Silenced voices: the disappearance of the university and the student teacher in teacher education policy discourse in England

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Abstract

The teacher preparation landscape in England has been subject to radical policy change. Since 2010 the policy agenda has repositioned initial teacher preparation as a craft best learnt through observation and imitation of teachers in school settings. Simultaneously a market based approach to the recruitment of pre-service teachers has led to significant changes for prospective entrants to the profession. In the enactment of policy between 2010-2015, the roles of universities and voices of prospective teachers were systematically silenced. Using critical discourse analysis we demonstrate how both actors have been positioned in, and have accommodated and resisted, the current policy discourses. These findings highlight the importance of problematizing and understanding these emerging issues at local and international levels.

1. Introduction

The initial teacher preparation (ITP) landscape in England has been the site of persistent turbulence for the last 30 years (e.g. Childs and Menter, 2013). However the publication of the 'Importance of Teaching' white paper by the coalition government in 2010 heralded arguably the most radical policy changes between 2010-2015, the time period which is the focus of this article (DfE, 2010). This government white paper set out a deliberate policy agenda signaling not only a 'pendulum swing' from 'school-based' to 'school-led' teacher preparation routes but also towards a market-

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driven approach to teacher supply (Murray and Mutton, 2015). In this re- engineered system central government played an ostensibly minimalist role in ensuring an adequate national supply of new teachers. In practice, central government continued to wield significant power through the formulation and implementation of a raft of policy directives and appointments. These policy moves intended to shift the responsibility for teacher preparation away from the universities to schools, principally through the introduction of a school-led teacher training route 'School Direct'. Such rapid and transient enactments of national policy posed a threat to the system of teacher preparation responsible for preparing a cohort of beginning teachers that the same paper acknowledged as 'one of our best ever' (DfE, 2010, 3). Whilst for some time teaching has been an all-graduate profession the role of the university in the preparation of teachers has long been a contested area (Furlong, 2013a). So when considering what problem the policies were intended to solve (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010), in this instance it is that universities were not producing the 'right' sort of teachers (Furlong, 2013b).

In this article we explore who has been marginalised or silenced in enactments of these policies, focusing on the period between 2010 and 2015, and consider the ways in which universities have potentially been complicit in the process. In our analysis we view policy both as text, with varying associated interpretations and enactments in practice, and policy as discourse (Ball, 2015). We query enactments of policy and the ways in which universities creatively interpret aspects of practices and technologies to position themselves within prevailing 'regimes of truth' about what constitutes good teacher education. As university teacher educators ourselves, this theorizing of policy enactments is uncomfortable; it creates 'ontological insecurity' (Ball, 2015) as we question the meaning of what we do and what is important in our work with beginning teachers (ibid). In this analysis of policy enactment enshrined in the 2010 White Paper, we therefore confront this ontological insecurity in order to argue that university teacher educators must continue to have a

voice and are not reduced to or silenced to 'merely 'interpretators'' of policy texts (Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2015).

As teacher educators, we recognise we have a vested interest in supporting a university based teacher education system. We do not claim to be impartial about the issues that are the focus of this article and indeed we present this article, in part at least, as a defence of the distinctive contribution of the university to the education of future teachers. We agree with Furlong that university teacher educators are experienced specialists with 'developed forms of practical wisdom' engaging with research and disciplinary theory (2013a). Moreover, being part of the academy means university teacher educators are 'part of a culture that expects to challenge, to debate, to interrogate taken –for-granted assumptions and values by exposing them to critical scrutiny' (ibid, 186). We believe that in an education system where spaces for democratic discussion and debate appear to being closed down this function of universities is as important as it has ever been.

Since 2010, university voices have been systematically marginalised and in some cases silenced in debates about teacher preparation and policies have actively reduced their input. Universities in England do provide high quality teacher preparation, as routinely evidenced by government inspection reports and evaluations (statistics are recorded on the government website each year and include inspection grades for each provider of teacher education). Nonetheless, university teacher educators have been characterized by the former Education Minister, Michael Gove, as 'the blob' and 'modern enemies of promise' responsible for the failure of education for a number of pupils (Gove, 2013). A feature of this agenda is an attempt to marginalise a range of 'vested' interests including unions and collected representations of particular voices such as, the Universities Council for Education of Teachers (UCET).

