proven otherwise, and also counteract media negativity, thus, lifting teacher status. Quality is referred to in Chapters 3 and 4 in relation to the quality of education, quality of graduates, quality of

teaching; quality of schools, quality of teachers, and quality of work. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 3 and 4 are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 3 and 4 of the Crowley Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 3 & 4 of the Crowley Report
Quality of education
Quality of graduates
Quality of teaching
Quality of schools
Quality of teachers
Quality of work

5.3.4 Chapter 5: "The Outside School Environment – Factors affecting Teacher Morale, Professionalism and Status"

Chapter 5 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) explored the "political, social, and economic" (p. 79) factors which affected "teacher morale, professionalism, and status" (p. 79). The report noted these were; "declining levels of funding to schools" (p. 79), the "politicisation of education" (p. 95), the "impact of the media" (p. 105), and "teachers' career structure" (p. 111).

First, in relation to government funding of public schools, this chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) suggested increases in government funding were "barely sufficient to keep pace with the current costs of schooling" (p. 80). The Australian Education Union, Vic Branch stated:

> the status of teachers is inextricably linked to the restoration of a properly resourced, *high quality system of public education* [emphasis added]. We note that in Victoria the budget surplus in April of this year was $802 million, yet Victoria spends less per head of population than any other state in Australia. (p. 91)

At the same time, it was noted that the Commonwealth funding of private schools had "increased significantly" (p. 86). The submission to the report from the Tasmanian Primary Principals' Association pointed out:

> The public v private debate is highly relevant to the matter of teacher status, and particularly the status of that large majority of teachers in the public school system. The debate places their *schools and therefore their quality* (emphasis added) under fire and is a major vehicle for attacks on their professionalism, integrity and performance. (p. 93)

Interestingly, teachers from both sectors (government and non-government) were concerned by the perceived decrease in government commitment to education. Both groups recognising the need for "*schools of high quality*" [emphasis added] (p. 93), regardless of sector. The

Australian Education Union stressed "the status of teachers is inextricably linked to the restoration of a properly resourced, *high quality system of public education*" [emphasis added] (p. 91).

Second, in relation to the impact of the "politicisation of education" (p. 95), this chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) contended political involvement in education was "narrowly focused, ill informed, short term and sometimes very damaging in its consequences" (p. 95), with teachers worried about the unjustified political attacks upon the profession which "seriously undermined their morale and contributed to a lowering of their status in the eyes of the community" (p. 96). The Tasmanian Primary Principals' Associated extended this to the politicisation of bureaucracy. Their submission highlights the tensions between bureaucrats and professionals contending it:

> is one of conflict between opposing attitudes - the bureaucratic and the professional. The bureaucrat is concerned with efficiency and statistical information to measure that efficiency. The professionals are concerned with the *quality of the teaching and learning* [emphasis added] process and the needs of individual students. The bureaucrat concentrates on output and testing, the professional on input and *teaching quality* [emphasis added]. (p. 102)

Third, in relation to the impact of the media, and more specifically the role of the media in promoting the quality of teacher's work, this chapter stated, "media coverage of schools and teachers is generally regarded as negative, misleading and ill informed" (p. 105). Teachers themselves acknowledged their lack of expertise in dealing with the media and the need to effectively counter the negative portrayal of teachers now being presented. The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland concurred, stating,

> not enough has been done by teachers themselves to publicly promote their professional status. Negative perceptions of the *quality of their work* [emphasis added] may well be reversed by credible, dignified and visionary advocacy from professional bodies. (p. 107)

To combat the negative effect of both the politicisation of education, and of the media, this chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) suggested a national campaign could be linked to "the proposed MCEETYA national campaign designed to attract *high quality entrants* [emphasis added] into the teaching profession" (p. 110).

Fourth, in relation to teachers' career structure, including salary, Professor Ingvarson's submission pointed out that

> To "get on" in teaching, unlike most professions, means getting out of professional practice. The career structure does not place value on high quality teaching. It says, in effect, that teaching well is less important than administration or management. (p. 113)

Professor Ingvarson's, submission suggested recent reforms to teacher's career structure were "undermining the *quality of their teaching*" [emphasis added] (p. 117) as "the only basis for progression after the first nine or ten years is to take on extra administrative work, with little time in which to do it, and with negative effects on the *quality of their preparation and teaching*" [emphasis added] (p. 117). The Report also noted the impact of the "long term decline in the "relative starting salaries for teachers and in the relative salaries of established teachers" (p. 111).

In relation to casualisation, the *Crowley Report* (1998) stated:

> the move to casualisation as a serious threat to teachers' status and professionalism. It is particularly unjustifiable at a time of predicted increases in school enrolments and predicted decreases in teacher supply. It is contrary to our governments' stated commitment to improving the *quality of teaching* (emphasis added). (1998, p. 126)

This chapter concluded that two issues needed to be "addressed if career structures in teaching are made sufficiently attractive to encourage *high quality students* [emphasis added] into the profession and retain excellent teachers within it" (p. 118). The first is "an overall increase in funding for teachers' salaries" (p. 118), and the second is the "way in which financial rewards are offered in teaching" (p. 118). The report proposed rewards be offered for "teaching" (p. 118) rather than in return for additional, non-teaching tasks (p. 118), adding that financial rewards could be linked to teacher "performance". Using 'good' as a synonym for quality this chapter of the report stated,

> Efforts to reward *good teachers* [emphasis added] should be assisted by our increased understanding of what *good teachers* [emphasis added] actually **do** [original emphasis] and what differentiates them from mediocre teachers. A different career structure, which rewards teaching excellence, will also require greater attention to defining and assessing teacher performance and greater accountability for the maintenance of agreed standards. (p. 118)

There is a notable absence of any description of "what *good teachers* [emphasis added] actually **do**" (p. 118), and how this would differentiate them from mediocre teachers. However, one possible meaning can be seen in the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) warning that "increasing reliance on casual teaching staff is detrimental to the interests of both teachers and students. Both

suffer because they cannot establish the relationships on which good teaching and learning depend" (p. 124). This suggests good teachers deliver good teaching and learning, when stable, permanent teaching appointments foster good relationships.

Similarly, there is an absence of any definition of the good teacher education student in relation to the report's statement:

> casualisation on this scale is a serious deterrent to attracting *good students* [emphasis added] into the profession and to retaining them in it" (p. 126) and is "contrary to our governments' stated commitment to improving the *quality of teaching*" [emphasis added]. (p. 126)

Economic justifications were refuted in the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) statement "there is no justification for the very high rates of casualization now in force" (p. 126), as any economic savings are minor in comparison with the financial loss sustained through "large scale defections of trained teachers" (p. 126).

In summary this chapter argued that the politicisation and mediatisation of education was damaging in its consequences. To combat these effects, it suggested reforms to teacher career structure, a decrease in casualization, and either an increase in teacher remuneration or financial rewards linked to teaching, rather than non-teaching tasks, as together these were a serious deterrent to attracting quality entrants. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 of the Crowley Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 of the Crowley Report
Quality system of education
Schools of high quality
Quality teaching and learning
Quality of teachers' work
Quality entrants
Quality preparation
Quality students

5.3.5 Chapter 6: "The School Environment – Factors Affecting Teacher Morale, Performance and Status"

Chapter 6 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) considered factors affecting teachers' morale, performance and status. Interestingly, whilst teachers' own submissions indicated several issues were problematic, none of them were considered to be impacting on quality teaching. Teachers stated: "excessive work load was the single most significant contributor to stress

and low morale" (p. 127); and that "lack of control… over an overcrowded curriculum" undermined their professional standing (p. 127). They were also cynical about the rationale and the effect of "the pace and scope of change in schools" (p. 130), although teachers were generally supportive of moves to include children with disabilities in regular classes. Teachers' did however suggest that support for the "impact of the inclusive classroom" (p. 137) was rarely adequate and was declining. Teachers were also concerned that "increases in class size" had impacted on teacher work load and on student outcomes (p. 138). Thus, in contrast to the previous chapter which noted organisational change, and in particular "the career structure was, in effect, undermining the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 117), teachers themselves, whilst critical of change, did not suggest any impact on the quality of their teaching.

Others disagreed, for example the submission from the Catholic Education Office stated:

> The chopping and changing of the curriculum and its direction may provide governments and ministers with some favourable short-term press coverage and community support, but this can be at the expense of *quality teaching and learning* [emphasis added] – a process that requires continuity, patience and perseverance'. (p. 131)

This chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) also noted teachers' opposition to para professionals "employed **in place** of trained teachers rather than **in support** of them" [original emphasis] (p. 133). A submission from Mr Edmunds, ACT, suggested,

> A model where paraprofessionals work to a fully trained teacher as a general method of reducing personnel cost is no more than the deskilling of the profession and will carry a cost in terms of the *quality of the education* [emphasis added] which can be delivered". (p. 134)

A submission from Professor Ingvarson agreed, stating,

> Those who hope, or claim, that we will be able to staff schools in the future with a reduced proportion of well qualified and well-paid teachers and an increased proportion of briefly trained teacher-aides with limited education in what they teach, and still maintain the *quality of learning* [emphasis added] are misguided or mischievous. (p. 134)

In summary, this chapter suggests increasing teacher workload, combined with the lack of support, loss of control over the curriculum, and increasing use of para professionals is negatively impacting teacher morale and status. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter are shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 6 of the Crowley Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 6 of the Crowley Report
Quality teaching and learning Quality of learning Quality of education

5.3.6 Chapter 7 and 8: "Teacher Recruitment" and "Training and Supply and Demand"

In Chapter 7 of the *Crowley Report* (1998) the notion of quality begins to sharpen in relation to teachers. First, the report stated that there was "disturbing evidence of a general (but not universal) decline in the *academic quality* [emphasis added] of young people attracted into the teaching profession" (p. 169). The submission from the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) concurred and suggested this had the potential to reduced teacher quality, the NBEET stated,

> There has been growing concern from many quarters that the standards of entrants to teacher training courses throughout Australia, especially as measured by tertiary entrance (TE) scores has been declining in recent years, and that this represents a reduction in potential *teacher quality* [emphasis added]. (p. 170)

Teachers themselves suggested low TER requirements for entry into teacher education simply reflected the low status of the profession. Professor Northfield, added that the focus on TER scores was misleading:

> There is a persistent belief that teaching attracts *low quality applicants* [emphasis added]. This perception is faulty in two ways. Firstly, it is a conclusion drawn from focussing on the lowest Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) score for entry and ignores the range of students who enter teacher education including some with very high TER scores. Secondly, in recent years, the lowest TER score for entry to education courses has increased significantly and now compares favourably with entry scores for Science, Computer Studies, Arts etc... The persistent statements that education attracts *low quality candidates* [emphasis added] is a myth and sets limits on the attractiveness of teaching for young people who may be considering this as a career option. (p. 171)

The *Crowley Report* (1998) noted that almost all of those who commented on this issue held the view that sole reliance on TER scores was an unsatisfactory predictor of teacher success and teacher quality. Quoting the NBEET which linked quality to teacher performance, it was suggested,

> the stress on academic record, as expressed in tertiary entrance scores, has served more as a public reassurance regarding *teacher quality* [emphasis added] than as an adequate predictor of teacher performance and quality in the classroom. (p. 172)

Reflecting an acceptance by the *Crowley Report* (1998) that the "*quality of new entrants* [emphasis added]" (p. 174) was indeed in decline, this chapter went on to suggest the reasons for this were "many and varied" (p. 174) all of which related "to the factors undermining the status of the teaching profession and the morale of teachers" (p. 174) These were noted to be as follows: limited career options, especially for women; fears of litigation (especially against men in connection with paedophilia); the impact of university fees; and uncertain job prospects (p. 174). The report suggested these were serious deterrents to attracting "*good students*" [emphasis added] (p. 126) into teaching. Whilst the word quality is not used directly here, 'good' in the context of the *Crowley Report* is interchangeable with quality.

This chapter then developed another discourse of quality – that of high calibre entrants, suggesting that "most serious of all, failure to recruit *high calibre entrants* (emphasis added) threatened the *quality of schooling* [emphasis added] in the longer term" (p. 171).

Providing some clarity for the fuzziness surrounding the terms *good students, high calibre students*, and quality entrants, the *Crowley Report* (1998) indicated that 'personal qualities' were also critical to successful teaching:

> While not disputing the importance of high academic achievement witnesses considered it was not a sufficient precondition for success. *Personal qualities* [emphasis added], motivation, organisational ability and flexibility, while difficult to measure objectively, were critical to successful teaching. Witnesses therefore suggested that entry to teacher training should, at a minimum, be based on TER scores plus in depth interviews designed to ascertain the applicant's suitability. (p. 172)

This chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) then turned its attention to initial teacher education (ITE), and whilst it acknowledged there were "positive views, including examples of good practice" (p. 182), the report nonetheless displayed a deficit thread of quality. For example, in relation to ITE the report noted many comments had referred to its "*poor quality* [emphasis added], inappropriateness and inadequacy in preparing teachers for the profession" (p. 191), including the "poor quality of teacher supervision of practicums and of beginning teachers" (p. 185). One submission suggested teachers were "being let down" (p. 182) by teacher training courses. A number of witnesses had drawn attention to university priorities impacting on the quality of teaching in ITE programs:

> the low priority placed by universities on *teaching quality* [emphasis added] as opposed to research output. This had an impact on the *quality of university teaching* [emphasis added] generally and on the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] in some education faculties. (p. 190)

On the other hand, this chapter of the report acknowledged that it would be misleading to suggest that the Committee had received only negative views on the "*quality of teacher education*" (p. 192), and using 'good' as a synonym for quality, they declared that there were many examples of "good practice" (p. 192). For example, the Tasmanian Secondary Principals Association stated,

> There has been a greater concerted approach by teacher educators around Australia to look at things, particularly the role of the practicum in teacher education. I would say that, as a consequence of improving the courses - which, from my view, were very theoretical in past years - the improved *quality of the content and experiences* [emphasis added] that the trainees have now is part of the reason we are getting competent teachers in our schools. (p. 193)

Surprisingly, despite this chapter declaring there were difficulties in obtaining a "comprehensive overview of all the high quality programmes" (p. 199), the report nonetheless, concluded that the evidence suggested the "quality of pre-service training is very variable" (p. 199), adding that "students are obviously dissatisfied with the training provided" (p. 199). The report went on to suggest that the Committee believed that education departments themselves are aware of the deficiencies but are hampered by a decrease in resources. The report stated that, therefore,

> If we are serious about enhancing the status of teachers we must ensure that new teachers are adequately prepared for the complex and demanding task ahead of them. *High quality, appropriate pre-service training* [emphasis added] is essential…without increased funding it is unlikely that the *quality of teacher training* [emphasis added] will improve. (p. 200)

Next, this chapter of the *Crowley Report* (1998) stated that all stakeholders: university educators, practising teachers, education departments and beginning teachers themselves, agreed that pre-service training cannot fully prepare new teachers to perform at their full capacity from their first day at work. The report stated:

> This is not a reflection on the *quality of new teachers* [emphasis added] nor on the standard of pre-service training. It is a recognition of the complexity of teaching and of the large number of variables (such as type of school, socio-economic and cultural background of students, school 'ethos', extent of support from colleagues and principal etc.) affecting a teacher's performance. This being the

> case, induction programs have a vital role in ensuring a smooth transition for beginning teachers from university trainees to competent practitioners. (p. 204)

In that regard, the report posited that the success of the entire induction process hinged upon "the *quality of mentoring* [emphasis added] provided" (p. 206), and that "appears to be very variable" (p. 206), and "ad hoc" (p. 215); although there was some evidence of "*high quality mentoring* [emphasis added]" (p. 210) provided to some beginning teachers. Moreover, this chapter suggested there was "no formal structure for induction, there is no attempt to ensure that it is of *adequate quality* [emphasis added], or even that it takes place at all" (p. 209).

Lastly, this chapter considered the "inadequacy of current professional development practices", as opposed to the "characteristics of *high quality professional development*" [emphasis added] (p. 218). In relation to the current practices, the report referred to its "poor *intellectual quality* [emphasis added] and lack of a conceptual framework" (p. 218). The characteristics of a quality professional development program was noted to incorporate four features: that teachers had significant input to all aspects of the program; each component is part of a well-structured, long term program; programs link university, teachers, parents, community and non-teaching school staff; and that programs include evaluation, feedback, follow up and modification as appropriate (p. 227).

Chapter 8 declared that whilst predicting supply and demand in the teaching profession was a complex process, it was important to the status of the teaching profession, as incorrect predictions can result in an undersupply and "jeopardise the *quality of education* [emphasis added] because governments may be tempted to meet the shortfall by increasing class sizes or employing unqualified teachers" (p. 229).

Moreover, Chapter 8 also suggested, "if governments are serious about ensuring an equitable and *quality educational provision* [emphasis added] across schools then they must see that schools have access to the full range of teaching subject expertise" (p. 242). For these reasons, the report declared that "clearly the analysis of teaching supply and demand needs to be much more sophisticated" (p. 246) including the gathering of information on teaching requirements by subject discipline, and a more targeted approach to recruitment of teachers.

Together Chapters 7 and 8 of the report suggest more government funding is necessary to ensure the quality of teacher training. It noted without such funding this would reduce teacher quality as high calibre entrants would not be attracted to the profession. This in turn

threatened the quality of schooling. In addition, it noted the sole reliance on TER scores as a measure of likely success of students was an unsatisfactory predictor of teacher quality.

The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 and 8 are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 and 8 of the Crowley Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 & 8 of the Crowley Report
Teacher quality High quality applicants Quality candidates Teacher quality Quality of schooling Quality entrants Quality of teacher supervision Teaching quality Quality of university teaching Quality of teacher education Quality experience Quality programs Quality of pre-service training Quality of mentoring Quality professional development Quality education provision

5.3.7 The Crowley Report's "Overview"

The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) "Overview" stated its aim was to identify "factors negatively affecting the status of the teaching profession" (p. 1), and make recommendations to ensure "*quality outcomes* [emphasis added] in education" (p. 1). The report stated:

> A vigorous, successful society requires a *quality education system* [emphasis added], and at the heart of *quality education* [emphasis added] are *quality teachers* [emphasis added]. Low morale amongst teachers works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added]. As this Report shows, steps to improve morale and to address the difficulties described will go a long way to achieving *quality outcomes* [emphasis added] in education. (p. 2)

The "Overview" proposed that it in order to address "the difficulties described" (p. 2), it was necessary to "establish a profession … ", "with all that implies" (p. 2), recommending government take responsibility for funding of "staffing, facilities and back up support" (p. 2) whilst "teachers be given responsibility for professional standards in teaching" (p. 2). The discursive threads of quality found in the "Overview" are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Discursive threads of quality found in the Crowley Report's Overview

Discursive threads of quality found in the *Crowley Report*'s Overview
Quality outcomes
Quality education system
Quality education
Quality teaching
Quality teachers

5.3.8 The Crowley Report's Recommendations

The *Crowley Report* (1998) sets out nineteen recommendations. Eleven relate to funding, seven relate to teaching standards, and one recommendation relates to ongoing planning for teacher supply. Only one of the report's recommendations used the term quality directly:

> **Recommendation 9**
>
> The Committee RECOMMENDS a national recruitment campaign designed to attract *high quality applicants* [emphasis added] to the teaching profession, with costs shared between the Commonwealth and all States and Territories. (p. 178)

Using 'best practice' as a synonym for quality, the *Crowley Report* (1998) also recommended:

> **Recommendation 13**
>
> The Committee RECOMMENDS the establishment of a National Teacher Education Network comprising a consortium of innovative teacher education faculties and schools to build upon the work of the National Schools Network and the Innovative Links Project in modelling *best practice* [emphasis added] in the development and delivery of initial and continuing teacher education. (p. 203)

The only discursive thread of quality found in the Recommendations is shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Discursive threads of quality found in the Crowley Report's Recommendations

Discursive threads of quality found in the Crowley Report's Recommendations
High quality applicants

5.3.9 Senators *Minority Report*

As government members did not form the majority of the Crowley Committee, Government Senators Tierney, Ferris and Synon officially stated their counter position in the Senators *Minority Report*. This report referred to quality on four occasions. The Senators *Minority Report*

agreed with the *Crowley Report* (1998) that "Standards and Guidelines provide a formal framework for securing *high quality teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. 255), and that these standards and guidelines provided "a platform for promoting the status of teachers and for emphasising the centrality of *quality teachers* [emphasis added] to *quality education* [emphasis added] and to our society more generally" (p. 256). However, the *Minority Report* disagreed on the most effective means of addressing the problems identified during the Inquiry. In particular, the Senators suggested,

> It was inappropriate to make recommendations to the Commonwealth Government on future arrangements governing standards and registration. Such issues should be directed to individual State and Territory governments in the first instance and then to the Ministerial Council on Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). (p. 253)

Therefore, the Senators recommended MCEETYA be given responsibility to develop a national recruitment campaign designed to attract *high quality applicants* [emphasis added] into the teaching profession" (p. 257). The discursive threads of quality found in the *Minority Report* are shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Discursive threads of quality found in the Senators' Minority Report

Discursive threads of quality found in the Senators' Minority Report
High quality teacher education Quality teachers Quality education High quality applicants

Table 4 below illustrates the multiple ideas (or discursive threads) about quality which have been identified across all chapters of the *Crowley Report* (1998). The next stage of the analysis considers how these discursive threads coalesce and knot into major discourses and come to represent the problems.

Table 13: Threads of quality as they appear in all chapters of the Crowley Report

Terms of Reference	Chapter 2	Chapter 3 & 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7 & 8	Overview	Recommendations	Senators Minority Report
Quality of teacher education programs Quality of classroom practice Best practice induction/professional development	Quality assurance Teacher quality Quality and well-being Quality of the resources Quality school system Quality education	Quality of education Quality of graduates Quality of teaching Quality of schools Quality of teachers Quality of work	Quality system of education Schools of high quality Quality of teaching and learning Quality of teachers' work High quality entrants Quality preparation Quality students	Quality teaching Quality of teaching and learning Quality of education	Teacher quality High quality applicants Quality candidates Teacher quality Quality of schooling Quality entrants Quality of teacher supervision Teaching quality Quality of university teaching Quality of teacher education Quality experience Quality programs Quality of pre-service training Quality of mentoring Quality professional development Quality education provision	Quality outcomes Quality education system Quality teachers Quality teaching	High quality applicants	High quality teacher education Quality teachers Quality education High quality applicants

5.4 Second level analysis: Applying the first question in Bacchi's WPR approach: What's the problem represented to be? to the *Crowley Report* (1998)

The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to examine how the previously identified discursive threads about quality coalesce or knot and come to represent the problems within the *Crowley Report* (1998). Three major discourses were identified, these were; Quality Assurance: ITE; and Education Systems. Three smaller (minor) discourses were also found; Teaching Practice: Media and Politicisation; and Teacher Qualities. Figure 6 provides an illustration of these discourses.

Figure 6: Major and minor discourses of quality evident in the Crowley Report

5.4.1 Major Discourse 1: A lack of quality assurance

The first major discourse found in the *Crowley Report* (1998) represents the problem as a lack of quality assurance. This knot comprised of multiple discursive threads of quality assurance: quality profession, quality standards, and measuring quality. The report suggested these were necessary to help teachers and governments to publicise more effectively the "excellent work taking place in schools" (p. 2) and counter the criticisms and perceived lack of quality assurance.

The quality profession was conceived by the *Crowley Report* (1998) as one part of the solution to the quality assurance. The logic underpinning this was that if teachers established themselves "on some kind of institutional basis" (p. 28) it would assign them the power to "influence political and financial decision-making processes" (p. 28). This was considered important as power would increase professional status and give teachers the voice with which to secure "high rewards" (p. 28) for their members. Thus a quality profession was intended to provide a cyclical outcome, one which would assure the 'quality' of the profession group, as teacher status improved it increase their voice and autonomy, which would in turn attract quality members (see Figure 7).

As part of the process of constructing the quality profession, the report went to some length to make a distinction between the status of an individual and that of a group and used this distinction to justify its proposition that "teaching needs to be accepted as a profession" (p. 2). This discursive process, referred to as "*dividing practice*" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 16) successfully separated the group from the individual and made the notion of an institution both possible and desirable, and created a new meaning for quality in relation to teachers: a quality profession.

Adding weight to this proposal the same dividing practice was employed by the *Crowley Report* (1998) to separate the unionised workforce from the quality profession, facilitating a corresponding meaning – what quality assurance was not – an "industrial model" (p. 36). This was evident in contributions which saw unions as "essentially promoting industrial issues, to the detriment of teachers' professional standing in the general community" (p. 36).

Providing the solution to quality assurance, the report suggested that assigning teachers professional group status, secured on an institutional basis, "*presumes* [emphasis in original

text]" (p. 2) all individual teachers who make up the profession will possess "certain skills, qualities or attributes" (p. 2).

Closely related, the *Crowley Report* (1998) also suggested a quality profession should have teaching standards as a quality assurance strategy with which to ensure the "quality and advanced standing of individual teachers" (p. 18), including newly trained teachers. The report suggested this would allow teachers to "proceed in a new era of professional autonomy and self-regulation" (p. 17), based on quality standards. Linking to the above, the report suggested teacher status would be improved if teachers could use professional standards to articulate their professional skills and convey more emphatically how these enabled students to learn.

Figure 7: Intended benefits of developing a professional group

Lastly, this major discourse also comprised a discursive thread of 'measurement'. In the *Crowley Report* (1998), the bureaucratic measure of quality was considered to be more concerned with "efficiency and statistics" (p. 102) determined by outputs and testing, whilst the professional measure of quality was more concerned with the "*quality of the teaching and learning* [emphasis added]" (p. 102).

In summary, this discourse is around the need to establish quality assurance measures in the form of a) a formal profession, to assign teachers the power to "influence political and financial decision making" (p. 28), and b) establish professional standards so that teachers could "proceed in a new era of professional autonomy and self-regulation" (p. 17). These measures combined would improve teacher status by publicising more effectively "the excellent work taking place in schools" (p. 2).

5.4.2 Major Discourse 2: Variable quality of ITE programs and declining quality of new entrants

The second major discourse came to represent the problem as the variable quality of ITE and of new entrants to ITE. This discourse comprises multiple threads relating to the "*variable quality in existing teacher training programs* [emphasis added]" (p. 201), including quality professional experience and quality induction; and lastly the declining academic quality of new entrants to ITE programs. This discursive knot also questioned the reliance on academic achievements of new entrants as a precondition for success.

Concerned with the quality of ITE, the *Crowley Report* (1998) acknowledged that the "*quality of pre-service teacher training* [emphasis added] is very variable" (p. 199), suggesting this was due to education departments being "hampered in their efforts" (p. 200) to rectify problems "by a decrease in resources" (p. 200). The report went on to stress *"high quality, appropriate pre-service training* [emphasis added] is essential. This is generally acknowledged, but to date nobody has been prepared to commit the necessary resources" (p. 200).

The *Crowley Report*'s construction of this representation can be seen in the co-location of the term *ITE* with "blame" (p. 183), "purging" (p .183), "let down" (p. 183), "too theoretical" (p. 183), "out of touch" (p. 183), "declined", (p. 184), "lack of intellectual rigour" (p. 186), "narrowly focussed content" (p. 186) "inadequacies" (p. 187), "serious omission" (p. 187), "ill-prepared" (p. 187) "lack of attention" (p. 188) "cut back" (p. 190) "low priority" (p. 190), and "no real understanding" (p. 191).

Also included in this major discourse are the contradictory claims of "*good practice*" [emphasis added] (p. 192) in ITE, such as the Tasmanian Secondary Principals' Association's statement that "the improved *quality of the content and experiences* [emphasis added] that the trainees have now is part of the reason we are getting competent teachers in our schools" (p. 193).

This discourse also included the suggestion that ITE could only produce quality teachers if quality entrants were entering the profession. There was suggestion that this was problematic as the academic quality of new entrants to ITE was declining, and further, that the sole reliance on TER scores was an unsatisfactory predictor of teacher success, and, therefore, teacher quality.

In summary, the multiple discursive threads in this major discourse came to represent the problem as the variable "quality of pre-service teacher training" (p. 199), as "nobody has been prepared to commit the necessary resources" (p. 200). The report was also concerned that the academic quality of new entrants was declining, and that TER scores were unsatisfactory predictors of teacher success.

5.4.3 Major Discourse 3: Declining quality of education systems

The third major discourse comprises multiple discursive threads concerned about 'education systems'. The *Crowley Report* (1998) considered issues related to education systems impacted negatively on quality schooling. The report stated, "a successful society requires a *quality education system* [emphasis added], and at the heart of *quality education* [emphasis added] are *quality teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 2).

This major discourse had multiple ideas of quality all intertwining to create a very complex discourse. Issues which the report considered negatively impacted a "*quality education system*" [emphasis added] (p. 2) were the following: "decentralization" (p. 158); the lack of "back up support" (p. 2) provided for teachers; teacher "career structure" (p. 111) and "salary structure" (p. 112); the impact of "casualisation of the workforce" (p. 123); the impact on teacher "supply and demand" (p. 229) "university fees and charges" (p. 175), "HECS fees" (p. 178), and "working conditions" (p. 13).

The *Crowley Report* (1998) indicated many of the issues connected to education systems could be explained by government funding "practices" (p. 159). This included issues related to the financing of the "public/private sectors" (p. 91).

The discourse demonstrates the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) criticism of government funding as a key factor in the quality of education systems, and is conspicuous in the report's use of the terms *fund*, *funded*, or f*unding*, which are mentioned one hundred and seventy-three times, in conjunction with "re-instate" (p. 199), "reduced" (p. 164), "lack" (p. 197) "cuts" (p. 199),

"inadequacy" (p. 202), "erosion" (p. 220), "under" (p. 200), "reduction" (p. 223), "removal" (p. 223) "declining" (p. 79), "uncertainty" (p. 90) "restrictions"(p. 92), "fluctuating" (p. 91), "withdrawn" (p. 92), "changes" (p. 161), and "deny" (p. 97).

This reflected the Crowley Committee's view that governments' core responsibilities for education systems should be described in terms of the "*quality of the resources* [emphasis added] and the working conditions in schools" (p. 13), and that these responsibilities were at present, problematic. The Independent Education Union added that "teachers as professionals are diminished by the public/private schism" (p. 94). The submission to the *Crowley Report* from the Tasmanian Primary Principals' Association concurred:

> The public v private debate is highly relevant to the matter of teacher status, and particularly the status of that large majority of teachers in the public school system. The debate places their schools and, therefore, their *quality* [emphasis added] under fire and is a major vehicle for attacks on their professionalism, integrity and performance. (p. 93)

This private versus public debate represents the quality of education systems as a problem of equity. This assigns a meaning to quality which can be understood as being determined by the value government place on the public schooling system in comparison to the private sector. This understanding is evident in the report's statement that "governments' clear responsibility to ensure that conditions in schools are commensurate with the requirements of good teaching practice" (p. 13), and that they should "fund public schools at a level sufficient to deliver the appropriate standard of education within the Eight Key Learning Areas, and commensurate with the National Goals of Schooling" (p. 90). Here the term *good* has again been used as a synonym for *quality*, but this time it operates to demonstrate that insufficient funding negatively impacts quality teaching practice.

In summary, this major discourse represented the problem as multiple factors considered to be negatively impacting the quality of education systems. The *Crowley Report* (1998) indicated many of the issues could be explained by "government funding practices" (p. 159) and deemed a number of changes were "necessary to support our teachers more effectively" (p. 2). This included funding "public schools at a level sufficient to deliver the appropriate standard of education" (p. xi), "a reversal of the trend to casualisation of the teaching force" (p. xii). The report cautioned that governments "ignore community commitment to education at their peril" (p. 3), and that the private/public debate was a matter of equity.

5.4.4 Minor Discourse 4: Teaching practice: What do quality teachers do?

This smaller discourse was concerned with the quality of teaching practice, and what "good teachers actually **do** and what differentiates them from mediocre teachers" [emphasis in original text] (p. 118). Whilst the report offered no comprehensive description of what "good teachers actually **do**", the inference is found in the terms that are used in juxtaposition with the term *good teachers*. The term *good teachers* is used nine times throughout the report and is found in conjunction with "highly developed teaching skills" (p. 116), "experienced" (p. 117), and "good performance" (p. 118). By inference, therefore, problematic teachers are those who do not perform well, and/or do not have the experience or (undefined but required) skills. One representation of a good teacher was presented in the report as a teacher's ability to build a relationship with the student as this facilitated quality teaching.

The *Crowley Report* (1998) also considered "low morale amongst teachers" (p. 2) to be impacting teaching practice as it negatively impacted quality teaching and quality outcomes. The report suggested "steps to improve morale and to address the difficulties described will go a long way to achieving *quality outcomes* [emphasis added] in education" (p. 2). Implying low morale affected enthusiasm, the report also suggested that where unenthusiastic teachers are enlisted as supervisors in the practicum "the *quality of teaching practice* [emphasis added] suffers".

Again, linking quality to equity, the report declared that it was a "simple matter of equity" (p. 20) that there is consistency of "*teaching quality* [emphasis added]" across all Australian schools" (p. 20) and for this reason the report suggested Government facilitate the development of a national professional teaching standards and registration body to "develop and maintain standards of professional practice" (p. x).

In summary, this minor discourse comprised of discursive threads concerned with what good teachers do, "and what differentiates them from mediocre teachers" (p. 118), which came to represent the problem as the quality of teaching practice. The report also considered how "low morale amongst teachers" (p. 2) impacted quality teaching. The report suggested is was a simple matter of equity and that there is consistency of "teacher quality across all Australian schools" (p. 20).

5.4.5 Minor Discourse 5: The impact of mediatisation and politicisation on public perceptions of the quality of schools and teachers

This discourse was concerned with the influence of "alarmist media reports" (p. 1) and politicisation of education, including "unsupportive ministers" (p. 1), on public perceptions about the "*quality of schools and of teachers* [emphasis added" (p. 42), which collectively negatively impacted teacher status and teacher morale. The *Crowley Report* (1998) stressed "low morale amongst teachers works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added] (p. 2), and, thus, was highly problematic. In response, the report indicated that teaching standards would provide teachers with an organised voice with which to defend themselves against "ill-informed or gratuitous criticism" (p. 5).

5.4.6 Minor Discourse 6: The need to select the desired teacher qualities: Who are quality teachers?

This minor discourse comprised discursive threads of teacher qualities and considered the sole reliance upon tertiary entrance scores and academic achievement as problematic as they were "unsatisfactory predictors of success as a teacher" (p. 172).

The *Crowley Report* (1998) was concerned that "most serious of all, failure to recruit high calibre entrants threatened the *quality of schooling* [emphasis added] (p. 171). Following the logic that there is a pre-determined set of desirable attributes "required in the practice of the profession" (p. 172), the report suggested "*personal qualities* [emphasis added], motivation, organisational ability and flexibility, while difficult to measure objectively, were critical to successful teaching" (p. 172). Thus, despite 'personal qualities' being largely undefined the report posited that changes in the selection processes in ITE programs was required.

This concludes the second level of analysis of the *Crowley Report* (1998). In summary, this level of anlaysis found these major and minor discourses came to represent the problems as: a lack of quality assurance, variable quality of Intial Teacher Education (ITE) programs, declining quality of education systems, the quality of teaching practice, the impact of mediatisation and politicisation on public perceptions of the quality of schools and teachers, and the need to select desirable teacher qualities.

5.5 Third level analysis: Applying questions two through six of Bacchi's WPR approach to the *Crowley Report* (1998)

The previous two levels of analysis have traced where the discursive threads (ideas) about quality emerged, and how these threads coalesced and knotted into three major and three minor discourses. Together these discourses came to represent the problem as one of quality, manifest in the declining quality of education systems, declining public perceptions of the quality of teaching practice, the impact of mediatisation and politicisation on teacher morale, and a perceived decline in the quality of entrants to the profession.

This third level of analysis now applies the subsequent questions in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach (two through to six) to the *Crowley Report* (1998) to inquire into the presuppositions and assumptions which underpin these representations of the problem, that is, the underlying logic. The WPR approach allows me to identify discursive tensions which have been left unproblematic, before considering the effects produced by the discourses, and whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

5.5.1 What presuppositions and assumptions underlie the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) representations of the problem?

Presuppositions and assumptions constitute taken for granted knowledge (Bacchi, 2009) – in other words the deep seated cultural values and conceptual premises that underpin the logic. It is important to note that whilst presuppositions and assumptions are separate concepts, together they produce a layered effect as one builds upon another. Presuppositions must first be considered true before subsequent and dependant assumptions can be accepted as logical. This section of the analysis has identified two presuppositions which work to support three key assumptions in the *Crowley Report* (1998).

5.5.1.1 First Presupposition: The meaning of quality in education is well understood

First, despite the privileged position given to the central theme of quality, the term is given no clear definition in the *Crowley Report* (1998). Instead there is a presupposition that the meaning of 'quality' in education is a well understood, and is taken for granted, "background knowledge" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5). This is important, as quality in education is *not* a uniformly accepted concept (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Sayed & Ahmed, 2015). Despite this the report uses the term as if it had a fixed meaning, referencing quality one hundred and thirty-nine times, and using it in juxtaposition with; "students" (p. 1), "teachers" (p. 3), "practice" (p. 1),

"education" (p. 9) "intellectual" (p. 1) "high" (p. 24), "entrants" (p. 2), "graduates" (p. 3), "programs" (p. 2), "teaching" (p. 22), "academic" (p. 2), and "adequate" (p. 1). This process works to create particular discourses of quality, such as quality teaching, quality education systems, quality assurance, quality teachers, quality ITE, and quality entrants to ITE. The term quality is also found in conjunction with managerial terminology such as, "control mechanism" (p. 1), "assurance" (p. 5), and "outcomes" (p. 1), which works to give credence to such managerial techniques. The term quality is also used as a deficit and judgemental descriptor in juxtaposition with "poor" (p. 3).

5.5.1.2 Assumption: There is a quality deficit

The presupposition that quality in education is well understood underpins the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) assumption that there is a quality deficit. This is evidenced in the way in which quality is used to identify and communicate threats. For example, the report stated casualisation of the workforce was a "serious threat to teachers' status and professionalism" (p. 126) as it impacted the "*quality of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 126). The term 'threats', which is part of the language of crisis (discussed later) is used seven times throughout the report.

Together the presupposition (that quality in education is well understood) and assumption (of a deficit) allows the *Crowley Report* (1998) to substitute synonyms for quality such as "good" (p. 118), "best practice" (p. 203), and "high calibre" (p. 171). 'Best practice' is used six times in the report, in conjunction with "initial and continuing teacher education" (p. xiv, 203, 255, 257), "curriculum" (p. 141), and "induction" (p. vii). 'Good' is found in juxtaposition with "teachers" (p. 118), "practice" (p. 13), and 'students" (p. 126), whilst 'high calibre' is used to suggest a threat posed to quality by low calibre entrants to the profession.

5.5.1.3 Assumption: The quality deficit has resulted in crises in confidence and morale

Closely related to the assumption of a quality deficit is the second assumption - that crises exist, and that these crises impact negatively on the ability to achieve "*quality outcomes* [emphasis added] in education" (p. 2). The *Crowley Report* (1998) identified two crises: first, a crisis in confidence in "discourses about teaching and education" (p. 6); and second, a "serious crisis of morale amongst teachers" (p. 6) which the report suggested "works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 2).

Importantly, the report stressed that there was "no major crisis of *quality in Australia's teaching force* [emphasis added] (p. 6), and that despite "shrinking budgets, alarmist media reports, unsupportive ministers, a crowded curriculum, and the disappearance of support services, teachers have continued to dedicate themselves to their students" (p. 1) and remain "dedicated and hardworking" (p. 6).

The assumed crises were, therefore, limited to confidence about teaching and education, and teacher morale, they are nonetheless noteworthy as operating to create a feeling of panic, and as Friedman (1982) suggests, panic can be used to exploit, manipulate, and shape public opinion. Friedman suggests that crisis has become a primary tactic for policy change, he states,

> Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable. (Friedman, 1982, p. ix)

Furthermore, despite the *Crowley Report* (1998) having stressed that there was no crisis of quality in Australia's teaching force, a third assumption can be seen in the report's contradictory claim that in order for the teaching profession to become "fully credible" (p. 17), "standards of professional teaching practice" (p. 16), are "unavoidable and absolutely necessary" (p. 16). This third assumption, that standards are "unavoidable and absolutely necessary" is a relatively complex one, for whilst the report seemed to imply standards were necessary for quality assurance in teaching practice, the report also draws attention to Professor Ingvarson's statement that "without standards, a professional body is defenceless"(p. 16).

The use of Professor Ingvarson's statement indicates the *Crowley Report* (1998) did not consider standards as a response to a deficit, a crisis, or even as a quality assurance measure per se, but rather that standards could provide teachers with an organised voice with which to defend themselves against "ill-informed or gratuitous criticism" (p. 5). The report's proposal that standards are "absolutely necessary" (p. 16) are, therefore, considered as a defence mechanism with which to reinstate teacher prestige, improve how teachers are "viewed by the community at large" (p. 26), and, thus, positively impact on a 'quality education system" – a complex chain of assumptions!

Moreover, implicit in the report's assumptions is an unstated acknowledgement that the perpetrators of "criticism" (p. 5) are beyond the reach of the report. Standards are, therefore, "unavoidable and absolutely necessary" (p. 16) as they are the optimum/only available strategy with which to reinstate teacher status and perceptions of quality, despite there being "no major crisis of quality" (p. 6). However, the positive virtues, and the way in which professional standards will achieve a "quality education system" (p. 2) are left vague. The *Crowley Report* (1998) simply suggested that a registration body would be given responsibility for establishing "standards ... taking into account what teachers should be expected to know and be able to do in order to facilitate learning" (p. x). Leaving this opaque made it difficult for the reader to reject the assumption that standards were "absolutely necessary" (p. 16) to effect quality.

5.5.1.4 Second Presupposition: There is a consensus about 'what good teachers do'

The second presupposition in the *Crowley Report* (1998) is that there is consensus about what "good teachers actually **do** and what differentiates them from mediocre teachers" [emphasis in original text] (p. 118). There is a small hint of ambiguity in this presupposition when the report is seen to suggest that an increased understanding would be beneficial to reward the efforts of "*good teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 118), reflecting the findings of the literature review, that what constitutes quality in a teacher or in teaching remains hotly contested. Some authors emphasise experience, some knowledge, for others it is qualifications, or beliefs and attitudes, and/or pedagogical skills (Angrist & Guryanm, 2008; Connell, 2009; Dennis, 2011; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007; Hollins, 2011; Kennedy, 2008; Phillips, 2010). Therefore, in the absence of a clear definition, any construct of what good, quality teachers **do**, or best teaching practice, which builds on this presupposition, is meaningless, other than to construct a problem to be addressed, that is, a straw man.

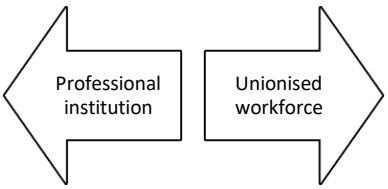
In summary, these presuppositions and assumptions have set the trajectory of the report: toward a focus on fixing the perceived quality deficit in education, and quality assurance in the form of standards as the solution to the perceived crises in confidence and teacher morale.

5.5.2 What is left unproblematic in this problem representation?

The WPR process has created a destabilising effect on the *Crowley Report*'s conceptual underpinnings, exposing tensions and contradictions (Bacchi, 2009) in the problem representations.

5.5.2.1 Tensions within the quality assurance discourse

Within the major discourse of quality assurance, there are two tensions. The first is around the notion of the professional institution, the role of trade unions within this construct, and "the extent to which they enhance or undermine teacher professionalism" (p. 35).



This was described in the *Crowley Report* (1998) as a "significant divergence of opinion" (p. 35) The *Crowley Report* (1998) acknowledged that whilst some considered unions to be "essentially promoting industrial issues, to the detriment of teachers' professional standing in the general community" (p. 36), others disagreed. A submission from Ms Preston, ACT, suggested,

> The implications of this inherent connection between the industrial and professional in teaching is that the two teacher unions should be recognised as the organisations which generally represent teachers on professional as well as industrial matters. (p. 36)

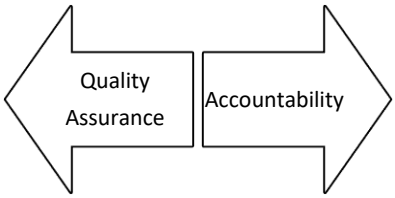
This view was shared by a number of submissions including Seddon and Brown's which stated,

> One thing is clear, consolidating the political and economic basis of teaching, and the status of teachers, depends upon an integration of professional and industrial matters, not their disconnection. (p. 36)

Despite this tension the *Crowley Report* (1998) went on to conclude "that teaching deserves the description of profession" (p. 39), making no reference to union inclusion. This demonstrates the discursive purpose of dividing practice (Bacchi, 2009), which serves to

shape what was considered possible and desirable, as opposed to that which considered impossible and undesirable (Bacchi, 2009).

Another tension evident in the quality assurance discourse emanates from conflicting beliefs about what constitutes quality. Without consensus about the purpose and mechanisms of quality assurance, tensions in the *how* and *what* to measure follow. On one hand professional concerns are with the quality of teaching and learning, whilst the bureaucratic concern is with accountability through procedures, statistics, testing and outputs as quality.



This tension makes the purpose of standards a contested issue. Standards used for quality assurance by a professional body, is very different from the notion of standards for accountability, and demonstrates the potential for the meaning of quality assurance to be shaped by the discourse. Quality assurance is generally understood as consumer or public confidence that a product or service will be of a consistently high quality, with responsibility for the quality of the product/service assumed by the producer. This stands in tension with the discourse of standards for accountability which is "the requirement that one group (here a profession) provide an account or justification of its activities to another group" (p. 12), in this case, government. Accountability also carries with it an expectation that the accountable are willing to accept "advice or criticism" (p. 12) from the public. Therefore, whilst the report alluded to teacher autonomy, and, thus, quality assurance, this stands in contradiction to the report's own statement that governments are the "regulators of teachers, the gatekeepers into the profession, and the monitors of their training" (p. 12).

