

Implementing the 'Donaldson Report'

Tracing policy making in action

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Setting the Scene...

Teacher Education Reform in Scotland:

Scottish education is steeped in **tradition, culture** and **history** (Menter & Hume, 2008): achieving stable **change** is not easy

Policy context in Scotland is **messy and complex**: huge number of organisations and associations with a stake in teacher education – lots of different interests

'Teaching Scotland's Future' is a policy text and contains **50 recommendations** for the improvement of teacher education in its **entirety**.
Two main themes are:

Strengthening partnerships between key agencies
Re-invigorating teacher professionalism

Two partnership groups, NPG and NIB, were created by Scottish Government to plan implementation in spirit of **'partnership'**. Both consist of key actors, or representatives, from a wide range of key agencies within Scottish education

Policy making is **complex** and **messy** (Ball, 1994); policy implementation is fluid, dynamic and temporal; and, policy texts are characterised by 'messy material complexities' and 'political negotiations' (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, p. 140).

We need methodologies that capture this **mess** and **complexity** (Law, 2004). **ANT** is one such approach.

Drawing on elements of Actor Network Theory (ANT)...

(Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Law, 2008; Latour, 2005)

ANT provides a framework for tracing complex activities that occur across **temporal and spatial** boundaries

Main assumption = both **humans** and **objects** have agency: allows researchers to focus on role of 'non-humans' – rather than prioritising human action

Two concepts useful for **policy analysis**:

Translation: how things come to be through 4 moments: problematisation, interessement, enrolment and mobilisation (Callon, 1986).

Token: A focal actor that can be traced through time and space, such as a policy text (Gaskell & Hepburn 1998).

ANT translation model of change opposes 'traditional diffusion model' of change (e.g. Fullan, 1991) which assumes that policy diffuses through society **unchanged** and **untouched**, with its success dependent on how many adopters and resisters it meets.

ANT translation model regards the policy as a **'token'** which is "either ignored or taken up by people who see their interests **translated** within it. In the process of shaping it to their interests, these people usually modify the token. The path of the token is a product of the number and strength of the links that are established... It is not a product of an initial quality, but of the subsequent action of a multitude of others" (Gaskell and Hepburn, 1998, p. 66).

To find out more about policy making and implementation, we need to trace the token as it moves through the NPG and NIB: **the main agenda set out in TSF**

"I think the challenge was, that the focus was at the beginning, representation of specific groups, and not always on having the... the right person in a particular group... the representation was a driver"

"the thing about partnership is that representation becomes the issue"

Research Context: Timeline



2010: Government commissioned **Review of Teacher Education in Scotland**

The Donaldson Report (Jan 2011): 50 recommendations for improvement of teacher education in its entirety