Policy texts have also signalled the disappearance of the concept of the 'student teacher' and the emergence of the apprentice or trainee teacher. This is also exemplified by the disappearance of the previous government's commitment to establish teaching as a masters level profession. We demonstrate that these discoursal moves are part of a sustained shift of policy as new 'regimes of truth' (Foucault, 1991) about what constitutes good teacher education emerge in the English policy arena. Much policy making can be characterised as a process of 'bricolage', with the result that 'most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice' (Ball, 1994, 1998). However, it is also important to locate these policy processes within a broader set of objectives in which any one policy element (such as teacher preparation) must be seen as a part of a larger ideological agenda pushing England towards a school-led teacher education system.

We see education, with the key function it performs in terms of ideological formation, as at the centre of the struggles about the future direction of society. More accurately we see teachers and the teaching profession at the heart of this struggle as it is through the actions and practices of teachers that the ideological intentions of the curriculum are realised. Hence the struggle over educational purposes is reflected in turn in our contested notion of what it means to be 'the good teacher' (Connell, 2009). Reforms to teacher preparation policy since 2010 must be seen as central to the process of reengineering state education, with the aim to prepare teachers to be 'good employees' in the new 'school-led system'.

We begin by locating teacher education policy in England within studies of similar reforms in a global context. In this international context of competency-based models of teacher preparation predicated on particular notions of the good teacher and by extension the 'good teacher education provider', we present a case study of the ways in which official policy in England between 2010-

2015 further diminished the role of the university in what is described below as the new teacher education project.

2. Context

The conflicting discourses evident in current policy agendas are anything but new. Brian Simon's seminal 1981 essay 'Why no pedagogy in England' argued powerfully that England has always had at best an ambivalent attitude to rigorous, theory-based approaches to teacher education, and this in turn has often been reflected in hostility to university-based teacher education (Simon, 1981). Simon's argument was a theory based approach to teacher education exposed training teachers to ideas that challenged the educational *status quo*, and that preserving the educational *status quo* was central to preserving a societal equilibrium based on class, hierarchy and privilege.

This antipathy to university based teacher education and education as a discipline, identified by Brain Simon, is often visible within universities themselves and at times is reflected in an indifferent attitude to the roles of schools of education within the wider institution. Such attitudes have always contributed to a sense of precarity within the discipline, and these sensitivities are likely to be compounded as government policy shifts power, and resources, towards schools and away from universities. It is estimated that teacher education accounts for some 66% of the economy of most university departments and faculties of education (Furlong, 2013a). In a higher education environment where 'bottom line' calculations increasingly triumph over traditional civic commitments it is likely that the position of schools of education within universities will be further undermined.

Teacher education programmes across different jurisdictions have 'consistently been a significant site of societal and political debate' (Menter et al, 2010, 17). A range of significant commenters on the field have articulated the influence of the specific neoliberal project on teacher preparation. In

the US context, Cochran-Smith identified developments in teacher education which is 'constructed as a policy problem, based on [a particular configuration of] research and evidence, and driven by outcomes' (2005, 12). In this analysis of what she termed *new* teacher education, Cochran-Smith positioned teacher education policy in the US as a deliberate mechanism for controlling and regulating the increasingly narrowed content and purpose of teacher preparation programmes and articulated four tensions/binaries as the focus of contestation in this policy arena:

> the conflict between diversification and selectivity of the teacher workforce, the valorization of subject matter at the expense of pedagogy, the competition between university and multiple other locations as the site for teacher preparation, and the contradictions of simultaneous regulation and *de*regulation.

> (2005, 12)

Cochran-Smith's analysis of the policy context in America has resonance with Connell's observations of teacher preparation policy in Australia and the emergence in policy discourse of 'the good teacher' as a classroom practitioner who has met a prescribed set of skills-based criteria (2009). Like Cochran-Smith, Connell identifies a narrowing of what is involved in teacher preparation which potentially becomes simply a 'list of auditable competencies' with an absence of 'cultural critique' and the loss of a 'conception of Education as an intellectual discipline' based on a limited research base of 'positivist studies to discover 'best practice'' (2009, 218).