The tension between quality assurance and accountability also spills over into discourses of professional development. The Tasmanian Primary Principals' Association suggested compulsion to participate in professional development would actually "undermine teacher professionalism" (p. 221) and cause "irretrievable damage to professional attitudes of teachers" (p. 222). On the other hand, the *Crowley Report* (1998) took the view that professional development should be a "requirement for continued registration of practising

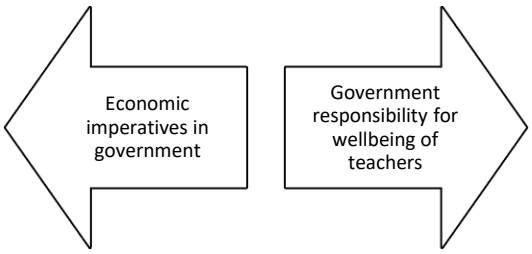
teachers" (p. 222), suggesting that it is "a recognition of the fact that professional status incurs responsibilities as well as rewards" (p. 222).

This demonstrates a clear tension between standards for quality assurance, what Sachs refers to as a developmental tool for quality improvement (2003), and standards for accountability, described by Mahony and Hextall (2000) as a method of reform, imposed by governments to control licencing and certification.

The *Crowley Report* (1998) did caution that any consideration of teacher quality measured against standards must be mindful of "underlying contradictions" (p. 30), and in a bid to relieve this tension the report is then seen to adopt the position of mediator, endorsing the view that government and teachers should each have well defined responsibilities for quality assurance. Shaping the discourse in this way allowed quality assurance issues to be divided into two distinct halves. Providing authority for this tactic the report quoted Darling-Hammond (1992) as advocating "government's domain is delivery standards" (p. 14), such as buildings, funding, working conditions, whilst the teachers' domain is "standards of professional practice" (p. 140). This discursive process again demonstrates a dividing practice, one which made which made the separate responsibilities strategy logical, and, therefore, possible and desirable (Bacchi, 2009). The report then reinforced and normalised (Bacchi, 2009) this position by drawing a comparison with the medical profession, suggesting just as the best surgeon in the world cannot perform to his/her professional standards without the necessary environment (equipment, ancillary staff, cleanliness), likewise "the best teacher in the world cannot perform properly in an inadequately resourced and inadequately staff school" (p. 14). Whilst the term quality is not directly used here, the inference is in the use of the word best.

5.5.2.2 Tension within the Education Systems discourse

Another tension is evident within the education systems discourse. The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) tactic of allocating Government "responsibility for staffing, facilities and back up support" (p. 2), including ITE, teacher supply and teacher remuneration, "through a focus on the *quality and wellbeing of teachers*" [emphasis added] (p. 8), stands in tension with the economic imperatives of governing.



The submission to the *Crowley Report* (1998) by the Early Childhood Association Inc. drew attention to such tensions (p. 8); it stated,

> any work that cannot be easily counted and measured in monetary terms has been accorded less status in our increasingly economically rational society. Teaching, because it is concerned with long-term outcomes and is part of our society's investment in the development of human and social capital, (as opposed to economic capital) is not highly esteemed. (p. 30)

This statement illustrates how such tensions can impact government funding of education. The *Crowley Report* (1998) was critical of a range of policy initiatives which they suggested had negatively affected teachers work and working conditions, and is evidenced in the report's use of the descriptor "decline/ing" co-located with "status" (p. 2), "morale" (p. 33), "salary" (p. 33), "entrance requirements" (p. 47), "resourcing" (p. 58), "retention rates" (p. 67), "profession" (p. 74), "funding' (p. 79), "funding to schools" (p. 79), "political commitment" (p. 91), "support" (p. 137), "academic quality" (p. 169), "standards" (p. 173), "supervision" (p. 190), "enrolments" (p. 239), and "status" (p. 201). This discourse displays the tension between government economic imperatives and the responsibility for teacher wellbeing and working conditions.

Adding weight to this tension, the *Crowley Report* (1998) also linked decreasing government funding of a wide range of social policies to the "rise in dysfunctional families" (p. 57) and acknowledged that such social policy interventions had resulted in teachers being delegated the "responsibilities which ought to lie firmly within a family" (p. 57). This was suggested to have led to a steep rise in "behaviour management issues". It was argued that this had led to parents having "unrealistic expectations" (p. 57) that teachers provide "nurturing and social support which parents themselves have failed to provide" (p. 57). As a result, teachers had to frequently undertake "counselling services in addition to the normal educational curriculum" (p. 57), without the necessary funding or resources. The report argued that social

policy changes had, therefore, compounded the negative effect of economic tensions with teachers' well-being.

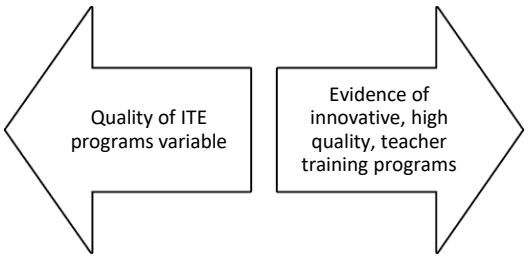
Thus, government economic imperatives stand in tension with the responsibility for teacher well-being. The danger presented in this tension is that professional standards could very easily be re-interpreted and re-framed by government to harness and steer public perceptions of teachers for political agendas. Representing the problem as teachers and their professional standards sets a dangerous trajectory as it would simultaneously degrade teachers, negatively impact teacher status, and at the same time further increase the expectation to do even "more with less" (p. 5). It, therefore, seems incongruous that the report assigns government responsibility for making teaching a more attractive career option, both economically and intrinsically in a bid to ensure teacher wellbeing. Yet the *Crowley Report* concluded that

> In encouraging governments to exercise their educational responsibilities for students through a focus on the *quality and well-being of teachers* [emphasis added] … it is the Committee's strong belief that the most powerful leverage for improving education lies with a skilled and high *quality teaching force* [emphasis added]. (p. 8)

The *Crowley Report* (1998) has left these tensions unresolved, choosing instead to consider them unproblematic.

5.5.2.3 Tension within the ITE discourse

Tensions are also apparent within the ITE discourse. On one hand the *Crowley Report* (1998) noted external reports confirm "variability in *quality of initial teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. 199) and that the Teaching Council's publication *What do Teachers Think*? considered ITE as irrelevant, out of touch and not practical enough. On the other hand, submissions to the report spoke of "many innovative, *high quality, teacher training programs* [emphasis added] established and run by dedicated and enthusiastic staff" (p. 199), and concerns were voiced about "the many innovative programs which have closed, or are threatened with closure, as a result of funding cuts" (p. 199).



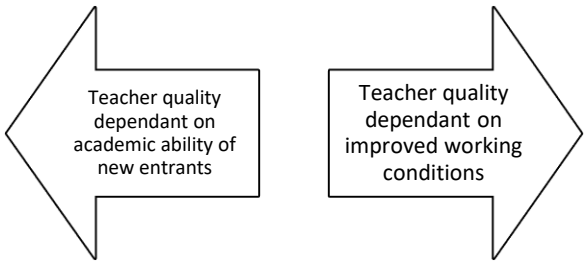
Despite this tension the *Crowley Report* (1998) concluded that given the "*variable quality* [emphasis added] in existing teacher training programs" (p. 201) it was essential that a national body should have responsibility for the accreditation of teacher training courses.

Another tension in the ITE discourse was seen to arise from the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) acknowledgement that the reasons for the decline in the "*academic quality* [emphasis added] of young people entering the teaching profession" (p. 174), were "many and varied" (p. 174).

On one hand, the Australian Council of Deans drew attention to the fact that half of new teaching students are "in the lowest quartile of tertiary entrance scores" (p. 169), and according to the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) this represented "a reduction in potential *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 170).

On the other hand, however, the School of Education, University of Tasmania suggested that it was too "simplistic to assume that TE scores are a good predictor of success at university, let alone of success in a student's chosen profession" (p. 172).

Rejecting the mantra that the quality of applicants was declining, or that students were "academically inferior" (p. 171), the *Crowley Report* (1998) disagreed with the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science's suggestion that "raising entry standards for teaching is the single biggest factor, which in the short and long term, will improve the *quality of Australian teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 179), choosing instead to suggest that the key to arresting the decline in applicants attracted to teaching did not lie in raising the "unacceptably low entry scores" (p. 170), but rather, in improved working conditions.

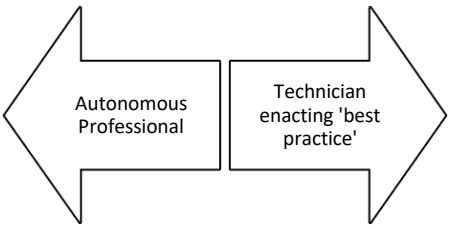


The report went on to posit that to ignore such influences would signal a "reduction in potential *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 170), as low entry scores are merely a "reflection of the falling status of teachers and how much they might be expected to earn on completion of their studies" (p. 170).

Thus, within the ITE discourse, quality is represented in two ways. It is either a measure of government resourcing of ITE – and, thus, the value placed on teacher training, or alternatively it is the quality of new entrants – with high entrance scores – implying "assumed skills, qualities and attributes" (p. 28).

The Board of Teacher Registration, Qld took this tension one step further suggesting that the academic tertiary entrance scores should not be the sole, or even major, criterion for selection into pre-service teacher education programs; rather, "entry should be based on a range of criteria and procedures (e.g., portfolios, interviews, references, as well as tertiary entrance scores) focusing on attributes required in the practice of the profession" (p. 172). This tension provided the catalyst for the *Crowley Report* (1998) to develop another construct of quality - teachers' personal attributes. The *Crowley Report* left this tension unresolved but went on to follow the trajectory of teacher selection.

5.5.2.4 Tension within the discourse of Teaching Practice



The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) strategy of giving teachers responsibility for "professional standards in teaching" (p. 8), thus, allowing them to "proceed in a new era of professional autonomy and self-regulation" (p. 17), does not resolve the tensions which are evident

between the discourse of the autonomous professional and that of the technicist (managerial). This tension is seen in the report's suggestion that teachers must be able to bring their professional judgement to bear upon what things require changing and what things need to be preserved, and that they should play a key role in determining "how change is to be most effectively implemented within the administrative, regulatory and policy frameworks which governments and education authorities prescribe" (p 8).

The use of the term *prescribe* stands in tension with the autonomous professional, and, thus, despite the report's overt claim that it is "vital that teachers establish themselves as a self-regulating, autonomous professional group" (p. 29), with an "organised professional voice" (p. 29), the report is also seen to adopt a contradictory authoritative tone in the statement, "all who take on the role of teacher must demonstrate their ability to operate at the appropriate professional standards" (p. 11). The report went on to state newly trained teachers would only be "permitted" (p. 16) to teach in a school if the necessary criteria for renewal of registration - "satisfactory *performance* [emphasis added] and ongoing professional development" (p. 16) - was met. These managerial discourses are apparent throughout the *Crowley Report* (1998), for example, the use of the following words and wordings: *performance* (x 17), *supply and demand* (x 51), *investment* (x 4), and *outcomes* (x 20) - their contradictory nature displaying the countervailing influences which cut across the aims of education, teaching, and teachers.

Together these tensions have the potential to further impact teacher morale, which paradoxically is considered in the *Crowley Report* (1998) to work against quality teaching.

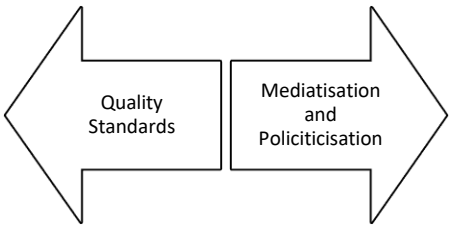
The *Crowley Report* (1998) stated,

> The Committee believes that a tolerant, vigorous, successful society requires a *quality education system*, and at the heart of *quality education* are *quality teachers*. Low morale amongst teachers works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added]. (p. 2)

Yet, on one hand, the teachers' role is portrayed as an autonomous professional, concerned with the quality of teaching and learning, whilst on the other hand, it is suggested a teacher should be an accountable technician, answerable to an external body's conception of quality, measured by tests and statistics. Leaving this unresolved, the *Crowley Report* (1998) conceded that the "market model of education now in force continues to value education as a commodity, while largely disregarding the interests of those who provide it … or make it

possible – our teachers" (p. 9), and giving some early indication of which application might prevail, the report went on to declare, "this does not mean endorsing and celebrating everything that teachers think, say and do. But it does mean taking teachers' perceptions and perspectives very seriously" (p. 6).

This is surprising as there is an overt acceptance in the *Crowley Report* (1998) of a "crisis in teacher morale" (p. 1). This is seen in the co-location of morale with "low" (p. 2), "improve" (p. 2), "debilitating" (p. 10), "declining" (p. 33), "destroyed" (p. 38), "undermined" (p. 38), "all-time low" (p. 38), and "lowering" (p. 223). The report also suggested this crisis in morale was unequivocal in nature and very "predictable" (p. 124). This was evidenced in the co-location of "declining morale" with "caused by the reduction in funding" (p. 223), "stress" (p. 217), "over-crowded curriculum" (p. 127), "lack of control" (p. 128), "teacher-student loads" (p. 200), "exhaustion" (p. 200), "litigation pressures" (p. 165), "workload" (p. 127) "pace of change" (p. 131), "non-core teaching tasks" (p. 132), and "inclusive classroom" (p. 137).



Linking to the issue of teacher morale, is the tension between standards and the mediatisation and politicisation of education policy. The potential for standards to be hijacked for political gain, is apparent in the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) acknowledgment that "perhaps the greatest effect on teacher morale arises from the continuing politicisation of education" (p. 95), and that continued "attacks on teachers by politicians is perceived by teachers as a major contributor to declining morale and to the undermining of the status of the profession" (p. 104). Providing an example of how this tension impacts teacher morale is Premier Kennett's claims that teachers have "never done a day's work in their lives" (p. 104), and that they have "done nothing to enhance public perceptions of the profession" (p. 104). These were criticized by the report, suggesting it demonstrated his "striking ignorance of the reality of teaching" (p. 104). The Tasmanian Primary Principals Association concurred suggesting his comments were "unfortunate" (p. 98) and one of the "greatest effects on teacher morale" (p. 95).

Yet the dangers of such political commentary are left unproblematic and serve to demonstrate the potential for politicians to exploit standards to build on deep-seated public assumptions about the nature of teachers' work to gain support for notions of control and compliance as a necessary reform measure. Thus, standards could be used to set ever higher expectation of teachers "to do more with less" (p. 5), perpetuating the blame game. This is not an oversight as teachers' submisssions to the report drew attention to media representations, and political accusations suggesting they were "simplistic, misleading and quite unjustified" (p. 98). Instead, teachers pointed to "dwindling resources, reduced support services, and increasing demands of the curriculum" (p. 95), suggesting that "instead of supporting us, ministers are leading the charge against us" (p. 99). There is a token call in the *Crowley Report* (1998) for "governments, to publicise more effectively the excellent work taking place in our schools" (p. 2); however, it comes with the acceptance that in today's climate it is unlikely to enlist the "necessary political will" (p. 39).

This tension creates a dilemma for teachers as they either need to transform themselves into an auditable commodity to survive: a position of compliance with standards, one which demands the re-forming not only of their professional identity, but also of their personal identity, or, resist, and risk further deterieration in public perceptions, ultimately fueling the blame game. Either way teacher morale will be negatively affected.

5.5.2.5 Problematic professional standards

One of the main problematisations in the *Crowley Report* (1998) was the lack professional standards of practice. This position created a conceptualisation of quality as quality standards. However, as seen, inherent in the notion of quality standards is the potential to produce different trajectories of thought. Sachs (2003) cautions that standards as an accountability measure, rather than a quality assurance measure, can be introduced under the guise of enhanced professionalism (Sachs, 2003b). The *Crowley Report*'s claim that standards provide "the legal mechanism by which state authorities give permission to applicants to practice their profession" (p. 15), which is "essentially concerned with quality assurance and accountability" (p. 12), reveals such a potential through the multiple ambiguities found in this discourse. As a consequence, the report's intended function of professional standards, that is, teacher autonomy, becomes blurred and has already given rise to another discursive trajectory in the report, that of standards for compliance. This is evident in the report's assertion that standards must be "established, regulated, and enforced" (p. 11). Terminology

such as "gatekeeper" (p. 16) "permitted" (p. 16) and "satisfactory assessment" (p. 16) demonstrates the ease with which autonomy can be reneged and gives an early indication of the direction which professional standards might take under the influence of managerial ideology.

The neoliberal, managerial concept of quality, which assigns a meaning to quality which is dependent on the effectiveness of technicians enacting best practice to achieve teaching outcomes (Connell, 2009), is argued to be overly simplistic, reducing teachers to no more than recipe-following operatives (Winch, 2005, p. 2), devoid of professional judgement and expertise. Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid and Shacklock (2000) warn that governments can use a range of mechanisms to achieve this type of regulatory quality, among them highly prescriptive initiatives such as national literacy and numeracy strategies which have been introduced in England and Australia. In such an environment, they suggest,

> Teachers are increasingly expected to follow directives and become compliant operatives in the headlong rush to encase schools within the ideology, practices and values of the business sector – never mind that they have histories, aspirations and professional cultures that make them decidedly different to car plant, breweries or fast-food outlets. (Smyth et al., 2000, p. 1)

Thus, in relation to standards, the way in which quality is being thought about remains muddy. For on one hand, if professional standards are adopted to mean standards of technicians' best practice, then rather than being done *with and for* teachers, standards will be done *to them and without them,* that is, as a regulatory measure. Ball (1994) suggests this limits the possibilities for social action, and, thus, it produces another dilemma for teachers: whilst the threat to their autonomy is apparent, the concept of quality is nonetheless hard to dispute. Ball (2012) argues that doing so would fuel the blame game, and, therefore, teachers who reject quality, even as an accountability measure, will negatively impact their own status still further. Despite this, the need for standards are placed firmly in the foreground, whilst leaving the function of standards backgrounded (Bacchi, 2009).

Moreover, there are dangers inherent in the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) proposal that 'professional standards' can form the basis of sorting teachers into 'professional levels', thereby facilitating a strategy of financial reward in return for specific 'standards'. Not only does this highlight the potential for professional standards to become obligatory standards, and a measure of compliance, but it also introduces competition among workers and reveals the absence of a conceptualisation of quality as 'collaborative teaching practices'. This is despite the report's

acknowledgement that there were "claims by some" (p. 16) that standards ignore the "complexities, surprises and subtleties of teaching" (p. 16) and make "any attempts to define standards of professional practice … simply not feasible" (p. 16). However, such concerns are left anonymous, marginalised and pathologised. Instead, the *Crowley Report* (1998) quotes Ingvarson (1995) to subjugate such concerns:

> Without standards, a professional body is defenceless. A demonstrated ability to articulate standards for *high quality practice* [emphasis added] is an essential credential if a professional body wishes to be taken seriously by the public and policy makers. When placed on the table in forums with policy makers about reform and accountability, established professional standards are hard to ignore. (p. 16)

The *Crowley Report* (1998) also claimed,

> a highly resourced and well serviced school will not ensure *quality education* [emphasis added] without teachers who can perform to the relevant professional standard. In the Committee's view, these relevant professional standards are the province of the teaching profession itself, and should be established and upheld by the profession. (p. 15)

The discourse is, thus, constructed in such a way as to limit the potential for alternative solutions, and establishes quality standards as both possible and desirable (Bacchi, 2009). The process effectively marginalised concerns that quality defined by standards could introduce competition between teachers, be used as disciplinary structure of normalisation (Bloomfield, 2006), and ultimately that standards could result in fundamental changes in what it means to teach: a situation where teaching becomes reduced to discrete tasks, aims and objectives, measured and assessed through management technologies (Taubman, 2009).

5.5.2.6 Problematic teacher qualities

Similarly, conceptualising the problem as one of teachers' "assumed skills, qualities and attributes" (p. 28) has led the *Crowley Report* (1998) to propose "entry to teacher training should, at a minimum, be based on TER scores plus in-depth interviews designed to ascertain the applicant's suitability" (p. 172). This discourse operates in the *Crowley Report* (1998) as if it referred to a minority group in need of some sort of policy reform, rather than a phase of learning, or a fulfilling career. The suggestion that new entrants should, at the onset of their training, already possess such characteristics, precludes the historical notion of education for personal growth and fulfilment (Cole, 1950), and paradoxically, discounts any notion that ITE can develop learning.

Further, the idea that skills are something positioned outside of potential teachers, waiting to be aquired not only assumes that human beings are skill-aquiring and skill-possessing creatures (Bastalich, 2001) but also ignores the aforementioned importance of collaborative practice, trust and realationships in the art of teaching. Positioning teachers' qualities as problematic endorses the notion of teaching as a role, rather than an identity (Nias, 1989) or even a profession, and challenges the whole concept of learning, and more specifically of teacher training.

This problematisation requires close scrutinty as the concept of teachers' skills, qualities and attributes is devoid of any in-depth discussion. Instead, as aforementioned, there is an assumption in the *Crowley Report* (1998) that there is a pre-determined set of desirable attributes "required in the practice of the profession" (p. 172), that are "critical to successful teaching"(p. 172); the report assumes we know what "good teachers actually **do** and what differentiates them from mediocre teachers" (emphasis in original text) (p. 118). This sets a dangerous precedent as the report has acknowledged personal attributes are "difficult to measure objectively" (p. 172). As a consequence of that difficulty, this issue remains hotly contested, and there is little consensus in the literature as to which attributes constitute quality. Thus, the process of selecting *best*, would work to constrain and limit thought with the purpose of influencing practice (Bacchi, 2009), effectively determining "who can speak, when, and with what authority" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 44).

The power of the personal qualities discourse is in its ability to give gatekeeper status to those who are charged with its management. As Berliner (2005) points out, it is unlikely that any federal law can mandate the employment of keen insight and good judgement. It is more likely that the process would limit teacher diversity, and limit the ability of the profession to work in diverse contexts. Any endorsement of pre-determined quality attributes would, therefore, be questionable as they would be dependent on the objectives of those doing the judging.

5.5.3 The Interconnected and overlapping effects of the discourse

The WPR approach starts from the "presumption that some problem representations create difficulties (forms of harm) for members of some social groups more so than for other social groups" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). For this reason it is important to interrogate the problematisations on offer to "see where and how they function to benefit some and harm

others" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). A discursive effect is that which follows from the limits imposed by the discourse in the problem representation: what can be said and thought. A subjectification effect refers to the way in which subjects are constituted in the discourse. This section of the analysis considers the discursive and subjective effects of the discourses and their representations of the problem of quality found in the *Crowley Report* (1998).

5.5.3.1 Discursive effects: A distinct kind of problem

The first discursive effect is its ability to place teachers as a specific type of problem, that is, akin to a minority group. The discourse effectively placed teachers as a problem to be solved, and in need of policy reform measures. The inherent danger in this, which was highlighted in the submission from the Australian College of Education, is that of the "pygmalion effect; of the image becoming the substance" (p. 51). The need for this report provides credence to such a notion.

The aforementioned role of the media in the politicisation of education illuminates such dangers, for mediatisation of education policy does not simply present an image, relay events, or offer a forum for rigorous debate. Rather, it can be used as a tool in the framing of generalised themes, narratives, and political stances (MacMillan, 2002) about the nature and work of the individual (Bacchi, 2009) – in this case the teacher. Thus the de facto policy/media relationship (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004) shapes and frames discourses of political communication (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), and in the process creates deep-seated beliefs and assumptions in the public domain. Set within this political discursive arena, education is viewed as a market (Ball, 2012) and teachers as products within a business model. Thus the meaning of teacher quality has been been framed in a very specific way. This changes public perceptions of teachers from one of a public service to that of a commodity (S. Ball, 2012). Such concerns about how media affects the trajectory, not only of the debate, but the society in which that discourse takes place, is not new (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004; Snyder, 2008), and shows how creating teachers and their work as a specific type of problem to be solved, can and does lead to a pygmalion effect – and the recommendations for a national recruitment campaign designed to attract *high quality applicants* [emphasis added] (p. 147), and establish *best practice* [emphasis added] in the development and delivery of initial and continuing teacher education (p. 203).

5.5.3.2 Discursive effects: Creating truth

A second discursive effect is seen in its ability to create 'truth'. This is evidenced in the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) claim that "teaching must be regarded as a profession, with all that this implies for the standards, accountability, status and autonomy that a community expects of a profession" (p. 6).

This truth has been facilitated by the power invested in the Crowley Committee to "make and deploy discourses"(Bacchi, 2009, p. 237), thus, shaping what can be said and thought, and with what authority (S. Ball, 2006). The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) ability to question if teaching could "be described as a profession", and "what attributes of teachers … contribute to their level of professional status" (p. 1), in combination with its use of authoritative texts to separate, and subjugate certain episteme of knowledge (Foucault, 1973), facilitated the positioning of what was impossible and disallowed, thus, making certain courses of action permissible, and allowed (Bacchi, 2009). This power of the discourse created an atmosphere of acceptance, making the report's position seem like a common sense argument (Bacchi, 2009) of professional deficit. This process made existing teacher professionalism almost invisible to the reader.

5.5.3.3 Subjectification effect: Conflicting subject positions

The *Crowley Report* (1998) also created a subjectification effect (Bacchi, 2009). It did this by placing teachers in conflicting subject positions, on one hand declaring "it is vital that teachers establish themselves as a self-regulating, autonomous professional group" (p. 29), whilst on the other hand, stating professional standards provide "the legal mechanism by which state authorities give permission to applicants to practice their profession" (p. 15).

The subjectification effect was also seen in the Conservative Government Senators *Minority Report* which exuded a discourse of exclusion and regulation. This positioned teachers not as autonomous, but as subordinate. The senators dissent from nine of the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) recommendations, represents counter claims to speak with authority (Bacchi, 2009) and effectively constrains the "subject position of teachers to that which is set up within the discourse" (Thomas, 2005, p. 73). This was evident in the Senators' counter recommendation that MCEETYA, in collaboration with State and Territory teacher registration bodies, be responsible for establishing and regulating what teachers will be "expected to know and be able to do" in order to be granted "certified levels of entry" (p. 254). Furthermore, it

recommended that MCEETYA should establish the "criteria for re-registration", including the "mechanisms for acting on complaints", "a register of teachers certified by State and Territory registration boards", and "eligibility for employment as teachers in both government and non-government schools" (p. 254). The *Minority Report* went on to recommend teachers be required to prove their competency by seeking "re-registration every few years, when proof of satisfactory performance and ongoing professional development would be the core criteria for renewal" (p. 16). In contrast to the autonomous professional subject position which was evident in the *Crowley Report*, the Senators report attempted to consign teachers a subordinate role, whilst giving external bodies the primary role as gatekeepers of 'quality'. This attests to teachers' claims that they feel a "sense of alienation from decision-making processes" (p. 29).

In addition, the discourse implied teachers, as part of a mass unionised workforce, were unprofessional. The *Crowley Report* (1998) also noted that the "marginality" of teaching owed much to language such as "loyalty, faith, devotion, and self-sacrifice" (p. 26), as it invoked notions of a "calling or vocation" rather than a profession. Knowledge such as this, which evolves from social, political, and historical conditions, becomes what Foucault terms a regime of truth that pervades society – a form of unquestioned truth which evolves from discourse and is constantly reinforced through education systems and the media. As a consequence of this accepted knowledge, teachers are positioned as intrinsically motivated to do their best for students, and to "do more with less" (Crowley Report, p. 5), rather than complain.

Thus, the discourse has simultaneously positioned teachers as autonomous, subordinate, self-sacrificing, and unprofessional, resulting in an imbalanced (Bacchi, 2009) and contradictory position. Such "asymmetrical imbalances in positions of power" (Thomas, 2005, p. 73) can create identity imbalance for teachers, in turn impacting teacher morale (Nias, 1989), which paradoxically was noted by the *Crowley Report* as one of the main factors negatively impacting quality teaching.

5.5.4 Can the problem be thought about in different ways?

These analyses have shown that the *Crowley Report* (1998) has represented the problem as various issues related to 'quality'. However, the term quality lacked precision, and as a result there were tensions between discourses as to the meaning being applied to quality. The term

quality is, therefore, open to being represented in a number of ways, and this should be "recognised and contested" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 32). This section of the analysis considers how the problem could have been thought about differently – in other words, how this could be rethought (Bacchi, 2009).

To recap, the *Crowley Report* (1998) acknowledged there was "no major crisis of quality in Australia's *teaching force*" [emphasis added] (p. 6). Rather, the evidence presented to the Committee demonstrated that a complex web of factors, both external (alarmist media reports, feminisation of the profession, unsupportive ministers, the absence of support services, the lack of career progression, shrinking budgets), and internal (curriculum, technology, school-based management, and student welfare), were negatively impacting teacher status. The report stated,

> We know the causes of declining status and we know, in large part, how to overcome them. The remedy rests with the exercise of the necessary political will (p. 39).

With that in mind, the *Crowley Report* (1998) proposed solutions which it thought possible and achievable, and as a result, the report privileged the discourse of professional standards as the solution to the problems. This solution was not designed to address the plethora of factors negatively impacting teacher status per se, but rather as a mechanism to provide teachers with a voice to defend themselves against "ill-informed or gratuitous criticism" (p. 5).

5.5.4.1 Privileging the discourse of teacher well-being

Rather than privilege the discourse of standards, an alternative way of thinking about the problem could have been to privilege the discourse of "*quality and well being of teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 8). For example, the *Crowley Report* (1998) suggested governments should be encouraged to exercise their educational responsibilities for students through a focus on:

> the *quality and well being* [emphasis added] of teachers…it is the Committee's strong belief that the most powerful leverage for improving education lies with a skilled and *high quality teaching force* [emphasis added]. Any effort applied to enhancing teaching will multiply the effects on student learning. (p. 8)

The report also criticised the uncertainty around government funding of education as having impacted on teacher morale and status, and that low morale amongst teachers works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added] (p. 2), it stated:

> Funding uncertainty and its failure to keep pace with costs affects every aspect of teachers' working lives. Together with excessive work load it is the single most important contributor to the declining morale and status of the profession. (p. 90)

The *Crowley Report* (1998) also stressed that the "serious" (p. 5) crisis of morale among teachers was as a result of teachers' perception that governments were in retreat from education, and that reflected the "value" (p. 5) placed on teachers.

Thus, despite acknowledging uncertainty around government funding reflected the "value" (p. 5) placed on teachers, and that this had impacted on teacher morale and status, and that low morale amongst teachers works against *quality teaching* [emphasis added] (p. 2), the *Crowley Report* (1998) instead concluded, "there is a strong prima facie case that school reform is best approached by a focus on *teachers and their professional standards* [emphasis added] (p. 11).

Had the report chosen to privilege discourses which addressed the "*quality and well-being of teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 8), then the problem representation could have framed quality as follows: teacher autonomy over their own work to allow them to "proceed in a new era of professional autonomy and self-regulation" (p. 17); increased wages, "to show the real value of teachers' work" (p. 34); stopping the politicisation and mediatisation of education policy, as "attacks on teachers by politicians is perceived by teachers as a major contributor to declining morale and to the undermining of the status of the profession" (p. 104); abandoning casualisation, including temporary and short-term contracts as this posed a "serious threat to teachers' status and professionalism" (p. 126); and increasing the level of government resourcing to ensure "the quality of the resources and the working conditions in schools" (p. 13). This way of thinking about the problem could potentially solve the problem of declining teacher status by demonstrating the "value of teachers' work" (p. 34). This would in turn contribute to attracting and retaining "quality entrants" (p. 110).

5.5.4.2 Privileging the discourse of learning

Another way of thinking about the problem was as "a simple matter of equity that young people, regardless of where they reside, should enjoy the benefits of quality teaching" (p. 20),

rather than the view presented in the *Crowley Report* (1998) which saw quality teaching through the prism of quality supply, including the following elements: the quality of ITE and of new entrants to ITE, the quality of teaching, and the quality of teachers. This is evident in the report's statement that "*teachers* [emphasis added] are central to the quality of students' learning" (p.2).

An alternative way of thinking about the problem would have been to privilege discourses on the demand side of the education equation: that of "equity" (p. 20) and "*the quality of student learning* [emphasis added]" (p. 2). This way of looking at the problem would have privileged discourses of equity and learning. The term *equity* was used four times in the *Crowley Report* (1998), *learning* was used 72 times, and *teaching and learning* (p. 13) was used once.

Representing the problem as one of equitable access to quality "teaching and learning" (p. 13) necessitates discussion of societal or social issues. Yet discussion of such issues in the *Crowley Report* (1998) were scant, except to highlight the blame game (Levin, 2004). For example, the submission from the NSW Federation of School Community Organisations' noted

> Sex education, drug education, road safety, fitness, nutrition, interpersonal relationships, socio-economic disadvantage, unemployment are all seen as the responsibility of schools. When teachers fail to solve the problems associated with these - as fail they must because education is only one part of the solution - society is quick to blame the teachers. (p. 44)

The *Crowley Report* (1998) did acknowledge the private/public debate; however, themes of fairness and inclusion were conspicuous only by their absence. This validates Ball's (2006) suggestion that discourse serves to limit and constrain certain possibilities for thought, and can be seen in the way the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) ordered and combed words to privilege discourses of quality and standards, and in the process silence or subjugate counter discourses.

Thus the analyses show the *Crowley Report* (1998) exhibited a range of value laden quality attributes: quality as practice, quality as outcomes quality as status, quality as systems, quality as new entrants, quality as efficiency, quality as self regulation, quality as equity, quality as learning, and quality as professional. Yet the *Crowley Report* (1998) privileged discourses of professional standards. This typifies the political process - one in which trade offs between

values are made (Rivi & Linguard, 2010, p. 72). – where some were privileged at the expense of others.

5.6 Concluding remarks

The *Crowley Report* (1998) stressed that whilst there was no major crisis of quality in Australia's teaching force, there was, however, a complex web of external (alarmist media reports, feminisation of the profession, unsupportive ministers, the absence of support services, the lack of career progression, and shrinking budgets), and internal (curriculum, technology, school based management; and student welfare) factors identified as negatively impacting teacher status and teacher morale, which in turn was perceived to be impacting the quality of teaching. The report conceded however, that whilst "we know the causes of declining status and we know, in large part, how to overcome them. The remedy rests with the exercise of the necessary political will" (p. 39).

These analyses have confirmed Gale's (1994) suggestion that irrespective of the factors contributing to the problem, solutions are constructed in a way that an inquiry believes it can solve. Instead of addressing the plethora of factors negatively impacting teacher status, the *Crowley Report* (1998) instead represented the problem as multiple issues of quality: quality assurance, quality of ITE, quality of education systems, quality of teaching practice, and teacher quality including the quality of ITE entrants.

The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) recommendation for teacher professional standards, which alluded to quality assurance through professional autonomy and self-regulation, should, therefore, not be seen as a strategy to address the plethora of factors identified as negatively impacting teacher well-being, working conditions, and status per se, but rather as a mechanism to provide teachers an "organised professional voice" (p. 29) to elicit an effect in the struggle to combat criticisms of teaching and teachers – in other words to control "claims to truth" (Bacchi, 2000, p. 35).

However, as Connell (2009) argues, neoliberalism is profoundly suspicious of professionalism, as it regards it as an anti-competitive monopoly. Consequently, the idea of an autonomous teaching profession, seemingly promoted in the *Crowley Report* (1998), has resulted in a struggle to retain the political truths which dominate in the context of this neoliberal arena: those of market ideology, accountability, certification and compliance - the

"products of the institutional (non-discursive) practices that sustain them" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 36). Similarly, a struggle was also seen in the Conservative Senators' *Minority Report* which attempted to suppress the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) claim to truth in recommending MCEETYA be given responsibility for developing a professional body.

This struggle has already given rise to another two discourses: those of standards for compliance, and teacher selection based on "the attributes required in the practice of the profession" (p. 172). Thus the privileging of the discourse of standards has set a dangerous trajectory, as the literature attests there is no consensus about what it means to be an effective teacher, and, thus, a plurality of meanings persists (K. Fraser et al., 2010; Kennedy, 2005; Shum, 2012; Tsui, 2009; Zeichner & Bekisizwe, 2008).

In this chapter I have conducted an exploratory study of the problems contained in the *Crowley Report* (1998). Rather than "simply accepting the shape they are given" (Bacchi, 2009 p. 46), I have used Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach as an analytic tool to explore how these problems have been constructed. This process allowed me to identify the presuppositions and assumption upon which the logic was based, and also to reveal tensions between discourses. This process allowed me to consider how the problem could have been thought about differently. The next chapter continues to trace how quality in the context of education policy, continues to evolve.

Chapter 6: Tracing the problematisation of teacher quality in the *Ramsey Review* (2000): *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices*

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explored the parliamentary report *A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession* (Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998), referred to as the *Crowley Report* after its first author. The analysis showed that whilst the *Crowley Report* (1998) acknowledged there was no major crisis in quality in Australia's teaching force, but identified a plethora of factors both external (alarmist media report, feminisation of the profession, unsupportive ministers, the absence of support services, the lack of career progression opportunities, and shrinking budgets), and internal (curriculum, technology, school based management; and student welfare) which were negatively impacting teacher status. The *Crowley Report* (1998) suggested the "causes were well known" (Crowley, 1998, p. 2). However, it conceded that the "seemingly reduced commitment to school education" (Crowley, 1998, p. 79), coupled with the "declining political commitment to the provision of publicly funded services and a greater reliance upon more competitive, market oriented models of service delivery" (Crowley, 1998, p. 91), left the Crowley Committee sceptical that government would "make a commitment" (p. 3) to support teachers. Instead of addressing the plethora of factors negatively impacting teacher status, the *Crowley Report* (1998) represented the problem as multiple issues of quality: quality assurance, quality of ITE, quality of education systems, quality of teaching practice, and teacher quality including the quality of ITE entrants. Framing the problem in this way led to solutions which proposed institutional status and professional teaching standards in a bid to give teachers a voice with which to combat criticisms and more effectively articulate the good work being carried out in schools. However, as the analysis demonstrated, within context of a neoliberal discursive arena, the *Crowley's Report*'s (1998) recommendations encountered a struggle to retain the political notions of market ideology, accountability, and compliance.

Using the lens policy as discourse (Bacchi, 2000; S. Ball, 1993) this chapter continues to trace how the concept of quality evolves in the parliamentary review: *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices* (Ramsey, 2000), hereafter referred to as the *Ramsey*

Review after its first author. This *Ramsey Review* (2000) is particularly significant as I argue it represents a point in time where the small, but nonetheless evident, discourse of teacher attributes and personal characteristics, which emerged in the *Crowley Report* (1998) began to gain traction and be consolidated as an accepted measure of quality in Australian education policy.

I begin by providing a background to the *Ramsey Review* (2000) and its terms of reference. As with the previous chapter, three levels of analysis follow. The first level of analysis is in preparation for the second and third: the application of Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach. The first level examines the content of each chapter of the review, carefully tracing where ideas (or discursive threads) of quality begin to emerge. The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's framework to identify how these discursive threads coalesce or knot into major discourses and come to represent the problems. The third level of the analysis applies questions two through six of Bacchi's (2009) WPR framework to probe more deeply into these problem representations found in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), and its subsequent proposals for change. The questions inquire about the rationales for the proposals: the deep seated presuppositions and assumptions which underpin the logic. This level of analysis also identifies tensions in the discourse and considers any effects produced by the discourse. Lastly, this level of analysis considers whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

6.2 Background

In 1999, under the then Prime Minister John Howard, the Conservative Liberal Government's education policy platform included a commitment to review teacher education in New South Wales. In June of that year, upholding his commitment, Prime Minister Howard instructed the Hon John Aquilina, Minister for Education and Training, to invite Dr Gregor Ramsey to undertake the review. Dr Ramsey, began his career as a science teacher, and later became managing director of the NSW TAFE Commission. The Ramsey Committee also included, Executive Officer Bruce Mowbray, a mathematics teacher and later manager of the Interim Committee for NSW Institute of Teachers, John Moore, Helen Gregory, Sera Gandolfo, Vivian Eyers and Graeme Speedy. Both Eyers and Speedy had been involved in previous education reviews. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) included two hundred stakeholder submissions from the following sources: Catholic and independent schools, universities, principals' associations, education and research services, unions, the Council of

Deans, youth and family services, teachers, students, and professional associations. The submissions also included international stakeholders involved in the reform of teacher education in the United Kingdom, the United States, Mexico, Denmark, Canada, Finland, Hong Kong and Singapore, in addition to senior officers from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). As part of the review, the Ramsey Committee also held meetings with the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, and with various relevant State departments. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) was released in November 2000.

6.3 First level analysis: Identifying the discursive threads of quality in chapters of the *Ramsey Review* (2000)

6.3.1 "Terms of Reference"

The *Ramsey Review's* (2000) terms of reference were to "consider and advise on the initial preparation and continuing development of teachers" (p. 221). In particular, the *Ramsey Review* was to focus on "issues and strategies for improving the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added] at all stages of their careers" (p. 221). Of the eleven terms of reference, only six referred directly to quality:

> 3. strategies for attracting *high quality candidates* [emphasis added] into teacher education while reflecting the diversity of the population teachers are to serve.
>
> 4. the range, effectiveness and *quality of present strategies and processes of initial teacher preparation* [emphasis added] to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills and personal attributes to meet future needs.
>
> 5. the nature, *quality and balance of the initial teacher education curriculum* [emphasis added], taking into consideration content knowledge, pedagogy, practical skills, legal requirements and government policies and the personal development of potential teachers.
>
> 8. the priorities for the use of resources currently available to universities and other organisations that undertake the preparation and training of teachers. The capacity of these resources to meet future needs for *quality teachers* [emphasis added], in the context of the relative roles and responsibilities of Commonwealth and State Governments in the preparation and training of teachers.
>
> 9. the relevance, *quality and availability of post initial and continuing education programs* [emphasis added] for teachers and strategies to encourage on-going professional growth throughout their teaching careers.

> 10. the on-going structures and processes necessary to guarantee the *quality and number of teachers* [emphasis added] required to meet likely future needs. (p. 221-222).

In summary, the terms of reference referred to quality candidates, strategies and processes of initial teacher preparation, teacher education curriculum, teachers, and post initial and continuing education programs. The discursive threads found in this chapter can be seen in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Discursive threads of quality found in the Ramsey Review's Terms of Reference

Discursive threads of quality found in the Ramsey Review's Terms of Reference
Quality teachers High quality candidates Quality and present strategies and processes of initial teacher preparation Quality and balance of the initial teacher education curriculum Quality and availability of post initial and continuing education programs Quality and number of teachers

6.3.2 Chapter 1: "Introduction"

Chapter 1 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested that "given teaching is becoming more important, society and teachers themselves need to be sure that the work of teachers is of the highest possible *quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 9). That being said, however, the reivew acknoweledged that "a dilemma exists in trying to describe what it is conceptually that teachers serve" (p. 11), and that

> in spite of attempts to avoid hard -nosed economic terms like *market forces, quality assurance, accountability, performance, bench marking, client, fee-for-service, efficiency, effectiveness* it must be recognised these are the lenses through which increasingly teachers and teacher educators are being forced to view the world. (p. 11)

This chapter stated four critical issues were to be addressed, only one of which related to quality: "the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 10). In addition, this chapter declared several important issues had arisen from the terms of reference, which would guide "the direction and outcomes of the Review" (p. 10). Two of these issues directly used the term quality. The first was the need for "strategies to attract *high quality students* [emphasis added] into teaching" (p. 10), and the second was "structures necessary to guarantee *quality in teacher education and teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 10).

Demonstrating continuity with the view taken in the previous *Crowley Report* (2000), this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) declared that "the sooner teaching is constituted as a

quality [emphasis added], rather than a mass, profession the sooner it will be possible to put these issues in a proper professional framework" (p. 12).

This chapter of the review suggested that "there is one issue that now seems to have been put to rest … the teacher really does make the difference in student learning" (p. 12). Using good as a synonym for quality, this chapter went on to posit that the focus was, therefore, first on "the fact that *good teachers* [emphasis added] are essential to effective learning, and second, on the professional systems needed to support *quality teaching* [emphasis added] (p. 12).

Justifying its position, the review declared that these were the "critical issues requiring attention" (p. 14), as "significant issues arise for students in those instances where the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] lags behind the *quality of the curriculum* [emphasis added]; the effect on student learning is less damaging where the reverse applies" (p. 13).

This chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) extended the notion of quality to leadership, and proposed "the *quality of educational leadership* [emphasis added] is critical to raising the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 14).

This chapter concluded that in response to such concerns, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) should be "seen as initiating a process of change" (p. 14) and that the review would "show the ways forward to improve the *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] and, therefore, *teaching* [emphais added]"(p. 15).

In summary, despite acknolwedging that it was difficult to describe conceptually what it is teachers serve, the introduction has set the tone (quality profession vs mass workforce), and focus (quality teaching, quality teachers, and processes and systems) of the review. In doing so it has demonstrated continuity with the binary discourse built in the previous *Crowley Report* (1998) to suggest teaching must become a profession (as opposed to a mass unionised workforce), and has outlined who and what are critical issues in relation to quality; these were the following: high quality students, quality teachers, quality leadership, quality teaching, and structures to guarantee quality initial teacher education. These were all considered more important, and less damaging, than the quality of the curriculum. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 1 can be seen in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 1 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 1 of the Ramsey Review
Quality of teachers' work
Quality teachers and teaching
High quality students
Quality teacher education and teaching
Quality profession
Quality curriculum
Quality leadership
Quality initial teacher education

6.3.3 Chapter 2, 3 and 4: "How the Review Proceeded", "Teaching in Critical Times", and "Review Contexts"

Chapter 2 of *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated that despite the recommendations of previous education reviews, there had been a distinct lack of action, and, therefore, to avoid meeting "a similar fate" (p. 16), this review "had to initiate processes to produce a momentum for change" (p. 16). To achieve this aim the review established five principles, only one of which related to quality - that "preparing *quality teachers* [emphasis added] is the responsibility of the whole university, school systems and the profession, not only teacher educators" (p. 16).

