

## **CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS, EVALUATION AND IMPLICATIONS**

To form monsters and join incongruous shapes and appearances costs the imagination no more trouble than to conceive the most natural and familiar objects (Hume, 1748/1955, p. 27).

The major justification for the research enterprise is that we have the time and skills to develop approximations of the truth which have a greater warrant than common sense (Firestone, 1990, p. 123, cited in Miles & Huberman, *op. cit.*, p. 277).

### **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, and explains how it is evaluated and the results of the evaluation. The first section summarises the conclusions, the second section explains the rationale for selecting Miles and Huberman's (*op. cit.*, pp. 277ff) account of "goodness" for the evaluation, and for including the implications of the study within the evaluation as an example of "pragmatic validity" (Kvale, *op. cit.*). Drawing on this rationale, the evaluation is then situated in relation to the study, to which it, like the other analyst's resources, stands in a reflexive relationship. This relationship then informs the evaluation of the study in the remaining sections of the chapter.

### **9.2 CONCLUSIONS**

This section summarises the conclusions of the study by drawing together the findings of chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8. In doing so, it follows the structure of the ontology, which, as explained in Chapters 3 and 4, underpins the conceptualisation of the study, the investigation of the research question, and the interpretation of the findings.

## 9.21 The analyst's perspective

As explained in Chapter 5, the study and its findings are to be understood in relation to the 'analyst's perspective' – specifically, in relation to how this aligns with the perspectives of the participants. This is a reflexive relationship in which the "motivational relevancies" (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., pp. 368ff) of the analyst shape and are shaped by the "practical relevance" (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 43) of the study through the process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, op. cit., p. 473) with the participants.

It is the argument in Chapter 5 that, through this process, my resources as the analyst have been shaped by memberships I share with ELICOS teachers, managers, and regulators, and that these resources include their competing perspectives on tensions between the discourses of teachers, managers and other groups implicated in shaping teachers' practices. The "members' resources" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24) associated with these different perspectives have in turn shaped and been shaped by the development of the theoretical framework, the process of designing the study, and how it aligns with the perspectives of the participants. In particular, these resources have shaped the investigation of teachers' workplace concerns as they understand them, from both micro and macro perspectives, while including – but not subordinating – the perspectives of other relevant groups; and have informed the selection of social-theoretical resources with which to explain my own experience of ELICOS, and to guide, and develop in response to, the emergent findings of the study.

This social-theoretical account of commercialisation combines Fairclough's (1992, p. 90) account of "contradictory interpellation" to explain the intra- and interpersonal tensions experienced by teachers between the discourses of commerce and pedagogy; his account of "technologization" (1996, p. 73) to explain how the discourses associated with teachers' practices are "colonized" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 207) by those of commercialisation; Bourdieu's (1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.) 'theory of practice'

to explain why it is that, in the production and reproduction of these practices, it is the commercial interests which dominate; and Gramsci's (op. cit.) theory of 'hegemony' to explain how the dominance of these interests is advanced and maintained.

Consistent with the ontology as a whole, then, it is in the light of this relationship between the analyst, the participants and the study that the findings which emerge from the 'participants perspective', the 'social resource perspective' and 'social/institutional perspective' should be understood.

## **9.22 The participants' perspective**

The findings of the diary analysis, presented in Chapter 6, both align with my own experience as a teacher in ELICOS and provide support for, and extend, the social-theoretical account of commercialisation introduced in the analyst's perspective. Thus, the analysis provides evidence that teachers perceive their practices to be shaped by three-way struggles between managers, teachers and students. In these struggles, the diarists believe that their authority as teachers is being overridden by both managers and students, thereby compromising their ability to teach according to their understanding of professional standards. This three-way pattern of tension emerges in the data in practices of 'evaluation/appraisal', in which managers, teachers and students struggle over how teaching is to be practiced and understood. In relation to the distinction between 'micro', 'meso' and 'macro' actors, explained in Chapter 4, these struggles provide evidence that teachers represent micro actors, with their authority subordinated to that of the meso actors, managers and students.