This trend towards a new teacher education project (which arguably began with the Conservative government reforms of teacher education in 1992 (Cater 2017, 7)) intensified under the Coalition government's reforms of teacher training starting in 2010 with a renewed focus on a 'school-led' policy of teacher preparation (e.g. Childs, 2013; Mutton, Burn and Menter, 2017, Murray and Menter, 2015).

In this complex and shifting context we explore how universities and beginning teacher voices were being systematically marginalised in policy discourses around teacher preparation routes, and how university educators may have at times been complicit within this analysis. We locate these changes within wider changes in the English school system, and specifically the shift to the 'school-led' model of teacher preparation. It is this model of beginning teacher education that was privileged in official discourses to position it as being preferable to a traditional university model of teacher education. This is a view that is also held by some key players within the emerging market of the new education landscape. This is why in writing this article we consider 'how some things come to count as true' (Ball 2016, 1132) and argue that policy developments in teacher education within the time frame under study were are not only a key element of this new model, but that they were central to both achieving, and embedding, this transformation of the school system.

3. Research design

This study of teacher education policy enactment in England builds on studies of similar policy implementations in other (mainly western) international contexts identified as sharing what Sahlberg described as the characteristics of a global educational reform movement (2012). Our focus on policy enactments draws on Foucauldian understandings of policy as discourse. Ball reminds us that for Foucault:

> Discourse is not present in the object, but 'enables it to appear'. Discourse is the conditions under which certain statements are considered to be the truth.'

> (Ball 2015, 311)

Foucault was interested in the ways discourses are constructed, how they shape everyday social practices and the ways in which 'regimes of truth' appear within orders of discourse. Norman Fairclough adapts this idea of 'order of discourse' to mean the 'overall configuration of discourse

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practices of a society or one of its institutions' (Fairclough 1996, 71) and we draw on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis in this study. Specifically, we employ the concept of 'technologisation of discourse' to help frame an analysis for how dominant social forces direct and control policy enactment within the arena of teacher preparation in the English context (Fairclough 2013). Fairclough claims that 'technologisation of discourse is part of a struggle on the part of dominant social forces to modify existing institutional discursive practices, as one dimension of the engineering of social and cultural change and the restructuring of hegemonies' (2013, 126-7).

Critical discourse analysis pays attention not only to the language but also to the context and so allows for a focus on how particular actors are privileged by particular discourses. We analysed discourse at the macro and micro-level of policy implementation to show how 'technologisation of discourse is received and appropriated by those who are subjected to it, through various forms of accommodation and resistance which produce hybrid combinations of existing and imposed discursive practices' (2013, 127).

In seeking to understand and map the marginalisation of previously key actors (universities and students) in the new marketplace of teacher preparation in England we have undertaken a detailed analysis of a broad data-set including:

- written policy texts, with a particular focus on the 2010 White paper
- promotional material directed at attracting applicants to teaching including:
  - Department for Education recruitment tools
  - Websites of 20 providers of teacher preparation programmes. 10 university and 10 SCITT provider websites formed this data set. The 20 providers were those that the Good Teacher Training Guide (GTTG) (2015) had listed as the top ten providers in each category. There are some reservations about the methodologies and metrics

utilised in the GTTG but it was felt that it was a sensible way of selecting a sample of websites for the purposes of this study.

- speeches and social media activities by key actors (such as blogs, twitter feeds and forum postings).

Of central concern to our analysis is to evaluate how far policies are leading to the deliberate silencing of particular voices in order to reconstruct the notion of the 'good teacher' (Connell, 2009) and what we describe as 'a good teacher educator' in a 'school-led' system.   In what follows we present the analysis of the data. This analysis resulted from reading and re-reading of the texts to identify themes which made visible how dominant discourses are legitimised and enacted by the texts alongside a comparison of the ways in which providers and applicants are represented or omitted within the texts. In this way 'regimes of truth' emerged that seemed to underpin the discourse practices.

4. Analysis

4.1 Policy texts

An analysis of a broad range of policy texts shows the systematic omission of the word 'university'. For example, a speech by England's Chief Inspector for Schools 'about teacher recruitment and training' comprised 3548 words; the sole reference to university was in relation to young people aspiring to higher education (Wilshaw, 2015). The marginalisation of the university voice extended to the configuration of nationally commissioned review bodies so for example, a government-commissioned independent review of extant Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in England was led by the principal of a small school-led teacher preparation course (Carter, 2015,).