In an attempt to establish if the current system reflected these responsibilities, the review Committee consulted with stakeholders seeking responses to eight questions. Only two of these referred directly to quality. The review first questioned, "to what extent does the current range of pathways into teaching and progression throughout their careers guarantee the *quality and supply of teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 16), and second, "what advisory structures and *quality assurance processes* [emphasis added] are needed in New South Wales to guarantee the *quality* [emphasis added] and number of teachers for the future?" (p. 16).

Chapter 3 of the *Ramsay Review* (2000) considered the submissions in response to the aforementioned questions. It acknowledged the concerns made by the University of Technology Sydney, Faculty of Education, which stated, "today we have an educational environment which is characterised by uncertainty and constant change – a reflection of the state in the wider society" (p. 18). Charles Sturt University, Faculty of Education, Bathurst, suggested that "in the broadest context, teaching has become the front line for apportioning responsibility (or blame) for changes brought about by globalisation and the rapid growth in communication technologies" (p. 18). Responding to these concerns, this chapter of the review suggested that "despite a sense of urgency amongst many who have a stake in the

quality of teacher preparation and teaching [emphasis added], few see clearly what the future holds" (p. 18), and yet it suggested:

> Change in society is so continuous and so pervasive that well-established beliefs and practices about how best to prepare teachers and how best to guarantee the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] in schools and educational institutions had become "increasingly difficult to defend. (p. 18)

This chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) cited the pressures of economic change as being responsible for producing a society which prioritised knowledge creation, and that this "places demand on teachers for the highest possible *quality in their work* [emphasis added]" (p. 25). Using best as a synonym for quality emphasised the importance of teacher preparation. It stated,

> The achievements of our *best teachers* [emphasis added] point to the salient fact that change in the classroom comes not from imposed priorities and bureaucratic regulation, but is drawn from the deep well of the teacher's professionalism. Parents know that the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] matters critically…The *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] experienced by their children should not be dependent on who the teacher is. Not only must the profession's *best practitioners* [emphasis added] be more valued, their skills and knowledge must be drawn on to raise the overall standard of teacher preparation and teaching. (p. 25)

This chapter posited that in order to ensure "their relevance and appropriateness" (p. 26), teacher education, and its "time and resources" (p. 26) needed to be restructured to "enable a much stronger focus on professional experience (p. 26), as this had "implications for teaching in schools" (p. 26).

Moreover, the review suggested teacher education needed to be understood as a lifelong learning process, and that, therefore, conditions needed to be provided in which teaching can be created as

> a *quality profession* [emphasis added]. We need to champion teachers and the critical work they do and guarantee the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] in all New South Wales educational institutions. (p. 26)

This chapter concluded that "those who prepare teachers need to be more accountable for the *quality of their work* [emphasis added]" (p. 26).

Chapter 4 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) drew attention to the "extent to which there is growing awareness in the education community and more broadly of research into *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 27), and associated concerns about the "the possible decline in the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 28).

Demonstrating discursive continuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998), this chapter drew attention to ongoing concerns regarding teacher education, including "the *quality and the effectiveness of the practicum* [emphasis added]" (p. 29), "the *quality of induction* [emphasis added]" (p. 30), and the "*poor intellectual quality"* [emphasis added]" (p. 31) in relation to professional development arrangements.

In authoritative tone, this chapter declared "the debate of the past 20 years about standards and how to improve the *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] has run its course. It is time to move forward" (p. 31). This chapter claimed there were "possible structures which would provide a better system of teacher education in New South Wales and a *higher quality teaching profession* [emphasis added] (p. 31). A submission from A Weate, of the University of New South Wales, suggested a structure such as

> the self-regulatory *quality mechanisms* [emphasis added] that exist in other professions, such as an endorsed set of competencies, a professional registration system based on established standards or an agreed requirement for continuing education. (p. 32)

This chapter went on to warn that

> failure, including at a national level, either to establish standards of professional teaching practice or to embed them deeply into the profession is now impacting in a negative way on the direction and *quality of initial and continuing teacher education* [emphasis added], and hence teaching. (p. 31)

Chapter 4 of the review agreed and proclaimed that standards would establish the means for teaching to have the attributes of a profession focused on the *quality of its performance and service* [emphasis added] (p. 33).

This chapter then linked the quality of teachers to student outcomes, citing Darling-Hammond's work to gain authority for its proposition,

> the growing interest in *teacher quality* [emphasis added] in New South Wales is paralleled across the English-speaking world. Globally, there is increasing

> appreciation that inadequate attention has been given to the importance of raising *teacher quality* [emphasis added] to improve student outcomes. (p. 34)

It then linked the quality of teaching to student outcomes and again quoted Darling-Hammond. This chapter warned that "the effect of *poor quality teaching* [emphasis added] on student outcomes is debilitating and cumulative" (p. 34) and is greater than those effects "that arise from student backgrounds" (p. 34). Building this argument, and using effective to signify quality, the review stated,

> In fact, available Australian research aligns well with Darling-Hammond's findings. Writing in 1998, Lawrence Ingvarson commented: The research program of Rowe, Holmes-Smith and Hill (1993) … shows … it is essentially through the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] that effective schools 'make a difference' [emphasis in original text]; in fact, on the basis of our findings to date it could be argued that effective schools are only 'effective' [emphasis in original text] to the extent that they have 'effective' [emphasis in original text] teachers. (p. 35)

This chapter concluded that this research set a "compelling case for the view that government policies directed at raising the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added] can have a highly significant impact on student outcomes" (p. 34).

The primary reason for the introduction of standards as a means of providing teachers a professional voice, and which was prominent in the *Crowley Report* (1998), was buried in the depths of this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000), where it suggests that teachers "have no framework of standards from within which they can demonstrate the *quality of their professional practice* [emphasis added]" (p. 32) and, thus, "they become the punching bag for populist but often ill-informed views which gain credibility because they largely go unchallenged" (p. 32).

In summary, Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) claimed that despite a lack of clarity about what the future holds, old beliefs about how to prepare quality teachers/best practitioners were difficult to defend. Implying a quality deficit amongst teachers, the review suggested this needed to be addressed, as a society which prioritises knowledge creation demands the best teachers to deliver quality in their work. In order to address this, the review posited that the creation of a quality profession, underpinned by a mechanism such as quality standards, was necessary to guarantee quality teachers and quality teaching. Moreover, attention to the quality of teacher education programs including the quality of the practicum, the quality of

induction and the quality of professional development was necessary. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 can be seen in Table 16 below.

Table 16: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 2, 3 & 4 of the Ramsey Review
Quality teachers
Quality assurance processes
Quality preparation
Quality teaching
Quality work
Quality profession
Quality practicum
Quality induction intellectual quality
Quality teacher education
Quality mechanisms
Quality initial and continuing teacher education
Quality performance
Teacher quality
Quality professional practice

6.3.4 Chapter 5: "Issues and Directions"

Chapter 5 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) began with the "premise" (p. 36) that there were emerging challenges that "make reform imperative" (p. 36). These challenges were noted to be as follows: the increasing use of technology (p. 18), changing society structures and corresponding social issues (p. 19), and an ageing teaching profession (p. 18). This chapter stated that "improving the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 36) and the "*quality of tomorrow's teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 36), must occur within a framework of "improving the *quality of the schools and systems* [emphasis added]" (p. 36).

This chapter suggested the shift to a "*quality focus* [emphasis added] in teaching" (p. 37) needed to begin in pre-service teacher education, and then be maintained throughout the professional lives of all teachers, and, moreover, "the present divide between universities, schools and the profession brought about by the significant withdrawal of teacher educators from teaching in schools is unsustainable if *quality teachers* [emphasis added] are to be prepared" (p. 38).

This chapter of the review then linked standards to quality teacher preparation, quality teaching, and teacher quality:

> there is growing acceptance of the research showing that *quality teacher preparation* [emphasis added] and *quality teaching* [emphasis added] make a difference to

> learning. There is powerful, unambiguous support for a much stronger focus on improving *teacher quality* [emphasis added] in New South Wales. The implications of this finding are far-reaching, but include the need to see that those aspiring to enter teaching are educated in models and courses to a level which meet explicit standards. (p. 37)

To facilitate standards, this chapter advocated "structures, systems and immediate work environments have to be developed which will enable all teachers to work toward and practise at the highest possible standards of professional performance" (p. 38).

The small, but nonetheless evident, discourse of quality applicants which had emerged in the previous *Crowley Report* (1998) is seen to gain traction in this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) in its consideration of "pathways into teaching" (p. 39). This chapter of the review suggested there needed to be "strategies to increase the size of the pool from which *quality applicants* [emphasis added] for teacher education may be drawn. It added, that "promoting teaching as a *quality profession* [emphasis added] should be one of these strategies" (p. 41).

Using competence as a synonym for quality, this chapter also suggested more flexible approaches to "selecting applicants for teacher education programs" (p. 42), were necessary to ensure "*competence* [emphasis added] at entry into teaching" (p. 42). Citing the Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) selection model to normalise this proposition, the review suggested a similar "process may be an appropriate starting point to address issues which are fundamental to the *quality of the teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 42). A GAMSAT model was described by the review as being able to provide both "valid and reliable information that will allow ranking of applicants" (p. 42), and indicate to "potential applicants the background knowledge necessary to commence the course and standards required" (p. 42).

In addition, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated, "a system of differentiated salaries and conditions of employment to attract and retain *high quality teachers* [emphasis added] (p. 49), together with "scholarships traineeships and internships" (p. 49) could contribute to raising the "*quality of the profession* [emphasis added]" (p. 49).

This chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) then linked the previously mentioned structures and processes to the issue of standards in teacher education programs, it stated,

> Uncertainty about the *quality of initial teacher education* [emphasis added] in New South Wales must be addressed. Structures and processes which enable

> standards to be developed, applied and reported upon are required within programs of initial teacher education endorsed by an external body. Our teachers must be *quality teachers* [emphasis added] because of the standard of their preparation. (p. 54)

Using *best practice* as a synonym for *quality*, this chapter noted that whilst some teacher education programs were regarded as "constituting *best practice* [emphasis added]" (p. 54), they were also the "subject of criticism from other sources, making highly problematic attempts to identify instances of *best practice in teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. 54). To address this issue, this chapter of the review suggested "a process be established to attest to the *quality of professional experience* [emphasis added]" (p. 59), and that "standards and guidelines for the induction of new teachers be established, making induction programs consistent in terms of *quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 68).

Using calibre and good as synonyms for quality, Chapter 5 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) highlighted the importance of educational leadership in the provision of quality professional practice:

> the *quality of educational leadership* [emphasis added], at whatever level, shapes the *quality of professional practice* [emphasis added] in classrooms which in turn is a major determiner of the level of student outcomes. There can be no adequate consideration of the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] in New South Wales unless full account is taken of issues related to educational leadership. *Good educational leaders* [emphasis added] affect for the better the pedagogy of teachers and the *quality of student learning* [emphasis added]. (p. 86)

Quoting the publication by University of New England, School of Curriculum Studies *Public Schools can Compete*, to gain authority for its emphasis on leadership, this chapter stated,

> the *quality of any school* [emphasis added] is not determined solely by its resourcing. The key ingredient is the *calibre of the principal* [emphasis added] and the *quality of the teaching and learning* [emphasis added]. (p. 86)

Lastly, this chapter of the review accepted there was "an emerging pattern of non-government schools 'poaching' known, *quality teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 90) and that "consideration needs to be given as to how best to address any *haemorrhaging of quality* [emphasis added] from the government school system" (p. 90).

In summary, in the context of Chapter 5 *Ramsey Review* (2000) the terms *best practice*, *competence* and *high calibre*, all operated to signify quality. This chapter declared quality teacher

preparation, quality leadership, and quality teaching affected student outcomes more than student background, and, therefore, the focus should be on developing teacher quality. It suggested that this quality focus should also create the structures and processes to improve the quality of the schools and systems, and the quality of teacher education. In addition, this chapter suggested quality applicants were fundamental to developing quality teachers, and that the introduction of differentiated salaries would attract and retain high quality teachers, which in turn would raise the quality of the profession. Lastly, the haemorrhaging of quality from the government school system was asserted, and considered to be problematic for effort to improve quality. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter can be seen in Table 17 below.

Table 17: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 of the Ramsey Review
Quality teaching
Quality schools and systems
Quality of tomorrow's teachers
Quality of teacher education
Quality focus
Quality teachers
Quality teacher preparation
Teacher quality
Quality applicants
Quality profession
Quality initial teacher education
Quality professional experience
Quality educational leadership
Quality professional practice
Quality student learning
Quality teaching and learning
Haemorrhaging of quality

6.3.5 Chapter 6: "Quality in Other Professions"

Chapter 6 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) conducted a comparative analysis of the "*quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] with professional preparation and continuing education in other professions" (p. 94); namely accountants, solicitors, dentists, and nurses. It concluded, "while teachers are most often described as professional people, teaching is not a profession" (p. 94).

Despite there being no reference to the term quality in the Australian Council of Professions (ACP) definition of a profession, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) declared that teaching could not be considered a quality profession as it was "neither self-regulatory, nor does the profession itself identify its service obligations … teaching is not represented by a

body through which it could seek membership of the Australian Council of Professions" (p. 95).

In relation to professional development specifically, this chapter of the review referred to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioner's approach which focused on "*quality assurance* [emphasis added] and continuing education" (p 100). The main differences between that approach and teaching were noted to be:

> health is highly differentiated, whereas teaching is much more mono-professional. A consequence is that teacher educators tend to focus on the numbers involved rather than their *quality* [emphasis added]. A focus on *quality* [emphasis added] in most other professions is significantly more in evidence than it is in teaching. (p. 113)

Furthermore, this chapter noted that in relation to maintaining currency teachers have no professional structure and are therefore unable to influence in any way decisions employers make about the "qualifications and *quality of people* [emphasis added] they employ to teach" (p. 105). This chapter posited therefore, that "the structure, organisation and *quality of professional experience* [emphasis added] in teacher education all need to be improved" (p. 111).

In summary this chapter conducted a comparative analysis to build the argument that teaching could not be considered a profession as it stood at the time, as quality assurance was more evident in other professions than it was in teaching. The review argued that in order for teaching to become a profession, structures, organisation, and professional experience, all needed to be improved. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter can be seen in Table 18 below.

Table 18: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 6 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 6 of the Ramsey Review
Quality in other professions
Quality teacher education
Quality assurance
Teacher quality
Quality focus
Quality people
Quality professional experience

6.3.6 Chapter 7: "Quality and Standards for Teachers"

Chapter 7 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) began with the assertion:

> there is no doubt that the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added] and the standards of teaching in our schools is a matter of deepening concern. Whether there has been a real decline in *teaching quality* [emphasis added] or whether the expectations held about teachers have risen faster than their ability to fulfil community requirements is difficult to judge. (p. 119)

This chapter noted however that there were certain standards and expectations that teachers were required to live up to. It stated:

> issues of *quality* [emphasis added] and standards were recurring themes in the evidence presented to the Review, with students and parents commenting that the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added] and teaching varied from the inspirational to the incompetent. The Review identified a real sense of frustration among parents that there was little evidence of *quality control* [emphasis added] or even that teachers were required to live up to certain standards and expectations. (p. 119)

A brief mention is made of teachers' frustration as they felt "thwarted by their inability to defend themselves from criticism about the *quality* [emphasis added] and professionalism of what they do" (p. 119).

In response to these concerns, this chapter of the review identified two "quality movements" (p. 120), which could be employed to address such issues, it stated:

> In broad terms, two *quality movements* [emphasis added] may be identified. The first has arisen from relatively recent *quality management* [emphasis added] theory and practice. It relates to *quality assurance*, accountability and competition-based policies. The second relates to how professions regulate themselves, and how their members develop and grow. (p. 120)

This chapter of *Ramsey Review* (2000) defined accountability as "about overall verification of the *quality of outcomes* [emphasis added], or more particularly, whether the expectations of key stakeholders are met … a top-down or externalised process" (p. 121). On the other hand, it suggested quality assurance is defined as "collective or personal activities or outcomes within individual schools" (p. 121). Demonstrating its preference, this chapter went on to suggest that there has been "limited pressure on teachers to provide information about the *quality of outcomes* [emphasis added] being achieved" (p. 121) and that accountability should be "guaranteed through a balance of school-based *quality reviews* [emphasis added] and a level of external supervision" (p. 121). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated:

> teachers do not have the institutional structures necessary to support formal professional recognition and advocacy" (p. 127) which included "agreeing on

> standards of practice and codes of ethics against which *quality* [emphasis added] can be benchmarked. (p. 127)

This chapter then examined how "the complexities of *teacher quality* [emphasis added] are approached in other countries, including "the use of tests as a means of raising *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 130) and "*teaching quality* [emphasis added] measured in terms of a teacher's ability to produce student results" (p. 131). This chapter noted however that this "has not always achieved the desired result" (p. 130). For example, the review noted "issue of standards for teachers has been a focus of policy development in England for most of the last decade" (p. 133), and whilst their "core aims" (p. 133) was to "boost the recruitment and retention of *high quality people* [emphasis added]" (p. 133), and increase "the standard and *quality of initial teacher training* [emphasis added]" (p. 133), the policy had led to the "requirement to link funding [of ITT] to *quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 133).

Turning its attention to Australia, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted that whilst there was "heightened awareness of the importance of *quality teachers and teaching*" (p. 138), "less progress has been made on their prescription here than overseas" (p. 138). Linking prescription to performance, this chapter posited "*quality* [emphasis added] will arise out of agreed standards if and only if processes and procedures are established to measure, recognise and reward performance against standards" (p. 140), and that furthermore, while there is "consensus on the need for accreditation of teacher education programs there is less on the process and procedures for assuring the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 143).

In that regard this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted:

> Almost universally, submissions that canvassed the issue of accreditation of university programs of teacher education, commented that the requirements of the Department of Education and Training's Teacher Qualifications Advisory Panel (TQAP) were ill-focused and inadequate for assuring the *quality of new entrants* [emphasis added] to the profession. (p. 142)

This chapter of the review acknowledged that quality in relation to the teaching profession, is as yet undefined, and that, therefore, it would now "draw on the best of the developments studied and meld them into a proposal for a framework in New South Wales that establishes teaching as a *quality profession* [emphasis added]" (p. 145).

In summary, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) acknowledged the concept of quality in relation to the teaching profession was yet to be "melded" (p. 145) into a framework. This

chapter referred to quality with increasing regularity and in ever expanding contexts. Furthermore, despite the lack of substantive evidence to suggest there had been a real decline in teaching quality, this chapter accepted that the quality of teachers was of deepening concern. Validating teachers' submissions to both the *Crowley Report* (1998), and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) (that they felt unable to defend themselves from criticisms about the quality of what they do), the review posited that this concern with quality was because teachers lacked any form of quality control. The review suggested quality standards, reviews and measured levels of performance were necessary to raise teacher quality and the quality of teaching by providing information about the quality of outcomes. A standardised quality framework would also lift the quality of initial teacher training, aid the recruitment of quality entrants, and to help retain high quality people. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter can be seen in Table 19 below.

Table 19: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 of the Ramsey Review
Quality teachers
Teaching quality
Quality control
Quality of what they do
Quality movements
Quality management
Quality assurance
Quality outcomes
Quality reviews
Quality standards
Quality code of ethics
Teacher quality
Quality people
Quality initial teacher training
Quality teaching
Quality of new entrants
Quality profession

6.3.7 Chapter 8: "Directions for Raising Teacher Professionalism"

Chapter 8 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) then considered the policy directions which would meld a proposal for a framework that established teachers as a quality profession. It stated, "it is not a simple task to recommend policy settings that have the potential to impact positively on *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 146). It acknowledged that despite "clear and explicit professional teaching and ethical standards" (p. 146) about the "expected knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of teachers' (p. 146), having widespread support, "the relative ease with which other professions have been able to reach agreement on procedures

and structures to support high standards seems not to apply in the education sector" (p. 146). This chapter suggested there were "various reasons for this" (p. 146).

First it reiterated,

> because there has been no professional structure, the unions representing teachers have held sway on what in other vocations are considered to be professional issues. The need for a change from union and employer control to a greater level of professional authority on professional matters is now seen as a major issue in many countries. (p. 146)

Second, it stated that the teaching workforce had been "largely disempowered and, consequently, is less professional than in the past and unable to respond effectively or influence the changing contexts within which teachers work" (p. 146).

Third, this chapter conceded, that because "education is a state responsibility … a national approach more apparent in other professions does not seem possible at this time" (p. 146).

However, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted that "of the models for such an organisation examined by the review, "those with the closest links to the profession were the ones which seemed to deal most effectively with the *quality and standards* [emphasis added] issue" (p. 146). This chapter posited, therefore, that there was a need for the Government to establish

> an organisation, the primary purpose of which should be to enhance the level of professionalism of teachers and teaching. This is seen as a critical first step towards raising the *quality of teachers, teaching and learning* [emphasis added] in New South Wales. (p. 146)

Whilst this chapter implied standards are a necessary panacea for a "largely disempowered" (p. 146) profession, it also acknowledged that "written standards by themselves will not enhance *teacher quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 146), but rather "the critical elements in increasing *teacher quality* [emphasis added] and professionalism are the systems that will recognise, utilise and value these standards of professional teaching practice" (p. 146).

However, having implied a preference for accountability earlier in the review, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) contradicted its previous position and argued that "rather than pursuing mandatory registration which acts primarily as an entry barrier to the profession, the evidence indicates that priority should be given to *quality improvement* [emphasis added] strategies" (p. 150). It stated,

> The evidence is clear that the professional standing of teachers and community perceptions about the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added] are directly related. This standing will only be enhanced when the community has confidence in the *quality* [emphasis added] and capacity of its teachers. A fundamental element in formally establishing teaching as a profession is the capacity for it to be self-regulating. Teachers must be able to set their own standards to articulate *quality pedagogy* [emphasis added] and professional ethics. Thus, the purpose of strategies to develop *quality standards* [emphasis added] is two-fold: to provide structures to advance the professionalism of teachers and to assure the community of the standards of teachers and the *quality of professional practice* [emphasis added] in all schools. (p. 149)

This chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) then extended the responsibility for the quality of teaching and teachers to the schools, suggesting schools would also need to be accredited based on quality improvements. It stated,

> Given the focus of this Review on raising the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added], and as a consequence the *quality of student learning* [emphasis added], a significant factor in achieving this goal is the steps schools take to raise *teacher quality* [emphasis added]. In these circumstances, it must be concluded that schools, as entities, have a core responsibility for the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added] within their jurisdiction. Accreditation is one way of giving meaning to this responsibility. There are two possible approaches. The first is to implement procedures to accredit all schools on the basis of the degree to which the school is able to demonstrate or is focused on *quality improvement* [emphasis added]…Such an approach would see the programs, processes and achievements of schools as being assessed against agreed *quality improvement principles* [emphasis added]. (p. 162)

The *Ramsey Review* (2000), therefore, declared that,

> Ultimately, all schools, government and non-government, would be accredited, not in terms of the appropriateness of their curriculum and facilities, but in terms of their focus on *quality improvement* and the standards they reach. (p. 163)

However, displaying unpredictability in the application of quality assurance measures, this chapter also noted that whilst sanctions, such as to "withhold government funds" (p. 163), could be imposed on non-government schools, in relation to government schools "such solutions are not currently available" (p. 163). This chapter proposed, therefore, that the New South Wales Government require the Institute of Teachers to advise on "the eventual accreditation of all schools where *quality educational practices* [emphasis added] can be certified" (p. 164).

Chapter 8 concluded that the key recommendations are "predominantly concerned with mechanisms for *ensuring quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 165), and that such mechanisms would be "a major step towards providing the *guarantees of quality* [emphasis added] the wider community is seeking" (p. 165).

In summary, Chapter 8 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) acknowledged policy settings, in the form of written standards alone, could not enhance teacher quality. Instead, this chapter recommended Government establish an institute as a critical first step in quality improvement. The newly developed institute was envisaged as also responsible for school accreditation to ensure their quality educational practices complied with agreed quality improvement principles focused on raising teacher quality. This chapter concluded these mechanisms would provide the guarantees of quality the community is seeking. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 can be seen in Table 20 below.

Table 20: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 of the Ramsey Review
Teacher quality Quality teacher, teaching and learning Quality improvement Quality pedagogy Quality standards Quality professional practice Quality of student learning Quality improvement Quality educational practices Quality guarantees

6.3.8 Chapter 9 and 10: "Resourcing Teacher Education" and "Supplying Quality Teachers"

Chapter 9 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000), reflected the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) concerns about the relationship between government resourcing and quality teachers. This chapter of the review stated that the "impact of the current funding arrangements on the education, *quality* [emphasis added] and supply of teachers in New South Wales is a critical issue" (p. 166), and that "critically, the government and non-government employers can, under present arrangements, only marginally address issues related to *quality in teacher education courses* {emphasis added]" (p. 166). The review noted that the decline in the level of resources provided, and the "quality of students [emphasis added] entering teacher education courses

comes from a complex set of causes, not well researched either by universities or employers" (p. 166).

In this regard, this chapter noted that despite the Commonwealth Government assuming responsibility for funding teacher education in 1973:

> no agreements were negotiated between the Commonwealth and the States to ensure that State needs in terms of education, *quality* [emphasis added] and supply of teachers could be met. Moreover, that competing pressures on universities had led to attempts to "achieve more with less. (p. 167)

This chapter drew attention to reductions in student/staff ratios in teacher education, and suggested this was "one indicator of *course quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 178).

Again, mirroring some of the criticisms in the *Crowley Report* (1998), this chapter also suggested that the "*quality of course delivery* suffers if too many casual staff are employed in major teaching roles such as lecturing, student assessment, and coordination and supervision of the practicum" (p. 179), and that as a consequence teacher education programs had become "very fragmented" (p. 171), and were a "major determinant of the *quality of the intake* [emphasis added]" (p. 167).

Emphasising the difficulties faced by the States in providing funds for the cost of the practicum, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) hypothesised that these problems could be overcome by

> directing contributions from employers towards raising the *quality of school level support* [emphasis added] for professional experience. Only through providing resources to these components can the State achieve any real control over the amount and *quality of the field experience* [emphasis added] provided to teachers. (p. 176)

Furthermore, this chapter of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted,

> The States have now limited capacity to effect supply and even less to impact on *quality* [emphasis added]. In fact, unless major reforms are introduced, as the level of supply decreases, so too will *quality* [emphasis added]." (p. 183)

And providing a policy direction in this respect, suggested,

> it is time that the total resources that are already applied to teacher education be brought together in a clear, open and transparent manner so that they are better used to prepare *quality, high-performing teachers* [emphasis added]. (p. 188)

Chapter 10 sharpened the focus of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) on teachers. It stated, "*quality teachers* [emphasis added] must be an absolute priority for governments employers and universities" (p. 189) - emphasising that "teacher supply and *teacher quality* [emphasis added] are inter-dependant" (p. 189). This chapter concluded that approaches to teacher supply "must be re-defined in terms of the supply of *quality teachers* [emphasis added] who meet predetermined standards" (p. 190). This chapter stated this was problematic as there was no current data on the "*quality of its workforce* [emphasis added]" (p. 190). The concept of quality in this context was simply described as teachers' "skills, *quality* [emphasis added] and characteristics" (p. 191).

Nonetheless, this chapter proclaimed, "it is essential that this system has the capacity to provide for rapid analysis of *teacher quality* [emphasis added] issues" (p. 191), and suggested that the discontinuation of data collection seemed to indicate that "*teacher quality* [emphasis added] has not been a major focus in planning" (p. 191).

This chapter then discussed the "*teacher quality* [emphasis added] implications that occur at the point of recruitment" (p. 198), and the "perceptions of a general decline in the *quality of entrants* to the profession [emphasis added]" (p. 198). In response, this chapter suggested,

> an entrance type examination, similar in intent to the GAMSAT test applied to select entrance to medicine, could alleviate many concerns about the *quality* [emphasis added] and suitability of those entering training… general aptitude as well as suitability for teaching must also be assessed. (p. 198)

Using *good* as a synonym for *quality*, this chapter expanded on this further, and suggested recruitment strategies should "differentiate performance standards and characteristics of teachers so that those having the greater potential to produce *good teaching* [emphasis added] are the people the Department actively seeks to employ" (p. 202). This chapter claimed, therefore,

> The imperative for achieving a supply of *quality teachers* [emphasis added] to schools has been given insufficient priority and creates a different perspective from simply supplying teachers ... the supply of *high-performing, quality teachers* [emphasis added] is a state-wide and national issue. (p. 203)

Lastly, this chapter considered "monetary compensation" (p. 202) for teachers who have endured "considerable hardship by accepting teaching assignments in less favourable and sometimes in remote locations" (p. 202), and proposed professional development opportunities so that they could better compete for positions on the basis of quality:

> The most appropriate form of compensation for affected teachers would be the provision of specific professional development opportunities allowing them to better compete for positions on the basis of *quality* [emphasis added]. Properly recognised *quality improvement* [emphasis added] would be of lasting benefit to these teachers and for the schools in which they teach. (p. 202)

In summary the focus of Chapter 9 and 10 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) sharpened to centre on the teacher. These chapters referred to the teacher as a type of quality product. It suggested the supply and quality of teachers were inter-dependant, and that underpinning their quality was the quality of ITE courses - as these in turn determined the quality of the intake and the quality of students. These chapters also pointed to the quality of school level support and the quality of the field experience as problematic in preparing quality, high-performing teachers. Finally, it was suggested that selection tests similar to the GAMSAT could alleviate concerns about the quality of entrants and their ability to deliver good teaching. In the longer term it was envisaged that high-performing, quality teachers should compete for positions based on their quality. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 9 and 10 are shown in Table 21 below.

Table 21: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 9 and 10 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapters 9 & 10 of the Ramsey Review
Quality teachers
Quality teacher education courses
Quality of students
Course quality
Quality of course delivery
Quality intake
Quality of school support
Quality of field experience
Quality workforce
Quality entrants
Quality improvement

6.3.9 Chapter 11 and 12: "Critical Choices" and "Recommendations"

Before presenting the main recommendations, Chapter 11 of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) posed a number of rhetorical questions in relation to the critical choices to be made. In relation to quality this chapter questioned if "we are prepared to focus on *quality performance* [emphasis

added] rather than giving priority simply to putting a person in front of a class?" (p. 204), and if so, then "how can funding arrangements be developed and agreed upon which match society's expectations about the *quality of those who teach* [emphasis added] in our schools?" (p. 204). This chapter also questioned if professional standards could be established which would underpin the *quality of teaching* [emphasis added]?" (p. 204), and whether the Department of Education and Training continue to be the "defacto agency for determining the suitability of teachers?" (p. 204), or should "the profession exercise this responsibility, with a focus on *quality performance*? [emphasis added]" (p. 204).

Assuming the position of authority, the review then responded to its own questions. It declared that "change is needed in teacher education and teaching which will assure "the *quality of teacher education programs and graduates* [emphasis added]" (p. 205), and using better as a synonym for quality suggested "choices can be made and questions can be answered in ways which will lead to *better systems of teacher education* [emphasis added] and *higher quality better performing teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 205). Table 22 below shows the discursive threads of quality found in this chapter.

Table 22: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 11 of the Ramsey Review

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 11 of the Ramsey Review
Quality performance
Quality of those who teach
Quality teaching
Quality teacher education programs
Quality graduates
Quality professional practice
Quality profession

Chapter 12 then presented the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) recommendations. The final recommendations were accompanied by a letter to The Hon J Aquilina MP, in which Dr Gregor Ramsey summarised the review's findings as:

> the *quality of teacher education and of teaching* [emphasis added] matter in ways which are matched in few other occupations, callings or professions. I am convinced that the *quality of professional practice* [emphasis added] in classrooms… will be improved by reconnecting universities and schools in initial and continuing teacher education and by strengthening teacher professionalism… The issues at stake are largely professional. They will be best addressed by dealing with them through structures and processes which make teaching the *quality profession* [emphasis added] so many want it to be. (p. 3)

Chapter 12 listed seventeen recommendations to realise these changes. Nine of these related to the establishment of an Institute of Teachers, four related to teacher supply issues, one related to funding of teacher education, two related to initial and continuing teacher education, and one referred to the establishment of a Graduate School of Teaching. Of those, only six recommendations used the term quality directly. These were as follows:

Recommendation 1

That the New South Wales Government establish an Institute of Teachers whose primary purpose is to enhance the level of professionalism of teachers and teaching. The Institute to be responsible for: advising the Government and the community on issues relating to *teacher quality* [emphasis added] and professional standards, and on the qualifications, profile and experiences of teachers employed throughout the State.

Recommendation 6

That the New South Wales Government require the Institute of Teachers to: advise on the possible merit of, and options for, the eventual accreditation of all schools where *quality educational practices* [emphasis added] can be certified.

Recommendation 8

That a Joint Committee on Teacher Supply be established representing the New South Wales Government, the Commonwealth Government, the employers, the universities and the Institute of Teachers to: advise the New South Wales Government and the Commonwealth Government on the most appropriate allocation of government resources to ensure the adequate supply of *quality teachers* [emphasis added] in the State.

Recommendation 9

That the Joint Committee on Teacher Supply, in consultation with the Institute of Teachers and employers: determine the mechanism whereby the State's requirements for the *supply of quality teachers* [emphasis added] can be submitted to open tender from potential providers of teacher education courses.

Recommendation 10

That the Joint Committee on Teacher Supply work with universities, employers, the TAFE system and the Institute of Teachers to increase the diversity of pathways for entry into teaching, giving priority to strategies which emphasise *high quality professional experience* [emphasis added] in the workplace.

Recommendation 17

That the Government: in five years' time establish a subsequent review to determine the extent to which the *quality of provision of initial and continuing teacher education* [emphasis added] has improved to meet the needs of the employers and of the profession.

Table 23: The discursive threads of quality found in the Ramsey Review's Recommendations

Discursive threads of quality found in the Ramsey Review's Recommendations
Teacher quality Quality educational practices Quality teachers Quality professional experience Quality initial and continuing teacher education

The *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) recommendations demonstrate which of the plethora of quality discourses emerge as most prominent. Three of the recommendations related to 'quality teacher/teacher quality, one to 'quality professional experience', and one to 'quality initial and continuing teacher education'.

Table 24 illustrates the multiple ideas (or discursive threads) about quality which were identified across all chapters of the *Ramsey Review* (2000). The next stage of the analysis considers how these ideas (or discursive threads) coalesce and knot and become major discourses which represent the problems.

Table 24: Threads of quality as they appear in all chapters of the Ramsey Review

Chapter 1	Chapter 2, 3 & 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9 & 10	Chapter 11	Recommendations
Quality of teachers' work Quality teachers and teaching High quality students Quality teacher education and teaching Quality profession Quality curriculum Quality leadership Quality initial teacher education	Quality teachers Quality assurance processes Quality preparation Quality teaching Quality work Quality profession Quality practicum Quality induction intellectual quality Quality teacher education Quality mechanisms Quality initial and continuing teacher education Quality performance Teacher quality Quality professional practice	Quality teaching Quality schools and systems Quality of tomorrow's teachers Quality of teacher education Quality focus Quality teachers Quality teacher preparation Teacher quality Quality applicants Quality profession Quality initial teacher education Quality professional experience Quality educational leadership Quality professional practice Quality student learning Quality teaching and learning Haemorrhaging of quality	Quality in other professions Quality teacher education Quality assurance Teacher quality Quality focus Quality people Quality professional experience	Quality Quality teachers Teaching quality Issues of quality Quality control Quality of what they do Quality movements Quality management Quality assurance Quality outcomes Quality reviews Quality standards Quality code of ethics Teacher quality Quality people Quality initial teacher training Quality teaching Quality of new entrants Quality profession	Teacher quality Quality teacher, teaching and learning Quality improvement Quality pedagogy Quality standards Quality professional practice Quality of student learning Quality improvement Quality educational practices Quality guarantees	Quality teachers Quality teacher education courses Quality of students Course quality Quality of course delivery Quality intake Quality of school support Quality of field experience Quality Quality workforce Quality entrants Quality improvement	Quality performance Quality of those who teach Quality teaching Quality teacher education programs Quality graduates Quality professional practice Quality profession	Teacher quality Quality educational practices Quality teachers Quality professional experience Quality initial and continuing teacher education

6.4 Second level analysis: Applying the first question in Bacchi's WPR approach: What's the problem represented to be? to the *Ramsey Review* (2000)

The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to examine how the previously identified threads about quality coalesce or knot and come to represent the problems within the *Ramsey Review* (2000). Four major discourses were found; Teacher Quality; ITE; Quality Profession; and Education Systems. One smaller minor discourse was also found, that of Teaching Quality. Figure 8 provides an illustration of the discourses found.

Figure 8: Major and minor discourses of quality evident in the Ramsey Review (2000)

6.4.1 Major Discourse 1: Determining teacher quality: Desirable skills, knowledge and dispositions

Identified as a minor discourse in the previous chapter's analysis of the *Crowley Report* (1998), this discourse has gained traction to become a major discourse in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), consisting of multiple discursive threads concerned with teacher quality. These discourses suggested certain teacher characteristics could can be identified, and in some cases measured, and, therefore, lifting teacher quality should be the major focus of policy makers. The desirable characteristics and attributes of quality teachers/teacher quality were primarily noted to be: teacher skills, knowledge, and personal attributes which included beliefs and values. This discourse centres on the idea that "the teacher really does make the difference in student learning" (p. 12). The reverse pair *quality teacher/teacher quality* were found 103 times throughout the *Ramsey Review* (2000). The review also used the term *quality people* as a synonym for *quality teacher* in the plural.

The term *skills* was found in juxtaposition with *quality* 217 times. More specifically, skills were subcategorised in the review as "leadership skills" (p. 243), "literacy and numeracy skills" (p. 22), "analytical and problem-solving skills" (p. 42), "relationship skills" (p. 75), "assertiveness skills" (p. 79), "interpersonal skills" (p. 40), and "technological competence" (p. 70). A "willingness" (p. 44) to build skills was also considered part of the *quality teacher/teacher quality construct*.

This discourse also considered knowledge a vital attribute of teacher quality/quality teacher, referring to it 218 times. The construct "teacher knowledge" (p. 12) was also broken into subcategories, albeit less well defined, such as "relevant knowledge" (p. 96) "sophisticated knowledge" (p. 55) "specialised knowledge" (p. 100) "expected knowledge" (p. 146) "adequate knowledge" (p. 95) "professional knowledge" (p. 102) "satisfactory knowledge" (p. 233) and "required knowledge" (p. 244). There were other, more specific conceptions of knowledge which were referred to in the review, but these were much rarer. For example, the idea of "pedagogical knowledge" was only used on three occasions (p. 13, p. 46, p. 52), "content knowledge" was similarly only on three occasions (p. 36, p. 221, p. 253), and "knowledge of the curriculum" was used only once (p. 25). As a solution the review suggested that teachers would be graded and certified as competent based on these desirable skills and knowledge - which are yet to be determined in quality standards. Furthermore, the review

suggested that teachers' level of quality could be used to compete for rewards and career advancement.

Though less tangible than skills or knowledge, teachers' values (p. 16) were also considered problematic as teachers are "at the forefront of creating modern Australia by teaching and modelling these important values" (p. 9) such as "respecting the rights of others, compassion for those who are less fortunate and a commitment to democracy and equality" (p. 9). The review proposed that these were the "values which society wants to be passed on for the intellectual and social growth of children and adolescents and to guarantee social cohesion" (p. 19). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested that strategies should be implemented to select quality candidates based on their values and beliefs. Lastly, the term teacher quality was also found in conjunction with "intellectual" (p. 31) and "performance" (p. 185).

In summary, this major discourse represented the problem as determining and selecting desirable qualities in teachers: their skills, knowledge and personal attributes (including beliefs and values), to ensure teacher competence and performance.

6.4.2 Major Discourse 2: Fragmented and variable quality of ITE programs

This major discourse comprised multiple discursive threads concerned with the fragmented and variable quality of the ITE programs. Three discursive threads were observed: how to attract and select quality entrants into ITE; best practice in relation to preparing quality graduates; and the shared responsibilities between universities, schools and employers for doing so. In this major discourse the term quality is found co-located with the following: "initial teacher education" (p. 54), "education" (p. 122), "initial preparation" (p. 124), "professional experience" (p. 111), "programs" (p. 54), "teacher education" (p. 3), "teacher preparation" (p. 37), and "induction" (p. 64).

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) articulated its concern in relation to "perceptions of a general decline in the quality of entrants to the profession", which it suggested was "represented by a perceived decline in the university entrance scores of students enrolling in teacher education courses" (p. 198). The review's "focus for improvement" (p. 202) was on recruitment strategies which could differentiate "performance standards and characteristics of teachers" (p. 202). As a "starting point" (p. 42) the review suggested quality entrants could best be guaranteed by developing "an entrance type examination" (p. 198). This would assess

"general aptitude as well as suitability for teaching" (p. 198), which included the following: screening for the "background knowledge necessary to commence the course" (p. 42), an "acceptable standard of written communication in English" (p. 42) "analytical and problem-solving skills" (p. 42), and "literacy and numeracy skills" (p. 42) so that those having the "greater potential to produce good teaching" (p. 202) could be "ranked" (p. 42).

The review used the term *best practice* nineteen times and devoted a whole section to "determining best practice" (p. 54) in ITE. It acknowledged that few claims of best practice could be supported by "substantiated verifiable data" (p. 54), and, therefore, "individual perceptions and anecdote" (p. 54) provided the basis of the discussion. Furthermore, the review conceded that "the reality is that at present there is no capacity to measure and describe teacher education programs in terms of the quality of their performance" (p. 54). Beginning to shape the solution to this problem, the review suggested that "teacher education should be conceived as a continuum relating to the development of professional standards" (p. 54), and that "knowledge and commitment to ensure inclusive assessment and evaluation practices which are consistent with equity and social justice" (p. 55). The review also considered issues which impacted the quality of ITE course delivery as problematic. For example, it suggested student/teacher ratios were "one indicator of course quality" (p. 178), and, moreover, it argued that if "casual staff are employed in major teaching roles such as lecturing, student assessment, and coordination and supervision of the practicum" (p. 179) the "quality of course delivery suffers" (p. 179).

This major discourse from the *Ramsey Review* (2000) was also concerned with the sharing of responsibilities in ITE. For example, it questioned how effective universities were "in preparing quality teachers" (p. 62). It argued that there needed to be a "greater responsibility for teacher education by the university disciplines" (p. 37) for whilst "academic disciplines have demonstrated a high level of interest in curriculum at a state level, a similar level of interest in pedagogy is difficult to discern" (p. 37).

The review suggested part of the solution lay in getting universities and schools to "build a relationship of shared responsibility for professional experience" (p. 63), including a "quality induction" (p. 64) and "quality practicum". The responsibility of employers, on the other hand, was to "reduce the initial workload of teachers in the first year of service and provide effective mentoring in the early years of teaching" (p. 68).

In summary, this major discourse comprised discursive threads which represented the problem as the fragmented and variable quality of ITE programs. It proposed assessment and evaluation practices which are consistent with "equity and social justice" (p. 55). Issues which impacted the quality of ITE were student/teacher ratios, and the use of "casual staff" (p. 178) as the "quality of the course suffers" (p. 179). The *Ramsey Review* was also concerned with the perceived decline in the quality of new entrants and proposed the introduction of "an entrance type examination" (p. 198) to "rank" (p. 42) those with "greater potential to produce good teaching" (p. 202).

6.4.3 Major Discourse 3: The need to formally establish teaching as a quality profession

This major discourse comprised multiple threads related to enhancing "the status of teachers" (p. 149), a fundamental element was "formally establishing teaching as a profession" (p. 149), and more specifically a "quality profession" (p. 3). The term *quality profession* was repeated 15 times throughout the review. The term *quality* is found co-located with *professional standards* 64 times, creating a distinct discursive cluster which worked to identify the source of quality in a profession was professional standards.

Despite having acknowledged that "all professions are different, having different codes of conduct, expectations, control systems and remuneration structures" (p. 33), the *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated it was "unequivocal; while teachers are most often described as professional people, teaching is not a profession" (p. 94), and contended it was now time to "draw on the best of the developments studied and meld them into a proposal for a framework in New South Wales that establishes teaching as a quality profession" (p. 145). The review provided no evidence to support this statement, instead creating confusion and uncertainty. For example, it suggested that "so much of what is presently in place seems not to work as well as once was the case, and old structures are unlikely to work for very much longer" (p. 18), and whilst "the work of teachers is becoming increasingly difficult to define" (p. 33), "amongst many who have a stake in the quality of teacher preparation and teaching, few see clearly what the future holds" (p. 18). Confusion phrases such as "seems not to work" (p. 18), "increasingly unlikely" (p. 18), "difficult to define" (p. 33), and "true or not" (p. 18), work to open the space for challenge - and the possibility for change (Bacchi, 2014).

This allowed the *Ramsey Review* (2000) to claim it was imperative teaching should be "*constructed* [emphasis added] as a profession focused on quality" (p. 33). This is noteworthy,

as it demonstrates the quality profession is a new construct yet to be defined. Notwithstanding, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) predicted "if established, a professional structure for teachers will have an important role in addressing the professional issues that have languished for so long" (p. 15) and went on to devote a section of the review to "enhancing the status of teachers as professional people" (p. 149).

Demonstrating continuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998), the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) conceptualisation of what a quality profession *is*, and by implication what it *is not*, is evident in its claim that "improving the proficiency of some teachers must be taken out of the industrial arena and confronted as professional issues" (p. 127).

Whilst the *Ramsey Review* (2000) alluded to a quality profession as being characterised by "self-regulation" (p. 95), "professional standards" (p. 119), and a "code of ethics" (p. 95); focused on "teaching and learning" (p. 213), the review later contradicted these claims by calling for "the appropriate use of quality measures in an accountability system" (p. 127) developed in consensus with relevant education authorities and employers.

Thus, despite the review having acknowledged that "placing the quality emphasis on accountability rather than assurance leads to its own problems" (p. 127), the reference to "performance" (p. 127), "measured outcomes" (p. 181), and "mandated systems of regulation" (p. 96) arbitrated by an Institute of Teachers to enable quality, provides an indication of the most likely trajectory for this solution to problem.