The analysis supports and extends the social-theoretical account of commercialisation proposed in Chapter 5 by providing evidence that evaluation/appraisal practices are a medium through which this subordination occurs, that they exhibit a number of the features of "technologization" (Fairclough, 1996, p. 73) and that they

thereby facilitate the “colonization” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 207) by commercial interests of the discourse(s) associated with teachers’ practices. In this process, the “social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) held by teachers in virtue of their membership of a profession is devalued; and their complicity in this devaluation through fear of redundancy is consistent with the emphasis in Bourdieu’s theory of practice on how, in seeking to improve their “life chances” (Postone et al., loc. cit.), those “who suffer most” (Thompson, op. cit., p. 58) are complicit in bringing about the dominance of more powerful groups. This complicity also provides evidence of the “equilibrium” (Boggs, op. cit., pp. 38-40) between “consent” and “coercion” (Gramsci, loc. cit.) required to maintain the dominance of those groups in control. Thus, “consent” is evidenced in teachers’ self-regulation of teaching practices in accordance with the commercial priority to create ‘happy’ students, induced by their fear of appraisal and redundancy. On the other hand, this “consent” is complemented by “coercion” in the form of managers’ directives to teachers to meet these commercial priorities if teachers do not demonstrate, or resist the pressure to, “consent”.

### **9.23 The social resource perspective**

The correlations between the findings of the diary analysis and the brochure analysis, identified in Chapter 7, provide evidence that the diarists’ experiences of tensions between pedagogic and commercial interests are shaped by the “colonization” (Fairclough, loc. cit.) of the discourse(s) associated with ELICOS teachers’ practices by the ‘discourse of commercialisation’. This, the dominant discourse in the colleges, constructs the identities of and relationships between teachers, managers and students as ‘communities of consumption’ in which teachers are ‘operatives’, responsible for carrying out tasks and procedures but not for deciding or questioning their purposes. This is the role of the ‘college’, identified with managers who, as ‘experts’, determine the purposes of teaching by supervising teachers to meet the commercial priority of creating and maintaining the



‘happiness’ of students. In this process, the task for which teachers are held responsible is the ‘repayment’ of the debt owed to students by ‘providing’ them with learning, a ‘consumption process’ in which teaching is constructed as enabling students to achieve their aspirations without effort, disappointment or imposition.

In thus advancing economic interests over those of pedagogy, the discourse of commercialisation shapes the interlocking risks facing teachers, managers and students and their competing efforts to reduce them. Thus, teachers risk redundancy, managers risk failing to maintain the commercial competitiveness of the colleges, and students expose themselves to financial risk by purchasing courses in order to realise their aspirations. The efforts by teachers, managers and students to minimise these risks, and thereby secure their own interests, drive the struggles between the three groups, in which managers exert their authority over teachers by holding them accountable for the provision of students’ learning; teachers seek to secure their employment by struggling to reconcile the demands of the consumption community with their understanding of professional standards; and students exert their authority over teachers and managers to ensure that they receive the learning owed to them.

In terms of the social-theoretical account of commercialisation, these findings support the explanation, proposed in Chapter 5 and supported by the diary analysis, that the discourse of commercialisation is a form of “symbolic violence” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 51) which operates through processes of “technologization” (Fairclough, 1996, p. 73), primarily through practices of evaluation/appraisal. These revalue to the advantage of the commercial “classes” (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 113) the capital “assets” (p. 112) which teachers associate with English language teaching, and therefore the “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1994b, pp. 95ff) of teachers, who, in trying to improve their “life chances” (Postone et al., loc. cit.) by avoiding unemployment, “consent” (Gramsci, loc. cit.) to their own subordination.

## 9.24 The social/institutional perspective

The findings of the social/institutional perspective, presented in Chapter 8, explain how the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation are themselves shaped by the operations of macro actors.

Thus, Bourdieu's critique of contemporary society (1984, 1998a) and the analysis of the 'lines of influence' which support its inclusion within the social-theoretical account of commercialisation provide an explanation of *why*, in the struggle over how 'teachers' practices' are to be understood and the purposes they are to serve, it is the economic interests which dominate. In this process, the "social capital" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) of teachers *and* of students – respectively, their 'expertise' and their ability to learn – is subordinated to serve these economic interests through the construction of teaching and learning as consumption processes. On the other hand, Gramsci's (loc. cit.) consent/coercion distinction explains *how* this subordination is produced and reproduced to the advantage of those whose interests are served by the economic order advanced by "neoliberal discourse" (Bourdieu 1998a, pp. 95).