The total disappearance of the university from policy discourse around teacher preparation was perhaps most starkly signalled in the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, a key policy text

which set out the education policy agenda for the 2010-2015 Coalition government (DfE, 2010). The paper drew on successful high performing education systems and in relation to teacher preparation, and as noted earlier, two main themes emerge. One is the link between teacher quality and the quality of the education system; and the other is the unequivocal claim that schools are the best training environments for beginning teachers to learn their craft. To address these themes, the paper introduced the government aims to improve the quality of entrants to the profession by providing financial incentives for graduates with top degrees and to raise the stakes of pre-requisite numeracy and literacy skills tests for all teacher candidates. The paper also signalled a further expansion of routes into teaching, especially school based training routes: 'our strongest schools will take the lead and trainees will be able to develop their skills, learning from the best teachers' (2010, 23). In what was a wide-ranging document spanning over 90 pages, there was not a single reference to the role of the university in future plans for training beginning teachers.

The White Paper is a key driver leading to differing enactments of macro policy intent on establishing a 'self-improving school led system' (Hargreaves, 2010), a dimension of the technologies of government leading to widespread systemic and institutional change in the field of initial teacher preparation (ITP) within England. This influential document signalled the disappearance of universities from policy discourse effectively removing key actors in the field. These disappearances have been managed by changing discourse practices and by technologies such as managing the number of teacher training places allocated to universities.

This strategic management of a discourse technique positioning schools as the best providers of ITP can be tracked forward through subsequent speeches by ministers and key figures in the policy arena who promote schools over universities in the new, increasingly marketized, world of ITP. Charlie Taylor, in his first speech as CEO of the newly established National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) (the executive agency of the Department for Education with responsibility for allocation of teacher training places) refers to pre 2010 initial teacher preparation provision as

being detached from schools: 'In the past teachers were often parachuted into schools from on high without any direct school involvement in the content and focus of their training.' (Taylor, 2013). This oblique reference to ITP happening somewhere 'on high' seeks to imply that previously training happened away from schools. This is arguably a deliberate distortion of the fact that since 1992, university teacher training programmes were mandated to be structured so that two thirds of the programme was spent in a school placement within a partnership school involved in the design and development of the teacher training programme (DfEE, 1992). Interestingly, in Taylor's speech, whilst universities are not completely invisible, as they are in the White Paper, their role is 'backgrounded' (Van Leewan, 1996) unless they are one of three named 'nimble, forward thinking universities' who are positioned as taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the marketization of teacher training. The three 'nimble' universities are arguably characterised by the ways in which they have assimilated the discourse of macro policy through their institutional texts and their presence in social media.

In 2014, Charlie Taylor further emphasized the direction of policy with regard to ITP by sharing NCTL's aim to ensure that 'by 2016 teaching schools and the best schools and academy chains will be leading teacher training' (Taylor, 2014). In the same year, the new Secretary of State for Education backgrounded the role of universities further by announcing that

> 'new teachers are getting the right training to prepare them to succeed in the classroom through School Direct, Teach First and school centred initial teacher training[2] – teachers in our best schools are now in the driving seat to train the next generation of their profession' (Morgan, 2014).

Finally in 2015, the Schools Minister was able to state that over half of new entrants to the profession were applying to school led routes. It is important to establish therefore that the emerging 'truths' within the discourse about schools being the preferred providers of teacher

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[2] These are all school based routes into teaching.

training exist alongside a raft of structural changes in policy that position the market firmly in favour of new, privileged, routes into teaching, and to the direct detriment of (arguably historically favoured) university based routes.

Despite the claims of the White Paper to look to the best performing international education systems, England at the time was the only country in Europe prioritising school led initial teacher preparation in this way (Brown, Rowley and Smith, 2015, 11), though many states in the US have a similar approach. A central plank of the current school-led agenda is the alternative certification route, School Direct, introduced in 2012. The first Government 'manual' published for this route promised that schools could: '…negotiate their choice of accredited ITT provider, the funding they receive from the provider and the way in which the training is delivered' (DfE, 2012a, 2). Schools are also encouraged to consider 'will an academic award be necessary?'[3] Previously initial teacher preparation in England for graduates had involved higher education providers working in partnerships with schools to offer a blend of academic (usually at masters level) and practical teacher education and preparation leading to the award of a post graduate certificate in education (known as the PGCE) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The School Direct manual effectively reconfigures the traditional construction of the professional identity of university-based tutors and reduces their autonomy as the discourse re-constructs teacher educators as trainers and diminishes the importance of the academic capital brought by university tutors to the preparation of new teachers. The document also states that 'This is a school-driven model of ITT and we would expect that the models of training developed should reflect the *leading role* [our emphasis] of the school'; again effectively silencing the voice of the university (DfE, 2012a).