In summary, this major discourse comprised of multiple threads which represented the problem as the need for teaching to be "constructed as a profession based on quality" (p. 18), as "old structures are unlikely to work for very much longer" (p. 18).

6.4.4 Major Discourse 4: Systems of education which enabled or disabled quality

This major discourse comprised multiple threads of systems, processes and procedures, which were either enabling, or disabling teacher quality. For example, systems such as those which encouraged casualisation of the workforce, low teacher remuneration, and haemorrhaging of quality teachers to the private sector, were all considered as disabling quality. On the other hand, systems and processes such as teacher reward systems, performance reviews, improved career structures, together with improved processes and procedures for entry into the profession, for accreditation, and for dealing with complaints

of professional malpractice were all considered as providing the opportunity to enhance quality in education. This discourse considered systems and processes as problematic as they had the potential to negatively influence the behaviours of the subject – the teacher, and the conditions within which teachers work.

6.4.5 Minor Discourse 5: Improving the quality of teaching practice

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) also developed a minor discourse of the need to improve the quality of teaching practice, one part of which was attributable to "the quality of educational leadership" (p. 14) as this was "critical to raising the quality of teaching" (p. 14).

In constructing this discourse, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) quoted Darling-Hammond's research to gain authority. It noted,

> poor quality teaching on student outcomes is debilitating and cumulative. Well qualified teachers, those with adequate subject content and pedagogic preparation, make a significant difference to student learning. The effects of *quality teaching* [emphasis added] on educational outcomes are greater than those that arise from student backgrounds. (p. 34)

This discourse is evident in the *Ramsey Review*'s use of the reverse pair *teaching quality/quality teaching* which were used 101 times throughout review. These terms were poorly defined, indicating a slippage between discourses rather than any clear focus on differences between them, or how they might be attained.

In this discourse the term quality was found in conjunction with "teaching" (p. 12), "pedagogy" (p. 149), and "professional practice" (p. 94). Primarily, this discourse considered teaching quality/quality teaching as a factor of the quality of the teacher. The *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) approach to this problem was that improving quality teaching/teaching quality could be achieved by improving the performance of teachers through selection strategies, and preparation (ITE) process and procedures. Synonyms for quality teaching such as *best practice* and *quality practice* were also evident throughout the review.

A significant observation in relation to the problematising of teaching quality/quality teaching can be seen in *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) acknowledgment that it was "ironic that the professional standing of teaching is declining given the evidence, generally, that schools and teachers are performing better than in the past" (p. 127). Attempting to explain this

discrepancy, the review suggested that this performance appears "not to have kept pace with increasing community expectations of teaching as a profession' (p. 127).

In summary, this discourse comprised discursive threads which represented the problem as quality teaching/teaching quality, noting that the quality of teaching was more important than student backgrounds. The review suggested that teaching quality could be improved by focusing on selection strategies, and best practice teacher preparation.

This concludes the second level of analysis. In summary, together these five discourses imply a particular understanding of quality in the context of the *Ramsey Review* (2000), what is problematic and needs to change (Bacchi, 2009). These discourses have been found to represent the problems as follows: the desirable qualities of teachers, the fragmented and variable quality of ITE programs, the need to formally establish teaching as a quality profession systems of education which either enabled or disabled quality in education, and improving the quality of teaching practice. This analysis has shown that in stark contrast to the *Crowley Report* (1998), which took a more holistic view of quality in education, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) has narrowed the idea of quality in education into one which is teacher centred and consisting of the desirable qualities of teachers (skills, knowledge and behaviours), fragmented ITE programs which impact on teachers' practice, teachers' professionalism, and systems of education which impact on teachers' practice.

6.5 Third level analysis: Applying questions two through six of Bacchi's WPR approach to the *Ramsey Review* (2000)

The previous two levels of analysis have traced where the discursive threads (ideas) about quality emerged, and how these threads coalesced and knotted into four major and one minor discourse. Together these discourses came to represent the problem as one of quality, manifest in the desirable qualities of teachers (skills, knowledge and behaviours), fragmented ITE programs which impact on teachers' practice, teachers' professionalism, and systems of education which impact on teachers' practice.

As in the previous chapter, this third level of analysis now applies the subsequent questions in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach (two through to six) to the *Crowley Report* (1998) to inquire into the presuppositions and assumptions which underpin these representations of the problem, that is the underlying logic. The WPR framework allows me to identify discursive

tensions which have been left unproblematic, before considering the effects produced by the discourses, and whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

6.5.1 What presuppositions and assumptions underlie the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) representations of the problem?

Presuppositions and assumptions constitute taken for granted 'knowledge' (Bacchi, 2009) – in other words the deep seated cultural values; which can be said to constitute a social unconscious that underpins the logic. It is important to note that whilst presuppositions and assumptions are separate concepts, together they produce a layered effect, as one builds upon another. Presuppositions must first be considered true before subsequent and dependant assumptions can be accepted as logical. This section of the analysis has identified two key presuppositions, each of which work to support two key assumptions in the *Ramsey Review* (2000).

6.5.1.1 First Presupposition: The meaning of quality in education is well understood

Displaying continuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998), the first presupposition in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) is that the meaning of quality in education is well understood. Whilst there were references to characteristics or features of quality teaching and the quality teacher, quality was left undefined. Yet the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) used the term *quality* 666 times throughoutout the report, suggesting a consensus of opinion about quality had been agreed. Instead, the review relies on the discursive practice of repetition to create the impression that the review knows what quality is, and, therefore, what it is not. From this presuppostion a particular representation of the problem has been constructed as a lack of quality, or variable quality, or the need to ensure quality. This presupposition supports two assumptions.

6.5.1.2 Assumption: A quality deficit

The first assumption contained within the discourse in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), and which displays continuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998), is that there is a quality deficit. Without any substantive evidence to support its position, the assumption of a quality deficit is evident in the review's use of such terms as: *a lack of* (x 26); *variable* (x 6); *poor* (x 24); *prevailing* (x 5); *possible* (p. 9); and *improvement* (x 182) in conjunction with the term *quality*.

Moreover, the assumption of a quality deficit is organised in a systematic way (Bacchi, 2009) to create interdiscursivity between quality issues. An example of this can be seen in the statement

> Thus, there is a direct link between the *quality of teacher preparation* [emphasis added] and *professional learning* [emphasis added] and the *learning outcomes of students* [emphasis added]. In turn, this means that there is, arguably, an important link between the *quality of teacher educators* [emphasis added] and the *programs* [emphasis added] they organise and deliver and the *learning achievements of students in the school* [emphasis added]. (p. 246)

Whilst it is difficult to dispute that these components are linked, what is noteworthy is how these connections are used to effectively make each reliant upon the other to effect quality.

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) gained credibility for the quality deficit construct by implying quality is inherent in the "competency standards" (p. 105) of other professional institutions such as the "Royal Australian College of General Practitioners" (p. 97), "The Law Society of NSW" (p. 97), "Dental Board of NSW" (p. 97), "NSW Nurses Registration Board" (p. 97), "Institution of Engineers" (p. 98) "Institute of Chartered Accountants" (p. 106), "New South Wales Medical Board" (p. 105), and the "Australian Association of Social Workers" (p. 105), and that the focus on "*quality* [emphasis added] in most other professions is significantly more in evidence than it is in teaching" (p. 113). The credibility gained from such a statement allowed the *Ramsey Review* (2000) to recommend,

> That the New South Wales Government establish an Institute of Teachers whose primary purpose is to enhance the level of professionalism of teachers and teaching. The Institute to be responsible for: the establishment and promulgation of performance standards. (p. 215)

Thus, based on the initial presupposition that quality in education is well understood, and that there is an assumed deficit, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) has gone on to develop the idea of an Institute of Teachers whose purpose is to enhance the professionalism of teacher and teaching using performance standards as a facilitating mechanism to address the quality deficit.

The review then normalises and gains authority for this proposal by citing Darling-Hammond's research, emphasising that this research makes a compelling case for "establishing, enforcing and supporting high standards for teachers" (p. 34), and that

"government policies directed at raising the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added] can have a highly significant impact on student outcomes" (p. 34).

Demonstrating how isomorphism is employed to place emphasis on knowledge which is considered useful (Bacchi, 2009, p. 240), the *Ramsey Review* (2000) quotes the previous *Crowley Report* (1998), as having already expressed "support for the national registration of teachers, linked to standards" (p. 30). Thus, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) uses interdiscursivity to build relationships between discourses to empower both the problem – a quality deficit, and the solution - professional standards.

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) also used international examples to gain credibility for its proposition, drawing attention to the development of teaching standards in the United States, in the Canadian Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta, in the United Kingdom including England, Wales and Scotland, as well as in France, New Zealand and Mexico. Whilst in Australia the review notes standards are being pursued in Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory (p. 128).

However, having cultivated an interdiscursivity with the *Crowley Report* (1998) to gain credibility for teaching standards, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) changes trajectory. This is evident in the title of Chapter 5, "Issues and Directions", (p. 36) to "ensure the *quality of tomorrow's teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 36). The use of the word *direction* is a deliberate lexical choice, illustrating the intention to divert, or change course, from what had gone before. An example of this is seen when the discourse of teacher attributes, which first emerged in the *Crowley Report* (1998), simultaneously gains traction and changes trajectory in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) to become a selection processes aimed at ensuring the quality of prospective teachers based on their suitability and general aptitude on entry to training. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated,

> an entrance type examination, similar in intent to the GAMSAT test applied to select entrants to medicine, could alleviate many concerns about the *quality* [emphasis added] and *suitability* [emphasis added] of those entering training. An opportunity will have been lost, however, if the test focuses overly on lowest common denominator issues in relation to literacy and numeracy. *General aptitude* [emphasis added] as well as suitability for teaching must also be assessed. (p. 198)

In attempting to select and regulate the quality of teachers, the review weaves back into the historical and cultural perceptions of teachers and legitimises culturally entrenched views of teaching as a low-status job suitable only for women (Drudy, 2008) who are neither high

achievers (Weis, 1987) nor ambitious (Troen & Boles, 2003). This demonstrates how the decline in the public perceptions of teacher status is produced and maintained. Ball argues this creates a neoliberal subject position which he defines as

> malleable rather than committed, flexible rather than principled – essentially depthless. A consequence of continual animation and calculation is for many a growing sense of ontological insecurity: both a loss of a sense of meaning in what we do and of what is important in what we do. (2012, p. 31)

Thus, although the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) assumption of a quality deficit is created endogenously, it gains strength from the exogenous understanding of teachers' lives and work. The process works to add fuel to the quality deficit fire, and gives power to the implied understanding of what needs to change (Bacchi, 2009) – in other words, this power creates knowledge. Thus, the situated meaning of quality in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), has arisen from the discursive practices, social position, and power relations which have ordered and combined words in specific ways to construct meaning (Bacchi, 2009; S. Ball, 1990a) and to represent the problem in a particular way.

6.5.1.3 Assumption: The deficit in quality is critical

A second assumption is seen to follow. Without any substantive evidence, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) assumes this quality deficit is critical. It is important to note the use of the term *critical* in the title of the review as it immediately generates notions of urgency and panic, giving the reader the impression that a serious, dangerous, or acute problem exists within the education system, and critical action is necessary and urgently required. Discursive practices such as this is described as an act of persuasion (Bacchi, 2009), resonating with the view that panic can be a useful tool used by politicians and policy makers to manipulate and shape public opinion (Mockler, 2014). The attribution of a moral panic is the extent to which the significance has been exaggerated compared to other problems (S. Cohen, 1972). These discursive dynamics represent what the review considered possible and desirable (Bacchi, 2009), in the process making certain courses of action permissible (Bacchi, 2009). The assumption of a critical quality deficit reflects a range of globalised education policy trajectories at that time (Ball, 2012).

The assumption of a critical problem is evidenced in the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) widespread use of the term. *Critical* was found 81 times throughout the review, used as an adjective, an adverb, and importantly as an interjection to convey emotion and create an ambiance of

crisis. The review added to the sense of crisis by using several synonyms for *critical* including *acute* (x 1), *crucial* (x 3), *dire* (x 2), essential (x 27), key (x 50), serious (x 7), urgent (x 4), and *vital* (x 3). These are co-located in the review with terms which signify confusion such as the following: "increasingly uncertain" (p. 18),"changes of great significance" (p. 18), "outcomes impossible to predict" (p. 18), "dramatic changes" (p. 18), "different from what we now know" (p. 19), and "becoming increasingly complex" (p. 19). In addition, the discourse created a multi-dimensional crisis, using critical in conjunction with several problematic issues. For example, "accreditation of initial teacher education programs" (p. 31), "data management systems" (p. 23), "employment patterns" (p. 21), "funding" (p. 31), "interpersonal skills" (p. 40), "issues" (p. 79), "profession" (p. 36), "quality" (p. 58), "responsibility" (p. 136), "standards of professional practice" (p. 136), "teacher education" (p. 18), "teacher licensing" (p. 31), and "work" (p. 18).

Having established there was a crisis in which critical choices have to be made, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) then adds urgency to the task. The review proclaimed that "approaches adopted in the past to some of these issues are now identified as having been inadequate or as having failed" (p. 19), and that "the debate of the past 20 years about standards and how to improve the quality of teacher education has run its course. It is time to move forward" (p. 31). This reflects Friedman's suggestion that "only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change" (Friedman, 1982, p. ix) as it acts as a call to arms (Taubman, 2009).

Moreover, the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) situating of teachers in the same discursive frame as critical worked to associate them with the crisis in education discourse (Berliner & Glass, 2014). This tactic is described by Saltman as gaining support by "capitalizing on disaster" (2007, p. 21). The result is that the problematisation has extended the assumed critical quality deficit in teach(ing) to include an assumed critical quality deficit in teach(ers). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested that it should pay "particular attention to teachers' knowledge and experience" (p. 221), and their "important abilities" (p. 10). One such ability was noted to be how they should 'behave'. The review stated,

> Importantly, teachers need skills in modern technology, managing classrooms, ethical behaviour and above all they need to be committed to their students. These are all critical professional issues about how the individual teacher should behave. (p. 10)

6.5.1.4 Second Presupposition: An economic rationalist worldview

A second presupposition is seen in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), that of economic rationalism. Economic rationalism is a form of political rationality in which the market economy is substituted for democratic politics and public planning (Marginson, 1992). Economic rationality has twin roots: first, in knowledge, and second, in the practices of government and management (Marginson, 1992, 1993). It is underpinned by notions of competition, efficiency and productivity (S. Ball, 1994, 2012, 2017; Jack Lam, 2001; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

This presupposition, which is evident throughout the *Ramsey Review* (2000) in the use of such terms as *competition*, *efficiency*, and *productivity*, underpins the logic behind measures of quality in education. For example, the review stated:

> efforts to provide for quality assurance and accountability in education have been generally less effective than in other industry sectors where the issue of *efficiency* [emphasis added] can more easily be related to the *productivity* [emphasis added] of workers and bottom line targets. (p. 121)

This presupposition, or logic is also seen in relation to the quality of the practicum and of school systems. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) spoke of "the relevance, effectiveness and *efficiency* [emphasis added] of approaches to the practicum (p. 221), and using *best* as a synonym for *quality*, the review also spoke of the "increasing *competition* [emphasis added] between school systems in attracting and retaining the very *best teachers* [emphasis added] (p. 44).

6.5.1.5 Assumption: Neoliberal audit mechanisms facilitate solutions to problems

The first assumption, supported by the presupposition of economic rationality, is that of neoliberal accountability and audit mechanisms to facilitate efficiency, and, moreover, that efficiency equates to quality. This reflects Foucault's perspective on liberalism as a form of state reason (Foucault, 1991).

Under the influence of Western market liberals, the dominant brand of economic rationality, or state reason, has become the free market version (Marginson, 1992). In Australia, neoliberal rationality is a particular way of thinking about national economies and their management (Beeson & Firth, 1998). Neoliberal philosophy is focused on economic and social transformation through the free market (S. Ball, 2012), using the technologies of management, accountability and audit mechanisms to implement this agenda (Connell, 2010, 2013; Connell & Dados, 2014; Harvey, 2005; Olssen & Peters, 2005). This process has

resulted in the public education sector being transformed into private sector markets (Atweh, Graven, Secada, & Valero, 2011; S. Ball, 2012; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) being set within a neoliberal discursive framework has made the assumption that the ills of the nation and the economy can be solved by applying accountability and audit techniques – in this case to the teaching profession – a model imported from business accountancy (Connell, 2013; Power, 1997). This is evidenced in the review's statement,

> Education is a service industry, no matter how much that notion rankles with some people in the field. In spite of attempts to avoid hard-nosed economic terms like market forces, quality assurance, accountability, performance, bench marking, client, fee-for-service, efficiency, effectiveness, it must be recognised these are the lenses through which increasingly teachers and teacher educators are being forced to view the world. They are not going to disappear just because we do not like them. (p. 11)

In this discursive arena the quality of teaching and teachers are considered accountable to the stakeholders in the education market (Mausethagen, 2013). Stakeholders include employers, government, parents and students. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) is seen to acknowledge this in the statement,

> more often than not policy discussion concerning the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added], has focused on quality assurance and accountability structures designed to identify those teachers who meet acceptable standards, and consequently those who do not. (p. 122)

Economic rationalism and the associated assumption of accountability and audit mechanisms to ensure efficiency underpins the practice of discussing teachers' worth in terms of performativity and accountability (S. Ball, 2003b; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007; Lingard, 2010; Wilkins, 2011). This is often referred to as a culture, or system, of terror (S. Ball, 2017): a system based on judgements, measures, comparisons and targets, operating a means of control (S. Ball, 2017) facilitated by appraisals, annual reviews, publication of results, inspections, and peer reviews. Rewarding individual or organisational performance is a critical tool in this type of management, resulting in an awareness of being constantly judged through various means, various criteria, and various agents and agencies. This has been described as a state of constant activation, where individuals become responsible for monitoring and disciplining themselves (S. Ball, 2017). The assumption of neoliberal accountability and audit mechanisms - the systems of terror – can not only result in damaging practices which can reshape the organisation they monitor (Shore & Wright, 1999), but also raises the question of who controls the judgement.

The terminology of assumed neoliberal accountability as a mechanism to ensure quality is evident throughout the *Ramsey Review* (2000). For example the review referred to *performance* 88 times, including "performance-related remuneration" (p. 21), "improving performance" (p. 23), "higher standards and teacher performance" (p. 30), "quality of its performance and service" (p. 33), "professional performance" (p. 38), "teacher's performance" (p. 43), "assessing performance" (p. 49), "reward performance" (p. 85), "school performance" (p. 87), "performance based assessment" (p. 98), "professional performance accountability" (p. 98), "performance criteria" (p. 106), "performance based skills testing" (p. 129), "performance management" (p. 136) "performance appraisal" (p. 137), "reward performance" (p. 144), and "performance standards" (p. 158). Similarly, when commenting on workplace and community needs the *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated that "the quality of data management systems became critical, for both improving performance and meeting accountability requirements" (p. 23).

6.5.1.6 Assumption- Teachers are tools in the production of human capital

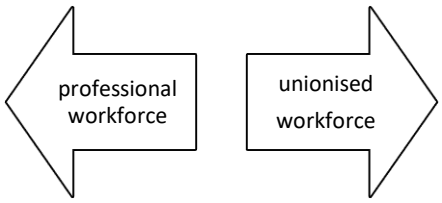
A second assumption which is supported by the presupposition of economic rationalism, is that teachers are tools in the production of human capital (S. Ball, 2012; Krieg, 2006). Human capital in education policy is the aligning of the content of education with the requirements demanded by industry, and by nation states, to compete in the global economy (S. Ball, 2012). For example, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted "economic change" (p. 22) had impacted "the kinds of jobs available" (p. 22) and the "knowledge and skills the economy demands" (p.22), and despite conceding "a dilemma exists in trying to describe what it is conceptually that teachers serve" (p. 11), the review suggested that the "work of teachers adds to the sum of the State's and the nation's *human capital* [emphasis added]" (p. 33).

Thus, this analysis demonstrates that together these two presuppositions and four assumptions make up the conceptual premise in the *Ramsey Review* (2000). In the context of this review the purpose of education is to ensure national growth and prosperity (Wayne & Youngs, 2003), through economic productivity and competitiveness (S. Ball, 2012, 2017). Within this paradigm teachers are the vital instrument with which to create the human capital to achieve such aims (Connell, 2013) – their efficiency and effectiveness in this task – has become the measure of quality which is regulated and assured through accountability mechanisms.

6.5.2 What is left unproblematic in these problem representations?

The WPR process creates a destabilising effect on the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) conceptual underpinnings, and its representations of the problems confronting school education. This has exposed tensions and contradictions in the problem representations.

6.5.2.1 Tension between a professional workforce and unionised workforce



Like the *Crowley Report* (1998), the *Ramsey Review* (2000) created a binary discourse between conceiving teaching either as a profession or as a unionised workforce, it stated,

> Because there has been no professional structure, the unions representing teachers have held sway on what in other vocations are considered to be professional issues. The need for a change from union and employer control to a greater level of professional authority on professional matters is now seen as a major issue in many countries. (p. 146)

The *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) approach to dealing with this tension was in creating a binary discourse. A binary discourse is one which assumes that what is on one side of the binary (in this case quality) is excluded from the other (Bacchi, 2009). Moreover, hierarchies are implied in binaries, as one side is privileged (Bacchi, 2009). Binaries function to give particular meanings to problem representations. In the review, the profession is considered quality and, therefore, in relation to the union, it is privileged.

The discourse within the *Ramsey Review* (2000) works to create negative sentiment for the term *union*, by positioning *unionised workforce* alongside terms such as "conflict" (p. 118), "contentious", (p. 27), "adversarial" (p. 27), "arbitrary" (p. 85), "resistance" (p. 121), and "domination" (p. 136). Conversely, the term *professional workforce* was found with more positive terms such as "quality" (p. 3), "effectiveness" (p. 206), "authority" (p. 131), "responsibility" (p. 118), "regulation" (p. 94), "initiative" (p. 14), and "principles" (p. 118). At the same time the review created positive sentiment by combining the term *quality profession* with the phrase "what so many want it to be" (p. 3). This discursive process not only operated to create a good and bad, but also to suggest to the reader that there was consensus for the

separation of the entities. Moreover, the review indicated that this consensus was international in origin, stating the need for change "was seen as a major issue in many countries" (p. 146). Despite a lack of evidence, the report implied professional authority was absent in the unionised workforce model.

Thus, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) used "dividing practice" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 17) to create a targeted group who themselves become responsible for the problem. The process functioned to develop a common-sense deficit (Bacchi, 2009), that a unionised teaching workforce is a deficit workforce, one which is both undesirable and out-of-step with international trends. This effectively marginalised any union contribution to the review.

Having created a targeted group, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested that "too often professional matters are turned into contentious industrial issues" (p. 33) and noted the Australian College of Education, New South Wales Chapter's concern that

> the centre ground is held by a dated, adversarial industrial relationship between the employers and the unions that pushes key questions and issues of teacher professionalism to the periphery rather than the centre of the debate. (p. 33)

Thus, the resulting representation of teachers as not professional enough targets unions as responsible for the problem, and reflects the impact of neoliberal politics on employee unions, weakening them by turning employer/employee relationships into individual contracts. This is part of a much wider debate which argues the market agenda implies an insecure workforce (S. Ball, 2012; Connell, 2010, 2013; Latifoglu, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) concluded it was necessary "to give teachers an opportunity to take up their individual professional responsibilities separate from either the dictates of their current employer or their union" (p. 118), and that "the sooner teaching is constituted as a *quality* [emphasis added], rather than a mass profession, the sooner it will be possible to put these issues in a proper professional framework" (p. 12).

Demonstrating how this process can facilitate the targeting of a group (the union) as themselves responsible for the problem, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) posited,

> industrial action by unions over attempts by employers to increase accountability in government schools in New South Wales *could be* [emphasis added] said to

> have further reduced the community's confidence in schools and teachers. (p. 127)

While no firm evidence was offered, the notion that union activity could be responsible for the decline in community confidence extends their problematic influence, and allowed the *Ramsey Review* (2000) to create the impression that a unionised workforce was detrimental to not only the profession but the community as a whole. The discursive process demonstrates the inherent limitations imposed by failing to acknowledge competing problem representations. The process worked to effectively marginalise the union's voice and silenced their concerns about the effect low remuneration had on teacher status and quality teaching, which they had argued "makes the profession an attractive career" (p. 113).

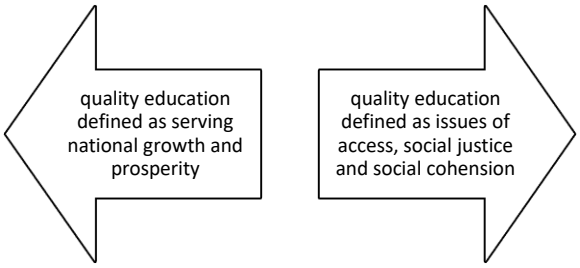
Leaving the tension unproblematic, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) subsequently reframed union concerns about teacher remuneration as an accountability issue aimed at the individual - performance pay. Providing credence for this reframing, the review quoted the Senate Employment, Education and Training Reference Committee's submission to the previous *Crowley Report* (1998), which stated,

> The Committee recommends that the new national professional teaching standards and registration body establish clear levels of advanced professional certification reflecting teachers' experience, professional development and additional roles such as mentoring. Such certification might be helpful in determining levels of remuneration for teachers. (p. 30)

Seen through a neoliberal lens, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) envisaged "incentive remuneration" (p. 24) as another accountability mechanism similar to professional standards – mechanisms which can be employed to change and regulate teacher behaviours to gain efficiency and effectiveness.

As Bacchi (2009) suggests, a binary discourse works to simplify a complex issue (Bacchi, 2009). However, as this analysis has demonstrated, it also limits the ways in which this problem is being represented. The *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) focus on problem *solving* foreclosed consideration of what the problem was represented to be (Bacchi, 2009). The process constrained and limited the possibilities for thought (S. Ball, 1990a, p. 17) to that which were considered possible through the lens of economic rationality, employing accountability mechanisms. This tension has been left unproblematic, but likely to re-emerge.

6.5.2.2 Tensions between conceptions of a quality education system



This tension is characterised by the struggle to define quality in education. The *Ramsey Review* acknowledged that "a dilemma exists in trying to describe what it is conceptually that teachers serve" (p. 11). However, it also conceded that "in spite of attempts to avoid hard -nosed economic terms" (p. 11) "these are the lenses through which increasingly teachers and teacher educators are being forced to view the world" (p. 11). The use of the word *forced* exposes an unresolved tension. On one hand quality in education is conceptualised in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) from within an economic rationalist lens, focused on human capital production. The review stated,

> In a society created and sustained by the knowledge and skills of its people and their capacity to work together for social and economic improvement, it is imperative that the quality of teaching be a priority for governments, universities, employers and, perhaps most importantly, the profession itself. (p. 213)

On the other hand, quality in education is defined as equal access, social justice and social cohesion. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated that a "quality education for all our young people must be the goal" (p. 123), and "in the case of government schools, they have both a moral and a legal responsibility to provide all people with *access to education of the highest possible quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 123). The review also stated that "the quality of schooling and education is becoming an even more important activity in the development of an *equitable, just and humane society and issues of access* [emphasis added] are also crucial" (p. 246). Recognising this tension, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated,

> In our rush to focus on the instrumental goals of education we must not lose sight of the important social goals of schooling. This applies particularly in a society where, despite the move to greater globalisation, there is increasing tribalisation at the local level. Teachers have a central role in addressing often complex issues, including the development and maintenance of social cohesion. (p. 9)

Whilst these conceptualisations of quality in education are not necessarily mutually exclusive, they nonetheless represent an issue in tension.

6.5.2.3 Tensions between internal quality assurance and external accountability

A tension is also seen in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) between external and internal forms of ensuring quality. First, the review outlined *quality assurance* as:

> Quality assurance generally arises from concerns **internal** to an organisation; for example, among members of a small enterprise, such as within a school or a group of schools in a region. Self-improvement and self-regulation of individual units, parts of organisations or the organisation as a whole is the main aim. (p. 120)

The review then described accountability and how it differs from quality assurance. It explained that

> Accountability, more commonly, arises from the efforts of **external** bodies or whole systems to measure outcomes, and to hold managers accountable for processes, programs and outcome levels achieved. Benchmarking and comparison with other similar enterprises in terms of productivity and quality are core issues. Accountability is fundamentally about overall verification of the quality of outcomes, or more particularly, whether the expectations of key stakeholders are met. Accountability is essentially a top-down or externalised process, and typically refers to large systems, based on the accountability of individuals or enterprises to those in higher authority. (p. 120)

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) stressed that "placing the quality emphasis on accountability rather than assurance leads to its own problems" (p. 127), and drew attention to instances where results based external accountability had already proved problematic in the United States, yet it seemed to be winning the battle over how quality is to be judged. The review stated,

> National Board proponents presume that teachers who are knowledgeable in their subject and have good professional judgement will be effective, while state accountability proponents believe that the best indicator of teaching effectiveness is the ability to achieve results with students. Of these two views

> of teaching quality, the logic of state accountability is simpler to understand and has fewer elements, and as a result of this results-oriented view seems to be winning the battle over how teaching quality is to be judged in the United States. (p. 132)

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) conceded it was difficult to "avoid hard-nosed economic terms" (p. 11), and providing evidence of this, the review itself uses terms such as "efficiency" (p. 121) "effectiveness" (p. 79) "market forces" (p. 11) "accountability" (p. 24), "performance" (p. 23), "performance-related remuneration" (p. 21), "best practice" (p. 172), "structure and procedures" (p. 139), "inputs" (p. 143), and "outcome-focused" (p. 143).

Using *best* as a synonym for *quality*, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted that when applying the external accountability approach to education, it is not the best that survive. The review stated,

> While both quality assurance and accountability could be described as micro-economic in focus, the application of market-based theories and the 'invisible hand' of competition in education is macroeconomically driven. According to this approach, the best, as determined by the cut and thrust of the market place, are likely to survive against others regarded as competitors. Experience in other industry sectors shows, however, that it is often not the best but the strongest that survive. (p. 122)

The tension inherent in the internal/external debate, has already become apparent in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), seen in the struggle over the purpose of the proposed professional standards. For despite the *Ramsey Review* (2000) giving the allusion of teacher autonomy, standards have actually been linked to accountability in three ways: first, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) employed standards to facilitate the "external assessment and endorsement of programs of initial teacher education" (p. 59); second, standards are employed to provide a framework to meet stakeholder expectations of "what teachers and schools can achieve for their children" (p. 32); and third, as the Australian College of Education NSW Chapter emphasised, standards provide the mechanism with which to "differentiate satisfactorily the competent professional from the incompetent; the competent from the truly accomplished" (p. 135).

This tension demonstrates a plurality of purpose, and ultimately undermines the validity of a standardised approach, a problem which has already become evident abroad. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted "not everyone in the United States is convinced of the validity of current

national standards approach" (p. 132), and also that "the reforms in England have been controversial" (p. 135).

Moreover, the plurality of demands (Bacchi, 2009) from the various stakeholders in relation to teaching standards, is representative of a wicked problem. A wicked problem is one which stems from social systems characterised by multiple framings by various stakeholders (Southgate et al., 2013), each of whom have their own agenda - a messy, fuzzy complex issue (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 61). Establishing an empirical basis for a 'wicked problem' is argued to be "methodologically complex and pragmatically fraught" (Southgate et al., 2013, p. 21) as stakeholders develop a plethora of solutions – often contradictory and unrelated. This is even more poignant given the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) acknowledgement of Australia's "highly pluralist society with its diverse sets of values and expectations" (p. 9), and the "diverse range of stakeholders in teacher education" (p. 28), who each with "their own agendas, which often thwart the implementation of worthwhile recommendations" (p. 28).

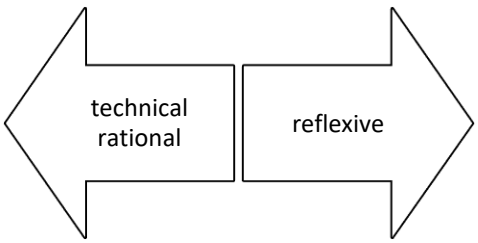
Yet the *Ramsey Review* (2000) leaves this struggle between stakeholders unresolved, and indeed it remains that way in current debate surrounding the most recent manifestation of teacher quality: *The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL, 2017). On one hand, Ingvarson and Rowe (2008) argue quality standards are useful to determine not only what is to be measured, but also provide structure to gathering evidence about capability and performance: how judgements will be made about whether the standards have been met. Talbot (2016) disagrees, claiming that the process of evidence production for the purposes of determining accreditation against standards fails to focus on teachers as individuals with individual learning needs, and that,

> In its current form, the accreditation process directs all teachers to produce evidence that they have all learned about items from the standards list. It would be very difficult for an individual teacher to concentrate on deep and extended learning with a particular focus and still meet the evidence requirements for maintenance of accreditation against a prescribed number of standards. (Talbot, 2016, p. 88)

Thus, there is an inherent tension in determining who the teaching profession is accountable to; teachers themselves, parents, employers, students, or universities, and how quality assurance should be implemented. The "plurality of meanings" (Bacchi, 2009), and corresponding demands, leaves the tension between external/internal assessment of quality unresolved, and leaves the concept of professional standards at best be futile, and at worst

unreasonable, inevitably creating harmful negativity and dissatisfaction within the teaching profession. As Connell (2009) argues standards decompose what teachers do into specific, auditable competencies and performances. The process creates an arbitrary narrowing of practice as it embeds an individualized model of a teacher, something that is deeply problematic for a public education system.

6.5.2.4 Tensions between technical rational and the reflexive teacher



Closely related to the tension between external/internal approaches to ensuring quality, is the tension between technical-rational and reflexive dimensions of teachers' work. The technical-rational approach is preferred by those who advocate accountability. However, as Jennifer Nias points out, there are dangers in privileging the technical-rational over the more human aspects of teachers' work and identity. She stated,

> Teachers have hearts and bodies, as well as heads and hands, though the deep and unruly nature of their hearts is governed by their heads, by the sense of moral responsibility for students and the integrity of their subject matter which are at the core of their professional identity...Teachers are emotionally committed to many different aspects of their jobs. This is not an indulgence; it is a professional necessity. Without feeling, without the freedom to 'face themselves', to be whole persons in the class- room, they implode, explode – or walk away. (Nias, 1989, p. 305)

Dewey (1933) defined reflective practice as action which involves "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads" (p. 9). Schön (1983) later added a) reflection in action which was defined as that which occurred during the event, and b) reflection on action, defined as that which takes place after the event. Eraut (1995) subsequently introduced the concept of reflection for action, defined as that which would direct future action. Thus, reflexive teachers can be understood as those who use their skills, knowledge, beliefs and attributes to determine the best course of action, in any context, either during, after, or for improved learning opportunities. The reflexive dimensions have been

extensively explored in the literature (Connell, 2009; Mockler, 2011b, 2013; Nias, 1989; Sachs, 2001, 2003a).

Acknowledging this complexity, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested that teaching is too complex to be reduced to a technical rational standardised approach, stating,

> the terms 'standards' and quality, so often used when referring to teaching, have a beguiling simplicity which belies the complexity of the issues in relation to how quality and standards may be guaranteed in the education sector. (p. 120)

Yet, contradicting the above statement, and Darling-Hammond's (1986) view that knowledge is complex, and requires judgement in applying general principles to unique and specific problems in practice, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) proposed that similar to the curriculum, teaching "should have structure" (p. 13), and that "teachers themselves will be held increasingly responsible for the learning outcomes of their students" (p. 34). It can be argued that such a perspective presents education as merely a matter of the effectiveness of its technicians, enacting predefined best practice (Connell, 2009, p. 224), a process argued to objectify teachers, and instrumentalise teaching (Gale, 2006). Such a technical rational approach, whilst facilitating accountability, may also detract from significant opportunities for a more effective bottom-up solution (Bain, Lancaster, Zundans, & Parkes, 2009), allowing for improvement informed by research.

Nonetheless, the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) recommendations set the policy trajectory toward the neoliberal logic of accountability, and leaving the tension with the reflexive dimensions of teachers' work unresolved, concluded that "a system of accreditation, in which a professional body verifies that standards have been reached and maintained, is needed" (p. 38).

Thus, despite the *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggesting teacher skills, knowledge, beliefs and attributes should form the basis of the selection criteria to ensure quality, the review also proposed holding teachers accountable to prescriptive standardised teaching – a situation which denies the autonomy to utilise professional judgment in applying the very attributes which were to become a requirement for selection into the profession.

6.5.3 The interconnected and overlapping effects of the discourse

The WPR approach starts from the "presumption that some problem representations create difficulties (forms of harm) for members of some social groups more so than for other social groups" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). For this reason it is important to interrogate the problematisations on offer to "see where and how they function to benefit some and harm others" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). A discursive effect is that which follows from the limits imposed by the discourse: what can be said and thought. A subjectification effect refers to the way in which subjects are constituted in the discourse. This section of the analysis considers the discursive and subjective effects created by the *Ramsey Review*s' (2000) representations of the problem of quality.

The first effect is discursive and seen in the ability of the discourse to create a critical deficit discourse in relation to the quality of teachers and their teaching practice. Despite the review's ambiguity in relation to the expected behaviours of a quality professional, the discourse nonetheless created a deficit discourse when positing teachers should "act like one" (p. 33). Similarly, despite acknowledging that it was "ironic that the professional standing of teaching is declining given the evidence, generally, that schools and teachers are performing better than in the past" (p. 126), the review also claimed there was "no doubt that the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added] and the standards of teaching in our schools is a matter of deepening concern" (p. 119). This is indicative of a discursive practice which emphasises contradiction and uses confusion to open space for challenge and change (Bacchi, 2014). The notion of critical deficit served as the catalyst for the review's trajectory of selection of quality entrants and regulation and certification of teachers against standards.

The discourses in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) also had a subjective effect. The concept of subjectification refers to the notion that individuals become subjects of a particular kind (S. Ball, 1990b), their place "enmeshed in social structures" (Foucault, 1994, p. 112). Government policy can be understood as a process of setting up such social structures and an individual's place (position) within them (Bacchi, 2009). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) made certain subject positions available within the problem representations: competent/incompetent; compliant/non-compliant; professional/unprofessional. The subjective effect is apparent in statements like "teachers themselves will be held increasingly responsible for the learning outcomes of their students" (p. 34), working to move responsibility from government to teachers for the quality of education outcomes. A position

which demanded a competence in the form of desirable values and beliefs, compliance with prescribed standardised teaching, and non-unionised professional certification. This provides some clarity for the apparent ambiguity in the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) original logic which stated that "simply establishing teaching as a properly constituted profession would not guarantee success' (p. 14), but rather it would require "other strategies as well" (p. 14). This "other strategy" has emerged as an attempt to construct *who the teacher is*, rather than *what the teacher does.*

6.5.4 Could the problem have been thought about differently?

The literature shows that the concept of *quality*, and how quality is measured, remains widely debated (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Sayed & Ahmed, 2015; Skourdoumbis, 2014). Consequently, the adjectival use of quality in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) can be considered to represent no more than a slogan, offering little to what quality actually entails (R. Alexander, 2015).

As these analyses have shown the *Ramsey Review* (2000) has represented the problem as various problems associated with quality. First, it was concerned with teacher quality as "the teacher really does make the difference in student learning" (p. 12). The review suggested, therefore, that policy makers should focus on determining and selecting desirable qualities in teachers: their skills, knowledge and personal attributes (including beliefs and values), to ensure competence and performance. Second, it was concerned with the fragmented and variable quality of ITE programs and proposed the introduction of "an entrance type examination" (p. 198) to "rank" (p. 42) those with "greater potential to produce good teaching" (p. 202). Third, the review proposed teaching should be "constructed as a profession based on quality" (p. 18), as "old structures are unlikely to work for very much longer" (p. 18). Fourth, the review was concerned that education systems were negatively impacting quality and that the introduction of a variety of measures including the following: teacher reward systems; performance reviews; improved career structures; and improved processes and procedures for entry into the profession, for accreditation, and for dealing with complaints of professional malpractice, would provide the opportunity to enhance quality in education. Lastly, the review suggested "the effect of *poor quality teaching* [emphasis added] on student outcomes is debilitating and cumulative" (p. 34) and is greater than those effects "that arise from student backgrounds" (p. 34), and posited that quality teaching could be improved by focusing on selection strategies, and best practice teacher preparation.

However, in the absence of any definition of quality, a struggle over the right to create meaning for the concept is seen to have emerged within the review. This should, therefore, be "recognised and contested" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 32). This section of the analysis considers how the problem could have been thought about differently – or how this could be rethought (Bacchi, 2009).

To recap, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) stated "given teaching is becoming more important, society and teachers themselves need to be sure that the *work* [emphasis added] of teachers is of the highest possible *quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 9). However, the review acknowledged there was a dilemma "in trying to describe what it is conceptually that teachers serve" (p. 11). This opens a space for challenge (Bacchi, 2000), and leads to the questions - what is it that teacher's serve? and what does that mean for the statement - "the *work* [emphasis added] of teachers is the highest possible *quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 9).

Such questions present an alternative way of looking at the problem, and that is to consider privileging discourses which focus on the importance of the "social goals of schooling" (p. 9). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) suggested the "social goals of schooling" (p. 9) form the basis of the "development and maintenance of social cohesion" (p. 9). Charles Sturt University's submission to the Ramsey Committee also emphasised teachers should have the "knowledge and commitment to ensure inclusive assessment and evaluation practices which are consistent with equity and social justice" (p. 55). Privileging these discourses would re-frame the quality of teachers' work from being measured in outcomes to being measured by the ability to educate and maintain a socially cohesive community, consistent with equity and social justice. Moreover, the quality of teachers' work would be measured by the community that they serve.

This way of looking at the issue suggests the problem could have been represented as the institutional hierarchies of cultural value that deny social equity and impede social cohesion. The private versus public debate, which was evident in the previous *Crowley Report* (1998), and still evident in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), provides justification for such a representation of the problem.

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) acknowledged a growing pattern of "non-government schools 'poaching' known, *quality teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 90). Predictably, this poaching of quality teachers, leads to an inequitable distribution of quality pedagogy received by those

students unable to access a quality education based on model driven by competition and free market principles. In this paradigm, parental choice has become the mantra. However, in low socioeconomic communities parents have little real choice when selecting schools for their children (McInerney, 2006, p. 8). The *Ramsey Review* stated,

> a market in education is easy to conceive where there are significant population aggregations: it is much more difficult in regions where population diversity is sparse. The dilemma for government arising from such developments is one of social justice. How can governments see that all people benefit from the changes now under way in education, and not just those who can take advantage of the opportunity that the additional non-government schools offer? (p. 123)

The notion of measuring the quality of teachers work, must, therefore, be set against the background of inequitable educational (and wider social and economic) structures. Any improvements (or solutions to this representation of the problem) to teacher work would, therefore, be focused on the degree to which the social, emotional, and moral development of students are being addressed which create and maintain an equitable, socially cohesive community - despite these having no immediate measurable performative value.

This way of looking at the problem is not only important for the community, but also for the teachers themselves, as these issues form the basis of how teachers develop their practice and maintain their sense of self, in and through their career. These are vitally significant in understanding the commitment of teachers in their work (S. Ball & Goodson, 1985). It could be argued that without such an emphasis, some teachers will feel their moral obligation to provide a democratic education compromised (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009).

Thus, the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) problematisation could have centred on equity and social justice, rather than the quality of ITE, quality teaching, and teacher quality. Thinking about the problems in terms of social justice and equity feeds into the much larger debate about the limitations posed by the dominant conceptualisations of the social justice agenda. Whilst the scope of this chapter does not allow a full discussion, Griffiths (2009) suggests such limitations can be understood as

> First, the equating of social justice with improved equity for more authentically meritocratic outcomes; secondly, the lack of space for more fundamental challenges to existing constructions of high-status knowledge; and third, the lack of attention to wider social and economic change, as part of the struggle to construct a more equal, just and democratic world-system in which socially just

> educational systems that contribute to the transformation of society, can be built. (p. 76)

Despite this, the deficit discourse in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), has created a type of discursive power, which has privileged discourses of quality in terms of professional status, teaching practice, teachers' characteristics, and teachers' personal responsibility for student outcomes in education, at the expense of discourses of equitable access to quality teaching. These limitations have implications for state and national education policy, including educational systems, teachers' pedagogical practice, and curriculum choices.

6.6 Concluding remarks

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) has represented the problem as overlapping and interdependent issues of quality in relation to the following: teacher quality, ITE programs; quality profession, systems of education, and teacher practice. Whilst there was some evidence in the review of a questioning of neoliberal framing of these problems, the recommendations, nonetheless, demonstrated an acceptance that "these are the lenses through which increasingly teachers and teacher educators are being forced to view the world" (p. 11). The review suggested standardising ITE programs, by selecting what is considered best practice and melding these ideas into a proposal for a framework in New South Wales that would establish teaching as a *quality profession* [emphasis added]" (p. 145).

However, such a process can work to constrain and limit thought with the purpose of influencing practice (Bacchi, 2000). Given the plurality of stakeholder views, this would arguably determine "who can speak, when, and with what authority"(S. Ball, 2006, p. 44).

As a consequence of the absence of any definition of quality, a predicable struggle over the right to create meaning for the term quality was seen to emerge, such as between quality as outcomes/equity, professional/unionised workforce, external/internal quality assurance, and between technical-rational/reflexive teaching.

There were three main discourses which displayed continuity with the previous *Crowley Report* (1998). First, whilst both made reference to the characteristics of quality teacher/quality teaching, quality in this context was left undefined. Instead, both documents displayed a presupposition that the meaning of quality was well understood. Second, both the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) constructed a quality deficit discourse: either a lack

of quality, poor quality, or the need for more quality. Third, both documents created a discourse of crisis, suggesting the quality deficit was critical and urgent action was required.

There was a significant change in trajectory in the way the deficit discourse operated in the *Ramsey Review* (2000). In the *Crowley Report* (1998) the deficit discourse functioned to gain support for giving teachers' a voice with which to combat criticisms. Whilst in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) it functioned to create acceptance for change, "initiating a process to change many things that relate to the way teachers are regarded, how they are prepared and supported, and how they may take up their professional responsibilities" (p. 14).