Specifically, the analysis of the three data sets – the EA News, the NEAS regulations and the CELTA materials – supports the argument that each advances, legitimises and naturalises the subordination of "social capital" (Bourdieu, 1986, p 248) to "economic capital" (p 243) through a different line of influence between the discourse of neoliberalism and that of commercialisation. Thus, the reports in the EA News construct as inevitable and necessary the policies of managers which, operating through the discourse of commercialisation, advance the subordination of the social to the economic according to the "law of the market" (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 35); and the NEAS regulations construct the quality of teaching as distinct from the quality of employment conditions, thereby legitimating the pressure exerted on teachers through "the rational management of insecurity" (pp. 85ff) to conform to their identity within the consumption community.

Moreover, by minimising the “social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p 248) – the ‘expertise’ – required for teaching, the regulations legitimate the CELTA, which constructs the habitus of teachers as ‘consenting’, in Gramsci’s (loc. cit.) sense, to teaching and learning as consumption processes, the construction advanced by the discourse of commercialisation.

These lines of influence in turn meet the requirement, explained in Chapter 3, to address the broader themes of contemporary society evident in the work of both Bourdieu and Giddens, and Foucault and Habermas. From their different standpoints, these theorists identify the emergence and domination, through forms of control which operate through discourse itself, of a social order which is transforming established social practices and undermining individuals’ autonomy, security and sense of social identity. These themes are exemplified in the findings of the current study by the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation, enforced through practices – notably appraisal and training – which are legitimised by neoliberal discourse. Furthermore, these practices themselves exemplify the means by which this new social order is produced and reproduced – through forms of control which operate reflexively through discourse, ensuring that those who stand to lose from social change are complicit in bringing it about.

These links back to the broader themes of contemporary society complete the operationalisation of the “multi-perspectived” (Candlin, 1997, p. vii) framework developed for this study. The remaining sections of this chapter focus on the evaluation of the study and its implications.

### **9.3 EVALUATION, QUALITY CONTROL AND IMPLICATIONS**

The evaluation aims to meet Cicourel’s (1982, 1992, 1996) requirement, explained in Chapter 2, that the researcher be accountable both for the “ecological validity” (1982, p. 1ff) of research and its ‘quality’, being “obligated to justify what has been included and what has been excluded according to stated theoretical goals, methodological strategies

employed, and the consistency and convincingness of an argument or analysis” (1992, p. 309). Following this requirement, then, the focus here is on how effectively the study has addressed the research question, given its aim, set out in Chapter 3, to acknowledge the reflexivity of the research process within an inductive, flexible methodology which enables a “critical, but open, methodological stance” in order to “understand social life from the inside, while striving to make sociolinguistic description and explanation socially relevant” (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 383).

Also explained in Chapter 3, the notion of ‘quality’ against which this study is evaluated, and on which this section draws, comprises the five areas which together capture what Miles and Huberman (*op. cit.*, p. 277-280) term “goodness” in qualitative research. Though I have drawn on their section headings here, I have not included all the evaluation questions they propose under each heading but instead summarise and respond to the main points raised. The first four sections are grouped under ‘quality control’, an extension of Miles and Huberman’s (*ibid.*, p. 278) use of this term to refer to the internal consistency of the study. The final section explains the implications of the study. These are included within the relationship of the study to participants and researchers, its “pragmatic validity” (Kvale, *op. cit.*), a construct operationalised here, as it was in Chapter 5, using Sarangi and Roberts’s (*op. cit.*, p. 43) notion of “practical relevance”. Before the study is evaluated, however, the following section explains the reflexive relationship between the evaluation and the study.

### **9.31 Evaluation and reflexivity**

In relation to the study, evaluation falls within the analyst’s perspective, reflecting the fact that it draws on the “members’ resources” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24) the analyst brings to the study. Like the analyst’s other resources, then, evaluation is both a focus of the study and a shaper of the research itself, and, as such, raises again what Sarangi and Coulthard

(loc. cit.) have called the “topic/resource dilemma”. As explained in Chapter 5, the challenge this raises is to acknowledge that the analyst is socially situated in relation to the participants – that the analyst draws on social resources in studying the social world, which itself shapes and is shaped by the resources employed by participants. In the study, this relationship between the resources of the analyst and participants is explained within the analyst’s perspective by combining Sarangi and Candlin’s “motivational relevancies” (op. cit., pp. 268ff) and Sarangi and Roberts’s (loc. cit.) “practical relevance” – specifically, by focusing on how the analyst’s resources shape the study to “align with” or “transform” those of participants (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., pp.379ff), and in doing so affect the study’s potential to benefit the lives of participants: its “ethics of practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 2). Within this framework, then, there is a need to acknowledge both the relationship between the world of the participants and the study *and* between this world and the criteria used to evaluate the study.