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[3] In England it is possible as a post-graduate to be awarded Qualified Teacher Status with no academic study

Implicit in this policy shift is the idea that a move to school led teacher preparation is what schools and prospective teachers want. One popular forum based website, Student Room, has a space for those interested in teacher training. One post 'PGCE applications 2016' was started in August 2015 (before applications for teacher preparation programmes opened) with the original poster seeking advice on application and interview processes. By January 2016, this post has generated 3353 replies and 161, 776 views. A similar post 'School Direct applications 2016' was started in November seeking similar advice and by January generated 118 replies with 4,142 views. Prospective teachers are still interested in university-based teacher preparation routes.

4.2 Promotional Materials

4.2.1 Official DfE recruitment tools

The National Audit Office reported that the plethora of ITP routes is confusing to both potential applicants and to schools (NAO, 2016). Applicants can find information about routes into teaching from print, television and web-based advertisements, the central admissions system, official '*Train to teach*' events and on university and school providers' websites. In summer 2015, a relaunched government website represents the official policy view most clearly. For example, there is a series of videos to help applicants decide on the best route for them. Of the 11 videos on the site, one shares the experience of a teacher who trained on a university led route; the remaining 10 are of teachers who trained on a school led route or position the beginning teacher in front of a School Direct advertisement board. The key messages of the policy texts are repeated in the content of the videos,

> 'speaking to teachers first hand and asking their advice confirmed to me that doing a programme like School Direct where you are in the classroom from day one would be for me' (How to become a teacher: transcript)

'The first two days of teacher training were inset days so we kind of mucked in with what the other teachers were doing…more hands-on…I wanted to be where, I guess I felt all the action was…Its been really fast' (Video transcript Carla Isaacs).

'I did a PGCE (postgraduate certificate in education) via School Direct which allows me to teach straightaway.' (Video transcript Idara Hippolyte)

The one video depicting the experience of a university-led route emphasizes the 'common sense view' that university teacher preparation is formed of theoretically driven lectures in university rather than direct experience in the classroom:

'So because I'm on the university-led training route, we started off in university for a couple of weeks, just getting some background information on teaching, talking about pedagogies and things like that….And then they slowly put you into a school.' (Video transcript David Swain).

Analysis of government websites shows, therefore, a differential positioning of schools and universities (DfE, 2015). The text on these sites has school-led courses offering 'hands-on, practical teacher training, delivered by experienced teachers' with 'similar academic elements as uni-led courses'. The use of the informal 'uni-led' phrase seeks to trivialise the role of a university whilst tacitly implying that schools have the expertise to offer an academic experience equivalent to that of universities. At the same time, university texts appear to re-position themselves and their expertise as sites of training rather than academia.

4.2.2 Provider websites

Analysis of the websites of the top ten universities, as identified in the Good Teacher Training Guide (2105), shows how individual institutions have assimilated some of the macro discourse through a well-established move to refer to potential applicants as 'trainees' and to teacher preparation programmes as 'initial teacher training courses'. This is an example of a tactical

accommodation of the sanctioned discourse that repositions teaching as a craft where competence requires training and reproduction of observed practices rather than education. Some institutions utilise the term 'teacher training' on the landing page of their website and then link to pages with more information where the term 'initial teacher education' re-appears. The retention of the term 'education' on these linked pages is a deliberate act of resistance to the hegemonic promotion of training within the official discourse of teacher preparation which offers a simplistic polarising of school direct (practical hands on training from day 1) and university provision (theoretical abstract lectures). However a quick glance at the landing pages suggests that university initial teacher preparation in England has been 're-branded' to fit with the policy 'truth' that applicants no longer want a university teacher education route.