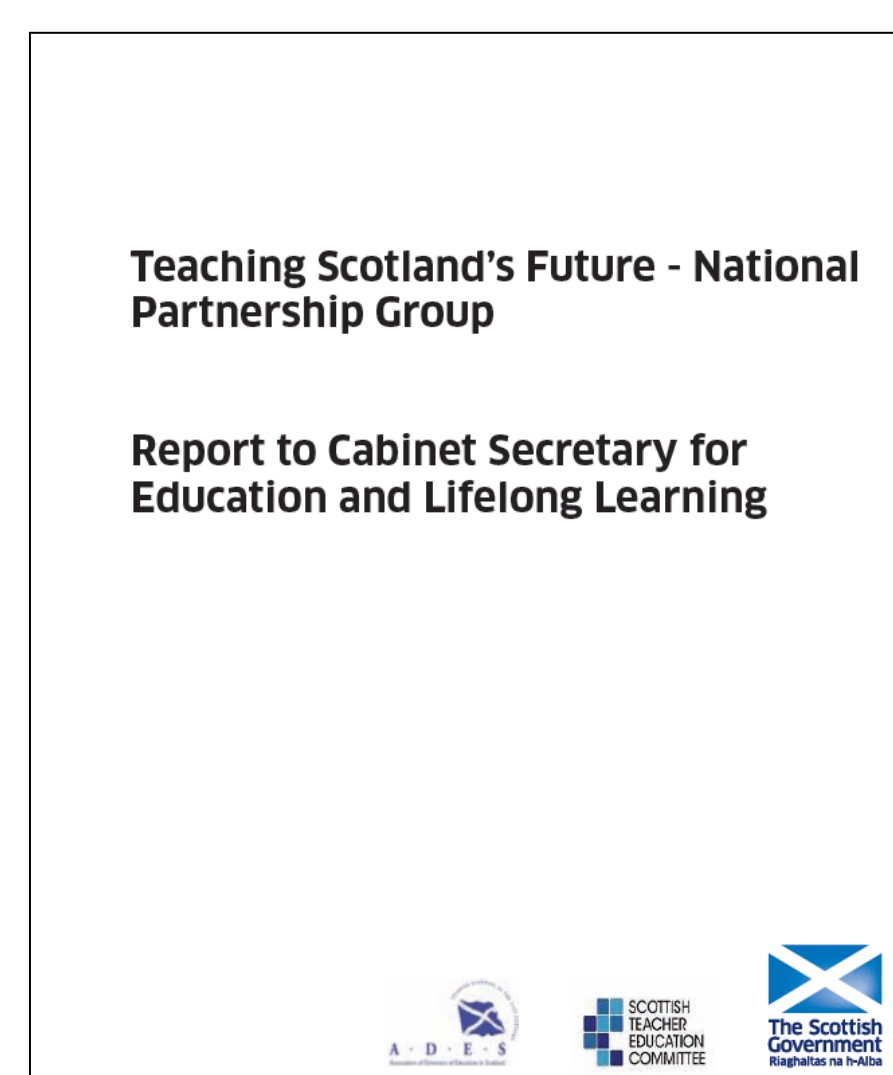


Jan 2011
Scottish Government accepted all 50 recommendations either in **full, in part or in principle**

Announced creation of the **National Partnership Group (NPG)** to plan implementation of recommendations

Sep 2012: NPG released Report of Recommendations

Nov 2012: Scottish Government accepted all recs and created a **National Implementation Board (NIB)** to drive NPG's recommendations forward



Oct 2013: I will finish collecting 'real time' data

I am interested in describing **what has happened between Jan 2011 and Oct 2013** – I want to join the dots in my data and fill in the missing pieces to trace the journey of a policy agenda as it has moved through temporal and spatial boundaries.

Why and how does it change and what does this say about the bodies involved in making Scottish education policy?

Preliminary Findings...

Research is ongoing...But there are some main themes emerging from interview data (phase one) – possible inhibiting factors:

✓ **Over-focus on representation** – members of NPG and NIB may not have been chosen because they had best expertise - **partnership becomes political**

✓ **Natural conservatism in Scottish education**

✓ **Location of power: Scottish Government is central**

What about the token?

Preliminary analysis has illuminated the areas that have become **modified** and those that have **'dropped off' the agenda**: further analysis is attempting to fill in the gaps

Big aims of Research

1. To **illuminate** a complex area of the policy process which is often ignored: the space between policy making and implementation
2. To **identify** and analyse the 'forces' at play which may act to **promote** or **inhibit** capacity for change.
3. To explore policy making in **Scottish education**: how is policy made and where does the **power** really lie?

How am I doing this?

Tracing the agenda from main report through discourse - identifying which parts:

- **remain the same**
- **become modified**
- **become silenced or drop off completely**

Identifying powerful actors and networks (human and objects) – what could be shaping the policy?

Illuminating organisations' interests and positions

Using my data to fill in the **missing pieces**: how did we get from there to here?



RESEARCH METHODS

Interview data: to gather information about processes and to determine each organisation's interests and position

Phase One: 23 semi-structured interviews with members of **NPG**

Phase Two (on-going): 10 semi-structured interviews with members of **NIB**

Documentary analysis on relevant policy texts, draft reports, working plans and press releases: tracing the token (ANT) (on-going)

"I think they were too conservative and too cautious"

"...It was just so let's keep it the same and not change it"

"I think at some level it will be the government that will need to make decisions in the end... there will have to be some political view taken of some of this...in terms of... the relative interests of the different stakeholders and the goal that's being sought"