In Chapter 5, when this need was addressed in relation to the study, it was argued that my resources as the analyst had emerged out of a process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) involving a reflexive relationship in which the analyst’s resources both shaped and were shaped by those of participants and the emergent findings of the study, and which extends beyond the study through the distribution of findings to participants. In regard to the evaluation criteria employed here, then, the question arises as to whether the evaluation also emerged from this “reflexive alignment of... accounting practices” (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., p. 383).

In response, it can be argued that the criteria are indeed implicated in this process – a result of the decision to integrate Miles and Huberman’s (op. cit., pp. 12ff) “interactive” model of data analysis within the study, a decision which in turn was shaped by the theoretical and methodological resources developed through “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) with participants. It is in this sense, then, that the evaluation

stands, along with the other analyst's resources, in a reflexive relationship to the participants and to the study. This is not to argue that Miles and Huberman's (op. cit., p. 277) notion of "goodness" or the study itself is compromised by this relationship, as if evaluation could only be a "topic" or a "resource" (Sarangi & Coulthard, loc. cit.). Rather, the aim here is to situate Miles and Huberman's (op. cit. pp. 278-80) evaluation questions, as a social resource, within the "interpenetrating contexts" (Cicourel, loc. cit.) which shape and are shaped by this study. To acknowledge this reflexivity, then, the following sections do not measure the study against the evaluation questions as if this was the only relationship between them, but rather seek a dialogue between the two which continues beyond 'quality control' into the implications of the study.

### **9.32 Quality control**

#### 9.321 External reliability/objectivity/confirmability

This, the first area of evaluation, focuses on the extent to which the conclusions result from the "subjects and conditions of study" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, cited by Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 278) and on how effectively the influence of the researcher is minimised and made explicit. The issue here is whether the study provides a "complete picture" (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 278) of the decisions and processes on which the findings are based. Underpinning this requirement is the need to provide a clear "audit trail" (Schwandt & Halpern, op. cit.) of the study for the reader. The questions Miles and Huberman (loc. cit.) propose to evaluate the success of research in achieving this requirement focus on whether the study makes explicit the influence of the "personal assumptions, values, biases and affective states" of the researcher; the rationale for and implementation of methods and procedures used; the bases on which conclusions are drawn, and whether "competing hypotheses or rival conclusions were really considered". Also relevant here is the "external reliability" of the study: that is, whether it could be



replicated by others (Le-Compte & Goetz, 1982, cited in Miles & Huberman, *ibid.*). The next section explains the “audit trail”; the following section focuses on the question of “external reliability”.

#### *9.3211 The audit trail*

In relation to the first question, the need to make explicit the influence of the researcher’s “personal assumptions, values, biases and affective states” (Miles & Huberman, *loc. cit.*) is included within Cicourel’s (1982, 1992, 1996) requirement to make clear both the explicit and tacit knowledge, assumptions and decisions of the researcher – the process by which the “ecological validity” (Cicourel, 1982, p. 1ff) of research is acknowledged and opened for scrutiny. In relation to the first question, then, the need to make explicit the influence of the researcher on the study underlies both the theoretical framework for, and the design and implementation of, the current study.

Thus, in addressing the second question, the rationale for and implementation of methods and procedures used through the study are explained as being shaped by the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, *loc. cit.*) which informs the analyst’s perspective – the start of the audit trail. This influence can then be traced through the critique of discourse analysis, the development of the theoretical framework, and into the explanation of the five perspectives, whose operationalisation is, in turn, explained in terms of the design and emergent findings of the study.

Moving to the third question, the consideration of “competing hypotheses and rival conclusions” and the explanation of the “bases on which conclusions are drawn” (Miles & Huberman, *loc. cit.*) is not documented apart the iterative process of analysis; it is integral to it, through the coding of data out of which patterns emerge and condense to form the higher levels of interpretive codes which constitute the major themes of the coding systems. In the current study, this process is documented through the use of data displays



from the analysis of individual data sets to the identification of correspondences between them, displays which track the process which yields evidence for the discourse of commercialisation, and culminates in supporting the inclusion of Bourdieu's critique of contemporary society in the social-theoretical account of commercialisation.