This re-branding is a reaction to the dilemma universities face when trying to maintain their identities as well-established providers of teacher preparation programmes whilst simultaneously operating within the dominant discoursal practices. The re-branding appears to serve two functions. First it positions the university providers as working within the dominant discoursal practices of policy enactment. Second, this re-branding serves to appeal to prospective students indicating a move from a 'traditional' relationship between university and applicant, where the locus of power rests with the university, to a consumer-oriented relationship with the 'consumer' (applicant) choosing from the 'range of goods on offer'. Our findings suggest that this move has intensified directly as a result of the policy shift to the marketization of school-led provision. The creation of intensive locally-based marketplaces where the 'consumer' can choose between learning to teach in a school or a university is an enactment at the macro-level of policy towards school-led provision that has increased the fragility of the university's position in national and local sectors.

These dilemmas and adjustments reflect shifting discourse practices as those actors involved in teacher preparation programmes react to a changing marketplace. This is particularly marked in the context with which we are most familiar- our own local initial teacher preparation landscape. This is

a particularly open market with applicants able to choose from 24 providers within a relatively small geographical region. Our own university website has shifted in response to the demands of this market and of the need to 'sell' our courses to schools and applicants. Similar accommodations as those described above are evident in our website, the use of the word 'training' (only on the landing page after which the term education is used) along with a deliberate emphasis on beginning teachers gaining experience in schools early in the course:

> 'We offer a range of teacher training routes across the primary and secondary phases, emphasising practical school-based training, supported by a thorough introduction to established and current educational theory and thinking.' (University website)

The web pages also make clear that teacher preparation programmes at the university draw upon a model of teacher education which blends preparation for classroom practice with a scholarly exploration of research, theory and debates about education in order to develop training teachers' 'evolving philosophy of education'. As discussed earlier, a research-informed model of teacher education exists in most university-schools partnership programmes (Furlong, 2013a). This is in sharp contrast to a technicist model of teacher preparation, with an inherent focus on skills and apprentice-style imitation of more experienced teachers' practice, that is arguably privileged in school-led programmes. In this way this university appears to assimilate and at the same time resist the hegemonic discourse of teacher preparation policy. This leads to an ambiguous, and somewhat vulnerable, identity for the university provider and for university teacher educators.

This is in contrast to the websites of the top ten school-led providers of initial teacher preparation programmes, identified in the Good Teacher Training Guide (2015), where there appears little ambiguity about the identity of the provider through clear echoes of the dominant policy discourse. Prominent on these website are the logos and images associated with official discourse such as the Department for Education logo- usually alongside the school's own branding. All refer to preservice teachers as 'trainees' rather than students and to training rather than education. Most also make

explicit reference to the skills and 'hands-on' training of which the programmes are comprised with reference to tracking of progression towards the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2012b). As such the focus is very much on discourses of learning how to teach through an apprenticeship model with an instrumental emphasis on how the programme will enable the applicant to meet the criteria needed to award Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Where a university provider is mentioned it is to indicate that the school-led provider has contracted a university to award an academic accreditation. In such cases, the university partners appear to have a peripheral role to signify academic credibility for example, through reference to the need that some theoretical knowledge is required to deliver effective lessons. One exception to this is a school-led provider website that explains that the programme provides a 'broader perspective on educational issues'. The majority subscribe to the government policy view that teaching is a craft learnt through imitation and practice as embodied in the original speeches and policy texts of the 2010 White Paper. In this way the 'truth' that schools are the best providers of teacher preparation is uncontested.

4.3 Social media

Within the discourse practices of social media, macro policy is clearly reflected and valorised. The nature of twitter discourse practices is that users follow each other's posts and establish a set of interlocutors exchanging views in a public arena. The 'Education Twitterati', a self-selected group of twitter users widely positioned as experts on schools and education, have become influential in the enactment and development of the macro policy; key players are invited to sit on policy committees and appointed to national roles. Universities have arguably been complicit in their marginalisation in these spaces through a seeming reluctance to engage with emergent practices. This has not gone unnoticed by the policy makers. For example Nick Gibb (schools minister) in a speech, the title of which echoes the White Paper of 2010 'The importance of the teaching profession', comments on the emergence of the role of social media in the 'self-improving school-led system':