The two documents also differed in their assessment of the factors negatively impacting quality in education. The *Crowley Report* (1998) found many of the issues arose from external factors such as alarmist media reports, feminisation of the profession, unsupportive ministers, the absence of support services, the lack of career progression, impact of technology, school-based management, and student welfare. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) found the issues arose mainly from factors internal to the profession: ITE programs, ITE entrants, teacher's professional status, teachers' skills, knowledge, beliefs and values. In other words, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) changed trajectory and considered the quality deficit as attributable in some way to teachers and their teaching practice, rather than external to the profession.

The *Ramsey Review* also demonstrated discursive creep (Bacchi, 2009). Whilst the *Crowley Report* (1998) predominantly discussed quality in relation to teaching, with only one mention of teachers' "personal qualities, motivation, organisational ability and flexibility" (1998, p. 172), the discourse in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) became much more teacher centred using the terms *teaching quality*, *quality teacher*, and *teacher quality* interchangeably without discrimination. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) subsequently proposed a selection process as an "appropriate starting point to address issues which are fundamental to the *quality of the teachers* [emphasis added]" (p. 42), and which would "assist in selecting those most suited for entry into teaching" (p. 49). This served to enable a new discursive trajectory – toward prescribing and ascribing desirable characteristics of quality teachers. This effectively moved the discursive frame from one where teachers *can* make a difference to one where teachers *are* the difference (Gale, 2006).

Demonstrating discontinuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998), which held the government responsible for providing a quality education system, and teachers' responsibility was for

teaching, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) set a new trajectory toward teacher responsibility for quality: in their teaching practice, in their ability to behave like a quality professional, and in their ability to demonstrate the desired characteristics and attributes to meet the selection criteria for entry into ITE. This reflects the neoliberal shifting of responsibility from the government to the individual.

Consequently, a new framing of the problem has emerged in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), which foregrounds a regulatory and aspirational approach to quality - aimed at the individual teacher.

In summary, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) has decreased the plethora of factors considered in the *Crowley Report* (1998) to be negatively impacting quality in education, facilitated discursive creep from teaching quality toward teacher quality, and in the process realigned the responsibility for quality away from government toward the teacher in the form of their skills, knowledge, values, and beliefs.

Chapter 7: Tracing the problematisation of teacher quality in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007): *Top of the Class: Report on the Inquiry into Teacher Education*

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored the Parliamentary Review *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices* (Ramsey, 2000) and called here, the *Ramsey Review*. The analysis of the *Ramsey Review* (2000) found continuity with the *Crowley Report* (1998) in the underlying logic: that quality in education is well defined and understood, that there is a quality deficit, and that there is a crisis which must be addressed.

Demonstrating discontinuity, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) decreased the plethora of factors considered by the previous *Crowley Report* (1998) to be negatively impacting quality education. The *Ramsey Review* (2000) also facilitated discursive creep from teaching quality toward teacher quality. This realigned the responsibility for quality away from the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) focus on the government, toward the teacher in the form of their skills, knowledge, values, and beliefs.

Despite conceding there was no crisis in education, the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) recommendations were for "structures and processes which would make teaching the quality profession so many want it to be" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 3). The review proposed an Institute of Teachers responsible for professional standards to ensure quality through the following: a) teachers' professional membership; b) teachers' teaching practice; and c) teachers' personal attributes, characteristics, values and beliefs – those who can meet the desired criteria for entry into ITE. In the process, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) effectively moved the discursive framing of the problem from one where teachers *can* make a difference to one where teachers *are* the difference (Gale, 2006).

This chapter continues to trace how the concept of quality evolves by exploring the Parliamentary Report *Top of the Class: Report on the Inquiry into Teacher Education* (2007b), hereafter referred to as the *Hartsuyker Report* after its first author. I argue this report marks a change in the way standards of professional practice were conceptualised in educational

policy – narrowing the notion of quality still further to one represented as regulatory mechanisms such as accreditation, certification, and registration.

As in the previous chapters, I begin by providing a background to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) and its terms of reference. Three levels of analysis follow. The first level of analysis is in preparation for the second and third – the application of Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach. The first level examines the content of each chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), carefully tracing where ideas (or discursive threads) of quality begin to emerge. The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's framework, What's the problem represented to be?, to identify how these discursive threads coalesce or knot into major discourses within the report and come to represent the problems and subsequently form the basis of the recommendations for change. The third level of the analysis applies questions two through six of Bacchi's (2009) WPR framework to probe more deeply into these problem representations, and the subsequent proposals for change. These inquire about the rationales for the proposals: the deep-seated presuppositions and assumptions which underpin the logic in the policy proposals. The WPR framework also allows me to identify tensions in the discourse and consider any effects produced by the discourse. Lastly this level of analysis considers whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

7.2 Background

Commencing in 2005, under the Howard Liberal National Coalition, the Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training conducted an inquiry into teacher education. Its terms of reference were to consider and make recommendations on all stages of teacher education. This included the following: the research base for teacher education, entry criteria for teacher education courses, the practicum component, partnerships between schools and universities, induction to the profession, ongoing professional learning for teachers, and overall funding. The final report *Top of the Class: Report on the Inquiry into Teacher Education* was released on Monday 26th February 2007. The Committee Chair was Mr Luke Hartsuyker MP, a National Party member and Fellow of the Chartered Practising Accountants. The Deputy Chair was Mr Rod Sawford MP, a Labor Party member and a teacher before entering politics. Other members were Mr Kerry Bartlett MP, Mr Michael Ferguson MP, Ms Sharon Bird MP, Mr Stuart Henry MP, Ms Ann Corcoran MP, Ms Kirsten Livermore MP, Mr David Fawcett MP, and Mrs Louise Markus MP.

7.3 First level analysis: Identifying the discursive threads of quality in chapters of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007)

7.3.1 Chapter 1: "Terms of Reference" and "Introduction to the Report"

The *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) terms of reference were to inquire into the:

> scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools (p. xi)

The only mention of quality in the terms of reference was the report's intention to

> Examine the extent to which teacher training courses can attract *high quality students,* [emphasis added] including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences. (p. xi)

The Introduction to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) added that changes in society meant high quality teacher education was a fundamental step in providing quality schooling. It stated

> Teaching is a highly complex profession. The demands on teachers are diverse and often intense and appear to be continually growing in response to expansions in the knowledge base, technological developments and changes in society. Providing high *quality teacher education* [emphasis added] that equips teachers well to meet these demands is a fundamental step in providing for *quality schooling* [emphasis added]. (p. 1)

Using *excellent* as a synonym for quality, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) emphasised that Australia's teachers are

> achieving *excellent learning outcomes* [emphasis added] in schools and Australian students perform well when compared against international benchmarks with students from other, similar economies. Teacher education courses must share some part of the credit for these results. (p. 1)

However, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) was concerned that a "small but significant number of students, often from remote parts of the country, still struggle to achieve the desired levels" (p. 1) of learning outcomes, and that therefore, "Australia must continue to do all it can to strengthen all the components that contribute to *quality schooling* [emphasis added], including teacher education" (p. 1).

In summary, these chapters referred to quality in relation to the extent to which teacher training courses can attract high quality students, and the importance of providing them with high quality teacher education to provide quality schooling. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter of the report can be seen in Table 25 below.

Table 25: The discursive threads of quality found in the Hartsuyker Report's Terms of Reference and Introduction

Terms of Reference	Introduction
Quality students	Quality teacher education Quality schooling

7.3.2 Chapter 2: "A Sound Research Base for Teacher Education"

Chapter 2 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) considered the "overall *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. 5), as to make schools effective, "teachers themselves should be the product of a first-rate teacher education experience" (p. 5).

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stated it was impressed by the dedication and professionalism of the teaching profession and that there was "clearly much of *high quality in teacher education courses* [emphasis added]" (p. 5). However, it pointed out that recent research from the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) indicated "significant variation in the *quality of teacher education courses* [emphasis added]" (p. 5), and that

> from the committee's perspective, there is simply not a sufficiently rich body of research evidence to enable it to come to any firm conclusions about the overall *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] in Australia. There is not even agreement on what *quality in teacher education* [emphasis added] means. (p. 5)

Thus, in order to ensure teachers were the product of a first-rate teacher education experience, the report suggested,

> Assessing the effectiveness of teacher education courses should be high on the agenda of course providers, and teacher registration and course accreditation authorities. Thorough assessment of teacher education courses will demand the development of tools and processes for evaluating the *quality of graduates' teaching* [emphasis added] in real school settings. The committee is encouraged by recent research by ACER which goes some way towards providing instruments that will allow for a more systematic and thorough evaluation of the *quality of teacher education courses* [emphasis added]. (p. 7)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested it was "imperative that steps be taken to establish what is meant by *quality teacher education outcomes* [emphasis added] and to identify

the approaches that best deliver them" (p. 9). The report stated this was necessary as "it is well established in the Western world that between 25% and 40% of all newly-recruited teachers resign or burnout in their first three to five years of teaching" (p. 9), and, therefore, it was concerned that "the attrition rate in the early years of teaching raises question about the "effectiveness of teacher education programs" (p. 8). More specifically, the report was concerned that there was insufficient data to determine the extent to which these issues arise from:

> inadequacies in the *quality of preparation* [emphasis added] provided by pre-service teacher education courses, the lack of support provided to beginning teachers during the induction phase, or other factors. (p. 9)

This chapter next considered the adequacy of funding for educational research. The report noted that in December 2005 the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) released its preferred *Research Quality Framework* (RQF) [emphasis added] Model (p. 11). The objective of the RQF was to develop a mechanism to assess "*research quality* [emphasis added] and its impact" (p. 11). However, the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) suggested there remained "a dearth of national competitive research schemes in education" (p. 13), and that this had resulted in a "significant gap" in "*high quality* [emphasis added], larger scale research into teacher education" (p. 13). The Committee stated that they were surprised and concerned to discover how little research has been undertaken into the effectiveness of different models of teacher education, and proposed "this gap in the knowledge base in teacher education needs to be addressed" (p. 16), as "*quality teaching* [emphasis added], the ultimate goal of teacher education, demands also that it is evidence based" (p. 16). This chapter concluded that, therefore, "there is a need to increase the funding available to support *high quality research* [emphasis added] in education" (p 17).

In summary, this chapter considered the quality of teacher education. It conceded there was no agreement on what quality education means, and whilst it noted there was significant variation in the quality of courses, it acknowledged there were clearly some high quality in teacher education courses. In order to assess the quality of teacher education it would demand the development of tools to evaluate the quality of graduates' teaching. This would mean steps had to be taken to steps be taken to establish what is meant by quality teacher education outcomes. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 are shown in Table 26 below.

Table 26: Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 2 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality of teacher education
Quality of teacher education courses
Quality of graduates' teaching
Quality of preparation
Quality teacher education outcomes
Quality teaching
Quality research on ITE
Research quality framework

7.3.3 Chapter 3: "A National System of Teacher Education"

Chapter 3 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) began with the statement

> *Teacher quality* [emphasis added] is on the agenda across the world. As part of their efforts to promote *quality schooling* [emphasis added], most jurisdictions in Australia have moved towards establishing processes of teacher registration and formal or the informal processes of accreditation of teacher education courses. (p. 19)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) cited the *Teacher Education Accreditation: A Review of National and International Trends and Practices* (Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz, & McKenzie, 2006) to emphasise how registration and accreditation influenced quality schooling in OECD countries. The reasoning cited was threefold. First, accreditation would assure the public that graduates from specific programs are "professionally qualified and competent" (Ingvarson et al., 2006, p. 2). Second, it would help "raise professional status and drive quality improvements within the pre-service sector" (Ingvarson et al., 2006, p. 2); and third, it would provide "clear guidelines about entry to the profession, progression and career development" (Ingvarson et al., 2006, p. 2).

These loose connections between accreditation, registration and quality schooling, were then linked to professional standards, this chapter stated,

> The accreditation of teacher education courses, the registration of teachers and the development and implementation of professional standards for teaching are all important ways of providing assurance that *teacher education courses are of high quality* [emphasis added]. (p. 19).

In an attempt to bridge this knowledge gap and gain authority for the proposal, this chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stressed that the value of standards had already been recognised by the Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth

Affairs (MCEETYA), and that MCEETYA had already established a "*Teacher Quality* [emphasis added] and Education Leadership Taskforce" (p. 20). This taskforce had in turn developed the "National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching" (p. 20). Furthermore, the report suggested that as State and Territory Federal Education Ministers had already endorsed the framework in 2003, the next logical step was to nationally align professional entry standards and graduate levels.

Attempting to allay fears that the notion of standards "often arouses concern that there is an intention to standardise, in the sense of making everything the same" (p. 20), the report suggested that "on the contrary, standards, accompanied by well-constructed means of assessing the degree by which they have been met (the outcomes), can provide for great flexibility, innovation and diversity" (p. 20).

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) then set out its conception of professional standards, which represent a solution to the problems across the "teacher education continuum" (p. 95), it stated,

> describing what teachers believe and know, what they understand, what they are able to do and what they value, professional standards for teaching articulate the complexity of teachers' work and assure the community of their competence. Standards are of value to teachers, employing authorities, governments, students and parents. Standards guide all involved in educating teachers during their initial preparation and beyond; standards act as benchmarks against which the effectiveness of teacher education courses and the performance of teachers can be assessed; standards provide guidance for the allocation of resources; standards support induction and mentoring processes; standards help teachers shape their on-going professional learning and guide education systems in the provision of on-going learning opportunities and materials. (p. 20).

Thus, despite acknowledging Australia's teachers were "achieving excellent learning outcomes" (p. 1), and that "teacher education courses must share some part of the credit" (p. 1), the report took the position that professional standards were the most important solution to unsubstantiated claims that teachers and ITE programs "could do better" (vii). Important to note, there is no reference to the term quality in the approach.

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) is then seen to link professional standards, with the accreditation of teacher education programs and teacher registration, suggesting these were all ways of ensuring quality as it increased community confidence and, thus, raised teacher status. It stated,

> The accreditation of teacher education courses, the registration of teachers and the development and implementation of professional standards for teaching are all important ways of providing assurance that teacher education courses are of a high *quality* [emphasis added]. They have the potential to significantly contribute to the renewal and improvement of teacher education courses. They should also raise the status of the profession and increase community confidence in it. (p. 19)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) posited that standards were valuable both for informing the design of teacher education courses, and as a benchmark for assessing how well they prepare students. In this respect, the report made policy intervention desirable by citing the Department of Education, Science and Training's concerns:

> in terms of incorporating standards in the 'accrediting' of teacher education courses, most jurisdictions maintain a list of 'approved courses' in their state or territory. The approval criteria are not necessarily directly linked to graduate entry level standards so much as to minimum hours and required subjects. In most cases, the extent, if any, to which teacher professional standards informs the course accreditation process is not clear. (p. 24)

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested this would be addressed under the new policy and processes for approving the initial teacher education (ITE) programs, as courses would be approved on the basis that they met the Graduate Teacher Standards of the NSW Institute of Teachers. It stated, "accreditation is an endorsement that a teacher education program produces graduates who can meet provisional registration standards" (p. 22). Quoting Ingvarson et.al., (2006) the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) reiterated,

> The primary function of accreditation is to assure the public that graduates from specific programs are professionally qualified and competent. By doing so, accreditation can help to raise professional status and drive *quality improvements* [emphasis added] within the pre-service sector. (p. 22)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) recognised the efforts of MCEETYA, and The Australian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation (AFTRAA), to "assure the *quality of teachers and teaching* [emphasis added] by ensuring that nationally consistent standards for graduate teachers are developed and embedded in requirements for teaching at all Australian Schools" (p. 25).

Separating responsibilities, this chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) proposed state registration authorities retain responsibility for registering teachers, whilst the accreditation

of teacher education courses would be responsibility of a national accreditation body. Clarifying the logic behind this structure, the report suggested,

> The proposed national system would enable the individual jurisdictions to devote their resources to fully developing and implementing processes for assessing and registering teachers at different levels of registration and for rewarding and recognising teachers' efforts in on-going professional learning as well as in taking on supervisory and mentoring roles. The accreditation of teacher education courses would be the responsibility of a national accreditation body. (p. 27)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) concluded that "from a national perspective, we are still a long way from where parents, students, schools and systems in any jurisdiction can be assured that the pre-service preparation of a teacher, wherever it has occurred, will have met certain agreed standards" (p. 26). This chapter demonstrates a narrowing of the notion of quality assurance in ITE to one of accreditation and regulation. It stated, "course accreditation is a key *quality assurance mechanism* [emphasis added]" (p 29).

In summary, without providing substantive evidence to support claims of a quality deficit amongst teachers, this chapter implied that there was variable quality at best between teacher education programs, and so it proposed a nationally consistent professional standards framework to assure the community that teachers could meet provision registrations standards. This chapter suggested this was necessary to help raise professional status and drive "quality improvements" (p. 22). The report assigned responsibility for the accreditation of ITE courses to a national accreditation body, and for the registration of teachers, to states and territories. The discursive threads of quality found in this chapter are seen in Table 27 below.

Table 27: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 3 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of 'quality' found in Chapter 3 of the Hartsuyker Report
Teacher quality
Quality schooling
Quality of ITE courses
Quality improvements
Quality of teachers and teaching
Quality assurance/mechanisms

7.3.4 Chapter 4: "Entry to Teacher Education"

Using *suitable* as a synonym for quality, Chapter 4 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) considered whether "enough people" (p. 35), and the "most suitable people" (p. 35) were being attracted into teacher education, and the appropriateness of the "selection processes" (p. 35). This chapter noted that the Australian Government was already clearly aware of the nature of the "challenges" (p. 36) facing initial and ongoing teacher education. These were noted to be as follows: the use of scholarships, HECS loans and incentives to attract teachers to geographic and subject area shortages, improved career paths and salary structures to attract and retain teachers; improved induction and counselling in beginning years, the promotion of the profession, and more flexible school environments. Providing no logical rationale for concentrating on entrants other than to state that as it was not possible to undertake an assessment of the extent to which the developed strategies had been successful, this chapter focused on key issues related to entrants to teacher education. These key issues were noted to be the following: ensuring the teaching workforce reflected the diversity of the Australian population, selection criteria for entry into teacher education, minimum entry scores for teacher education, and minimum requirements in terms of literacy and numeracy.

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stated it was a "creditable objective" (p. 37) that the diversity of the teacher education student population should reflect the diversity of Australian society, and so it considered ways in which people from indigenous communities, rural/remote entrants, non-English speaking and low socio-economic backgrounds could be selected. Whilst no definition was given for the "most suitable people" (p. 35), inclusion of these groups indicated a focus on diversity. Similarly, the report also indicated the exclusion of gender from the "most suitable people" (p. 35) criteria. It noted that whilst initiatives aimed at increasing the proportion of men should be encouraged, the "*quality of the teacher* [emphasis added] is more important than whether the teacher is male or female" (p. 44).

Despite offering no definition of what the quality of teachers should be, this chapter reinforced the need for more research to establish whether there were links between specific "requirements for entry to teacher education programs and the *quality of teachers* [emphasis added] prepared within those programs both at graduation and over time" (p. 57).

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) also acknowledged the impact of government policy and resourcing on teacher supply. It noted tensions existed between the "Australian

Government as funding provider, the State and Territory governments, as primary employers, and the universities, as the providers of courses" (p. 63). The report quoted Brock (2000) who suggested, "there is no policy nexus between *quality teacher* [emphasis added] demand as required by public and non-government systems … and *quality teacher* [emphasis added] supply as driven by Commonwealth funding and policy" (p. 63).

In summary, this chapter acknowledged there was a plethora of factors impacting the quality of entrants into ITE, including government policy and resourcing, yet this chapter focused on the appropriateness of the selection process in ensuring the teaching workforce reflected the diversity of the Australian population, and met minimum entry requirements for entry into teacher education. The teacher is referred to as a type of product in a supply/demand chain. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 4 are seen in Table 28 below.

Table 28: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 4 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 4 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality (entrants) teacher/s

7.3.5 Chapter 5: "Practicum and Partnerships in Teacher Education"

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) began with the statement

> Despite a range of problems with the provision of practicum, the fact that practicum is consistently rated highly by recent graduates is testimony to the hard work and dedication of many teachers in schools and many teacher educators in universities. Notwithstanding these efforts, much of the evidence received in this inquiry related to concerns about practicum. The issues raised are well known in the educational community and a brief summary of them should suffice. (p. 70)

This chapter noted these issues to be as follows: no obligation on employing authorities or schools to provide placements, increasing reluctance of teachers to take on the role of supervisor, regional areas and subject shortage areas find it difficult to find placements for students, and particular difficulty in finding placements for international students. Furthermore, this chapter noted,

> There is no single model of practicum provision in teacher education courses in Australia. There is also little consensus on questions such as how much practicum there should be, when practicum should begin and the best structure for practicum. (p. 67)

This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) considered this problematic as *"high quality placements* [emphasis added] for school-based professional experience are a critical component of teacher education courses" (p. 67). In a bid to overcome the lack of consensus over the model, structure, length, or when it should begin, the report stressed that "the *quality of the practicum* [emphasis added] is more important than the number of days" (p. 68) and suggested the mere fact it receives so much attention indicates the need for major reform in this area.

This chapter of the report referenced Teaching Australia's definition of the desired characteristics of "*quality practice* [emphasis added] within the practicum component of pre-service teacher education programs" (p. 73). These characteristics were those which did the follwing: integrated theory and practice; designed and implemented the practicum within a partnership; articulated clear progressive stages for the development of the acquired knowledge, skills, attributes and dispositions of beginning teachers; provided diverse experiences; was assessed against clear expectations of student activity and performance; was flexible and encourages innovation; and involved ongoing evaluation and response (p. 73). This chapter of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested the existing process made this difficult to achieve, it stated,

> the use of casual non-teaching staff to undertake the supervision of practicum students not only puts the "the overall *quality and consistency of trainee supervision* [emphasis added] at risk, it means the *quality and relevance of the university program* [emphasis added] is not enriched by academics' regular exposure to the realities of today's classrooms. (p. 71)

This chapter also acknowledged that "most universities claimed that inadequate funding hindered their capacity to ensure *high quality practicum experiences* [emphasis added] for their students" (p. 72). The report stated it was "unacceptable that the *quality of practicum* [emphasis added] is as variable as it is reported to be" (p. 73), given that in 2004 (three years previous) the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership (NIQTSL) had produced guidelines with a "high degree of consensus within the teaching profession on the characteristics of *quality practicum* [emphasis added]" (p. 73).

This chapter concluded that the key to achieving "*high quality practicum* [emphasis added]" (p. 75) was "the establishment of strong authentic partnerships between all parties" (p. 75). To achieve this the report suggested that the Australian Government should continue to be responsible for funding aspects of the practicum and that a "detailed assessment of the real costs of a *high quality practicum* [emphasis added] be undertaken (p. 75). This chapter of the

report also suggested that employing authorities, who gain from recruiting graduates who have benefited from "*high quality preparation* [emphasis added]" (p. 76) should take more responsibility for their training by ensuring placements were available in their schools (p. 76). In addition, the report suggested they should create conditions which "encourage *quality teachers* [emphasis added] to take on the role of supervising students undertaking practicum" (p. 76), thus, giving every student a "*high quality supervising teacher* [emphasis added]" (p. 76).

This chapter concluded that the Australian Government should establish a National Teacher Education Partnership Fund to examine stakeholder views regarding "joint proposals for funding for initiatives in delivering *quality teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. 80). Having proposed a shared responsibility for funding, the report then linked quality ITE with quality schooling, the report stated that the "proposed investment would improve the *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] and the *quality of schooling* [emphasis added] (p. 80).

In summary, this chapter was concerned about the model, structure and length of teacher practicum and the variable quality of the supervising teacher. It suggested that despite this being a critical component of teacher education, there was no obligation on employing authorities or schools to provide placements. It noted the existing structure could not carry out the following: integrate theory and practice; articulate clear progressive stages for the development of the acquired knowledge, skills, attributes and dispositions of beginning teachers; nor provide diverse experiences. It suggested strong partnerships between stakeholders was a necessary component and that the government should establish a National Teacher Education Partnership Fund to examine funding initiatives between partners for quality teacher education. The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 are seen in Table 29 below.

Table 29: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 5 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of 'quality' found in Chapter 5 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality placements
Quality practicum
Quality supervision
Quality university program
Quality supervising teacher
Quality preparation
Quality teachers
Quality teacher education
Quality schooling

7.3.6 Chapter 6: "Induction to the Teaching Profession"

Chapter 6 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) considered the period between a teachers' graduation from an ITE program and full registration. The report suggested this was "an important, yet often neglected stage, in teacher education" (p. 83).

This chapter noted Skilbeck and Connell's (2004) findings "the nature and *quality of induction programs* [emphasis added] vary widely" (p. 85), and linked the problem of high teacher attrition to the induction experience. The report noted,

> whilst there are many contributing factors to attrition, the evidence suggests that a key factor is the inadequate level of support that is given to beginning teachers. The role that *quality induction programs* [emphasis added] may have in reducing attrition is explicitly acknowledged in the materials that the Victorian Department of Education and Training has prepared to support its Induction and Mentoring Program. (p. 87)

This chapter considered a quality induction program to be one in which beginning teachers were allowed "the opportunity to consolidate what they have learned" (p. 88), with a "reduced teaching load" (p. 90) and an experienced teacher as "a mentor" (p. 90). The report suggested that a quality induction necessitated a "quality relationship" (p. 89), which was defined as those which provide "continuity, proximity and flexibility" (p. 89). The report asserted that induction should be "an integral part of teacher education. It is not an add-on, a finishing touch" (p. 91).

This chapter of the report was concerned that beginning teachers on short-term contract positions could not benefit from "continuity, proximity and flexibility" (p. 89) as this assumed "employment at the same school for a full year" (p. 89). This chapter concluded, therefore, that the responsibility of employing authorities in each jurisdiction, together with the Australian Government "should provide some impetus to achieving the long called for improvements in this area" (p. 88). The report suggested this starts with ensuring "beginning teachers have access to stable employment for long enough to experience *quality induction* [emphasis added]" and proposed that a "Teacher Induction Scheme administered by the General Teaching Council for Scotland in partnership with the Scottish Executive Education Department be the model of induction that should be followed in Australia" (p. 93). This allowed for a "probation experience of consistently *high quality* [emphasis added]" (p. 91).

The Committee recognised that "at this point in time, there are a range of impediments to an immediate adoption of this model of induction, in particular, the mismatch between the number of teacher education graduates and vacancies in the teaching workforce" (p. 93). However, it proposed a) funds equivalent to 10% of a beginning teachers' salary be provided by employing authorities or schools towards the cost of a twelve month practicum, and b) ensuring that there is a close match between the number of teacher education places that the Australian Government funds in teacher education courses and specific teaching workforce needs (p. 93).

In summary, this chapter considered the period between teacher graduation and full registration. It suggested the problem of high teacher attrition was attributable to the quality of induction programs. It noted the practice of offering teachers term contracts did not allow teachers to benefit from continuity, proximity, and flexibility. It suggested teachers need to have access to stable employment for long enough to experience a quality induction. The discursive threads of quality found in this Chapter of the report can be seen in Table 30 below.

Table 30: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 6 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of 'quality' found in Chapter 6 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality induction programs
Quality relationship
Quality probation

7.3.7 Chapter 7: "Supporting Career-long, On-going Professional Learning"

Chapter 7 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) considered on-going professional learning as a "vital part of the teacher education continuum" (p. 95). It stated that in undertaking professional learning "there is a dynamic relationship between teaching, learning and research" (p. 95), and that the vigour of this relationship is in some respects an indicator of the "*quality and health of teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 95).

This chapter noted the principle vehicle for the Australian Government's "significant contribution" (p. 96) to on-going professional learning was through the Australian Government Quality Teaching Program (AGQTP).

In considering the relationship between teacher registration and professional learning, the report noted Skilbeck & Connell's observation that

> continued registration should no long be on the basis of an initial qualification but should reflect a model of lifelong learning and demonstrated competence … Notwithstanding the complexities of fair assessment, we believe teaching performance should be evaluated throughout the teaching career and that graduated steps are needed to make teaching a career based on *quality of performance* [emphasis added], with appropriate incentives and rewards. (p. 98)

This chapter highlighted the "potential of the national professional standards for teaching to provide a means of linking on going professional learning to career progression" (p. 98), and pointed to the submission from the South Australian Government which suggested that professional standards aligned against a national standards framework offered the opportunity to "clearly define and describe *quality teaching* [emphasis added] and post-graduate and on-site professional learning requirements" (p. 99).

This chapter of the report recommended "processes for recognising the value of on-going professional learning linked to higher levels of registration" (p. 100), and that MCEETYA should "encourage employing authorities to recognise higher levels of registration in salary structures" (p. 100).

To support this aim this chapter proposed "building an evidence-based approach to pedagogy" (p. 100). In this regard, the report noted that Teaching Australia had intimated its intention to examine the feasibility of establishing a National Clearing House for Educational Research, to "identify and extract evidence-based information about *quality teaching* [emphasis added] and school leadership" (p. 101), and recommended the Australian Government support this proposal.

In summary, this chapter outlined the potential of the national professional standards, underpinned by evidence-based pedagogy, as a means of linking on going professional learning to career progression. Moreover, this chapter posited that teacher registration levels could be rewarded in their salary structures. The discursive threads of quality found in this Chapter are seen in Table 31 below.

Table 31: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 7 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality teaching
Quality and health of teaching
Quality performance of graduates

7.3.8 Chapter 8: "Funding of Teacher Education"

Chapter 8 of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) examined funding of teacher education. It stated,

> A large proportion of submissions expressed concerns about the level of funding for teacher education. All viewed the funding level as inadequate and many singled the issue out as the most important in the inquiry. (p. 108)

It noted that since 2005 funding had been provided to universities and higher education providers by the Commonwealth Grants Scheme, which negotiated "the funding rate per place for each cluster or priority area set by legislation" (p. 103) and in relation to teaching this is set "based on relativities derived from the teaching component of the Relative Funding Model (RFM) developed in the early 1990s" (p. 103).

Quality was only mentioned twice in this chapter. First the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) noted that a number of submissions were concerned at the "inadequate" (p. 108) level of funding for teacher education, as it had impacted on the ability to attract *quality staff* (p. 108*)*. A number of submissions to the report stated inadequate funding was responsible for

> A significant rise in staff-student ratios; increased workloads of staff; limiting capacity to build strong partnerships with schools' limiting capacity to innovate; limiting the number of places that can be offered in teacher education; limiting the capacity to properly resource the school experience component of the course; preventing maximising the use of information and communications technology; and hampering the ability to attract *quality staff* [emphasis added]. (p. 108)

Second, this chapter also suggested "universities need substantially more funding for practicum from the Commonwealth if they are to be expected to ensure that their courses provided high *quality professional experience* [emphasis added] components" (p. 117).

In response, this chapter recommended the Australian Government examine and calculate the amount of funding for the practicum component on the basis of the quantum of placement rather than taught load, and pay this amount "separately to universities and requires them to acquit it separately as part of their financial reporting requirements" (p. 117). The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 are seen in Table 32.

Table 32: The discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 of the Hartsuyker Report

Discursive threads of quality found in Chapter 8 of the Hartsuyker Report
Quality staff
Quality professional experience

7.3.9 "Executive Summary" and "Recommendations"

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) presented a summary of the findings before listing its recommendations. First, the "Executive Summary" provided the rationale for the report on the inquiry into teacher education, it noted,

> there are still on-going concerns about the quality of teacher preparation. Some of these concerns are expressed in the responses of beginning teachers and principals in surveys on the adequacy of their preparation and selection. The attrition rate of beginning teachers also suggests that there are inadequacies in either the *quality of initial teacher preparation* [emphasis added] or in the level of support provided to beginning teachers in the induction period. (p. xxi)

The summary suggested this was problematic as "ensuring *high quality teacher education* [emphasis added] is a first and critical step in delivering *high quality teaching* [emphasis added] in schools" (p. xxi).

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) reminded the reader that over the last twenty years there had been many inquiries into teacher education and yet there were "on-going concerns about the *quality of teacher preparation* [emphasis added] (p. xxi). It posited that, therefore, the high attrition rates of beginning teachers suggested "inadequacies in either the *quality of initial teacher preparation* [emphasis added] or in the level of support provided to beginning teachers in the induction period" (p. xxi).

The "Executive Summary" of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stated that a good measure of the effectiveness of teacher education courses is the "*quality of the graduates* [emphasis added] teaching in real school settings" (p. xxii), and that, therefore, research should be undertaken to assess the impact of a number of factors upon "the *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added]" (p. xxii). Those factors were noted to be the following: the background and characteristics of students (diversity, academic achievement, literacy and numeracy skills, and dispositions) and of the quality of practicum supervisors (undefined); the selection process; course content, length, location, structure, delivery modes, assessment and evaluation; the

professional experience; the stakeholder partnerships; and the nature of the induction processes (which were noted to be continuity, proximity, and flexibility).

The "Executive Summary" also reiterated that increased funding was needed to "support *high quality research* [emphasis added] in education" (p. xxiii). It also noted that whilst some work had been done on the development of national professional standards for teaching such as the establishment of processes for the registration of teachers, and the accreditation of courses, there needed to be a "nationally coherent approach" (p. xxiii) to "ensure *high quality teacher education* [emphasis added] (p. xxiii), thus, "ensuring that *quality* [emphasis added] is consistently high throughout Australia" (p. xxiv). Lastly, the "Executive Summary" also noted that in relation to the practicum, the problems included "the *variable quality of supervision* (emphasis added]" (p. xxv). The discursive threads found in the Executive Summary are shown in Table 33 below.

Table 33: The discursive threads of quality found in the Hartsuyker Report's Executive Summary

Discursive threads of quality found in the Hartsuyker Report's Executive Summary
Quality teacher education
Quality teaching
Quality preparation
Quality initial teacher preparation
Quality graduates
Quality research
Quality supervision

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) then presented twelve recommendations. These related to; establishing a sound research base for teacher education; establishing a national system of teacher education; requirements for entry to teacher education; establishing collaborative approaches to practicum; establish a model of induction into the teaching profession; support on-going professional learning; and transparency and accountability in relation to funding of teacher education. Only one of the recommendations referred to 'quality' directly. This was recommendation 3 which stated:

Recommendation 3

> The committee recommends that the Australian Government continue to support the work of Teaching Australia in developing a national system of accreditation. The Establishment of a high *quality system* [emphasis added] will take some time and the cooperation of state and territory registration authorities. The Australian Government should ensure that sufficient resources are committed to allow for the time needed to reach agreement. Once the national

> system of accreditation has been established, the Australian Government should require universities in receipt of Commonwealth funding to have their teacher education courses accredited by the national accreditation body. (p. xv)

Table 34: Discursive threads of quality found in the Hartsuyker Report's Recommendations

Discursive threads of 'quality' found in the Hartsuyker Report's Recommendations
Quality system

Thus, whilst the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) acknowledged there was no crisis in teacher education, and that teachers and teacher education systems work very well, and moreover, numerous submissions stated government funding was the most important issue, the *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) recommendations come to represent a very narrow concept of 'quality' - in relation to a 'quality system'. This worked to facilitate a framing of 'quality' as a regulatory approach – that of the accreditation of teacher education courses, and the certification and registration of teachers, against professional standards.

Table 35 illustrates the multiple discursive threads (or ideas) of 'quality' found across all chapters of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007). The next stage of the analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to consider how these discursive threads coalesce into knots and become major discourses within the report and come to represent the problems.

Table 35: Threads of quality as they appear in all chapters of the Hartsuyker Report

Terms of Reference & Introduction	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Executive Summary	Recommendations
Quality Students Quality teacher education Quality schooling	Quality of teacher education Quality of teacher education courses Quality of graduates' teaching Quality of preparation Quality teacher education outcomes Quality teaching Quality research on ITE Research quality framework	Teacher quality Quality schooling Quality of ITE courses Quality improvements Quality of teachers and teaching Quality assurance/mechanisms	Quality teacher/s	Quality placements Quality practicum Quality supervision Quality university program Quality supervising teacher Quality preparation Quality teachers Quality teacher education Quality schooling	Quality induction programs Quality relationship Quality probation	Quality teaching Quality and health of teaching Quality performance of graduates	Quality staff Quality professional experience	Quality teacher education Quality teaching Quality preparation Quality ITE Quality graduates Quality research Quality supervision	Quality System

7.4 Second level analysis: Applying the first question in Bacchi's WPR approach – What's the problem represented to be? to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007)

The second level of analysis applies the first question in Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to examine how these identified threads about quality coalesce or knot into major discourses and come to represent the problems in the report. This level of analysis found two major discourses, and two minor discourses in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007). The major discourses were: the need for regulatory mechanisms to ensure quality (registration and certification), and the fragmented ITE program and the lack of quality entrants to the program. The minor discourses were as follows: determining who or what constitutes teacher quality in order to select suitable people, and the need to clearly define and describe quality teaching, and ITE. Together these four discourses come to represent the problem as "every stage of teacher education" (p. vii). Figure 9 provides a visual representation of these discoures.

Figure 9: Major and minor discourses of quality evident in the Hartsuyker Report (2007)

First, a word about the concept of *quality*, as this is central to the *Hartsuyker Report's* (2007) representations of the problems. It is important to note that definitions of quality and how quality is measured in education are widely debated (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Sayed & Ahmed, 2015; Skourdoumbis, 2014). Yet the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) provided no clear definition for its construct of quality despite using the word 150 times.

Furthermore, though the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) emphasised that Australia's teachers were achieving "*excellent learning outcomes* [emphasis added]" (p. 1) and teacher education must take some of the credit for these results. (p. 1), it nonetheless left the reader in no doubt there was a quality deficit across the continuum of teacher education. For example, the report suggested it was necessary to "develop" (p. 11) research to inform and "establish" (p. 11) quality frameworks, as this would help "*raise"* (p. 22) professional status and "*drive*" (p. 22) quality improvements. It also suggested that "developing*"* (p. 26) teacher quality though registration, accreditation and certification would "improve*"* (p. 80) the quality of teacher education (p. 80) and result in "higher" (p. 6) quality teaching.

It is significant that the term 'quality' is found with expressions of judgement such as: "variable" (p. xxv); "high" (p. xi), and "better" (p. vii), despite the report acknowledging it could not form any conclusions about the overall *quality of teacher education* [emphasis added] in Australia, or even what *quality in teacher education* [emphasis added] means (p. 5).

7.4.1 Major Discourse 1: The need for regulatory mechanisms (registration and certification) to ensure quality

This major discourse represented the problem as the need for regulatory mechanisms, for both teachers and teacher education, to ensure quality. It comprised multiple threads which envisaged a national standards-based system as having two parallel purposes: first, to provide the basis of the accreditation of teacher education courses; and second, as the basis of a registration system for teachers. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) posited these parallel mechanisms would prepare and maintain confidence in "high-quality teachers"(p. vii). Evidence of this discourse is seen throughout the report with the term *registration* being used 129 times, and *accreditation* 160 times. Interestingly, the term *quality assurance*, privileged in the *Crowley Report* (1998) is now relegated, found in juxtaposition with such terms as "criteria" (p. 11), "frameworks" (p. 14) "research" (p. 16), and "mechanisms" (p. 29). Thus, in the context of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) quality assurance has been reframed as part of the regulatory system.

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) asked the rhetorical question, whether "the current system is the most effective way to ensure that we prepare sufficient numbers of *high-quality teachers* [emphasis added]"? (p. vii). In answering, the report suggested that in order to achieve high quality teachers, two things had to happen: first, research was needed to "establish what is meant by *quality teacher education outcomes* [emphasis added] and identify the approaches that best deliver them" (p. 9); and second, "having endorsed the standards framework in 2003" (p. 21), that a "national standards-based system" (p. 26) be established.

Regulation is aimed at both the system - in the form of accreditation of *quality teacher education outcomes"* (p. 9), and at the individual - in the form of registration of "high-quality teachers" (p. vii) against "national standards" (p. 26), and as a consequence these discourses were difficult to untangle from the other three discourses. However, it is important to see these as a distinct discourse as this marks a significant change in trajectory from the *Crowley Report*'s representation of the problem as the quality of systems of education to now representing the problem of quality very narrowly around regulation.

7.4.2 Major Discourse 2: The fragmented ITE program and the lack of quality entrants to ITE

This major discourse represented the problem as the fragmented ITE program and the lack of quality entrants into ITE. This discourse comprised multiple threads related to the quality of ITE: research to improve every stage of teacher education; the selection criteria for entrance into ITE; the current fragmented approach to organisation and responsibility for teacher education (including partnerships between Australian Government, ITE providers, schools, and employing authorities); and government funding for ITE.

First, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested a key task in achieving national consistency in the *quality of ITE courses*, lay in further research to "establish what is meant by *quality teacher education outcomes* [emphasis added] and to identify the approaches that best deliver them" (p. xxii). Thus, ITE is constructed as problematic despite the absence of any substantive evidence to demonstrate that there had been a decline in teacher quality due to ITE. This discourse reflects a straw man approach (Bizer, Kozak, & Holterman, 2009) to policy, what Berliner and Biddle (1996) refer to as a manufactured crisis.

Using *best* as a synonym for *quality*, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) then elaborated on what it thought the research should attempt to establish. This was noted to be the following: "how

best to prepare teachers" (p. 6); "making sure the "*best* internationalised programs are in place" (p. 32); identifying "the *best model* available" (p. 29); selecting the "approaches that *best* deliver them" (p. xxii); including the "*best structure* for practicum" (p. 67); and the "*best mentoring* arrangements" (p. 89), – in other words, to establish "*best practice*" (p. 182) across all elements of ITE.

Second, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested, this would also include "assessing the background and characteristics of student ... the selection processes … course length, course location and course structures … course assessment and evaluation procedures … the nature and length of professional experience and induction processes … and the nature and strength of partnerships between different stakeholders" (p. xxii) (these stakeholders are universities, schools, and employing authorities).

Lastly, as most of the submissions to the inquiry expressed concerns that government funding of ITE was inadequate, the report conceded the Australian Government needed to examine and calculate the amount of funding for the practicum component and pay this amount to universities. The caveat was that universities were required to acquit it separately as part of their financial reporting requirements.

In summary, this discourse was concerned with the current fragmented approach to the organisation or, and responsibility for, initial teacher education. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) proposed establishing "what is meant by *quality teacher education outcomes* [emphasis added] and to identify the approaches that best deliver them" (p. xxii). Addressing concerns that "funding for teacher education is … inadequate" (p. xxi) the report suggested government calculate the required funding for the practicum component and pay this amount to universities, who would then be required acquit it in their financial reporting.

7.4.3 Minor Discourse 3: Determining who or what constitutes teacher quality in order to select suitable people

This minor discourse represented the problem as determining who or what constitutes teacher quality, so that the most suitable people (p. 35) can be selected into the ITE program. It comprised two threads related to the question "whether we are attracting the most suitable people" (p. 35) – those who constitute teacher quality. The first thread revolved around concerns about teacher "characteristics" (p. 9), "personal attributes" (p. 55) and "skills" (p. 56). The second thread was concerned with the processes for selecting the "attributes

considered necessary for teaching" (p. 56), such as "interviews, structured references, written applications, and portfolios" (p. xxiv), and "diagnostic testing of their literacy and numeracy skills" (p. xxiv). Third, the report was also concerned that teaching was stereotyped as "largely a lower middle class, Anglo-Celtic profession, feminine in the primary and lower secondary years" (p. 37), and, therefore, "more people from under-represented groups - indigenous, rural/remote/isolated, non-English speaking background and low socio-economic status entrants" (p. xxv) should be prioritised.

Noteworthy in this discourse was the element of objectification seen in the juxtaposition of the term *quality teacher* with "demand" (p. 63) and "supply" (p. 63), and teachers as a "*product* [emphasis added]" of a first-rate teacher education experience" (p. 5). In this paradigm teachers must demonstrate their individual quality throughout their career via very specific regulatory structures – selection, training, and ongoing professional development. The inference is that those teachers who are deemed a quality product will be in demand.

This discourse represents the problem as two issues: first, the problem of determining who or what constitutes teacher quality; and second, how to select the "most suitable people" (p. 35) for ITE who can become quality teachers. What constitutes 'suitable' lacks detail aside from socio-cultural diversity, and pre-existing literacy and numeracy skills.

7.4.4 Minor Discourse 4: The need to clearly define and describe quality teaching

Despite the lack of any substantive evidence to suggest the quality of teaching was in decline, this minor discourse represented the problem as the need to clearly define and describe 'quality' teaching. It comprised two discursive threads. First the report suggested research was necessary "to clearly define and describe *quality teaching* [emphasis added]" (p. 99), to facilitate an "evidence-based approach to teaching" (p. 100), and second, there was concern about the attitude towards 'continuing professional development'. In this regard the report suggested teachers needed to stay up to date with developments in the knowledge base in their discipline, as well as with developments in corresponding "pedagogical approaches" (p. 95). There was no suggestion of what aspects of pedagogy the report found problematic, however some indication can be gleaned from the juxtaposition of the term, such as: "knowledge base of pedagogy" (p. xxvii), "culturally-appropriate pedagogy" (p. 40), and evidence-based approach to pedagogy" (p. 100). In other words, research was needed to establish 'best practice' pedagogy, and more specifically culturally appropriate pedagogy.

This concludes the second level of analysis. In summary this level of analysis found four discourses; two major and two minor. Together these discourses were concerned with the lack of quality throughout the continuum of teacher education, beginning with the quality of entrants to ITE, continuing through the variable quality of ITE, and early career induction, and lastly with the quality of teachers' ongoing professional learning.

Importantly, the Registration and Certification discourse was tangled throughout the other representations of the problem; Quality ITE; Teacher Quality; and Quality Teaching. This represents a significant shift in the way 'quality' in education was framed. The analysis of the previous Crowly Report (1998) demonstrated a more holistic view of 'quality'; as 'whole school' or 'systems of education'. The Ramsey Review (2000) reduced that complexity to focus on the teacher as an individual responsbile for student outcomes, rather than on government responsibility for providing equitable assess to education. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) has narrowed and changed the trajectory of this discourse still further - framing 'quality' as regulatory mechanisms – those of registration, certification and accreditation.