In the argument for including Bourdieu's critique, the audit trail moves from the account of discovery through grounded coding procedures to the search for evidence of the influence of macro actors on meso and micro actors. The inclusion of Bourdieu's critique is then explained in terms of its fit with these findings and with those of the study as whole. This is an argument which, while it does not consider competing hypotheses or conclusions, nevertheless both draws on the grounded approach to research recommended by Miles and Huberman (*op. cit.*) and aligns the study with other social-theoretical positions in the discussion of the relationship between the findings and the themes of contemporary society.

Gaps in the audit trail include the absence from the appendices of information for students which is not provided in the brochures, such as fees and refund policies. Though omitted because they were not included in the brochure analysis, their inclusion in the appendices would, with hindsight, have supported the argument, in Chapter 7, for omitting them from the analysis. Also absent from the appendices are data drawn on in operationalising the social-institutional perspective. These include 'The National Code' (DETYA, *op. cit.*), and 'The practice of English language teaching' (Harmer, *op. cit.*), which were omitted to contain the length of the appendices.

Beyond these aspects of the study, the audit trail extends to the implications for the study explained below in terms of its "practical relevance" (Sarangi & Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 43).

### *9.3212 External reliability*

Notwithstanding the support this audit trail may provide for the “objectivity/confirmability” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) of the study, there remains the question raised under “external reliability” of whether the study could be replicated by others (Le-Compte & Goetz, op. cit.). Viewed from the analyst’s perspective, this question highlights the reflexive relationship between the evaluation and the study by raising the question of what resources and memberships these ‘others’ would need in order to replicate the study.

The point here is that, from the analyst’s perspective, the resources and memberships which shaped and were shaped by the current study evolved through the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.). In Bourdieu’s terms, this is an example of how “as a practice like others, social research is governed and informed by internalized dispositions, not by codified propositions, by the practical logic of the habitus, not by the theoretical logic set forth in treatises and textbooks” (Brubaker, loc. cit.). The possibility of auditing and replicating the study, and therefore of addressing the external reliability question depends, then, not only on whether the audit trail can be followed, but on the extent to which ‘others’ share the analyst’s resources and memberships – and how, therefore, the auditing and replication of the study would align with or transform the perspectives of the analyst and of the participants. While this is an issue for the auditing of the study, it is arguably more pressing for attempts to replicate it – where, as explained in Chapter 5, the study shaped and was shaped by the analyst’s resources, memberships, and relationship to the participants. Seen in this light, then, the capacity for replication is as much a reflection of how the analyst and participants are socially situated in relation to each other and to those who would replicate the study as it is a question of its “goodness” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 277).

### 9.322 Internal reliability/dependability/auditability

The focus of evaluation shifts in this section from the ‘explicitness’ of the study to “whether the process of the study is consistent, stable over time and across researchers and methods” (ibid., p. 278). In other words, while the decisions, values, procedures and methods which shape a study might be clearly documented, this does not mean that the study is internally coherent, that it has been conducted, and its components operationalised, consistently, and measures taken to ensure that data and its analysis contribute to the study in a coherent way. The questions which address this requirement cover the identification of the role and status of the researcher; the specification of theoretical and analytical constructs; the clarity of the research question and suitability of the research design for addressing it; the appropriacy of the data sets to the research question; and the consistency with which the quality of data and coding is monitored (ibid.).

#### *9.3221 The relationship between the analyst and the study*

The first question focuses on the consistency of the relationship between the analyst and the study. In terms of the theoretical framework, this is not a relationship in which the analyst’s resources are held constant in guiding the study towards its conclusions because this would exclude the reflexive relationship between the analyst’s resources and the study – the relationship which acknowledges the potential for the direction of the study to shape and be shaped by the analyst’s perspective. Consistent with Layder’s (op. cit.) recommendations for social research, this capacity for the co-development of the analyst’s resources and the study reflects the need for the resources deployed in the study to be held lightly, responsive to incoming data and analysis, and open to alternative orientations. It is in this sense, then, that the ‘stability’ of the relationship between the analyst and the study

has been constructed to contribute to the “goodness” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 277) of the study.

