**0330**

**Policy verbs: towards a theory of enactments**

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**Background**

Drawing on data collected as part of the 'Policy enactments in secondary schools' research project (see symposium details), this paper explores the way in which teachers relate to policy through their talk and thus, how they represent the ways in which policy is done to them and how they do policy.

**Research Questions**

Taking as a starting point the way in which Norman Fairclough (2001) deals with a variety of aspects of interpersonal positioning in different written and spoken contexts, the paper will plot the relation of teachers to different sorts of policies, and the relation of different teachers (with different positions and histories) to similar policies. The grammar and wording employed in the reception and interpretation of policies, as elicited in our research interviews, will be subject to careful analysis and comparison. We suggest in particular that **verbs and verb forms** (e.g. active and passive) indicate types of relationship of teachers to policies. Through this means of analysis the role of teachers as interpreters and translators, as well as subjects, of policy will be considered.

**Methods**

As outlined in the symposium proposal, we are working in four co-educational, non-denominational and non-selective secondary schools. For the research, we are collecting four kinds of data: a) Contextualising information from each school; b) Policy texts - national, local and school-centred; c) Observations of meetings, training, etc.; and d) Semi-structured interviews with various members of the school communities (what we have termed 'policy actors' and including senior management, teachers at all levels, non-teaching and local authority staff). This paper draws predominantly on the interviews. Overall the research will generate a data set of approx. 93 digitally recorded and transcribed interviews (52 have been completed at the time of writing). Initial coding of the interviews has involved content analysis and critical discourse analysis. Analysis, theorisation and writing are ongoing and are fed back into data collection to enable progressive focusing and identification of new themes and issues.

**Frame**

'Translation is a process of continuous displacement, transformation and negotiation' (Herbert-Cheshire 2003 p. 461) and enactment. That is, a form of 'active readership' (Lendvai and Stubbs 2006 p. 4) or 'a process of re-representation, re-ordering, and re-grounding through various discursive and material practices ... a process of displacement and dislocation (Callon 1986)' (Lendvai and Stubbs 2006 p. 5). Translation and enactment can involve processes of borrowing/sharing/adaptation through networks of actors/participants, in and out of school. It also involves selection among policies and the systematic neglect of some. We suggest that one way of making these processes visible, is by focusing analysis on the ways teachers in the case study schools use policy language.

**Research findings**

One intention of the paper is to highlight the play of power in this process, both the power that is embedded in particular policies and the powers of displacement that are involved in enactment. Embedded also in this is the way in which language is used to constitute a sense of being and identity, that is how identification is located in the use of language. In this case how teachers construct themselves as policy actors and as professionals (or not).

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