7.5 Third level analysis: Applying questions two through six of Bacchi's WPR approach to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007)

The previous two levels of analysis have traced where the discursive threads (ideas) about quality emerged, and how these threads coalesced and knotted into two major and two minor discourses. Together these discourses come to represent the problem as a lack of quality throughout the continuum of teacher education – starting with the quality of entrants to ITE, through to the variable quality of ITE and early career induction, to the quality of their ongoing professional learning.

This third level of analysis now applies questions two through six of Bacchi's (2009) WPR approach to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) to inquire into the presuppositions and assumptions which underpin these problem representations. The WPR approach also allows me to identify discursive tensions which have been left unproblematic, and consider the effects produced by the discourses, and whether the problem could have been thought about differently.

7.5.1 What presuppositions and assumptions underlie these representations of the problem?

Presuppositions and assumptions are the taken for granted knowledge (Bacchi, 2009) which underpin given problem representations. In other words, the deep seated cultural values which constitute the social unconscious underpinning the logic. Presuppositions must first be considered true for any subsequent and dependant assumptions to make sense. The WPR approach analyses discourses for evidence of presuppositions and assumptions as these represent deep seated cultural values. This analysis has identified two presuppositions and one assumption.

7.5.1.1 First Presupposition: Deficit in the quality of teacher education continuum

First, there is a presupposition of an existing deficit in the quality of "the teacher education continuum" (p. 95). This presupposition is evident in the apparent contradiction between the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) conceding that there was "not even agreement on what *quality in teacher education* [emphasis added] means" (p. 5), but affirming that "there is room for improvement" (p. 8).

The presupposition of deficit is also evident in the way the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) ordered and combined words in specific ways as to give the reader the impression that remedial action was necessary. In the context of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), the process involved first creating a sense of confusion. It stated,

> It is important to state that the teacher education system is not in *crisis* [emphasis added]. It currently serves Australia very well but *could do better* [emphasis added]. The committee's recommendations suggest *improvements* [emphasis added] at every stage of teacher education such as by seeking to strengthen its research base, fund *better* [emphasis added] teacher education programs and develop practicum partnerships. We suggest how the transition from teacher education student to classroom teacher can be *improved* [emphasis added]. Each recommendation is worthwhile as a stand-alone measure but, together, the recommendations comprise a *powerful reform package* [emphasis added]. (vii)

This allowed the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) to position a "powerful reform package" (p. vii) as both 'possible and desirable' (Bacchi, 2009). The presupposition of deficit is implied in phrases such as "problems continue" (p. xxv), "it is of concern" (p. 1), "a degree of frustration" (p. 2), "not as strong as it needs to be" (p. 6), "was less than adequate" (p. 8), and "concerned by the lack of consistency" (p. 26). It is also evidenced in direct terms such

as *deficit* (x 3) *deficient* (x 1) *shortage* (x 11) *negatively* (x 2) *insufficient* (x 5) *shortfall* (x1) *inadequate* (x 11) *poor* (x 3) *unsatisfactory* (x 1) and *unacceptable* (x 1). The use of *unsatisfactory* and *unacceptable* represents areas where the report considered certain courses of action as not only possible and desirable, but also permissible.

Based on the presupposition of deficit the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) proposed certain courses of action which signalled change. For example, the report suggested, "a road map for change to achieve and maintain excellence in teacher education" (p. vii), "allocation methods should change" (p. 16), "achieving change in this area will require the committed and collaborative efforts", (p. 92), and that this will "require systemic change" (p. xxvi). This served to persuade the reader that despite there being "no crisis" (p. vii) a "powerful reform package" (p. vii) was necessary to address the deficit in quality.

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) then stressed the benefits of addressing the deficits across the continuum of teacher education, using terms such as improve (x 15) enhance (x 4) raise (x 6) and better (x 27). The term *improve* was used to persuade the reader of the need for change, and was found in juxtaposition with the issues deemed problematic: "improve practicum" (p. xxv), "improve induction processes" (p. xxvi), "improve professional experience" (p. 75), "improve the quality of teacher education" (p. 80), "improve the quality of schooling" (p. 80), "improve teachers' skills and understanding" (p. 96), and "improve research" (p. 102). Similarly, the term *better* is found in juxtaposition with various elements of the reform package, for example, "better quality teacher education" (vii), "better predictors" (p. xxiv), "better partnerships" (xxv), "better knowledge" (p. 6), "better learning" (p. 6), "better management" (p. 36), "better support" (p. 47), "better inform" (p. 49), "'better candidates" (p. 56), "better predictors" (p. 56), and "better integration" (p. 77).

Adding urgency to the task, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) proclaimed the reform package would "address the most pressing and long-standing issues in teacher education" (p. vii). This sense of alarm is found throughout the report in terms such as: critical (x 18); severe (x 1); serious (x 4); and grave (x 1). This resonates with Berliner and Biddle's notion of "a manufactured crisis" (1996). Berliner and Biddle argue that the scapegoating of educators by legislators, based on misleading or absent data, leads to questionable reforms. They argue this strategy is used by politicians, with or without the help of the media, to generate panic and crisis with a view to eliciting support for their policy interventions.

Thus, whilst the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stated teacher education was not in crisis, the presupposition of a deficit in the quality of the continuum of teacher education allowed the discourse to suggest the opposite. Political discoursec such as this is described as the "straw man" (Bizer et al., 2009) approach to policy decision making: a technique outlined as one which exaggerates, distorts or oversimplifies the views of opponents so that a new, ridiculous position can be knocked down – like a person made of straw (Porter, 2002). This technique is noted to be among the most "prevalent forms of fallacious argumentation at work in contemporary popular political discourse" (Talisse & Aikin, 2006, p. 349).

It is important to note that concept of quality was reflected in range of globalised education policy trajectories around that time (S. Ball, 2012), and, therefore, the presupposition of a quality deficit gained credibility in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) not only through discursive repetition and juxtaposition, but also through its resonance with international policy discourses. This is indicative of a discursive process described as enabling universal credibility for a construct (Bacchi, 2009) by association and suggestion of expertise and authority.

7.5.1.2 Assumption: Improving ITE preparation will reduce teacher attrition

Based on the presupposition of deficit, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), also declared "it is a safe *assumption* [emphasis added] that improving the support that is provided to beginning teachers will assist in reducing the attrition rate" (p. 88). This was despite acknowledging that there was "insufficient data" (p. 9) to determine the extent to which the high attrition rates (between 25% and 40%) of all newly-recruited teachers had arisen from inadequacies in the quality of ITE preparation, the lack of support during induction, or "other factors" (p. 9). Yet, the report opts to address inadequacies in the quality of ITE preparation, based on the presupposition of a quality deficit, rather than interrogate the attrition statistics further. This assumption led the report trajectory to address attrition statistics which have been recognised as inadequate (AITSL, 2016; Buchanan & Prescott, 2013). The literature suggests that the problem is not an "intractable problem of epidemic proportions" (Gallant & Riley, 2014, p. 562), as the figures seem to suggest, but rather the issue is that the attrition rate "is, in fact, *not* [emphasis in original text] well established. It is unknown" (Weldon, 2018, p. 12).

7.5.1.3 Second Presupposition: Audit and accountability mechanisms are the solution

A second presupposition evident in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) is that of an audit culture. For example, terms such as the following: *required* (x 24); *expected* (x 12); *requisite* (x 4); *performance* (x 21); *outcomes* (x 16); *standards* (x 129); *certification* (x 4); and *registration* (x 160) are found throughout the report. In relation to government funding of universities, the report suggested,

> in order to provide greater transparency and *accountability* [emphasis added], that universities be *required* [emphasis added] to acquit CGS funds against each funding cluster by providing a table of expenditure corresponding to the table in the funding agreement that sets out the initial allocation of funds. (p. xviii)

The presupposition of accountability also underpins the unconvincing argument that certification and registration mechanisms "have the potential to" (p. 19), address the quality deficit. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) posited,

> The accreditation of teacher education courses, the registration of teachers and the development and implementation of professional standards for teaching are all important ways of providing assurance that teacher education courses are of a high quality. They have the *potential* [emphasis added] to significantly contribute to the renewal and improvement of teacher education courses. They *should* [emphasis added] also raise the status of the profession and increase community confidence in it. (p. 19)

This, in turn facilitated the linking of standards to regulatory arrangements. For example, the report proposed "*linking* [emphasis added] standards to accreditation" (p. 24), "professional learning *linked* [emphasis added] to higher levels of registration" (p. xviii), and "standards for teaching *linked* [emphasis added] formal processes for approving teacher education programs" (p. 22). Conflating these ideas allowed the report to propose a Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching as the means to develop "*teacher quality* [emphasis added] though registration, accreditation and certification arrangements" (p. 26). The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested,

> the assessment of graduates against professional standards for teaching should be central to the processes for the registration of teachers and the accreditation of teacher education courses. (p. xxiii)

Positioning MCEETYA as the gatekeepers of quality, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) suggested that national accreditation would fit neatly with work already undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), which had been established by MCEETYA in 2000

to audit and assess each institution's "success in maintaining standards consistent with quality frameworks for university education in Australia" (p. 29).

Given the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) acknowledged that there was no evidence to enable "any firm conclusions about the overall quality of teacher education" (p. 6), nor any "agreement on what quality in teacher education means" (p. 5), the presuppositions and assumptions have facilitated a narrow view of the problem and solutions. Thus, the report's proposal to introduce regulatory mechanisms to effect quality represents a solution to its own manufactured crisis.

In summary, these presuppositions and assumptions set the trajectory of the report - toward using accountability in the form of standards as the basis of teacher registration, and of ITE program certification. This would rectify the perceived quality deficit across all aspects of teacher education.

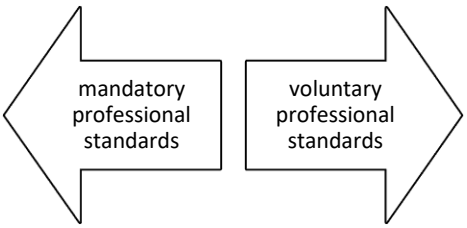
7.5.2 What is left unproblematic in these problem representations?

This section outlines the tensions between discourses which have been left unproblematic by the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), and, thus, "raise for reflection and consideration issues and perspectives that are silenced in identified problem representations" (Bacchi, 2012c, p. 33).

7.5.2.1 Tension between voluntary and mandatory professional standards

There is a tension evident in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) between voluntary and mandatory professional standards. First, the report is seen to acknowledge excellent voluntary systems in other countries, and other professions. It stated,

> The system that Teaching Australia is proposing would be *voluntary* [emphasis added] and take into account and complement existing state-based course approval arrangements. The committee is aware that there are some excellent national accreditation systems in *other professions* [emphasis added] and in *other countries* [emphasis added] where accreditation by the national body is *voluntary* [emphasis added]. (p. 33)



However, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) also suggested a mandatory approach would be more effective for the teaching profession, and by implication therefore voluntary standards would be ineffective for teachers. The report stated:

> while there are examples of successful *voluntary* [emphasis added] accreditation arrangements, the committee considers that a *mandatory* [emphasis added] approach would be *more effective* [emphasis added] in delivering the benefits of a national accreditation system. (p. 33)

This effectively created a binary discourse and assigned a negative sentiment around voluntary standards for teachers. In view of the *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) acknowledgement that there was no "agreement on what quality in teacher education means" (p. 6), any approach promoted as effective has to be considered as problematic at best. Rather, it resonates with the observation made in the previous report, the *Ramsey Review*, that the tendency towards standards "is an indication of declining trust in the capacity of schools and teachers to deliver the required educational improvement" (Ramsey, 2000, p 121). The literature reflects the view that embedding accountability within crises of quality undermines trust in the profession (Mockler, 2014).

The process of creating a binary between two approaches to standards can be seen in the privileging of mandatory terms throughout the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007). For example, the frequency of such terms as: *registration* (x 160); *accreditation* (x 160); *requirement* (x 102); and *certification* (x 10), stands in stark contrast to the frequency of terms such as *voluntary* (x 5) *guide* (x 9). The desirability of the mandatory approach is also seen in the report's juxtaposition of "certification" with "teacher quality" (p. 26), and "accreditation" with "high quality system" (p. xv). Thus, in the absence of a clear understanding of what effective teacher education means, the report nonetheless framed mandatory standards as producing quality, and, therefore, the desirable approach.

This discursive process is reflective of what Bacchi (2009) terms *dividing practices*, and is noteworthy as it signals a change from the discourse which alluded to the autonomous

professional which was evident in both previous reports. For example, the *Crowley Report* stated "teacher must enjoy a strong sense of ownership … and take full responsibility ... for both admission to and dismissal from the profession" (1998, p. 18), whilst the *Ramsey Review* drew attention to "the need for professional ownership of standards" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 142). In contrast, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) only involved the teaching profession in advisory and consultation roles. It stated,

> there is much to be gained from the national accreditation of teacher education courses provided it is based on well developed standards and rigorous processes of assessment and that it involves the *profession in advisory and consultation roles* [emphasis added]. (p. 34)

The binary allowed the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) to link mandatory standards with quality. It stated,

> The *accreditation of teacher education courses* [emphasis added], the *registration of teachers* [emphasis added], and the development and implementation of *professional standards* [emphasis added] for teaching are all important ways of providing assurance that teacher education courses are of a *high quality* [emphasis added]. (p. 19)

This marks an important shift in the framing of quality. The *Crowley Report* (1998) framed quality in education as whole school and systems of education, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) framed quality as ITE and teacher selection. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) continued the focus on quality and ITE, but framed quality almost exclusively as mechanisms of accreditation and regulation.

Having separated mandatory from voluntary standards, and linked quality with mandatory standards, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) then developed positive sentiment for the proposal. This is evidenced in the suggestion that registration and certification would "have value" (p. 24) and "strengthen" (p. 24) the current process, the report stated,

> Just as the linking of professional teaching standards to the registration process *strengthens* [emphasis added] the registration process, so should the linking of standards to the accreditation of teacher education courses *strengthen* [emphasis added] the accreditation process. Standards *have value* [emphasis added] not only in informing the design of teacher education courses but also in acting as a benchmark for accreditation bodies to use in assessing how well teacher education courses are preparing their students. (p. 24)

The binary demonstrates the ability of the discourse in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) to suppress and silence opposing discourses. Discourses of voluntary standards, of the autonomous professional, and of conceptions of internal quality assurance, have all but disappeared. Instead, standards are now found linked to regulatory mechanisms such as accreditation and registration. In relation to teachers the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) proposed, "all registration authorities to *require participation* [emphasis added] in on-going professional learning as a *condition for the renewal of registration* [emphasis added]" (p. xviii). Whilst "teacher education courses in receipt of Commonwealth funding should be *required to be accredited* [emphasis added] by the national teacher education accreditation body" (p. 33).

Mandatory standards focused on compliance and accountability and are "driven by administrative rather than a developmental imperative" (Sachs, 2016, p. 256), and, therefore, constitute a neoliberal approach to educational policy – one which attempts to define what teachers should know and be able to do. This reflects a preoccupation the technical capabilities of teachers to facilitate accountability, which has been described by some as the "age of compliance" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). Such a strategy is not designed to address the complexities of teaching (which were highlighted in both previous reports), nor to celebrate the diversity of teachers and learner, rather it is argued to "standardise practice, stifle debate and promise the fallacious notion of "professional objectivity" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 8).

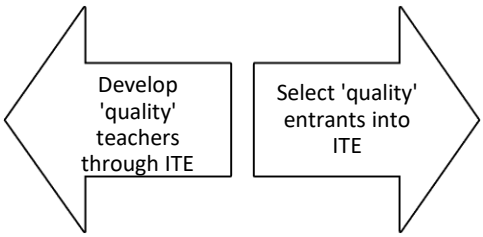
In stark contrast to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), which exhibits a distinct lack of recognition for professional ownership, Sachs (2003) argues that professional standards should be owned by the profession themselves, rather than imposed by government in the form of a regulatory framework. Gale (2006) suggests standards used as an accountability measure objectifiy teachers and instrumentalise teaching, and so reflect the need for teacher agency. The narrowing of the problem to one of regulation contradicts the view that knowledge is complex, requiring judgement in applying general principles to unique and specific problems in practice (Connell, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 1986; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Mockler, 2014; Sachs, 2003b; Scholes et al., 2017; Tuinamuana, 2011).

Professional standards have generated considerable interest and have been extensively explored in the literature (Darling-Hammond, 1992, 1999; Ingvarson, 1998; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Sachs, 2003b; Taubman, 2009; Wise & Leibbrand, 2000). What is clear from the literature is that whilst there is general support for professional standards, issues

surrounding ownership, design and implementation, remain contentious. It is difficult to dispute the value of professional standards; however, Sachs (2003b) cautions that there is a need to be sceptical of what they are trying to do, as standards "cannot be empirically substantiated" (Sachs, 2003, p. 179). Sachs (2003) draws attention role of standards in a political landscape where decreasing education budgets mean fewer resources for quality assurance, but at the same time increasing accountability; the net result is that the cost of quality in the form of professional development is being carried by teachers themselves, "both in terms of financial cost and the investment of time" (Sachs, 2003 p. 180). This particularly pertinent given the criticisms in both the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) of the effect the ever-decreasing government funding of education was having on quality. These issues have been left unproblematic in this binary.

7.5.2.2 Tension between teacher development and teacher selection

The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) acknowledged that selection procedures are one of the most "contested areas concerning the intake of students into teacher education". The report noted that central to the debate was the question "should selection procedures be based on academic performance or should they draw on a wider range of criteria?" (p. 53).



On one hand, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) noted "teaching is generally a four year degree, and it is often during the course of those four years that students *develop* [emphasis added] the qualities and attributes of a good teacher (p. 56). On the other hand, the report also suggested that "clearly, traditional *selection processes* [emphasis added] should be supplemented by interviews and other strategies for applicants who may otherwise be disadvantaged by sole reliance on a TER score (p. 57). Mr Mark Dawson, University of Southern Queensland, in his submission to the Hartsuyker Committee, stated,

> When we select people on the basis of what they are now … we may actually be making a very unjust decision because what people are when they enter, often at 17 or coming from another profession or something, and what they are when

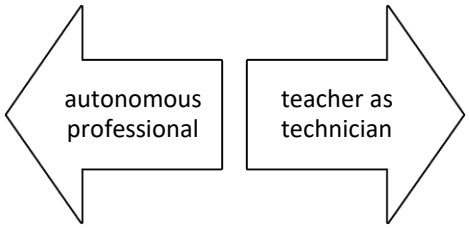
> they leave should be two different things. The role of a program of education is to get people to experience that personal growth. (p. 111)

Interestingly, in each of these constructs, the teacher is characterised as a problematic individual, both in relation to their desirable attributes (p. 159) and by implication, their undesirable attributes. The concern is with how best to attract, develop, and retain those with desirable attributes through standardised processes and procedures. It is argued that processes and procedures such as this can sometimes be difficult to separate from goal directed activities (Bacchi, 2009), and as a consequence when standardised process and procedures are applied to teacher selection, education and assessment, these activities operate not to improve teachers' work but to regulate and determine who can be admitted, and who will graduate, and, thus, determine what sort of people can become teachers (Osborne et al., 2013).

Thus, this tension presents a paradox between educational policy designed to *develop* quality teachers through ITE, and onging professional learning, and institutional recoginition of teacher dispositions as a determinant of teaching quality – and, therefore, worthy of *selection*. Not only does this tension draw attention to the role of teachers' own beliefs, values and attitudes in their ability to adapt to context and flourish where others might fail, but also affords consideration of whether dispositions are static or developed.

The danger in adopting aptitude testing is that it could effectively eliminate many potential teachers on the basis of their existing dispositions and deny them the opportunity to develop and change. This could be considered an endorsement of the notion of teaching as a role rather than an identity (Mockler, 2011b). It has been argued that in order to further the ideal of teaching quality, teachers as reflexive practitioners, may be better served with an acknowledgement of their professional ability to identify and pursue their own continuing professional development needs, whilst providing appropriate opportunities and support (Mockler, 2013). This would simultaneously recognise that dispositions are fluid and influential in the creation of a professional teaching identity, self-efficacy, and ultimately teaching quality.

7.5.2.3 Tension between the autonomous reflexive professional and the teacher as technician



The question of professional judgement, exposes another tension in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) between discourses of the autonomous professional and of the technical-rational - the latter approach requires teachers as technicians to enact predetermined teaching practice. This tension resonates with the much wider debate around trust in the teaching profession (Imig, Wiseman, & Imig, 2011; Mockler, 2014; Noble-Rogers, 2011; Townsend, 2011), in which it is argued that there is a general lack of trust in the teaching profession to provide a quality education. This tension is evident in the submission from the Hobart Forum on Teacher Education to the report, in which it stated,

> that members of professions such as engineering, law and medicine, accountancy and others … have a major role in determining entry standards, performance expectation, accountability requirements and continuing registration to practice. The teaching profession … requires no less … an appropriate national authority, equivalent in standing to the Australian Medical Council is needed to bring together the varied interests and to ensure a strong voice for the profession, teacher educators included. (p. 32)

Thus, this tension is not about standards per se, rather it is a tension between professional autonomy and the neoliberal technical rational approach which *uses* standards as a mechanism to measure compliance, and in turn to differentially reward or punish compliance/non-compliance. In a review of the literature on standards of teaching and teaching tests, Zuzovsky and Lipman (2006) conclude that "the value of standards is not questioned, what is questioned is their imposition as controlling devices" (p. 48).

Technical rationality is instrumental in nature and pertains to a view of science with the emphasis on certainty and objectivity, including the scientific technologies of measurement, efficiency and control. Thus, on the face of it, a technical rational approach appears to be common sense. However, it is argued that unlike science, which is objective, education cannot be managed within instrumental rationalism (Beyer, 1998; Loughran & Russell, 2007),

and that it is only good sense if standards are implemented in the best interests of teacher and students, not as a gatekeeping function (Sachs, 2003b). As Andrews suggests,

> Overly zealous gatekeepers who gain power over accreditation and licensing may well produce a massive teach-to-the-test response that will divert efforts at improving teaching and teacher education, and dumb down high quality and innovative programs. (1997, p. 170)

Thus, rather than being seen as a common sense approach, if standards are seen as an accountability mechanism to control teachers through rules, mandates and requirements, they present significant implications for teacher autonomy and teacher professionalism (Sachs, 2003), and for student learning. For example, standards ultimately lead to professional learning sharped by the interests of such standards - narrow in scope, focused only on the quantifiable knowledge and skills which allow teachers to demonstrate their competence against such standards (Mockler, 2013). What Mayer, Luke and Luke term a "generic teacher" (2008, p. 81), branded as a corporate entity with generic competences and uniform practices including "testing, mandated textbooks, scripted teaching, school-based manageation and economic management issues" (2008, p. 81) - a view of teacher effectiveness which has evolved from the closed loop of the neoliberal policy regime in which it produces its own knowledge base, closing out all other kinds of knowledge (Connell 2013). This can be seen in the technicisation of knowledge, in this case represented by business language such as *best practice* into educational discourses (Connell, 2013). Yet within the paradigm of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), compliance with technical standards of teaching equals quality.

It is noteworthy, that the submission from Dr O'Donnell which referenced the paper entitled "Teachers' Choice: Obedient Technicians or Autonomous Professionals", was not discussed in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007).

7.5.3 The interconnected and overlapping effects of the discourse

The WPR approach starts from the "presumption that some problem representations create difficulties (forms of harm) for members of some social groups more so than for other social groups" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). For this reason it is important to interrogate the problematisations on offer to "see where and how they function to benefit some and harm others" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). A discursive effect is that which follows from the limits imposed by the discourse in the representation of the problem: what can be said and thought. A subjectification effect refers to the way in which subjects are constituted in the discourse.

This section of the analysis considers the discursive and subjective effects of the discourses and their problem representations in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007).

The first effect of the discourse is in its ability to shift the responsibility for providing a quality education from that of government – a social service, to that of the individual – the teacher. This shift in the framing of quality reflects a neoliberal lens, effectively reconfiguring the discourse into an individualised approach, one which holds the teacher responsible for his/her own ability to meet standards for professional membership, standards of professional practice, standards for ongoing professional learning and ongoing registration, and for students' educational outcomes.

The discourse has presented standardised teacher education programs, which are designed to ensure teachers acquire aptitudes, skills and behaviours which have coded signs of obedience, measured through surveillance, performance rewards and punishment, as desirable. This has the potential to manifest in a moral dilemma between "being good and doing good" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 11), which is described as misalignment between personal beliefs and practice (Santoro, 2013) and is argued to have a profound effect on the lives of teachers (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014).

Moreover, whilst the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) noted the attrition rates of newly qualified teachers to be concerning, the focus on standardised practice and teachers accountable to external bodies is surprising given the literature shows the loss of professional integrity (Palmer, 1997; Santoro, 2013), decreasing autonomy (Gordon, 2009; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), attempts to define teacher characteristics (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996), and the rise of neoliberal ideology and accountability (Dembele & Schwille, 2006; Taubman, 2009; Theall, 2010) as all impacting on teacher stress and burnout, and, thus, ultimately attrition.

The discourse, therefore, also has a subjective effect**.** Teachers, as subjects, would, thus, need to demonstrate their compliance or desired conduct in order to prove their quality and be allowed registration/accreditation. This positions teachers as "competent" (p. 22), "effective" (p. 25), "highly regarded" (p. 33), and efficient" (p. 25) only when they can demonstrate, or comply with, predetermined standards – a position which is difficult for teachers to resist for fear of being labelled militant, pathological, and unreasonable. Thus, the discourse has created a binary. Teachers who comply with the standardised techno-

rational requirements are responsible, whilst others are not. As a consequence of such practices teachers become subjects responsible for their own regulation, reflecting Taubman's (2009) criticism that "performance standards transform individuals into self-monitoring and monitored selves, who are urged or feel compelled to embrace constant self-improvement in their practice, which is aligned with the standards that strip the individual of any autobiographical idiosyncrasy" (p. 117).

In the context of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), the discourse has created teachers as a category of people – a type of person, and, thus, a specific kind of subject. Drawing on social constructivist theory, there is no universal meaning of *teacher,* rather it has been determined within different time periods by the prevailing social, cultural, and historical context. In relation to teachers' purpose and work, this has changed over time, Moore's (2004) changing professional models providing evidence of this. These consisted of the following: the competent craftsperson, one which Moore suggests is favoured by governments; the reflective practitioner, commonly associated with scholars and universities; and the 'charismatic' model, favoured in popular culture. These reflect evolving notions of quality in teachers, and, therefore, it is important to note that the category 'teacher' is socially constructed, ever evolving, within historical, social, and cultural timeframes.

The *Hartsuyker Report* displays all three of Foucault's (2000) inter-related types of subjectification: the subject as a product of knowledge, the subject who is separated by dividing practices from others according to a binary logic, and the subject who transforms themselves into the compliant subject through self-governance. For example, the report referred to teachers as a "*product* [emphasis added]" of a first-rate teacher education experience" (p. 5), that is, a product of knowledge. Second, the report created a binary between the competent subject (those who would be allowed entry into the profession or allowed to graduate) and by implication the incompetent subject, and third, the report linked continuing professional development to teacher registration, thus, setting the processes and procedures in place which required good teachers to comply: self-governance.

7.5.4 Could the problem have been thought about differently?

This section of the analysis considers how the problem could have been thought about differently. To reiterate, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) acknowledged that teacher education was "not in crisis" (p. vii). However, the report nonetheless represented the problems as

follows: a need for regulatory mechanisms to ensure quality of the continuum of teacher education (through the certification of ITE programs, and registration of teachers); the need for a selection process to ensure the quality of new entrants to teaching; and comprehensive longitudinal study into the *effectiveness* [emphasis added] of different models of teacher education across Australia" (p. xvi). The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) stated "registration as a teacher or accreditation of a teacher education course should ensure certain identifiable *outcomes* [emphasis added]" (p. 19).

Given the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) conceded there "is not even agreement on what *quality in teacher education* [emphasis added] means" (p. 5), and, therefore, what it is striving to achieve, any process which aims to select teachers on the basis of the most desirable characteristics in order to achieve unknown outcomes is problematic at best. Moreover, methods of selection shift the judgemental bias from teachers themselves to gatekeepers. This effectively determines who can speak and with what authority. This should be recognised, and the idea of teacher selection challenged and contested.

Another way of thinking about the problem could have been to recognise that teacher knowledge is complex, requiring judgement in applying general principles to unique and specific problems in practice (Darling-Hammond, 1986). This realisation means that teacher registration against a standardised process cannot extend our understanding of why, even when teachers attain all the professional requirements for registration, some will excel where others fail, and, therefore, is of limited value to the notion of teacher quality.

Moreover, research has shown that accountability measures applied to the teaching profession leads to negative media coverage of teachers and their work (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004). This was a major concern of the *Crowley Report* (1998) as it negatively impacted public perceptions of teachers and their work, which led to a further demise of teacher status, and as a consequence teacher attrition - which paradoxically was of concern to the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007). This suggests the problem should be thought about differently.

Instead, the problem could have been reframed to address the degree of autonomy and control that practitioners have over their own workplace decisions as this is argued to be one of the most important criteria in determining the degree of professionalisation and the status of a particular occupation (Freidson, 1986). Given that the previous two inquiries, the *Crowley*

Report (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) were both concerned with the status and quality of the teaching profession, this provides another way of representing the problem.

Thus, rather than prescribe, define and standardise the behaviours of teacher quality in the singular, allowing teachers to exercise professional judgement and self-regulation, is more likely to create good teachers in the plural, and good teaching in the collective sense (Connell, 2009).

Another way of thinking about the problem is to question the *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) recommendation for top-down research to inform the standards framework for the accreditation of ITE courses and the registration of teachers. As Ingersoll reminds us

> Too much organizational control may deny teachers the very power and flexibility they need to do the job, effectively undermine their motivation, and squander a valuable human resource … Having little say in the terms, processes, and outcomes of their work, teachers may doubt they are doing worthwhile work -the very reason many of them came into the occupation in the first place – which may contribute to the high rates of turnover. (Ingersoll, 2007, p. 25)

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that teachers and unions are resistant to being held accountable to externally led research which overlooks the needs of teachers. Moreover, it provides some insight into the motives of teachers who believe it is their moral responsibility to work around some policy directives in the interests of their students (Farris-Berg & Kirkswager, 2016, p. 179). Rather, a top-down standardised process may detract from significant opportunities for a more effective bottom-up solution (Bain et al., 2009): improvement informed by research, starting at the level of course design.

7.6 Concluding remarks

Notwithstanding the *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) acknowledgement that "teacher education system is not in crisis" (p. vii), the report displayed continuity with the discourses found in the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) with respect to discourses of quality, of deficit, and of crisis. The *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) came to represent the problem as one of a quality deficit across the continuum of teacher education, and in future teachers selected for and participating in ITE programs.

The discourses worked to create a manufactured crisis, a problem to be solved by the proposed standardised accreditation and registration. This reflects "blind policy borrowing"

(Lingard, 2010, p. 132) from the OECD, as opposed to policy learning, which Lingard suggests entails careful consideration of the research into the effects of the borrowed policy, and the possible implications of national histories and cultural factors.

Unlike the previous *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000), the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) made no reference to an autonomous, or self-regulated profession anywhere in the report. The analyses show the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) constructed mandatory standards as the solution to the quality deficit, and by implication, therefore, voluntary, or self-regulated, standards were unacceptable and excluded. The discursive process worked to marginalise the autonomous profession discourse and reframe quality through the neoliberal lens of the audit technologies of governance - certification and registration. This signals a distinct change in trajectory in relation to the purpose and ownership of professional standards, and consequently - the conceptualisation of quality.

These analyses served to highlight that the tension between autonomous profession and teacher as technician discourses, is not about standards per se, but about purpose and ownership. This in turn has drawn attention to the dangers apparent in attempting to define what is considered best practice, from within an arena which arguably determines "who can speak, when, and with what authority" (S. Ball, 2006, p. 33). In the context of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), this has served to constrain and limit thought with the purpose of influencing practice.

Similarly, the discourses around selection of quality candidates based on desirable teacher attributes which emerged in the *Crowley Report* (1998, p. xiii), and gained traction in the subsequent *Ramsey Review* (2000, p. 191), has evolved in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) into a more generic "better candidates" (p. 56) in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007). In this discursive arena which arguably represents 'who can speak, when, and with what authority' (Ball, 2006), *better candidates* have been decreed in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) as those who reflect the socio/cultural diversity of the Australian population and possess pre-determined literacy and numeracy skills – representing a constraint and limit on thought with the purpose of influencing practice.

Particularly significant is the change in framing of quality in education over the period studied 1998–2007. The *Hartsuyker Report*'s (2007) exclusivity in framing quality as regulatory mechanisms is in stark contrast to the *Crowley Report* (1998), which took a holistic view of

quality in education, one which suggested the decline in government funding as having contributed to the crises in confidence about teaching and education, and the serious crisis in morale among teachers. The *Crowley Report* envisaged self regulated professional standards as a mechanism to provide teachers with an "organised professional voice" (1998, p. 29) to combat criticisms of teaching and teachers - to control claims to truth (Bacchi, 2000). The *Ramsey Review* (2000) narrowed of the framing of quality in education to focus on the individual – the teacher. Professional standards were reframed as a mechanism with which to regulate teacher professionalism, teaching practice, and teachers' personal characteristics and behaviours. This represented a substantial change from the *Crowley Report*'s notion of government responsibility for a systems wide approach to quality in education. Finally, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) has narrowed the framing of quality still further to one which is almost exclusively seen as regulatory mechanisms aimed at teachers and their education.

To conclude, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) made a distinct neo-liberal shift. Lacking any substantive evidence, the report identified a deficit in the quality of the continuum of teacher education as problematic. In response it has recommended mandatory teacher registration and mandatory certification of ITE programs based on professional standards informed by top-down external research.

Chapter 8: Discussion: Reflecting on a history of the present

8.1 Introduction

The objective of this research was to conduct a history of the present (Foucault, 1977); to trace the emergence and evolving concept of teacher quality, which in contemporary education policy discourse functions as an unquestioned truth (Foucault, 1977). As a history of the present, the previous chapters have set out the contemporary context for the study in relation to a dominant mode of neoliberal governance and a performance managed audit culture of education policy (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016; Mockler, 2013; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). It is within this context that the analyses of the three key documents indicate a distinctive change occurred in the "purpose, values, structure, control, relationships and organization" of education (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 1).

In the neoliberal era, mechanisms for holding teachers accountable have increased in number and scope (S. Ball, 1990a, 2012; Bowe et al., 1992; Connell, 2009, 2013; Gale, 2006; Mausethagen, 2013), and frequently in reference to the "market, consumer demands, and the nation" (Zemke, 2007 pg 45). This has occurred despite research showing that the concept of teacher quality is more complex than the dichotomies of valid/invalid, reliable/unrealiable, good/bad would suggest.

A major contribution of this work is its insight into how the concept of teacher quality emerged in parliamentary reports during the period 1998–2007, and how teacher quality has been conceptualised and problematised in specific policy proposals during that period. Using Bacchi's (2009) What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach, this research has revealed the rationale and the assumptions underpinning the concept of teacher quality, and found a major shift in the way quality in education was being conceptualised, shifting from a more holistic view of quality in education (in the form of quality systems and structures), to one which places the onus for quality on individual teachers.

The aim of this chapter is to trace the erratic and discontinuous discursive process identified across the analyses. This provides a means of engagement with the past, in order to understand how the past became the present. This chapter is set out in three parts. First, it traces the continuity in rationale found across all three analytic chapters as these represent a stable conceptual logic over time. Second, it traces significant discontinuities and ruptures in the problematisations presented in the parliamentary reports. I argue that the findings show that the complexity of issues highlighted in the *Crowley Report* (1998) to be impacting quality in education, have been narrowed in the subsequent *Ramsey Review* (2000) toward a focus on the teacher. This represented a significant realigning of responsibility away from the state and from public funding arrangements as responsible for providing equitable assess to education, toward the teacher as responsbile for their personal capacity to deliver a quality education. The final part of this chapter considers the effects of the teacher quality concept on the trajectory of the debate around education theory, policy and practice.

8.2 Discursive continuity

This section discusses the continuity in rationale or assumptions found in all three reports. Assumptions are important as they demonstrate how each policy has been influenced by values, beliefs and biases which have in turn been informed and influenced by history,

context, experiences, and personal interpretations. This includes the compounded effects of educational policy that has gone before (Bacchi, 2009; S. Ball, 2012). Based on the analysis of the three key parliamentary reports, four significant continuities in logic were identified. These were the following: (1) the failure to clearly articulate what quality is, and how to measure it; (2) an assumption of a deficit in the quality of Australian schooling (3) the rhetoric of crises in Australian schooling; and (4) that the marketisation of education is of benefit to the nation. Each of these discursive continuities are now discussed.

8.2.1 A failure to clearly articulate what quality is, and how to measure it

All three reports displayed a failure to articulate what quality is, or how to measure it. Instead they each displayed an assumption both implicitly and/or explicitly that the meaning of quality in education and/or teachers is a phenomenon that is universally understood, measurable and grounded in evidence-based consensus. Each policy was seen to rely on discursive practices of repetition and juxtaposition to create and sustain this illusion. First repetition was used to normalise the construct. For example, despite no definition of the concept being offered, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) used the term *quality* 666 times. Juxtoposition was then used to "elaborate" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 34) quality, a discursive effect which provided meaning and value to the term. For example the *Ramsey Review* (2000) used quality in juxtaposition with *skills* 217 times. The practices of repetition and juxtaposition operated to suggest quality in this context reflected a consensus of values between all stakeholders: teachers, parents, students, community members, business and government. The ethos was further enhanced through intertextuality: the relationship between texts, which established connections with both previous policy documents and scholarly literature. This reflects Bacchi's suggestion that the referencing of authoritative texts, with the suggestion of expertise and authority, contributes to creating the impression that there was in fact a consensus of opinion. In this case the process worked to create the illusion there was consesus about what quality is – and by implication, therefore, what it is not. The effect constructed "a form of social knowledge that makes it difficult to speak outside of the terms of reference they establish" (Bacchi, 2009 p. 35). This served to limit and constrain the framing of quality.

However, the preceding analysis of these parliamentary reports indicates quite the opposite was true – there were frequent tensions and a clear lack of consensus about the aspects which

constitute quality in teachers or teaching. Indeed, none of the documents analysed offered a definition of quality, and, thus, the term quality reflects what Bacchi refers to as a "key word" (Bacchi, 2009 p. 60); a "travelling idea" (p. 60), the meaning of which was seen to narrow over the period being studied, from quality envisaged as holistic systems of education, toward quality envisaged as individual teachers.

This resonates with the idea that quality as a concept has a history which lacks conceptual clarity (Dinham, 2012; Frome, 2005; Wang et al., 2011). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) acknowledge the inherently subjective nature of the concept of quality, declaring,

> for some it appears to serve as a synonym for excellence or efficiency, others use it as a metaphor for good educational practice and others again equate it with material provision. For many it is no more than a short hard way of expressing value discontent with the present outcomes of education while covering up a lack of cogent policies and priorities for action… Quality will always remain a subjective entity. (Committee, 1983, p. 19)

The findings of the present study reflect the argument that despite the lack of clarity, teacher quality is frequently found with adjectives such as good, effective, and competent (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Wallet, 2015), implying a particular definition and consensus of opinion of what works best (Strong, 2012).

8.2.2 The assumption of a deficit in the quality of Australian schooling

The analyses demonstrated that there was continuity in the assumption of a quality deficit in Australian schooling. The analyses show that the discourse was organised in a systematic way (Bacchi, 2009), using interdiscursivity among quality issues *within* the parliamentary reports document, and also *between* parliamentary reports, to directly and indirectly suggest a deficit.

In the *Crowley Report* (1998) the quality deficit was represented as the lack of quality in the systems of education, and the lack of mechanisms to monitor quality. In the *Ramsey Review* (2000), the quality deficit operated in a number of ways, to: frame teachers' competence and performance as in need of regulation, to frame ITE as fragemented and of variable quality; and to suggest teaching needed to be formally established as a quality profession. Whilst in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), the deficit operated to gain support for the proposal that quality could only be assured through a regulatory framework against which teachers' competence

and performance could be measured "throughout their teaching career" (Hartsuyker, 2007b, p. 98).

As an example, despite the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) ambiguity in relation to the expected behaviours of a quality professional, it created a deficit sentiment when it made the claim that teachers should "act like one" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 33). This exemplifies discourse operating to "construct certain possibilities for thought" (Bacchi, 2009, 237). In other words, the deficit discourse did not represent reality, but rather it reflects what Bacchi (2009) refers to as "practices through which things take on meaning and value" (p. 35). This demonstrates how power is productive rather than possessed (Foucault, 1980).

The findings show the quality deficit worked to build a common-sense momentum for who was being targeted and how the deficit was expressed – as a lack of teacher quality. This demonstrates how discourses "accomplish things" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 35), and the way in which problem representations are framed to "constrain and limit our understanding" (Bacchi, 2009 p. 7).

8.2.3 The cultivation of a rhetoric of 'crises' in Australian schooling

The analyses show that all three parliamentary reports cultivated or contributed to a rhetoric of crisis in Australian schooling. This was despite two of the three parliamentary reports openly asserting there was no crisis. For example, the *Crowley Report* (1998) stated "there was no major crisis of quality in Australian's teaching force" (Crowley, 1998, p. 6), and the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007b) stated "it is important to state that the teacher education system is not in crisis" (Hartsuyker, 2007, p. vii). The third parliamentary report, the *Ramsey Review* (2000), implied there was no crisis in its suggestion that it was "ironic that the professional standing of teaching is declining given the evidence, generally, that schools and teachers are performing better than in the past" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 126). Yet, the analyses show that in different ways, each document effectively cultivated or contributed to a rhetoric of crisis.

The sense of crisis cultivated in the reports displays multiple characteristics. In the *Crowley Report* (1998) there was an assumed crisis in confidence in private and public discourses about teaching and education, and an assumed crisis in teacher morale. These are noteworthy as they operated to create a broad sense of panic, and as Friedman (1982) suggests, panic can be used to exploit, manipulate, and shape public opinion. This was evident when, without

substantive evidence, the *Crowley Report* (1998) declared the crisis was serious, and that standards of professional teaching practice were considered "unavoidable and absolutely necessary" (Crowley, 1998, p. 16).

In the case of the *Ramsey Review* (2000), a sense of crisis was conveyed through the widespread use of terms such as *dire, serious*, *urgent* and *vital*. The review used the term *critical* in its title and a further 81 times throughout the document. This operated to convey emotion and create an ambiance of crisis, generating notions of urgency and panic, and giving the reader the impression that a serious, dangerous, or acute problem existed within the education system. As a discursive practice such terminology creates acceptance for reform, and like the previous *Crowley Report* (1998), without substantive evidence the *Ramsey Review*'s subsequent assertion was that the identified problems made "reform imperative" (Ramsey Review, 2000, p. 36).

Likewise, the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) cultivated the rhetoric of crisis using terms such as, *critical, severe* and *grave*, throughout the report. This operated to create acceptance for the proposed "powerful reform package" (Hartsuyker, 2007, p. vii).

The discursive process created a sense of crisis in order to open up space for challenge and change (Bacchi, 2014), and functioned as an act of persuasion (Bacchi, 2009). This resonates with the view that panic can be a useful tool and primary tactic for policy change (Friedman, 1982). Berliner and Biddle refer to this practice as a manufactured crisis (1996); one which they suggest sees the scapegoating of educators by legislators, based on misleading or absent data. Berliner and Biddle (1996) argue that this strategy is used by politicians, with or without the help of the media, to generate panic and crisis with a view to eliciting support for their policy interventions; a tactic described by Saltman (2007) as gaining support by "capitalizing on disaster" (p. 21).

8.2.4 The belief that the marketisation of education is of benefit to the nation

The analyses revealed an underlying rationale of a neoliberal values orientation toward the marketisation of education. The marketization of education can be understood as the process of applying market forces to education, creating competition between schools and increasing parental choice. The analyses also revealed that running parallel was an assumption that education provides "human capital for economic growth" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 73),

and that accountability and audit mechanisms would facilitate efficiency; where efficiency equates to quality. This reflects Foucault's perspective on liberalism as a form of state reason (Foucault, 1991).

In a submission to the *Crowley Report* (1998), the Early Childhood Association Inc. drew attention to this, it stated,

> any work that cannot be easily counted and measured in monetary terms has been accorded less status in our increasingly economically rational society. Teaching, because it is concerned with long-term outcomes and is part of our society's investment in the development of human and social capital, (as opposed to economic capital) is not highly esteemed. (Crowley, 1998 p. 30)

Demonstrating the human capital rationale, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) noted, "one of the most significant areas of change has been in how Australians work, the kinds of jobs available to them and the knowledge and skills the economy demands they have" (p. 22). It went on to suggest that the "work of teachers adds to the sum of the State's and the nation's human capital" (p. 33).

The underlying rationale of education for national economic competitiveness can be seen in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), when speaking of Australian students' performance, it noted they "perform well when compared against international benchmarks with students from other, similar economies" (p. 1).

As part of the marketisation of education, the rationale of *choice* is also evident. As parents become consumers of education, choosing what they consider the *best* education, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) acknowledged a growing pattern of "non-government schools 'poaching' known, quality teachers" (p. 90).

This is important as the changing purpose and value of education for national competitive edge in the form of human capital development implies learning, does not have any intrinsic ends, and that learning for learning's sake is no longer sufficient.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the WPR approach, which guided these analyses, draws upon social constructionist premises. Within this theoretical orientation, education is considered to be a socially constructed category, and a form of knowledge. That is, our conception of education may be different in previous eras. For example, education can be thought of as an activity

directed at the achievement of a range of ends. These could potentially include the fulfilling human potential, well-being, and an intrinsic interest in learning; or "the development of knowledgeable individuals who are able to think rationally, the formation of sustainable community, and the realization of economic goals" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 71).