#### *9.3222 Coherence of theoretical and analytical constructs*

With its focus on the specification of theoretical and analytical constructs, the second question draws attention to the coherence of theoretical and analytical frameworks, and the consistency with which they are employed. These requirements are addressed in the study through the argument for ontological and methodological needs in discourse analysis; the development of the theoretical framework to provide an integrating response to these needs; and the operationalisation of this framework in the design and implementation of the study, specifically through the selection and analysis of the data sets and the emergent explanation of the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation.

The two deviations from this integration of the theoretical and analytical constructs are the absence of data representing the social practice perspective from the study, and the shift away from the interactive model of data analysis to a more selective approach in the operationalisation of the social-institutional perspective. The rationale for these deviations again reflects the reflexive interaction between the components of the study. Thus, the reason for the first is that the study is, as explained in Chapter 1, ‘preliminary’ and therefore seeks to develop, rather than draw on, a rationale for the selection of data to operationalise the social practice perspective. The second deviation was determined by the need to include an analysis of the three data sets, and thereby operationalise the social/institutional perspective, within the scope and constraints of the study. This “trade off” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 17) between analytical and practical needs reflects Miles and Huberman’s (pp. 17ff) argument that a research design should reflect the knowledge, needs and priorities which guide and emerge through the research process.

### *9.3223 Clarity of the research question*

The issue of reflexivity is also raised by the third question, concerning the clarity of the research question. Thus, while the question ‘How does commercialisation affect the professional practices of teachers who work in ELICOS colleges in Australia?’ was a resource developed to investigate the social phenomenon identified in Chapter 1, the key construct ‘professional practices of teachers’ was itself problematised in response to the findings which emerged from the data analysis. Similarly, the account of ‘commercialisation’ evolved in concert with these findings, culminating in the incorporation of Bourdieu’s critique. This is a further example, then, of how the study, by aiming to acknowledge the reflexivity of the research process, in turn shapes the evaluation, here redirecting its focus from the clarity of the research question to its relationship, as an analyst’s resource, with the emergent findings of the study.

### *9.3224 The relationship between design, data and investigation*

The penultimate question concerns whether the research design, and the data sets gathered, are coherently related to the investigation of the research question. The answer to this question depends on the effectiveness of the design and implementation of the study in drawing on the theoretical framework to operationalise the construct ‘professional practices of teachers’ at the intersection of the four perspectives. An indication of the value of the data sets selected is that, based on their analysis, the construct ‘professional practices of teachers’ itself emerges, and is explained as a subject of, struggle within ELICOS. This is a finding which is both consistent with the reflexive and emergent focus of the theoretical framework and supports the claim that the findings from the different data sets contribute in a coherent way to investigating the research question.

### *9.3225 Consistency of coding and procedures*

Finally, there is the question of whether checks have been made to maintain the consistency of coding procedures and data quality, in terms of, for example, “bias, deceit, informant knowledgeability” (ibid., p. 278). In checking the implementation of the coding procedures, the study has relied primarily on the checks inherent in the iterative coding process, in which, as explained in Chapter 3, emergent patterns of codes shape and are themselves shaped by the results of subsequent coding. Indeed, it is precisely through this process of recursive checking that the coherence and stability of the coding systems emerge. On the other hand, in relation to the quality of the data itself, the only checks used were those included within the rationale for the selection of teachers to conduct the critical incident diaries, explained in Chapter 4. While these did not include checks on the veracity of the diary entries, except to the extent that they were consistent with each other and with my own experience as a teacher, the diarists’ “knowledgeability” (ibid.) was checked by the stipulation that they be currently employed and have sufficient experience as ELICOS teachers to complete the dairies according the guidelines.

### 9.323 Internal validity/credibility/authenticity

Miles and Huberman (ibid.) stress that though this area of “goodness” concerns the “truth value” of findings, it does not entail a positivist view of research. Rather, they emphasise that internal validity is a complex notion which includes the various kinds of “understanding” (Maxwell, 1992a, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) which may be sought and promoted by a study. Also covered by validity in this sense is “natural” validity: that is, the extent to which “the events and settings studied are uncontrived, unmodified by the researcher’s presence and actions” (Warner, 1991, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), as well as the “plausibility” and “adequacy” of the study (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), and processes of “checking,

questioning and theorizing” which support the “validation” of research (Kvale, 1989b, cited in Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 279). The questions which Miles and Huberman propose with which to evaluate validity in this broad sense cover two aspects of research: the rendition of the context studied, and the warrant for findings