'What is noticeable about this *movement* [our emphasis] is that it has not emerged from our universities. Many university academics, it appeared, were too much invested in the *status quo* to provide any challenge. Rather the challenge came from classroom teachers, burning the midnight oil as they tweeted, blogged and shared ideas about how to improve their profession…there are about 1,237 active educational blogs in the UK and many of them, I can testify have directly influenced government policy. Education provides a case study in the democratising power of new media, providing an entry point for new voices, to challenge old orthodoxies.' (Gibb, 2015)

In this, the 'old orthodoxies' are those universities who have been stable providers of ITP. In the push to a school led system, the discourse omits the long history of high quality training and education provided by these 'old orthodoxies' as evidenced by reports from Ofsted, the national state inspection body. As has already been stated, universities have not been quick enough to engage with the influential discourse embodied in the Twitterati postings on social media. In effect they have silenced themselves in this latest designed conduit of policy enactment and have allowed themselves to be marginalized by the newly emerging key actors.

We would also argue that prospective teachers are also marginalized by the discourse of school-led provision. In a speech introducing a new 'direction of travel' for teacher preparation policy, the head of the government body responsible for beginning teacher education emphasised how schools rather than potential teachers are the main beneficiaries of the policy: 'School Direct is the new way of training teachers which puts schools, the employers, the *customers* [our emphasis], at the heart of the process.' (Taylor, 2013). This discourse is echoed in a (typical) example of one school's recruitment website: 'The main aim of School Direct is to allow schools to recruit and select the trainees they want'.

In this simplistic notion of what schools and potential teachers want from teacher preparation, there is a deliberate lack of acknowledgement of the complexities of teacher education leading to an ambiguous role for universities and the deprofessionalisation of teacher educators who find themselves positioned as trainers rather than academics in instantiations of the enactment of the policy through a range of discourse practices (Ellis et al, 2014). This has been achieved through the redesign of discourse techniques moving the field of initial teacher preparation to that of increasing marketization and associated consumerism (though it is unclear whether the consumer is the prospective teacher or the school). Through the manipulation of key texts such as the '*Get into Teaching*' website and technologies such as NCTL's division of teacher training places, the technologolisation of the discourse of school led teacher training engineers and standardises discourse practices and prominent themes within this. This has the effect of maintaining government's power whilst seeming to distribute control to the marketplace.

The themes emerging from the analysis include: the disappearance of key actors in the texts; the emergence of an uncontested 'truth' that schools are the best providers of teacher preparation; that a shift in policy from school-based to schools-led is what schools and applicants want; how universities and schools are aligning discourse practices with the standardised discourse manifest in government sanctioned texts; and the emergence of an 'insider-group' within the discourse of social media. We locate these developments within a discourse that privileges particular narratives in order to bring about, and embed, systemic change in the English school system. These narratives cohere to form a 'discursive ensemble' (Ball 2017) of concepts, ideas and arguments which serve as a rationale for the need to move teacher preparation to schools.

5. Conclusion: fashioning the 'good teacher' and the 'good teacher educator' in/for a school-led system

In this article we have highlighted the ways that teacher education policy in England has been framed discursively, in the period from 2010 to 2015. Throughout this time there was a deliberate marginalisation of the role of universities in providing teacher education, and a privileging of so-called school based routes. Universities, traditionally the key providers of teacher education programmes, have often been rendered invisible in key policy statements and high profile ministerial speeches. At the same time school based routes have been promoted aggressively, usually in the form of claims that such routes provide the most effective forms of preparation for the job of teaching. As yet, the longer term consequences of this shift are still unclear. There is no evidence base to support the drive to school led provision whilst short term consequences are far from positive (Cater, 2017). Applicants are faced with a highly complex application process whilst schools also face considerable additional work and having to engage in substantial, and largely unnecessary, marketing type activities.

What is the key therefore to understanding the drive to press forward with this considerable shift in policy? A drive to school-based teacher education, and the concomitant marginalisation of higher education, is predicated on the drive to reconfigure the notion of the 'good teacher' as one who is a 'good employee' – loyal to the organisation and conservative in professional practice.