Yet the analyses demonstrate the assumption of the marketisation of education operated to make thinking about education outside those terms of reference undesirable; in other words the assumption has worked to set limits upon what it is possible to speak about and with what authority (S. Ball, 2006; Foucault, 1974a). As a result of this limitation, the *Crowley Report* (1998), which initially envisaged quality as a factor of government funding of education, acknowledged that in today's climate it was unlikely to enlist the "necessary political will" (Crowley, 1998, p. 39). Conceptualisations of quality were subsequently transformed and became envisaged as the quality of teachers measured by their individual ability to create human capital for economic prosperity.

In summary, these four discourses are representative of continuity in conceptual logic across the three key documents. The analyses show there was a failure to clearly articulate what quality was and how to measure it. Instead discursive tactics of repetiion and juxtapostiion operated to suggest the value and meaning being applied to quality in this context reflected stakeholder consensus. Second, there was an assumption of a deficit in quality in Australian schooling across all three documents. This operated to build momentum for who was being targeted and how the deficit was expressed – culminating in a lack of teacher quality. Third, there was continuity in the discourse of crises across all documents. In each case this operated as an act of persuasion, reflecting the notion that manufactured crises are used to generate panic with a view to eliciting support for policy interventions. Lastly, in each document there were implicit and explicit assumptions that the marketisation of education is of benefit to the nation. This represents a socially produced form of knowledge that operated to limit and constrain the way in which education was thought and talked about.

Together these four discursive continuities (the illusion that quality is a fact-based concept, that there is a quality deficit in Australian schooling, that the deficit/s represented crises in need of reform, and that the marketization of education was in the best interests of the nation) represent persistent conceptual logics across the key documents. These are important findings as problematisations rest upon assumptions and conceptual logic (Bacchi, 2009), reflecting the ability of discourse to create knowledge and truth (Foucault, 1974a).

In summary, this section has outlined the discursive continuities which operated to create knowledge, or which were indicative of accepted forms of knowledge – both of which functioned as truth (Foucault, 1974a). The next section traces the discursive discontinuity - those which constitute a change in trajectory in the way ideas are being thought and talked about, including those which fall silent.

8.3 Discursive discontinuity

The analyses found discursive discontinuities in conceptual logic "lodged within the problem representations" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5). Discontinuities in this context are ideas which are "no longer perceived, described, expressed, characterized, classified, and known in the same way"(Foucault, 1974a, p. 217): those which change trajectory, transform into something new, or have been omitted or silenced.

The analyses identified five key discursive discontinuities. These were as follows: a change in the way in which teachers where being problematised, a change in the way standards were being conceptualised, the omission of the problematic nature of politicisation and mediatisation of educational policy, the transforming of the way in which casualisation of the workforce was being thought about, and the silencing of concerns around equity in education. Each of these discursive discontinuities are now discussed.

8.3.1 Teachers remained central to the problematisation but were not characterised in the same way

The analyses show that whilst teachers were central to the problematisations in all three policies, the ways in which they were being thought and talked about changed significantly over the period being examined, changing from an initial concern with "effectively communicating the excellent work taking place in our schools" (Crowley, 1998, p. 2); in other words a change from a concern with what teachers do, to a concern with regulating who teachers are – their skills, behaviours, and values.

This transformation began in the *Crowley Report* (1998). The assumption of the marketisation of education operated to make thinking about education outside those terms of reference undesirable, and as a result the *Crowley Report* (1998) noted that certain solutions would be unlikely to enlist the "necessary political will" (p. 39). The perceived decline in teaching

quality and in teacher morale was instead addressed with a proposal for professional standards. This solution was intended to provide teachers with an "organised professional voice" (Crowley Report, p. 29). In other words, a strategy to elicit effect in the struggle to combat "ill-informed or gratuitous criticism" (Crowley, 1998, p. 5) - to control claims to truth. This way of thinking about teachers framed them as needing to defend their teaching practice against the perceived "crisis of confidence in the private and public discourses about teaching and education" (Crowley, 1998, p. 6).

Thus, despite the *Crowley Report* (1998) having criticised government funding of education as a major contributor to falling teacher morale, and also having identified a plethora of factors to be impacting the falling status of the teaching profession, it nonetheless, and perhaps unwittingly, shaped the solution in a way which built momentum for who was being targeted. The *Crowley Report* (1998) was then seen to proclaim, "all who take on the role of teacher must demonstrate their ability to operate at the appropriate professional standards" (p. 11). As can be seen in Figure 10, this set the trajectory toward a focus on the teacher, and a decreasing number of discourses associated with quality in the key reports.

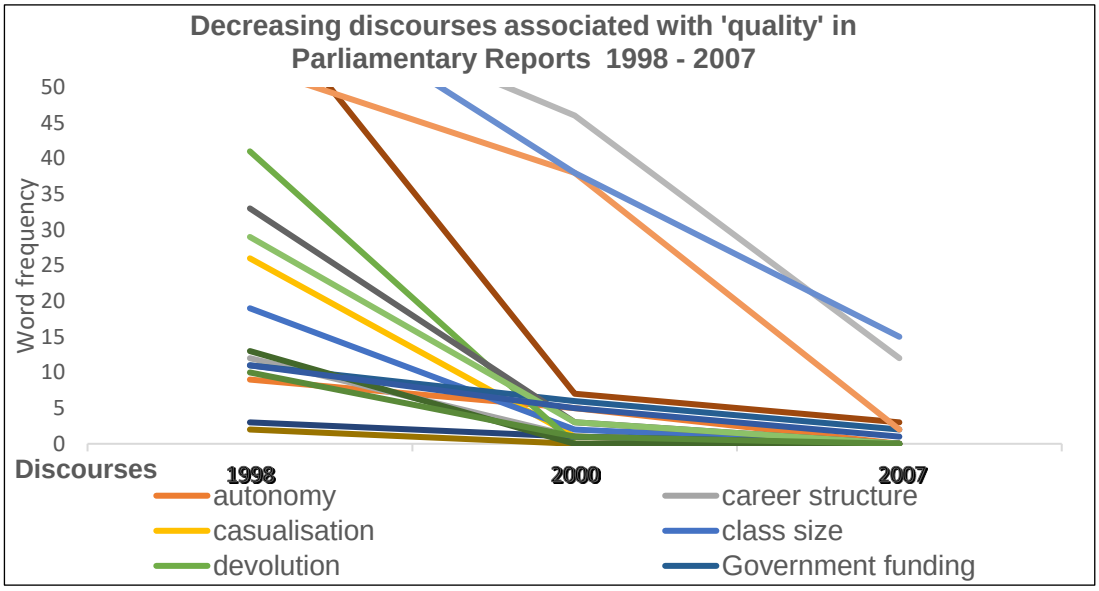


Figure 10: Decreasing discourses associated with quality in key parliamentary reports

By 2000, although teachers remained central to the problematisations in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), the way they were being thought and talked about changed significantly. Rather than thinking about teachers as having to defend their teaching practice against "ill-informed criticism" (Crowley Report, p. 254), the discourse in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) was concerned

with ensuring teacher competence and performance. This affected the nature of the problematisations, which became focused on determining and selecting the desirable factors which constitute teacher quality in the form of teacher skills, knowledge and personal attributes (including beliefs and values).

This change in trajectory was facilitated by discursive creep in the nature of the problem (Bacchi, 2009). Despite the terms *teaching quality/teacher quality* being used 101 times throughout the *Ramsey Review* (2000), they were poorly defined, and there was no clear focus on differences between them, or how they might be attained. This operated to change the way in which teachers were being problematized – away from teach*ing* quality to teach*er* quality in the form of their skills, knowledge, values and behaviours.

This change effectively realigned responsibility for any perceived quality problem away from the state and from public funding arrangements (which had been highlighted as problematic in the previous *Crowley Report*) toward the individual teacher (and their personal capacities, dispositions, etc.): a process which repositioned teachers as self-maximising individuals responsible for the quality of their practice, and the quality of their students' educational outcomes – a redistribution of control.

The effect of this discursive creep was that it created a discursive subject (Foucault, 2000) - understood as a category of the human (Bacchi, 2009) which is constituted as normal via the workings of the power-knowledge nexus through the operation of discourses (Foucault, 2000).

Consequently, the discourse made certain subject positions available within the problem representations: that of the competent/incompetent teacher; the compliant/non-compliant teacher; and that of the professional/unprofessional teacher - an attempt to construct *who the teacher is*, and *what the teacher does*. This created a 'desirable' subject position to be occupied - competent (in the form of desirable values and beliefs), compliant (in the form of the technical-rational teacher delivering prescribed standardised teaching), and professional (certified non-unionised professionals). However, this subject position stood in tension with the reflexive dimensions of teachers' work. Reflexive teachers being those who use their skills, knowledge, beliefs and attributes to determine the best course of action, in any context, either during, after, or for, improved learning opportunities.

The analysis showed that because of such tensions, the subject (the teacher) at the centre of the teacher quality construct was considered a problematic entity in the *Ramsey Review* (2000). In an attempt to resolve the tensions, a dynamic of division operated to give particular meaning to this problem representation (Bacchi, 2009). Teacher quality became a construct of individual and collective categories, organised around: the quality profession, quality teaching, and teacher quality. Central to each category was the quality subject - the teacher. Figure 11 shows how each of these categories were constructed in the *Ramsey Review* (2000). In the first sub-category the teacher is part of a problematic collective – a quality profession. In the second sub-categories the teacher is characterised as a problematic individual. Both the collective and the individual constructs were discussed in relation to their desirable attributes (Ramsey, 2000, p. 159) and by implication, their undesirable attributes, and how best to attract, develop, and retain these attributes through standardised processes and procedures.

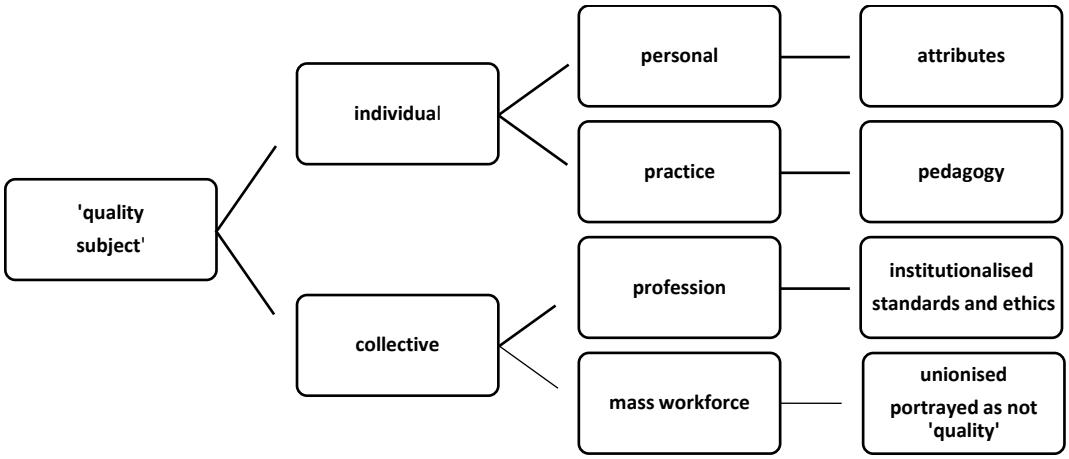


Figure 11: Categories of collective and individual quality in the data

This dynamic of division reflects the neoliberal rationale of the individualised approach. The creation of people categories has significant effects for the ways in which governing takes place (Bacchi, 2009) as it makes available certain subject positions. According to Biesta (2015) this represents an attempt to "burden individuals with tasks that used to be the responsibility of governments and the state" (p. 76).

Defining a teacher in such a way - as an entrepreneurial individual, also worked to create a binary which acted to constrain or limit the understanding of an issue (Bacchi, 2009). The perceived dichotomy between the profession and the union worked to eliminate the collective agency of workers expressed through unions (Compton & Weiner, 2008). This

illuminates the purpose behind the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) co-located terms such as: *conflict, adversarial, resistance,* and *domination*, with *union* – which worked to create the illusion that a unionised workforce was unprofessional - implying lack of quality. The process illustrates how a good and bad dichotomy (Bacchi, 2009) functions to develop a common-sense deficit that a unionised teaching workforce is a deficit workforce, one which is both undesirable and out-of-step with international trends. This effectively marginalised any union contribution to the discourse and built momentum for the demise of the collective, and the rise of an individualised subject position.

In 2007 the *Hartsuyker Report* became even more individual teacher centric; conceptualised as a lack of quality throughout the continuum of teacher education. This report consolidated the major shift seen in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) which reassigned responsibility for any perceived quality problem away from the state and from public funding arrangements toward the individual teacher. The analysis showed a focus on the appropriateness of the selection process to recruit the "most suitable people" (Hartsuyker Report, p. 35), and a concern with meeting minimum entry requirements for entry into teacher education. The process framed teachers as responsible for his/her own ability to achieve predetermined standards *and* predetermined student educational outcomes. This changed the trajectory of thought again to one in which the teacher is framed as a type of product in a supply/demand chain – and in addition to the individual responsibility for quality introduced by the *Ramsey Review* (2000), the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) introduced regulatory systems deemed necessary to ensure quality.

Thus, the analyses demonstrate a significant change occurred over the period in the study in the way teachers were being talked and thought about. Teachers were originally seen as in need of an "organised professional voice" (Crowley Report, p. 29) to communicate effectively what they do - in the struggle to control claims to truth (Bacchi, 2000). The discursive creep in the subsequent *Ramsey Review* (2000) from teaching quality to teacher quality operated to shift responsibility for quality away from the state toward the individual – in the form of the human category, teacher quality. The subsequent *Hartsuyker Report* (2009) focused on regulating the characteristics of teacher quality. The changing focus toward the personal characteristics of teachers over the period in the study can clearly be seen in Figure 12.

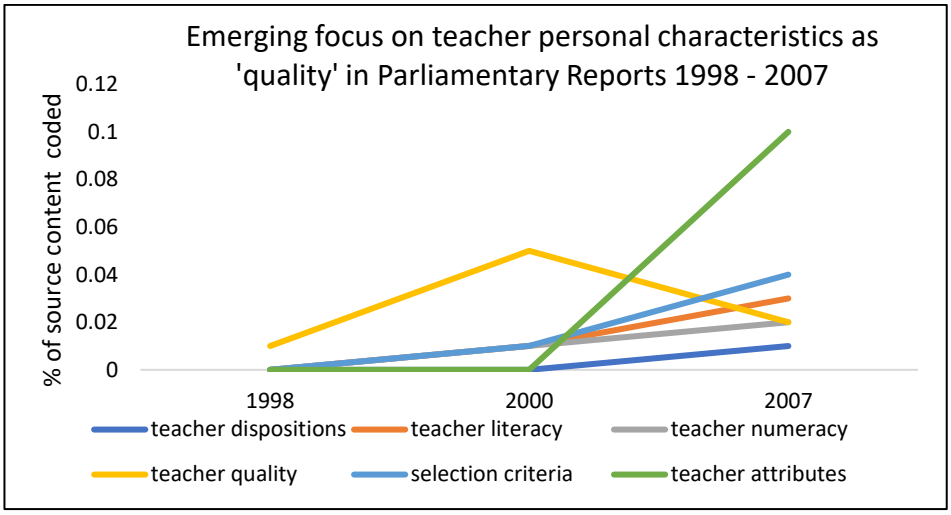


Figure 12: Emerging focus on teacher characteristics in key parliamentary reports

This change in trajectory in the way teachers were being thought and talked about reflects governance by a liberal democracy, a type of governmentality (Foucault, 1991) in which a framework of discipline and bio power (Foucault, 1978, p. 139) is used to develop the characteristics deemed to be desirable (Bacchi, 2009, p. 161).

8.3.2 Standards remained central to the solution, but they were not perceived, characterised, or classified in the same way

The analyses show that whilst standards remained the central solution to the problematisations across all three policies, the way in which standards were being thought and talked about changed trajectory, from a conceptualisation of a development framework - standards *for* and *by* teachers, to an accountability framework – standards imposed or *done to* teachers.

The *Crowley Report* (1998) promoted teaching standards as mechanism for strengthening the teaching profession, which in turn would strengthen its status in the community, that is, a means of giving teachers a voice to deflect criticism. Standards were also seen as a framework for voluntary professional development. The *Crowley Report* (1998) envisaged professional standards as being owned and overseen by the profession themselves – a vision of professional autonomy. This was considered an acceptable solution, as teaching standards, even voluntary standards, constitute an accountability mechanism. This reflects the government rationale of accountability, which was acknowledged in the report. The report stated,

> The Committee is in no doubt that teaching must be regarded as a profession, with all that this implies for the standards, accountability, status and autonomy that a community expects of a profession. (Crowley, 1998, p. 6)

The *Ramsey Review* (2000) continued the trajectory set by the *Crowley Report* (1998), and presented the solution to its problematisations as the establishment of a professional body responsible for professional standards. However, this analysis revealed a significant change in the way standards were framed. Facilitated by the discursive creep from teaching quality to teacher quality, and the increasing focus on an individualised conception of quality, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) changed the trajectory from the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) vision of an autonomous profession responsible for its own professional standards to become perceived as a neoliberal audit mechanism with which to ensure teachers acquired the aptitudes, skills and behaviours set down in the standards – characterised by implicit coded signs of discipline, of compliance and obedience. Teachers' compliance with the standards was to be ensured through surveillance, performance rewards, and punishment in the form of deregistration.

The subsequent *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) also conceptualised standards as the solution to its problematisations. However, a further change in the trajectory of the discourse was identified, manifest in the intensification of the previous change: from standards of accountability to regulatory standards. The analysis revealed the conflation of standards with teacher quality, perceived as a regulatory framework – the purpose of which was to act as a gatekeeper to the skills, attributes and dispositions which were deemed appropriate – those which fit the standardised model of what it means to be teacher quality.

The rise in regulatory discourses over the period 1998 – 2007 can be seen in Figure 13 below. Regulation effectively prescribes what teachers should believe and know, what they understand, what they are able to do, and what they value.

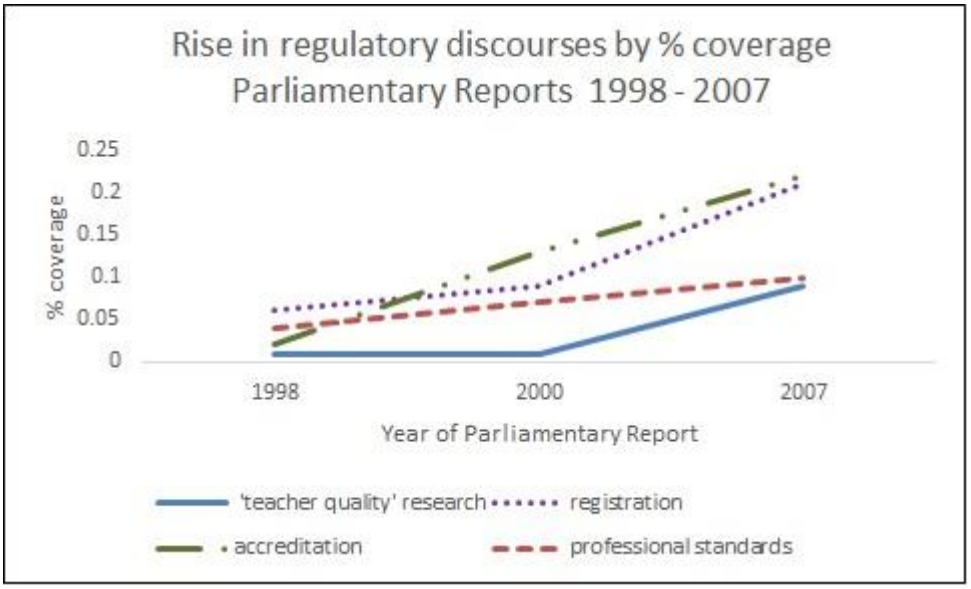


Figure 13: Rise in regulatory discourses in key parliamentary reports 1998–2007

Thus, the analyses show that the professional body, which the *Crowley Report* (1998) had envisaged as an autonomous professional body, became transformed into a structure, a process, and an arbiter – a gatekeeper. This is an example of a technology of government – bio power - by which subjects come to adopt the societal norms constructed by discourse (Foucault, 1998). In other words, teachers must discipline themselves according to the norms in the discourse in order to be awarded registration status.

This is important as structures and processes, such as standardised teacher education, and standardised teacher selection and assessment, can be difficult to separate from goal directed activities (Bacchi, 2009) as these activities operate to regulate and determine who can be admitted, and who will graduate, thus, determining what sort of people can become teachers (Osborne et al., 2013). They operate to ensure that teachers acquire particular aptitudes and types of behaviour which have coded signs of obedience, the value of such obedience is measured through power processes such as surveillance, reward and punishment (Foucault, 1994). Here power is reinforced through teacher adherence to the teaching standards (APST).

Thus, the analyses demonstrate that between 1998 – 2007 professional standards were manifest as a framework of discipline and biopower (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). A technique used to develop the characteristics deemed to be desirable (Bacchi, 2009, p. 161), which in this context was to meet the construct of teacher quality.

8.3.3 Concerns about the politicisation and mediatisation of education policy became silent

The *Crowley Report* (1998) found the politicisation and mediatisation of education policy was a major factor contributing to the declining status of the teaching profession and on teacher morale. The analyses show this concern faded in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) to a sprinkling of comments. For example, the *Ramsey Review* (2000) acknowledged that teaching is often "presented negatively" (Ramsey, 2000, p.11), and that the fact many young people do not see teaching as a career options was at least in part due to the "negative media attention and public perception" (*Ramsey Review*, 2000, p. 247). It also suggested there was "a need to adopt concrete strategies to reverse this" (*Ramsey Review*, 2000, p. 247). However, there was an apparent paradox in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) in voicing concerns about the status of the teaching profession whilst simultaneously suggesting there were "too many examples of low-hope teachers" (Ramsey, 2000, p. 11). This effectively identified 'who' is being targeted – the teacher, which contributes and serves to add fuel to the blame game.

This adds weight to Blackmore and Thomson's (2004) proposition that education policy is intentionally mediated, and that teachers are represented in a negative light in a deliberate attempt to gain public consent for government intervention; a relationship between politics and the media that Lingard and Rawolle term "de-facto policy" (2004). The de-facto phenomenon underpins the practice of teacher bashing (Baker, 1994; Richardson, 2015).

Despite this, the analysis of the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) revealed the concern with mediatisation and politicisation of education policy was gone.

8.3.4 Concern about the casualisation of the profession was transformed into concern about adequate training

The *Crowley Report*'s (1998) concern that the increasing casualisation of the teaching profession and resulting job security was as a major factor in the declining teacher morale and teacher status, was not evident in the *Ramsey Review* (2000). Instead, the *Ramsey Review* (2000), was concerned that "universities, the TAFE system and employers give greater attention to the preparation and induction of casual or contract teachers, equivalent to the provision for permanent teachers" (p. 68). This changed emphasis was facilitated by the binary discourse cultivated in the *Ramsey Review* (2000), which served to determine that a professional

workforce was a quality workforce – and by implication, a unionised workforce was not. This operated to silence union concerns regarding the casualisation of the workforce, teacher remuneration; and career pathways – de-emphasising them. These issues later became reframed in the *Ramsey Review* (2000) as ensuring the preparation of casual teachers; performance pay; and standards tied to career advancement.

In the subsequent *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) the discourse of casualisation was gone and in its place was the call to ensure:

> beginning teachers have access to stable employment for long enough to experience quality induction into the teaching profession will require the Australian Government to take very seriously its consultation process with the employing authorities about labour force needs when it negotiates the number of teacher education places to be allocated with the universities. (Hartsuyker Report, p. 89)

The concern that the casualisation of teaching was negatively impacting teacher morale was thus, de-emphasised and transformed into a concern that casual teachers were appropriately prepared and that they were given stable employment for long enough to experience quality induction into the teaching profession.

8.3.5 The conceptualisation of quality as equitable access to education was silenced

Confirming Gale's (1994) suggestion that irrespective of the factors contributing to the problem, solutions are constructed in a way that an inquiry believes it can solve, the conceptualisation of quality as equitable access to education was silenced.

The *Crowley Report* (1998) considered equity very broadly - as fairness in education. It asserted "Education, and a quality school system, remain a fundamental responsibility of government" (Crowley 1998, p. 20). It criticised government funding suggesting any increases were "barely sufficient to keep pace with the current costs of schooling" (p. 80), and that it was a "simple matter of equity that young people, regardless of where they reside, should enjoy the benefits of quality teaching" (Crowley Report, 1998, p. 20). Eleven of the nineteen recommendations made by the *Crowley Report* (1998) related to government funding of education aimed at ensuring equity. This included the recommendation that "the Commonwealth Government reinstate the Disadvantaged Schools Program as a separately identified and funded program" (p. 161).

In the *Ramsey Review* (2000), a significant part of the process in changing the responsibility for quality away from the government and the state toward the individual teacher, was the silencing of the equity discourse. As part of this process the *Ramsey Review* (2000) first framed equity as access to quality teaching. It warned that the effect of poor quality teaching on student outcomes was debilitating and cumulative and was greater than those effects "that arise from student backgrounds" (Ramsey Review, 2000, p. 34). Next, and facilitated by the creep between teach*ing* quality and teach*er* quality, the review then realigned equity with teacher quality. It suggested that teachers should have the "knowledge and commitment to ensure inclusive assessment and evaluation practices which are consistent with equity and social justice" (Ramsey Review, 2000, p. 55).

In the subsequent *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) concern for equity in education had seemingly gone. The only mention of disadvantage was in relation to selecting "the most suitable people" (Hartsuyker, 2007, p. 35). It stated,

> Clearly, traditional selection processes should be supplemented by interviews and other strategies for applicants who may otherwise be disadvantaged by sole reliance on a TER score (Hartsuyker, 2007, p. 57)

In summary, the analyses have revealed discursive practices, and the assumptions and presuppositions "that made it possible" Bacchi, 2009, xiv) to develop these problematisations, and to change the way in which teachers and professional standards were being perceived, described, expressed, and characterised (Foucault, 1974a, p. 217). This worked to silence or reframe equity concerns, silence concerns about the politicisation and mediatisation of education policy, and reframe the concern surrounding casualisation of the teaching profession.

I argue, therefore, that the *Ramsey Review* (2000) reduced the complexity of issues (which were identified by the *Crowley Report* (1998) as impacting on the quality of education) to focus on the teacher. This is a significant realigning of responsibility away from the state and from public funding arrangements, as responsible for providing equitable assess to education, toward the teacher as responsible for their personal capacity to deliver a quality education. This realignment resulted in a second significant shift – professional standards which were originally conceived as a development framework *for* and *by* teachers, were transformed into an accountability framework, *done to* teachers.

The findings reflect the neoliberal rationale of the individualised approach, with professional standards operating as an accountability framework of discipline and bio power (Foucault, 1978, p. 139) - used to develop the characteristics deemed to be desirable (Bacchi, 2009, p. 161) to meet the individualised construct of teacher quality.

The discursive process outlined above is representative of a power-knowledge nexus where power produces knowledge, and accepted forms of knowledge functions as truth (Foucault, 1974a). These findings add weight to the argument that policy solutions are inherent in their problematisations (Bacchi, 2009), and illuminates the sharpening focus across the period in study toward the individual – the teacher, and the creation of the APST as an accountability measure in the quest for quality.

8.4 .The influence and effects of teacher quality on current debates surrounding quality in education

As a way of engaging with the past in order to better understand the present, the previous section has traced the stable conceptual logics, the discursive tactics, and the discontinuities in the problematisations. The process has served to confirm that problems do not and cannot exist outside of the way in which they are conceptualised (Bacchi, 2009, p. 262), and that, therefore, teacher quality can be considered a socially constructed category - a category which is relative, in the sense that it is the product of a particular time and place (Bacchi, 2009, p. 264). The analyses showed the parliamentary reports created the illusion of consensus in definition and purpose of both the teacher quality construct and the associated professional standards. AITSL claim that the APST

> reflect and build on national and international evidence that a teachers' effectiveness has a powerful impact on students, with broad consensus that teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor influencing student achievement" (2011, p. 2).

However, the scholarly literature does not exhibit consensus. Thus, the analyses now serve as a process in which history becomes a means of engagement with the present. The final part of this chapter considers the influence and effects of the teacher quality concept on the trajectory of the debate around quality in education

8.4.1 Quality has become a smoke screen, obscuring issues which may have equal or greater merit

The findings of the analyses confirm the proposition that quality is no more than a slogan in need of a definition (R. Alexander, 2015), and that quality has become "a smoke screen that effectively obscures the issue of equity in education" (Mockler, 2014, p. 115).

The analyses have shown that between 1998 – 2007 the discursive focus in parliamentary reports changed from initially conceptualising quality as equitable access to education, to become conceptualised as teacher quality. This change was shown to rest upon an assumption that the marketisation of education (and all that brings with it: accountability, entrepreneurship, competition and choice, and the ideological predispostion against a collective workforce) is good for the nation. This confirms the claim that the dominant mode of neoliberal governance and a performance managed audit culture of education policy (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016; Mockler, 2013; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), argued to have changed the "purpose, values, structure, control, relationships and organization" of education (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 1). There is considerable research which demonstrates the divisive social consequences of the market agenda in education (S. Ball, 2003a, 2012; Chisholm, 2004; Connell, 2009, 2013; Connell & Dados, 2014; Liasidou & Symeou, 2018; Reay, 2001; Skilbeck & Connell, 2004; Teese & Polesel, 2003), which argues that market fundamentalism (Soros, 1998) in education needs to be resisted as it rests on assumptions of individualism, in an arena of human activity that is all about sociality (Rizvi, 2016).

According to Connell (2012), one effect of the market logic of choice in education is that it has simply shifted old forms of inequality, based on institutional segregation, to new forms of inequality based on market mechanisms. It achieves this by rationing quality education by virtue of the parents ability to choose based on their social and cultural background (Windle, 2009), a sorting exercise of power, that reproduces the privileges of dominant social groups (Connell, 2013). Connell suggests that policy trajectory such as this, means that the "best advice we can give to a poor child keen to get ahead through education is to choose richer parents" (Connell, 1993, p. 22), which ironically contradicts the *Ramsey Review*'s (2000) aim which was " to provide all people with access to education of the highest possible quality" (p. 213). Ball suggests this conceptualisation of 'quality' to be

> A regime of accountability that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances of individual subjects or organisations serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or moments of promotion or inspections. These performances stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement. Clearly, the issue of who controls the field of judgement and what is judged, what criteria of measurement are used or benchmarks or targets set, is crucial (S. Ball, 2017, p. 49).

There has long been an interest in how effective the provision of school education is and how it can be improved (K. Rowe, 2003a), with equity forming a large part of the debate, see for example, (Coleman et al., 1966; Department of Education and Science, 1984; Goodlad, 1983; Jencks et al., 1972; OECD, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1995, 2005, 2012a, 2012b; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimer, Ouston, & Smith, 1979). The Australian Government now acknowledges a relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and student outcomes. Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham's address in 2016 to the Independent School Councils of Australia in which he stated,

> As the OECD and others have noted, there are other family, personal and social impacts that impact more on student performance than school funding. …Schools can make a difference and do make a difference but we should be honest enough to acknowledge that their influence has limits in the face of these wider social, cultural and individual factors, which in part explains why all of the extra funding targeted to schools and students has a limited impact in tackling areas of disadvantage. Tackling disadvantage requires a holistic approach in which education is a critical piece of the bigger puzzle. (Simon Birmingham transcript of the Address to the Independent Schools Council of Australia (AHISA) National Education Forum 15/3/16)

Despite this however, high quality teachers are still considered the critical factor in the success of national education systems and for national economic vitality (Hanushek, 2010, 2011). Policy remains firmly focused on how to attract better-quality students into teaching careers (Foster, 2018), the goal of which is to achieve the long-term objective of improving teacher quality (Foster, 2018; Hanushek, Piopiunik, & Wiederhold, 2014), whilst school funding models such as The *Gonski Review* (Gonski et al., 2011) remain under threat, and reflecting the government rationale of competition and choice, have been all but reduced to a competition between public and private schooling (Scholes et al., 2017).

The literature shows the range of solutions aimed at improving quality in education have remained constrained by the teacher quality concept (underpinned by individualism and accountability). These constraints are exemplified in solutions which range from "teacher

literacy and numeracy testing for pre-service teachers to the establishment and application of teaching standards, to large-scale 'overhauls' of teacher education curriculum"(Mockler, 2018, p. 262). This serves to demonstrate that teacher quality in educational policy has not operated as part of a holistic approach, but rather as previously suggested it has become a smoke screen – one which obscures issues of equity in favour of the market logic of competition and choice, facilitated by individual responsibility and accountability standards. This is an important revelation, as choice in education is argued to have shifted old forms of inequality, based on institutional segregation, to new forms of inequality based on market mechanisms, and rationing of access to quality by virtue of parental ability to choose (Connell, 2012).

Further, it is argued that teaching conditions remain characterised as bargaining 'trade-offs' for compliance with system-driven reforms (McDonnell & Pascal, 1988), many of which are based upon competition and choice. Rather than being viewed as essential to the quality of teaching and learning (Leithwood, 2006), reforms concentrate on teacher assessment and teacher recruitment, serve to detract from the conditions in which teaching takes place. According to Bascia (2018) such reforms are argued to

> ignore the issues teachers themselves have repeatedly identified as factors critical to the success of their teaching: class size and manageable workloads; time available for professional, non-teaching work; resource adequacy; collegiality and stimulating professional interactions; opportunities to learn and improve; support for professional risk-taking and experimentation; ability to influence school decisions; and organizational goals. (Bascia, 2018, p. 164)

According to Robertson, the imposition of teacher quality reforms are argued to have had damaging effects on teachers' work (2012) and teachers' health and well-being (Parker, 2012; Pillay et al., 2005) as teachers experience "bureaucratization, stress, demotivation, alienation and insecurity" (Verger, Altinyelkin, & De Koning, 2013, p. 149)

Teacher quality has acted as a smoke screen obscuring issues which may have equal or greater merit. Critical links between student economic marginalisation, lower test scores, early school leaving, and lack of access to labour markets have been identified (Mills & Gale, 2010), yet the focus on teacher quality endures, whilst teachers continue to experience policies and practices that constrain their ability to provide quality teaching and to sustain teaching careers over the longer term (Smaller, 2015).

8.4.2 Teacher quality has become synonymous with teaching quality despite important differences

Teacher quality/teaching quality have become interwoven (Mockler, 2011a) and used interchangeably (Mockler, 2013) despite their different meanings and implications for education policy and practice. As a result the terms have become ambiguously defined (Adams et al., 2015).

Yet, buried beneath the conflation of these terms, the trajectory of the debate is argued to have shifted from a focus on teaching quality to one focused on teacher quality (Mockler, 2011a). This shift may seem subtle, but according to Mockler (2013) it is an important one as these concepts have very different implications for education policy and practice. Mockler states,

> Embedded in a focus on teaching quality is a desire to support and foster teacher professional learning, to encourage pedagogical and curricular innovation and risk taking and to collaboratively determine and pursue good teaching practice. Conversely, embedded in the ensuing focus on teach*er* quality is a desire to narrowly measure and quantify teachers' work (usually represented simply in test scores), to standardise practice and attribute blame to teachers where their students fail to 'measure up' (Mockler, 2013, p. 37)

The conflation of the terms has served to detract from the important role of teach*ing* quality in the holistic approach to ensuring equity in education. This is exemplified in a study which used the dimensions of the *Quality Teaching Framework* (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003) to measure quality pedagogy. The findings demonstrate that "the higher the SES mean at class level (i.e. the more advantaged), the higher the measure of the 'intellectual quality' dimension of the work experienced in the classroom" (Griffiths, Amosa, Ladwig, & Gore, 2007, p. 8). A similar trend is seen in the measure of the 'significance' dimension of the Quality Teaching Framework for ATSI students (Griffiths et al., 2007, p. 12). This demonstrates the potential equity effect of the *Quality Teaching Framework* (Amosa, Ladwig, Griffiths, & Gore, 2007), and of a focus on quality teaching.

Yet it is argued that the overwhelming use of term *teacher quality* when referring to schools is linked directly to *who* is doing the teaching (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2018). This stands in contradiction with Gore, Ladwig and King's (2004) argument that quality is about good teaching practice - not people. This has implications for education policy designed to select suitable candidates to improve quality, and for the argument that there are innate

qualities within individuals which make them more suited to be good teachers (Coe, Aloisi, Hoggins, & Major, 2014; Moseley, Bilica, Wandless, & Gdovin, 2014).

8.4.3 Professional standards have become the arbiter of quality - a regulatory mechanism

The analyses show that the emergence of teacher quality facilitated a change in the purpose of standards; changing from a development framework, *for* and *by* teachers, to become regulatory standards *done to* teachers. This is an important revelation as definitions of quality and how it is measured remain widely debated (Cochrane-Smith et al., 2012; Sayed & Ahmed, 2015; Skourdoumbis, 2014; Strong, 2012; Strong et al., 2011).

Consequently, tensions which were apparent in both the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000) around the purpose and ownership of standards (either as standards for teach*ing,* which are aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning from within the profession, or alternatively, as standards for teach*ers',* the main focus of which is to control quality by imposing regulatory regimes), have not abated (Beyer, 2002; Bourke et al., 2012; Codd, 2004; Connell, 2009; Louden, 2000; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Ni Chroinin et al., 2012; Sachs, 2011).

Regulatory standards have been identified since the turn of the century as a method of reform (Mahony & Hextall, 2000), imposed by governments as a framework to control licensing and certification procedures. The literature argues these are potentially counterproductive for two key reasons. First, any standards framework will not appease *all* stakeholders, what Rittel and Webber refer to as the "plurality of publics"(1973, p. 169) – manifest in those who seek to pursue varied and sometimes conflicting goals (Southgate et al., 2013, p. 21). Second, holding teachers accountable to standards, and making them compliant, carries with it a degree of negativity (Mausethagen, 2013) as it comes with the suggestion of (in) competence - implying a distrust of teachers.

The literature presents a recurring theme when explaining public distrust of teachers – that it is mainly attributable to a combination of historically held beliefs (Lortie, 1975) and contemporary media coverage of education policy (Blackmore & Thorpe, 2003; Doyle, 1998; Lingard & Rawolle, 2004), rather than personal experience. Reflecting the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) concern, it is argued that this is because media dissemination of government education

policy is superficial and inadequate (Baker, 1994), and lacking in scope and depth (Guyton & Antonelli, 1987). In relation to school and teachers specifically, coverage is argued to be relatively broad (Berliner & Biddle, 1996), with only the crisis issues such as literacy (Snyder, 2008), discipline (Fields, 2005), and testing (Shine & O'Donoghue, 2013), covered in any depth, and most of that is from a negative perspective (Ogle & Dabbs, 1998). This reflects Lingard & Rawolle's claim that the mediatisation and politicisation of education policy is a de-facto policy (2004).

According to MacMillan (2002) media coverage has become too focused on standards, and, thus, the implication is that defacto policy can use teacher standards to add fuel to the blame game, presenting teachers' as a glass half empty. This (re)creates and perpetuates distrust of teachers and the sense of crisis and conflict (Ungerleider, 2006),serving to impact teacher confidence (Bryant, 2007; Maeroff, 1988) and teacher morale (Hattam et al., 2009) and lower teacher status – which ironically was of concern to the *Crowley Report* (1998).

The literature shows that the *Crowley Report*'s (1998) strategy of using professional standards as a defence mechanism against the politicization and the mediatisation of educational policy (Altheide, 2004; Altheide & Snow, 1988) has not been successful (Hattam et al., 2009; Rawolle, 2010). Quite the opposite. Confirming McMillan's (2002) claim, professional standards have instead been used as a mechanism for politicians and the media to produce, disseminate, and proliferate criticism of teachers, their unions, and their work, and in the process negatively influence public perceptions of the profession. For example, writing for the media in *The Australian*, Balogh reports,

> Assistant Minister Michael Sukkar has blamed teachers' unions for being a "roadblock" standing in the way of the government's efforts to improve *teacher quality* [emphasis added] and empower principals to halt Australia's academic slide (Balogh, 2017)

Similarly, The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, speaking in 2014, stated,

> Teacher education quality has been put in the too-hard basket for too long. A quality education system must be underpinned by quality teachers. The profession knows it, parents want it, our students deserve it and the nation needs it. (The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, 2014)

Standards have also served to foster and perpetuate the historic lack of trust in the teaching profession. The following statement made by Teacher Standards in Action (TSA) providing a stark demonstration of distrust being used to justify regulation:

> accreditation is critical to upholding the integrity and accountability of the teaching profession and in ensuring high quality teaching in every classroom". (NSW Department of Education, 2017)

These findings are important as the literature suggests the proclivity to blame teachers (Levin, 2004) is implicit in the following: declining teacher morale (Shamir, 2008), ill health caused by stress and burnout (Hakanen, 2006; Lloyd, 2012; Parker, 2012; Wisniewski, 1997), loss of professional integrity (Palmer, 1997; Santoro, 2013), dilemmas in forming a teaching identity (Bodman et al., 2012; Gunn Elisabeth Soreide, 2006; Mockler, 2011b; Reio & Thomas, 2005), decreasing autonomy (Gordon, 2009; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), growing expectations and responsibilities and changes in school structure (Fernet, 2012), changes in school culture (Schuck, 2005), attempts to define teacher characteristics (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996), low public status (Cunningham, 1992; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007).

The APST as current arbiters of quality are argued to have "stripped away the subtleties and complexities of the teaching role" (Storey, 2006, p. 218) which are especially important in diverse contexts. This is despite research showing that teachers' knowledge is not only applied to specific contexts, but more importantly it can "gain strength from those situations" (Bereiter, 1993, p. 53).

The literature shows that conceptions of the good teacher, who they should be, what they should know, and what they should be able to do, remains contested (Bowles et al., 2014; Comber, 2012; Hattie, 2015; Polesel et al., 2012; Rowan et al., 2015; Scholes et al., 2017; Thompson & Harbaugh, 2013). Yet regulatory standards effectively prescribe what teachers should believe and know, what they understand, what they are able to do, and what they value.

It is somewhat predicable therefore that teachers and unions are resistant to being held accountable to externally determined standards and regulatory frameworks which remain contentious, and importantly are considered detrimental to teacher health and well-being. This provides some insight into the motives of teachers who believe it is their moral

responsibility to "work around some policy directives in the interests of their students" (Farris-Berg & Kirkswager, 2016, p. 179).

The loose connection between accreditation/registration and teacher quality which was adopted in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007), can be seen as reflective of "blind policy borrowing" (Lingard, 2010, p. 132) from the OECD, as opposed to policy learning. Policy learning, according to Lingard (2010) entails careful consideration of the possible effects of the borrowed policy. This includes possible implications of national histories, which in Australia is noted to be culturally entrenched views of teaching as a low status job suitable only for women (Drudy, 2008) who are neither high achievers (Weis, 1987) nor ambitious (Troen & Boles, 2003).

The literature shows that the narrow view of quality presented in the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) as best practice, measured in educational outcomes (outputs) does not give a reliable picture of the quality of a school, nor of a teacher (van der Wateren & Amrein-Beardsley, 2016 p. 25). It is therefore relevant to question the narrowing and simplification of the problem, and the place of top-down research in the standards framework. Ingersoll argues,

> Too much organizational control may deny teachers the very power and flexibility they need to do the job, effectively undermine their motivation, and squander a valuable human resource… Having little say in the terms, processes, and outcomes of their work, teachers may doubt they are doing worthwhile work -the very reason many of them came into the occupation in the first place – which may contribute to the high rates of turnover. (Ingersoll, 2007, p. 25)

According to Rizvi (2016), rather than promote quality, standardised teaching and testing has in fact demoralised teachers and students, impacting on student learning, and serves only as a conduit for the markets in education – those which promote and legitimise activities which favour the already advantaged.

According to Sachs (2003), professional standards should be owned by the profession themselves, rather than a government imposed regulatory framework, a view which is supported by the claim that self-regulation comes from self-efficacy (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Teacher self-regulation as defined in the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling* (MCEETYA, 1999) as "having the ability to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice" (p. 229). This is arguably akin to self-regulation in medicine, guided by the Hippocratic Oath (S. Miles, 2004). Both offer moral and ethical

frameworks which serve to guide, rather than prescribe, practice: allowing autonomy in morality, ethics and social justice to remain with the professional. However, the teacher quality concept has reduced space for teacher self-efficacy, especially when the dominant discursive frame is implied (in)competence in need of more, and more comprehensive, regulatory standards. This constitutes a negative subject position, which it is argued no other profession in the public domain is subjected to (L. Hargreaves et al., 2007).

8.4.4 Teacher quality has become a singular measure despite the plurality of stakeholders and conceptualisations

Teacher quality is frequently found with adjectives such as good, effective, and competent (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Wallet, 2015), implying a particular definition and consensus of opinion of what works best (Strong, 2012). Despite this, teacher quality remains a contested term. (Sachs, 2003b), one which can be considered a wicked problem, as multiple stakeholders continue to disagree over what constitutes quality.

According to Sachs (2003b) a system which judges teachers' ability and competence against one "idealized notion of what competent or excellent teaching might be" (p. 185), is problematic as questions remain around whose interests are being served and what effect the imposition of a singular measure might have on teachers individually and collectively. For this reason, Sachs (2003) cautions that a regulatory approach to teacher quality, one which promotes one particular view of teaching and what it means to be a teacher – "a one size fits all" (Sachs, 2003b, p. 185), may not be possible, or in the best interests of teachers, as they teach in a diverse range of contexts and must be flexible to the changing conditions of teaching and learning as they occur inside and outside of school (Sachs, 2003b).

Connell (2009) argues, quality in education has become defined as merely the effectiveness of its technicians, "enacting predefined 'best practice'" (p. 224), a position which is argued to have objectified teachers, and instrumentalised teaching (Gale, 2006). According to Connell (2009), what teachers do has been decomposed into "specific, auditable competencies and performances" (p. 9), a process which fails to engage with the reality that teaching is situated in context and is collaborative and social in nature (O'loughlin, 2007). The literature also shows concerns that a single model, or a 'one size fits all', (Sachs, 2003b, p. 185), model of teacher quality may not be possible or in the best interests of teachers, as they teach in a diverse range of contexts.