### *9.3231 The rendition of context*

The questions relating to the rendition of context focus on how “comprehensive” (Campbell, 1986, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), “context-rich” and “meaningful” – or “thick” (Geertz, 1973, pp. 6-10) – it is, and whether it “enables a ‘vicarious presence’ for the reader”. In addressing this requirement, the current study has, as explained in Chapters 2 and 3, sought to operationalise Cicourel’s (1992) notion of “interpenetrating contexts” (p. 309), comprising multiple “local and more abstract senses of culture or social organization” involving “multiple ethnographic and/or organisation settings and informants” (p. 305). As explained in Chapter 3, the resulting theoretical framework seeks to achieve this sense of “‘vicarious presence’” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) through the focus in the participants’ perspective on recovering participants’ lived experience through narratives which reflect their interpretations of discursive practices. As argued in Chapter 3, however, this is not an ethnographic process, in which the researcher tries to “get the fullest data on a group” (Glaser & Strauss, 1971, p. 183, cited in Layder, op. cit., p. 44), but rather draws on the analyst’s resources and the emergent findings of the study to guide the selection and analysis of “theoretically relevant data” (ibid.). This rendition of context, then, is not designed to be “comprehensive” (Campbell, op. cit.) or “context-rich” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) in an ethnographic sense, but selectively focuses on data samples – in the participants’ perspective, the diaries – which are sufficiently “meaningful” (ibid.) to enable the perspectives to be operationalised within the theoretical framework. While necessary for the framework, however, the participants’ perspective is not sufficient



because the framework seeks to account for the perspectives of discourse in an ontology of the phenomena which shape and are shaped by the “obstinately familiar world” (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 37) perceived by participants. This need, then, draws into the ontology the other perspectives of the framework, thereby extending the rendition of the context studied beyond that required to provide the reader with a sense of being present within it.

### *9.3232 The warrant for findings*

The evaluation of the warrant for findings focuses on the strength of links between the study and the findings, including whether the findings are “internally coherent” (Eisner, 1991, cited in Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 279), and whether they reflect the “constructs in play”, and have a systematic relationship with “prior and emerging theory” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 279). Also relevant here is the extent to which findings from different analyses converge, predictions are made, findings replicated, and measures taken to confirm and disconfirm them (ibid.).

### *9.32321 Links between the study and the findings*

In the current study, the links between data analysis, findings, constructs and theory are developed through the operationalisation of the perspectives, the process in which the findings emerge through the iterative, grounded development of coding systems which themselves shape and are shaped by the findings and constructs which emerge through the combination of the perspectives. It is this process which links the analysis of the data sets to the constructs associated with prior theory, through the theoretical framework to the analyst’s perspective and the emergence of the social-theoretical account of the discourse of commercialisation. While the study aims in these ways to generate the warrant for the

findings, there are uncertainties and limitations which should be acknowledged here. These primarily concern the method of coding, and can be divided into four areas.

The first is that, though the grounded coding procedures proved an effective means of revealing patterns of codes across texts, they do not lend themselves to tracking the interaction of codes within texts, and thus identifying which codes interact to form patterns within texts. These correlations between codes might have provided further evidence of how, for example, phenomena identified under the codes – such as appraisal and fear of redundancy – are conjoined in the experience of the individual diarists. Likewise, in the coding of the brochures, the tracking of interactions between grammatical codes could have provided evidence of how identities and relationships are constructed across clauses within the texts, an analysis which would have complemented the focus on relationships between elements of the clauses across the texts.

The second point focuses on the question of when the “saturation” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 62) of codes is reached, the point at which no further codes emerge and coding ceases. While it is possible to know that new codes have not emerged for a period of analysis, the question remains open as to whether a coding system has been exhausted or whether more coding would eventually lead to the discovery of new codes. This question was never resolved within the study. Instead, the principle adopted was to stop coding after one additional text had ceased to generate new codes. Even this solution needs to be qualified, however, because in the last diary coded, that of D8, new codes did emerge: notably, ‘Managers appraise teacher’s ‘attitude’’. The coding of the diaries was brought to an end here both because the incidents D8 reported related to her sacking, a situation unlikely to appear in further diaries, and for the practical reason that her diary was the last available in the data set.