Being recruited into a teaching job directly by a school has an important, and significant, impact on how a novice teachers' professional identity is formed. Aspiring teachers are likely to feel less like they are joining a profession, and more like they are joining an organisation. Rather than a common and shared experience of professional education, through which beginning teachers are socialised into their new profession, aspiring teachers now experience increasingly heterogenous routes into

their new occupation. Not only do multiple routes undermine the commonality of experience that contributes to a sense of collective professional identity, but distinction *within* routes (achieved by different school-based providers offering 'brand-distinctive' approaches) further reinforces a sense of difference. In this scenario traditional collective loyalties and identities (to 'the profession', or, for example, to a professional association or union) are subjugated to the primary loyalty – the school. In the English 'school-led' system this is loyalty to a school that functions competitively in a market and whose policies are largely driven by a highly centralised inspectorate. In many cases the school will be the responsibility of a private sector provider, albeit non-profit. In this new school-led system the 'good teacher' is re-framed as the compliant employee – loyal to the organisation and committed to meeting company objectives. This is an important shift from preparing teachers for a professional career that might extend to different contexts to a narrow 'on-the-job' training model. For this reason we think use of the terms 'apprentice' and 'trainee' are markers of a diluted version of what it means to join a profession.

Providers of teacher education have also been recast within this discourse and the good teacher education institution is one which has embraced the school-led policy and by working with schools to offer school direct routes either in place of or in addition to 'traditional' university courses. However there are clearly examples of resistance within some of the discoursal practices and these illustrate how some enactments of policy can be a site to push back against aspects of coercive practices such as NCTL's manipulation of teacher training places. However these resistances are often located alongside accommodations of the sanctioned discourse and so it can be argued that universities have experienced the school-led policy enactment as both 'complementarity and conflict' (Ball 2015) as they have had to modify and adapt existing practices. Analysis of this has led to our own introspection as we have had to invest in understanding what it is that we do as university teacher educators and to consider the ways in which we have consciously or otherwise been complicit in re-positioning ourselves as 'good teacher educators'. In some ways we have

experienced Ball's ontological insecurity in the process and have undergone what Ball describes as a form of 'Socratic self-examination' (Ball 2016).

However, whilst the above analysis provides a partial explanation of why government policy has been so committed to marginalising universities from teacher education, it does not provide the full story. Further explanation must be sought within the context of a policy agenda that seeks to fundamentally reconfigure schools as the transmitters of a new conservative cultural project. This strand within Conservative Party thought has featured significantly amongst key politicians in the Department for Education. Much of the thinking has been associated with Michael Gove (Secretary of State from 2010-2014), but junior minister Nick Gibb (Schools Minister 2010-present) has arguably been at least as influential. Both have drawn extensively on the ideas of ED Hirsch, and the concept of 'core knowledge' and of 'traditional teaching methods'. The uncontested truth is that the best place to learn how to teach in these ways is in schools because university providers are problematically progressive and too abstractly intellectual and as such are unsuitable training environments. What is particularly significant is the way in which a range of voices have been mobilised in support of this agenda – political advisers, key figures in the new educational think tanks and perhaps most conspicuously, bloggers in the highly influential space occupied by social media.

It is our argument, in conclusion, that changes to teacher education policy in England between 2010-2015 were central to a reconfiguring of the school system in ways that reflect a complex fusion of neoliberal and neoconservative policy agendas; schools were further recast as commercial organisations functioning in a market. In this sense the discourse of being 'schools-led' (largely framed in terms of autonomy) is being used to mask an increasingly aggressive market (neoliberal) environment in which private provision of public education is being normalised. At the same time, the state is intervening in order to promote a new traditionalism, in which a culturally reactionary

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curriculum and pedagogy are being used to assert a neo-conservative hegemony. Central to achieving these interdependent objectives is the reconstruction of the 'good teacher', and the 'good teacher educator'. In much the same way as Brian Simon described teacher education in nineteenth century England, so too in the twenty-first century, the creation of the 'good teacher' involves excluding the university from teacher education. Now, as then, the intention is to reinforce an education system focused on reproducing a conservative social order.

It is the responsibility of university teacher educators as key actors in the field to move beyond 'mere' interpretation of this policy as discourse and.to understand how to perform and behave in changing contexts. It is also incumbent on them to actively challenge untested and recycled policies and their enactment through continual retrospection of how 'we seek to constitute and recognise ourselves through technologies- the intellectual, practical instruments and devices which shape and guide' (Ball 2016, 1135) being a teacher educator in this brave new world.

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