The contentious nature of the concept is understandable given that the literature confirms teacher quality is difficult to code, measure or standardise (Caprara et al., 2006; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2006; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Usher et al., 2003; Youssef, 2003). This is evident in the plethora of research which has attempted to measure the characteristics of teacher quality (S. Ball, 2012; Connell, 2009; Parker, 2012; Rice, 2003; Stoel & Thant, 2002). Studies show that compounding the inherent difficulties in accurately defining, capturing or measuring the complex web of *tangible* characteristics, is the problematic nature of measuring *intangible* assets such as beliefs, attitudes and dispositions (Usher et al., 2003). This suggests a single measure of teacher quality as promoted in the APST may simply detract from significant opportunity for a more effective bottom-up solution (Bain et al., 2009).

The agenda of individualization, which was seen in Figure 11, is indicative of an institutional system set up to create competition and difference. It is a process which uses teacher quality as a means of comparison, one which separates to differentiate. According to Connell (2009) this process, based on a singular measure, cannot work in large scale collective labour process such as education, as it is impossible to measure the contribution of any individual worker to output.

Moreover, it is argued that creating competition between schools and teachers completely overlooks the importance of seeing teaching as collaborative and social in nature (O'loughlin, 2007). Connell (2009) argues that teaching is a collective effort of staff and students. Collectivism operates in, and gains strength from highly contextual situations where there is a need to adapt to issues such as social class backgrounds, gender, ethnicity, religion, peer group, hierarchies and exclusions where appropriate. It is argued that in such an environment teachers depend on each other – and on what other people are doing (Connell, 2009). Thus, thinking about teachers in this way, as an individual entity, completely disregards alternative meanings being assigned to quality, such as the quality staff room and the quality school, instead endangering any semblance of collegiality in the working environment.

8.4.5 Teacher quality has created a subject position to be inhabited or resisted

Classifying and categorising teachers by their ability to comply with one conceptualisation of quality, not only created a very specific type of subject – the competent, quality teacher, but by implication - the (in)competent (poor quality) teacher. Undefended, the positioning of an

(in)competent teacher, in need of regulation, weaves back into the historical and cultural perceptions of teachers, serving to legitimise culturally entrenched views of teaching, which according to Hargreaves et al., (2007) was a low status job suitable only for women (Drudy, 2008), who are neither high achievers (Weis, 1987) nor ambitious (Troen & Boles, 2003). This demonstrates how such a subject position is produced and maintained (Moore, 2004; Rawolle, 2010), and demonstrates how it can exacerbate the blame game, be used to justify crises in education (Berliner & Biddle, 1996), and in the process contribute to the decline in the public perceptions of teacher status.

The literature confirms that teacher quality is difficult to standardise, and that the validity of any classification and sorting construct is therefore questionable. Yet teacher quality continues to classify and categorise teachers as an individual entity in competition with one another based on their performativity. According to Ball (2012), performativity is quintessentially neo-liberal, encompassing subjectivity, institutional practices, economy and government. Ball suggests performativity is a sort of hands-off management which works most powerfully when it is "inside our heads and our souls" (p. 31). Ball suggests performativity

> invites and incites us to make ourselves more effective, to work on ourselves, to improve ourselves and to feel guilty or inadequate if we do not. It operates within a framework of judgement within which what 'improvement' and effectiveness are, is determined for us, and 'indicated' of us by measures of quality and productivity. (Ball, 2012, p. 31)

The analyses confirm this view, showing that the discourses in the context of this study have disseminated a particular construct of the quality teacher which operated to "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1974a, p. 54). According to Ball, such a subject position works best when teachers self-regulate and take on the responsibility for "working hard, faster and better" (Ball, 2012, p. 31), thus, improving output to achieve a sense of personal worth. This reflects a technique of government referred to as biopower (Foucault, 1978, p. 139), a technique used to modify subjects in order to make them manageable and productive.

Furthermore, as good has historically been associated with the moral acts of honesty, compassion, respect and fairness (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005), it is argued that focusing on the technicalities of teaching, whilst failing to engage teachers in the greater social and moral issues of society, not only eliminates the legitimacy of professional

judgement, impacting teacher morale (Bottery, 2004), but also promotes a diminished view of teaching and teacher professionalism that has no place in a sophisticated knowledge society (A. Hargreaves, 2003, p. 161).

However, subject positions can either be occupied or resisted. Sachs (2003a) suggests teachers "have a primary responsibility to contribute to public debates about the quality of teaching and the quality of student learning outcomes and should be central to debates about teacher education" (Sachs, 2016, p. 252). Sachs proposes an alternative subject position - teachers as activists. Sachs describes this activism as a form of social movement in which there is trust, respect and reciprocity among various stakeholder groups as they work together to improve teacher status and working conditions (Sachs, 2016). Whilst the term *activism* suggests defiance against bureaucratic control – something negative in the minds of many (Sachs, 2016, p. 252), this form of activism is positive and seen by many teachers as a moral obligation.

These analyses also identified the creation of another competitive subject position, seen in the reframing competence into differentiated performance pay. However, the literature shows that using financial rewards to motivate can create further tensions for teachers, as it may conflict with their personal teaching philosophy (Burant et al., 2007; Covaleskie, 2007; Sherman, 2006), which is argued to at best result in deep confusion as teachers attempt to satisfy education policy, and at worst may manifest in misalignment between personal beliefs and practice (Santoro, 2013). This has been described as a moral dilemma between "being good and doing good" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 11), and is argued to have had a profound effect on the lives of teachers (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014), and has implications for teacher morale, teacher identity, teacher education, and school practices and administration (S. Ball & Goodson, 2004). This is a situation which would result in even more stress, fatigue, and low morale which ironically was identified in the *Crowley Report* (1998) as having a negative effect on quality teaching. The discursive process created a neoliberal subject position which Ball (2012) defines as

> malleable rather than committed, flexible rather than principled – essentially depthless. A consequence of continual animation and calculation is for many a growing sense of ontological insecurity: both a loss of a sense of meaning in what we do and of what is important in what we do' (2012, p. 31).

8.5 Concluding remarks

In summary, this chapter has traced the discursive processes which shaped the emergence teacher quality in Australian parliamentary reports. This chapter identified the discursive continuities in conceptual logic across all three parliamentary reports between 1998 — 2007 as these operated to create knowledge, or were indicative of accepted forms of knowledge – both of which functioned as truth (Foucault, 1974a). Four conceptual logics were identified: that the value and meaning being applied to quality in this context reflected stakeholder consensus; that there was a deficit in quality in Australian schooling, teaching and teachers; that the deficits were of crisis proportions and needed to be urgently addressed; and that the marketisation of education was of benefit to the nation. Together these conceptual logics operated to limit and constrain the way in which quality in education was thought and talked about.

This chapter also revealed a "framing process" (Bacchi, 2009, p. xi), which included discursive practices such as dynamics of division, binaries, and discursive creep (Bacchi, 2009). The process operated to simplify the complexity of issues identified in the *Crowley Report* (1998), narrowing the focus in the subsequent *Ramsey Review* (2000) and the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) to one in which only part of the story was being told. This worked to change the trajectory of the discourse and make it possible to reframe the way in which teachers and professional standards were being perceived, described, expressed, and characterised (Foucault, 1974a, p. 217).

The tracing of the emergence of teacher quality has served to reveal the erratic and discontinuous process whereby the past became the present. The analyses identified a significant rupture with the past, one which reflected the influence of a neoliberal rationale, the marketisation of education, and governance through notions of performance, accountability, and the capitalisation of the self. The rupture produced three significant effects. First, the responsibility for quality in education was seen to shift away from government and the state toward the individual teacher as responsible for their personal capacity to deliver a quality education. Second, a shift was seen in the changing focus from what teachers *do*, toward who teachers *are*, and third, professional standards changed from a development framework, *for* and *by* teachers, to an accountability and regulatory framework, *done to* teachers. Thus, the teacher quality concept has had significant effects on education

theory, policy, and practice, teacher education and continuing professional development, teacher selection, and teacher identity.

A significant finding of this study is that teacher quality in contemporary discourse, did not emerge from facts or definitions, but rather it emerged as a social construct based on assumptions, values, and beliefs, melded with policy borrowing. The resulting construct of teacher quality and professional standards are characteristic of frameworks of discipline and bio power (Foucault, 1978, p. 139) used to develop characteristics deemed desirable (Bacchi, 2009, p. 161). The discursive process exposes a power-knowledge nexus where power produces knowledge, and accepted forms of knowledge functions as truth (Foucault, 1974a).

Contrary to the illusion generated in the parliamentary reports there is no consensus in the literature around the purpose and aims of teacher quality or the associated professional standards. Rather, the literature reflects the findings of the present research, that quality in education is no more than a mantra in need of a definition - a slogan (R. Alexander, 2015) or travelling idea (Bacchi, 2009), one which offers limited purchase on what quality actually entails (Alexander, 2015), serving as a smoke screen effectively obscuring equity in education (Mockler, 2014).

In addition, whilst the term teacher quality is commonly found with adjectives such as good, effective, and competent (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Wallet, 2015), implying a particular definition of opinion of what works best (Strong, 2012), Berliner (2005) reminds us "quality always requires value judgments about which disagreement abound" (p. 206). It is somewhat predicable, therefore, that in the face of enduring complexities in the research evidence (S. Ball, 2012; Connell, 2009; Parker, 2012; Rice, 2003; Stoel & Thant, 2002), deep divisions endure around the intended purpose and use of a standardised framework (APST) (Beyer, 2002; Bourke et al., 2012; Codd, 2004; Connell, 2009; Louden, 2000; Mahony & Hextall, 2000; Ni Chroinin et al., 2012; Sachs, 2011), that is, one which operates to represent a singular construct; an arbiter or gatekeeper of quality, despite the "plurality of publics" (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 169), and plurality of meanings.

The teacher quality construct is argued to have created a one-size-fits-all model, which has objectified teachers, and instrumentalised teaching (Gale, 2006), serving only to decompose teachers work into auditable competencies and performances, whilst failing to engage with the reality that teaching is situated in context and is collaborative and social in nature. The

process, underpinned by the neoliberal rationale, is argued to be attempting to "burden individuals with tasks that used to be the responsibility of governments and the state" (Biesta, 2015, p. 76).

Teacher quality has created a subject position where teachers are only considered competent, effective, efficient, and, therefore, highly regarded, when they can demonstrate or comply with predetermined standards. Despite it being difficult for teachers to resist for fear of being labelled militant or unreasonable, some propose teachers can, and should, choose to resist this subject position (Connell, 2009; Rizvi, 2016; Sachs, 2003a).

The proposal is reasonable, given the following: a) these analyses have shown that beneath the current discourse of teacher quality there is no consensus in definition nor in purpose for the term; b) despite a plethora of research into teacher quality, it remains unclear as to why, even when teachers' meet all the current requirements of the APST, some succeed where others fail; c) this serves to confirm that teacher quality is much more complex than the simple valid/invalid, reliable/unrealiable, good/bad dichotomy presented in the APST would suggest; and d) that the construct is detremental to teacher health and well-being.

Moreover, teaching standards have not provided teachers with a voice against ill-informed or gratuitous criticism as the *Crowley Report* (1998) intended. Quite the opposite. The defacto politicisation and mediatisation of education policy now use teacher quality and professional standards to garner public support for reform policies. This is important as it serves to perpetuate the blame game, which the literature suggests is implicit in the following: declining teacher morale (Shamir, 2008), ill health caused by stress and burnout (Parker, 2012), loss of professional integrity (Santoro, 2013), dilemmas in forming a teaching identity (Bodman et al., 2012), decreasing autonomy (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), growing expectations and responsibilities and changes in school structure (Fernet, 2012), and low public status (Cunningham, 1992; L. Hargreaves et al., 2007).

The problematic nature of the teacher quality construct is reflected in Connell's suggestion that the good teacher is now defined under registration authorities in "an incoherent but insistent way" (2009) - a tension which according to Tsui (2009), has contributed to teacher self-doubt. This is unsurprising as teacher quality has been shown to constitute a negative subject position, where the dominant discursive frame is implied (in)competence in need of more, and more comprehensive, regulatory standards.

Thus, the emergence of teacher quality has created a paradox. It is a construct which is argued to implicitly deny, or at best work against, the professional autonomy required to achieve teaching quality, which was a stated goal in all three parliamentary reports in this study. Yet a standardised framework, in the form of the APST, as arbitrated by AITSL (2014), has become the litmus test of teacher quality, used to maximize teacher effectiveness (OECD, 2005, 2012b; Wise & Leibbrand, 2000), and in current political discourse teacher effectiveness equates to quality in education.

The emergence of teacher quality in education policy has changed the trajectory of the debate around quality in education. The literature shows the debate has become saturated with concerns about the implications and unintended consequences of the teacher quality construct, and the associated standardised framework, on education theory, policy, and practice, and the associated effects on schooling, teacher education and continuing professional development, teacher selection, teacher identity, teacher working conditions, and teacher health and well-being. Stakeholder scepticism of these constructs was a predictable response given the findings of this study shows a) teacher quality is a social construct underpinned by, assumptions, bias, values and beliefs, melded with borrowed education policy, and b) the research shows ongoing ambiguity in definition, and lack of consensus over the purpose of teacher quality and the associated professional standards.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This study set out to trace the emergence and permutations of teacher quality in Australian parliamentary reports 1998—2007. The present research is grounded in the understanding that social policy problems and their solutions, are always socially constructed, and are situated in particular historical contexts. The literature review in Chapter 2 revealed that despite the dominance of teacher quality found in Australian education policy, there was no discernible agreement about its definitive characteristics, nor any consensus as to its aim. The literature review also served to demonstrate that the concept of quality in education is even more complex than the narrow good/bad dichotomy presented in teacher quality and the APST. This highlighted an important gap in the research literature. Three research questions were designed to explore how teacher quality had become so dominant in educational discourses and examine the effects of the concept on the trajectory of education policy and more specifically, on teachers.

The research questions were:

Q1. What factors have shaped the emergence of teacher quality in Australian education policy?
Q2. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality?
Q3. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And, more specifically, on teachers?

This final chapter will conclude with a response to each of the research questions chronologically in light of the preceding, elaborated, findings. I will then contrast the findings of the present research with the existing field of knowledge. This chapter then considers the implications of the findings for policy makers, and teachers, before presenting the conclusion. In this way I emphasise the original contribution to the body of knowledge around the concept of teacher quality, and its significance both theoretically and empirically to the field of education policy and practice.

9.2 Response to the research questions

Q1. What factors have shaped the emergence of teacher quality in Australian education policy?

The present research has identified five main factors which influenced and shaped the emergence of teacher quality in the key parliamentary reports. These factors were the following: conceptual logics, discursive tactics, a neoliberal values orientation, rhetorics of crisis, and historical and personal values, beliefs and biases about teachers.

The concept of teacher quality was found to rest upon *conceptual logics*. These logics either created, or contributed to, accepted knowledge and truth. These conceptual logics were identified as follows: 1) quality is a fact-based concept, 2) that there was a quality deficit in Australian schooling, 3) that the deficit/s of quality represented a crisis in need of reform, and 4) that the marketization of education was in the best interests of the nation.

In the absence of any clear and agreed definition of quality, *discursive tactics* (juxtaposition, repetition, binaries, and discursive creep), together with selected authoritative texts, created the illusion that quality in this context reflected stakeholder consensus. The discursive process worked to support acceptable claims to truth, these claims reflecting a *neoliberal values orientation*. This orientation underpinned the assumption that the marketisation of education (and all that it brings with it, such as accountability, entrepreneurship, competition and choice, and the ideological predispostion against a collective workforce) is good for education and for the nation. A binary discourse created a process of exclusion, which positioned the union as deficit - an agent of 'non-quality'. This operated to silence union contribution to the debate about quality, a process which attempted to dismantle collaboration and collective working practices in favour of neoliberal individualist ideals. This in turn, built momentum for who was being targeted - an accountable, measurable, individualised, entrepreneurial subject – the teacher.

The findings show that despite the parliamentary reports explicitly and implicitly asserting there was no general or major crisis, the assumed deficit in the quality of schooling operated to cultivate a *rhetoric of crises* and a sense of panic. Berliner and Biddle (1996) notion of a manufactured crisis, can and clearly has served as an act of persuasion to elicit support and acceptance for subsequent policy proposals.

An important factor contributing to the acceptance of teachers as both the problem and the solution, was that the discourse looped back, and gained traction from *historical and personal values, beliefs and biases* – the historical notions of teaching as a low status profession suitable only for women (Drudy, 2008), who were neither high achievers (Weis, 1987), nor ambitious (Gerbner, 1966; Troen & Boles, 2003). Together these conceptual logics, assumptions, values, beliefs and biases, needed to be in place for the policy aims to gain credibility and be considered rational. This finding confirms Lingard's (2010) warning that careful consideration needs to be given to the potential effects of borrowed policy, and the possible implications of national histories and cultural factors.

The findings of the present study show that these factors (conceptual logics, assumptions, values, beliefs, and biases) operated to elicit specific effects. These effects were identified as follows: 1) to open a space for challenge and change (Bacchi, 2009), 2) to generate acceptance for reform, 3) to advance acceptable truth, which in this context worked to appease and/or progress the influence of government rationale, 4) to reframe the debate and narrow the focus toward the teacher as both the problem and the solution, and finally 5) to reframe standards as an accountability mechanism. This operated to give the state support and legitimacy for its reform agendas, whilst silencing other discourses which may have had greater merit.

These effects resulted in facilitating a rupture with the past, significantly changing the nature of the way in which teachers were being perceived, described and characterised, shifting from a collective workforce to an individualised category of teacher quality. Importantly, this worked to move the responsibility for quality in education away from the government and the state, from education systems and their public resourcing, toward the individual teacher. According to Biesta's (2015) research, this finding indicates an attempt to "burden individuals with tasks that used to be the responsibility of governments and the state" (p. 76). In the process this changed the focus of the debate from what teachers *do*, toward who teachers *are,* effectively moved the discursive frame from one where teachers *can* make a difference to one where teachers *are* the difference (Gale, 2006) – and heralded the individual category of teacher quality.

The newly created category of teacher quality facilitated another change: significantly changing the way in which professional standards were being characterised, shifting from a development framework - standards *for* and *by* teachers, to an accountability framework –

standards imposed on or *done to* teachers. In the absence of any substantive evidence, standards emerged as a regulatory framework; a system of structures and process used to determine who should be admitted, and who would graduate, thus determining the sort of people allowed to become teachers, and the aptitudes and behaviours considered acceptable.

In tracing the emergence of the seemingly objective teacher quality category, the findings of the present research reveal that it has emerged as a construction of ideas which arguably obscure more than they reveal. This serves to further illuminate the enduring lack of consensus surrounding quality in education found in the literature review.

The findings of the present research adds to previous research that has critiqued the narrowing concept of 'quality in education' under neoliberal government. This research confirms that within a neoliberal ideological setting, concern for return on investment in education has led Australian educational policy to employ neoliberal technologies with an increasing emphasis on teacher accountability (S. Ball, 1990a, 2012; Bowe et al., 1992; Connell, 2009, 2013; Gale, 2006; Mausethagen, 2013). The findings of the present research also serve to validate the proposition that quality operates as a slogan in need of a definition (R. Alexander, 2015), and that the dominance of quality discourses has become "a smoke screen that effectively obscures the issue of equity in education" (Mockler, 2014, p. 115), serving to detract from issues which may have equal or greater merit. The present research has revealed how these phenomena are manifest in these major documents.

Q2. What has been left unproblematic in the rendering of the notion of teacher quality?

The analyses of the present research have revealed a tangled web of discursive tensions across all parliamentary reports which can be summarised as revolving around: contested conceptualisations of 'quality in education'; and the erosion of teachers' professional autonomy. These tensions were provoked by the rending of a single measure of quality in education – that of the teacher quality concept. The analyses also highlighted the discursive tactics which were employed to silence or reframe these tensions. However, as the field of education has multiple stakeholders, with a corresponding plurality of views, a singlular model of quality in education is understandably problematic. The literature review in Chapter 2 demonstrated that as a result of the neoliberal ideological push in education policy, these

tensions have intensified. A trend that has been further consolidated, with predictable implications.

Contested conceptualisations of quality in education

The *Crowley Report* (1998) stated, "Education, and a quality school system, remain a fundamental responsibility of government … and it is a simply matter of equity that young people, regardless of where they reside should enjoy the benefits of quality teaching" (Crowley, 1998, p. 2000). In subsequent reports, in the rendering of teacher quality, responsibility for quality in education was seen to move away from the government toward the individual teacher. Tensions which were provoked by this shift were silenced and considered unproblematic.

However, some research literature suggests the shift in responsibility has resulted in solutions, aimed at improving quality in education, becoming constrained by the teacher quality concept. Solutions are now seen to range from teacher literacy and numeracy testing for pre-service teachers, to the establishment and application of teaching standards, to large-scale 'overhauls' of teacher education curricula (Mockler, 2018, p. 262). A result is that teacher quality in educational policy does not operate as part of a holistic approach to improving 'quality in education', but rather obscures issues of equity in favour of the market logic of competition and choice. But expanded choice simply shifts old forms of inequality based on institutional segregation, to new forms of inequality based on market mechanisms which operate to ration the access to quality in education by virtue of constrained parental ability to choose. This reproduces the privileges of dominant social groups (Connell, 2013), and as a consequence, remains contested and problematic.

The issue of who controls the field of judgement and what is judged to constitute 'quality in education' is therefore critical to creating 'truth and knowledge' (Foucault, 1977), and demonstrates why school funding models such as The *Gonski Review* (Gonski et al., 2011), often reduced to a competition between public and private schooling, remain contested. Multiple conceptualisations of 'quality in education' are representative of diverse stakeholder values and beliefs. As a consequence, a single measure of teacher quality which reflects the neoliberal ideals of a performance managed audit culture, is argued to have changed the "purpose, values, structure, control, relationships and organization" of education (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 1), remains problematic.

The erosion of teacher autonomy, and the impact on teacher status, teacher self -efficacy, teacher morale, and the quality of teaching

The *Crowley Report* (1998) recommendation for professional standards alluded to professional autonomy and self-regulation, aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning from within the profession. In the rendering of teacher quality in the subsequent reports, standards became linked to accountability and regulation. Regulatory standards, informed by top-down research represents a controlling mechanism for imposing external accountability regimes – a bureaucratic standardised procedure which reduces teacher autonomy (Sachs, 2003b).

The literature suggests, a lack of teacher control over their own work undermines their professional standing, negatively impacts teacher status, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher morale, and denies them Fraser the power and flexibility they need to do their job (De Vries et al., 2013; K. Fraser et al., 2010). Teacher quality is argued to have created a single view of teacher effectiveness which has emerged from the closed loop of neoliberal rationale (Connell 2013) - a model, which has led to professional learning tailored to allow teachers to demonstrate their competence against the standards (Mockler 2013). The model remains problematic as there *is no* consensus about what it means to be an effective teacher (K. Fraser et al., 2010; Kennedy, 2005; Shum, 2012; Tsui, 2009; Zeichner & Bekisizwe, 2008).

It is important to note that it is not the potential value of standards which is contested, it is their imposition as a controlling device. Their use in this way presents significant implications for teacher autonomy, teacher self-efficacy, teacher well-being, and teaching quality, and consequently standards in their present form remain problematic.

Q3. What effects have discourses of teacher quality had on education policy generally? And more specifically, on teachers?

The present study shows the discursive process observed in the key parliamentary reports had four significant effects.

First the responsibility for quality in education was seen to shift away from government and the state toward the individual – the teacher. This change has arguably contributed to what I argue is an illusion: that educational funding can be cut, and equitable access to education can be ignored, without impacting negatively on educational quality.

Second, a shift was seen in the changing focus from what teachers *do*, toward who teachers *are*. This has led to greater and more systematic regulation of initial teacher education, of teacher selection, and professional development, all of which have come to be presented as the primary solutions to the ever-present crisis in the quality of Australian schooling. This is a significant finding as it confirms the views that the concept of teacher quality acts as a discursive barrier to: achieving greater equity in education (Levin, 2012), raising teacher status (Waddell, 2012), reducing teacher attrition (Buchanan & Prescott, 2013), and ensuring adequate allocation of government resources and teacher pay (Connell, 2009).

Third, the analyses show professional standards changed from a development framework, *for* and *by* teachers, to an accountability framework, *done to* teachers. This is argued to have had a profound effect on the lives of teachers (C. Campbell & Proctor, 2014) as they have been positioned in the realm of standardised instrumentality effectively reducing teaching to a role rather than an identity (Mockler, 2011b), demeaning the role of teacher autonomy in teachers' self-efficacy and self-fulfilment (De Vries et al., 2013), and which shows little regard for the collaborative and social nature of teaching (O'loughlin, 2007). The resulting confusion in purpose, and loss of moral compass is argued to have created a dilemma for many teachers between "doing good and being good" (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 11), a position which the literature attests has: negatively impacted teacher morale, raised teacher attrition, increased teacher burnout, and contributed to teacher ill health. The focus on the technical rationale skills, also devalues the impact of teacher dispositions and teacher differentiation, both of which are important factors in achieving teaching quality diverse contexts. This has implications for teacher morale, teacher identity, teacher education, and school practices and administration (S. Ball & Goodson, 2004).

Fourth, the centrality of teachers in the concept of teacher quality reinforces the idea that there is something wrong with the quality of individual teachers, rather than the quality of the education system or with the quality of particular curricular or teaching practices. This effectively makes individual teachers central in the blame game, proven to have impacted negatively on teacher status, teacher morale (Phi Delta Kappa International, 2013), and ironically, on teaching quality (Crowley, 1998), which, paradoxically, was a stated aim of the key parliamentary reports.

Discourses of teacher quality, which have emerged from neoliberal ideals, have significantly changed the "purpose, values, structure, control, relationships and organization" of

education (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 1). The analysis of the reports demonstrates how within the context of education policy, quality has become a smoke screen that "effectively obscures the issue of equity in education" (Mockler, 2014, p. 115). It is argued, therefore, that teacher quality has acted to widen the appature between quality in education measured in terms of equity and social justice, and quality in education focused on parental choice and teacher accountability – a position which implicitly questions the credibility, integrity, and competence of teachers, and has resulted in a trust deficit bigger than the percieved quality defict.

9.3 Summary of findings

The findings of the present research confirm Bacchi's (2009) suggestion that "problems do not and cannot exist outside of the way in which they are conceptualised" (p. 262).

The present study has identified five main factors which influenced and shaped the emergence of teacher quality in the key parliamentary reports. These factors were the following: conceptual logics; discursive tactics; a neoliberal values orientation; rhetorics of crisis; and historical and personal values, beliefs and biases about teachers. These conceptual logics, assumptions, values, beliefs and biases needed to be in place for the policy aims, (assumed) deficits, and the in(competent) teacher, to gain credibility and be considered rational.

These five factors operated to elicit specific effects: to open a space for challenge and change (Bacchi, 2009); to generate acceptance for reform; to advance acceptable 'truth' – which in this context worked to appease and/or progress the influence of government rationale; to reframe the debate and narrow the focus toward the teacher as both the problem and the solution; and, finally, to reframe standards as an accountability mechanism. This operated to give the state support and legitimacy for its agendas, whilst silencing other discourses which may have had greater merit.

The discursive process worked to create knowledge and truth, heralding a rupture with the past. Thus the rendering of teacher quality has had significant implications for the trajectory of the debate: 1) responsibility for quality in education was seen to move away from government toward the teacher; 2) the focus of the debate changed from what teachers *do*, to who teachers *are*; and 3) this worked to change standards away from a framework *for* and

by teachers, toward an accountability mechanism, imposed or *done to* teachers – a system of structures and process used to determine who should be admitted, and who would graduate, thus, determining the sort of people allowed to become teachers, and the aptitudes and behaviours considered acceptable.

The present research further demonstrates that the concept of teacher quality is a social construct, underpinned by assumptions, bias, values and beliefs, melded with borrowed education policy, and as such there is ongoing ambiguity in definition, and lack of consensus over the purpose of teacher quality and the associated professional standards. Moreover, there are ongoing concerns about the effects and implications provoked by teacher quality in education, considered to have eroded teacher autonomy, negatively impacted teacher status, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher morale, and the quality of teaching.

The findings of this research show teacher quality remains both controversial and consequential, as it has had implications for education theory, policy, and practice, and associated effects on schooling, teacher education and continuing professional development, teacher selection, teacher identity, teacher working conditions, and teacher health and well-being. The concept has limited possibilities for thought, and in the process detracted from, and neglected other issues which may have greater or equal merit in providing a quality education system.

9.4 Implications for policy makers

The present research reveals teacher quality to be an overly narrow conceptualisation of 'quality in education', and one which has emerged from conceptual logics, assumptions, existing values and beliefs, discursive practices, and borrowed policy. Moreover, the analyses revealed how certain discourses have been preferenced to support desirable claims to truth – those which reflected a neoliberal values orientation.

The literature review in Chapter 2 shows the concept of teacher quality has inadvertently had multiple negative effects. The implication for policy makers is that this implies current educational policies and practices based on teacher quality, including regulatory standards, may serve to contradict policy objectives by demeaning the role of teacher autonomy and self-efficacy, thus constraining teachers' ability to provide quality teaching, or to sustain teaching careers over the longer term (Smaller, 2015).

The findings of the present research imply that policies designed to encourage a more democratic, transformative, and activist form of teacher professionalism (Sachs, 2003a), whilst promoting bottom-up improvement informed by research (Bain et al., 2009), would support the complexities of teachers' work and identities (Sachs, 2003a) and therefore present considerable opportunities to simultaneously raise teacher status, lift teacher morale, and improve the quality of teaching.

Sachs (2016) suggests an approach in which professional standards are designed to combine contractual (regulatory entrance requirements) with responsive accountability (research informed and improvement driven). I would suggest that such an approach would simultaneously enable: 1) teacher voice, which the *Crowley Report (1998)* deemed necessary to combat ill-informed criticisms, 2) professional standards, which the *Crowley Report* (1998), the *Ramsey Report* (2000) and the *Hartsuyker Report* (2007) all deemed necessary for quality assurance, and 3) accountability to the community, society and peers. This would provide teacher autonomy and self-efficacy as they would be owned by, and, professionally driven.

Such a conceptual framework for professional standards would allow teachers to engage with wider societal problems, many of which schools alone cannot resolve. Educational policy designed in this way, would allow teachers to engage with the forces and policies which create, re-inforce, or subjugate societal problems. In so doing schools can become places where such problems can be challenged and moderated within the framework of quality which sees education as a social justice issue.

9.5 Implications for teachers

The emergence of teacher quality heralded a "profound transition" (Tuschling & Engemann, 2006, p. 451), manifest in a realigning of responsibility for quality in education away from government and toward the teacher. This has implications for teachers in a range of complex and contradictory ways.

Teacher quality has created a paradox for teachers, for whilst they are selected based on their ability to meet desirable professional criteria, such as attaining the necessary skills, knowledge, beliefs and attributes, at the same time teachers are held accountable to prescriptive and narrow measures of teaching standards. These standards are focused on codification and accountability, are limited in scope, and deny teachers' the autonomy to

utilise professional judgment, and the agency and self-efficacy to enable critical collaboration (K. Fraser et al., 2010).

Additionally, the notion of teacher quality must be set against the background of inequitable educational (and wider social and economic) structures. Many teachers view their work as the social, emotional, and moral development of students, a process which creates and maintains an equitable, socially cohesive society. This underpins the reason why many teachers came into the profession. Without this emphasis, teachers feel their moral obligation to provide a democratic education compromised (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009).

The teacher quality construct, therefore, arguably overlooks the needs of teachers, and works against quality teaching and learning. Not surprisingly, many teachers and teacher unions remain resistant to being held accountable to APST and externally led research.

Teacher quality in education policy presents teachers with a choice. Teachers must either transform themselves into an auditable commodity to survive: a position of compliance with standards (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009), one which may demand not only the re-forming of their professional identity, but also of their personal identity, or, resist and risk further deterieration in public perceptions, ultimately fueling the blame game. Either way teacher morale has been, and may further be, negatively affected.

I would suggest therefore that teachers need to act to offer counter-discourses that challenge existing truth claims regarding quality in education. Sachs (2003a) calls upon teachers to engage in greater activism. Whilst the term *activism* suggests militancy and defiance against bureaucratic control, this form of activism is different (Sachs, 2016, p. 252), it is positive and seen by many teachers as a moral obligation.

I argue that adopting an activist voice could provide opportunities for the profession to engage in open debate about ways to develop the teaching profession and improve the learning outcomes of students: an internally driven process with the interests of teachers and students as the central rationale. This would enable a strong and confident teaching profession, one where teachers' are accountable to their communities, their students and their peers, not to the neoliberal imaginary.

9.6 Concluding remarks

The term teacher quality has become prominent in education policy across all Anglophone countries. However the enduring puzzles in the literature suggest there may not be shared and observable defining features of effective teaching across all contexts (Strong et al., 2011). Whilst there is substantial literature that has addressed some aspects of teacher quality, to date no studies have examined the evolution of concept in the Australian context. For this reason, the present study questioned why teacher quality has become so dominant in public and political discourse. This study used a sociological perspective and discourse analysis to trace the origin of teacher quality in key Australian parliamentary reports 1998—2007. A unique feature of this study was in its engagement with the past, revealing the erratic and discontinuous processes that have led to beliefs which continue to have meaning.

What the present research found was that teacher quality emerged, not from facts, but as a social construct, resting upon historical assumptions, personal values and beliefs, melded with borrowed policy. In the rendering of the concept, conflicting and contradictory ideas, which may have had greater merit in improving the quality of education, were silenced or reframed to reflect the dominant neoliberal values of the marketisation of education, individualisation, and accountability. This finding confirms Gale's (1994) suggestion that irrespective of the factors contributing to the problem, solutions are constructed in a way that an inquiry believes it can solve. This is a significant finding, as teacher quality has had three important effects on the trajectory of the debate in education policy.

First, teacher quality has moved the responsibility for quality in education away from the government and the state toward the individual teacher. A change that has arguably contributed to the illusion that educational funding can be cut, and equitable access to education can be ignored, without impacting negatively on educational quality.

Second, the focus of the debate moved away from what teachers *do*, toward who teachers *are*. This has led to greater and more systematic regulation of initial teacher education, of teacher selection, and professional development, all of which have come to be presented as the primary solutions to the ever-present crisis in the quality of Australian schooling.

Third, teacher quality has significantly changed the way in which professional standards are characterised, shifting from a development framework - standards *for* and *by* teachers, to a regulatory mechanism – standards imposed or *done to* teachers.

The resulting APST operates as a system of structures and process used to determine who should be admitted, and who would graduate, thus, determining the sort of people allowed to become teachers, and the aptitudes and behaviours considered acceptable. The detremental effects of the teacher quality construct on educational theory, teaching practice, on teachers' working environment and personal well being are well documented.

The present study has served to confirm that quality always requires a value judgment where disagreements abound (Berliner, 2005). It argues that the concept of teacher quality in education policy has, perhaps counter-intuitively, limited and constrained possibilities for thought, and in the process detracted from, and neglected other issues which may have greater or equal merit in providing a quality education system. The rendering of teacher quality has altered the trajectory of the discourse from one focused on what teachers do, toward one focused on who teachers are.

Given the ongoing controversy and consequences of the teacher quality concept, this study argues in favour of moving beyond the constraints of the teacher quality construct, to (re)imagine quality in more complex ways, one in which the broadest possible debate can (re)consider the meaning of quality in education. In so doing the findings of this present study can assist policy makers and teachers to reframe quality and see constructions of quality in present-day policy in a new way. This contributes to our understanding of teacher quality as a 'questionable' truth in public and political discourses, and that produced and conceived in a different time, the obvious is not obvious at all.

Postscript

Quality in education is now defined as *teacher quality*, arbitrated by the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST). The *Standards* were endorsed by The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in December 2010. Figure 14 shows the timeline of events leading up to the implementation of the standards that are now synonymous with teacher quality.

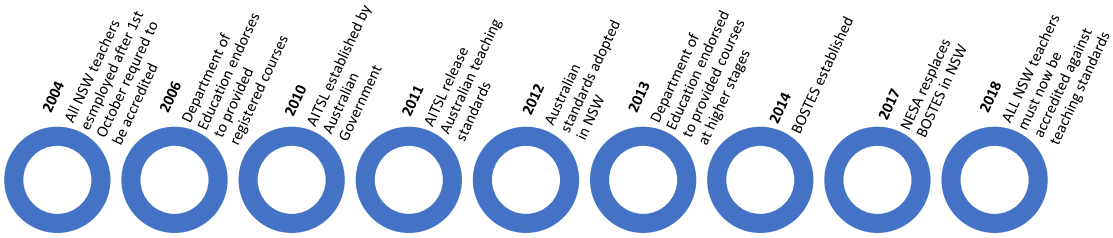


Figure 14: Timeline showing events toward a standards-based teaching profession

The APST continue to allude to a problem with teacher quality and the need to improve (M. Ryan & Bourke, 2013), and the framework remains firmly focused on the individual teacher.

As of October 2018, yet another review, this time into teacher registration, resulted in a number of recommendations. Launching the report entitled *One Teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia*, the Expert Panel chair, Chris Wardlaw PSM stated,

> These recommendations provide clear and practical steps to maintain or improve the high standards of the profession, strengthen child safety, and streamline teacher registration across Australia (AITSL, 2018).

This statement illustrates two points. First, the use of the term *improve* continues to allude to a problem with the quality of teachers, specifically in relation to what teachers do, and second, it demonstrates the ongoing attempts to further burden teachers with tasks that used to be the responsibility of governments and the state. The authors of the report claim that implementation of the recommendations will give "the community confidence that all teachers keep their children safe" (AITSL, 2018).

Similarly, media coverage of the release of the report, which was headlined *How Teacher Quality is Being Revamped*, quoted the Chair, Chris Wardlaw PSM to state that the

recommendations would, "ensure only people who meet standards of quality and suitability can be teachers" (Brett Henebery, 2018). The use of the term *suitable* continues to allude to a problem with the quality of teachers, specifically in relation to who teachers are.

On September 3rd 2018 Jordan Baker of the Sydney Morning Herald published an article about the new standards to be set by the NSW government. Perpetuating the blame game, Baker reported,

> Under the new hiring standards, graduates will only be allowed to apply for jobs in the public system once they have shown superior cognitive and emotional intelligence in a psychometric test administered by the Department of Education.
>
> They will have to demonstrate their commitment to yet-to-be-defined values of public education (such as inclusivity and diversity) in a behavioural interview, and achieve at least a credit average in their degree.
>
> All their practical assessments will be scrutinised to ensure that they are not hiding bad feedback. Applications from students that did an online-only course will not be given preference, but there will be exceptions for students with no other option.
>
> Mr Stokes said the standards ensured the selection process focused on aptitude for teaching as well as academic achievement. (Jordan Baker, 2018)

At the same time, the struggle to control truth and to highlight the consequences of the current policy trajectory continues. This is seen in the submission to the Committee of the review of teacher registration. In it Dr Mark Merry, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, contests:

> Any proposals for further regulatory measures linked to teacher registration must be carefully considered for their impact on teacher and school autonomy and other expressions of professional agency
>
> Casualisation of the teacher workforce and the increasing number of teachers seeking part-time employment to achieve greater work-life balance are workforce management issues that have a countervailing effect on the intent of teacher registration to regulate teaching quality (Merry, 2018)

Similar struggles to control truth and to highlight the consequences of the trajectory of educational policy are seen in England. On January 11th 2018 Anushka Asthana and Mason Boycott-Owen of The Guardian, published an article warning that an epidemic of stress is to blame for 3,750 teachers on long-term sick leave. In it Layla Moran, Liberal Democrats

education spokesperson, claims research carried out by the Liberal Democrats reflects "the impossible pressures our teachers are being put under" (Asthana & Boycott-Owen, 2018). Teaching Union spokesperson Dr Mary Bousted, pointed to "a relentless policy onslaught which has left teachers rocking from stress and exhaustion."(Asthana & Boycott-Owen, 2018)

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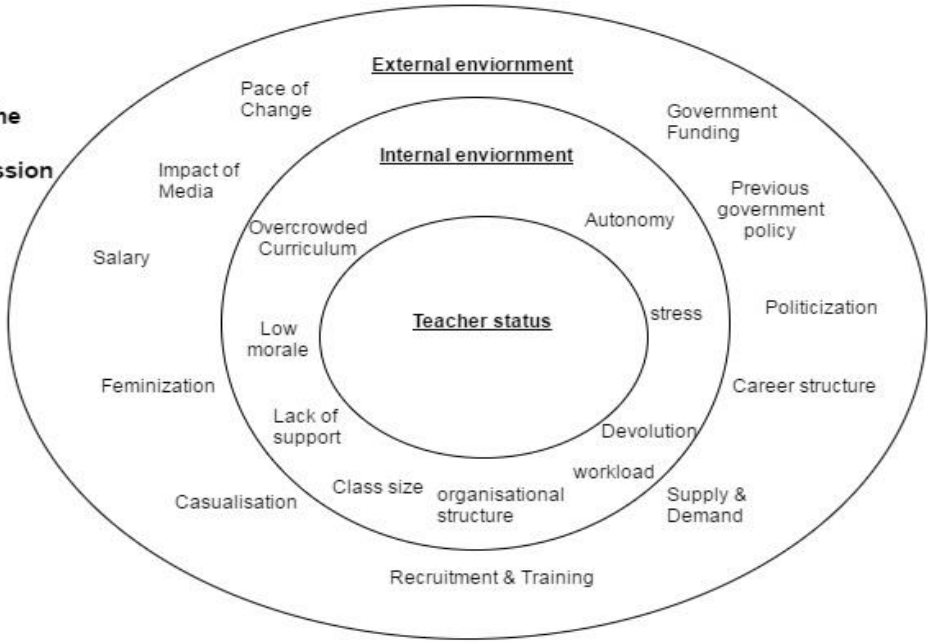
Appendix B - Mind maps from the first reading of the *Crowley Report* (1998) and the *Ramsey Review* (2000)

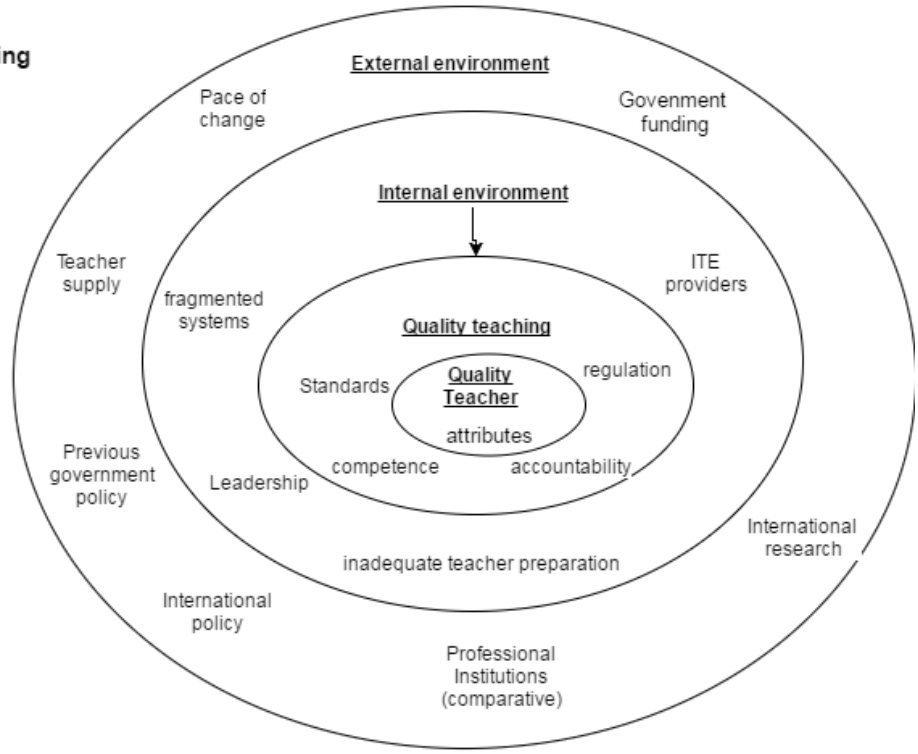
A Class Act

Factors affecting the status of the teaching profession



Quality Matters; Revitalising Teaching

Factors affecting the quality of teaching



Appendix C - Thematic threads of quality evident in chapters of the *Ramsey Review*

Terms of Reference	Chapter 1	Chapter 2,3 & 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6 & 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9 & 10
Quality teachers	Quality teachers	Quality teachers	Quality teachers	Quality teachers	Quality teacher	Quality teachers
		Teacher quality	Teacher quality	Teacher quality	Teacher quality	
	Quality teaching Quality of teachers' work	Quality teaching Quality work Quality professional practice	Quality teaching Quality professional practice Quality teaching and learning	Quality teaching Quality of what they do	Quality teaching Quality pedagogy Quality professional practice Quality teaching and learning	
Quality initial teacher education curriculum	Quality teacher education	Quality teacher education Quality initial and continuing teacher education	Quality teacher education Quality initial teacher education	Quality initial teacher training Quality teacher education		Quality teacher education courses Course quality Quality of course delivery
	Quality profession	Quality profession	Quality profession	Quality profession Quality in other professions		Quality workforce
High quality candidates	Quality students	Intellectual quality	Quality applicants	Quality people Quality of new entrants		Quality students Quality entrants Quality intake
Quality initial teacher preparation		Quality preparation Quality practicum Quality induction	Quality teacher preparation Quality professional experience Quality of tomorrow's teachers	Quality professional experience		Quality of field experience
			Quality schools and systems		Quality educational practices (schools)	Quality of school support
		Quality assurance processes Quality mechanisms	Quality focus	Quality assurance Quality focus Quality control Quality reviews Quality management Issues of quality Quality movements	Quality improvement Quality guarantees	Quality improvement
		Quality performance	Quality student learning	Quality outcomes	Quality of student learning	
				Quality standards Quality code of ethics	Quality standards	
Quality continuing education programs						
	Quality curriculum					
			Haemorrhaging of quality	Quality		Quality
				Teaching quality		
	Quality leadership		Quality educational leadership			