Thirdly, in the coding of the brochures, the focus on “transitivity” (Halliday, *op. cit.*, pp. 101ff), while producing findings which are coherent, and consonant with the

findings of the study as a whole, could have been combined with the analysis of other linguistic and non-linguistic features of the brochures to produce a fuller account of the construction of identities and relationships. Particularly relevant here are lexical and grammatical cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), the analysis of images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), and the discursive practices through which the texts are produced and interpreted (Fairclough, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72). These analyses were not conducted due to practical constraints, and because, in the case of the images, the analysis would have risked compromising the agreement with colleges to maintain their anonymity.

Finally, the codes have not been 'weighted' according to, for example, their frequency, and this weighting included within analyses. In hindsight, a systematic analysis of frequency may well have contributed to the warrant for the findings. While it would have been technically possible to attach values to the codes, this was not done in the analysis of the diaries because of questions raised by isolating frequency as the criterion which reflects the analytical significance of the codes. For example, to weight the codes developed in the diaries according to their frequency would have ignored the emergent effect of differences between the diarists which, for example, arose from their qualifications and experience, as noted in Chapters 6 and 8, and would have begged the question of how to isolate code boundaries, explained in Chapter 6. Though desirable, then, it was judged impracticable to address these questions in a rationale for weighting the codes. Instead, the principle was adopted for the diary and brochure analyses to include in the presentation of findings the frequency of codes where this emerged as significant in the analysis.

### 9.32322 Convergence, confirmation and disconfirmation

Notwithstanding these uncertainties and limitations, the warrant for the findings is strengthened by the convergence, in Chapter 7, of the findings of the diary and brochure

analyses in the correspondences between their coding systems. The confirmation of this convergence in Chapter 7 affirms the prediction which informed the rationale for the study, explained in Chapter 4, that the analyses of the brochures and diaries would evidence, in Fairclough's (ibid., p. 207) terms, the "colonization of institutional orders of discourse, and more broadly of the societal order of discourse, by discourse types associated with commodity production". Further support comes from the convergence, in Chapter 8, of the analyses of the three data sets which evidence the influence of macro actors on the identities and relationships of meso and micro actors.

As argued in Chapter 4, the convergence of these analyses adds to the credibility of the study in three ways. Substantively, it supports the finding that it is the discourse of commercialisation which shapes both the construction of teachers' practices in the ELICOS brochures and in colleges, and adds credibility to the broader social-theoretical account of commercialisation developed through the study. In terms of the methodology, it supports the claim that the findings of the diary and brochure analyses are not artifacts created by or imported into the study, but are 'authentic' in the sense that they are grounded in the analysis of the data. Thirdly, in relation to the ontology, the correspondence between the findings of the analyses which operationalise the social resource and participants' perspectives, combined with the evidence for interdiscursive connections between these and the data gathered for the social/institutional analyses, supports the interdiscursive account of the relations between the perspectives of discourse.

In terms of efforts to disconfirm the findings through the search for "negative evidence" (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), the grounded coding procedures do not produce negative evidence which might *refute* the findings, but emergent 'surprises' which were identified and incorporated into the study as part of the iterative, reflexive analysis described in Chapter 3. Understood in this sense then, then, negative evidence emerged through and guided the coding procedures and systems themselves. While this process was

ongoing and integral to the investigation, notable surprises include the revision, in Chapter 6, of the diary coding system which was forced by the emergence of ‘evaluation/appraisal practices’; the need to include Gramsci’s (loc. cit.) consent/coercion distinction to explain emergence patterns of subordination; the extension of the transitivity coding of the brochures, in Chapter 7, beyond Fairclough’s (op. cit., p. 234ff) recommendations, to include, for example, ergativity; and the emergence of the contradictory construction of students, in Chapter 8.

A further way of seeking counter evidence is to present the findings to the “original informants” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), a step which, in this study, is part of a dialogue which is currently being developed with these informants and in ELICOS more general. The dialogue includes the dissemination of findings to teachers and institutions, including ELICOS colleges and NEAS. This dialogue, however, while providing a forum within which to evaluate the findings against these participants’ perspectives, is not planned as a test of the findings. Rather, consistent with the analyst’s perspective, it is intended to continue the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) which motivates the study and therefore falls within – and is explained further in relation to – the “pragmatic” (Kvale, 1989a, cited in Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 280), rather than the internal validity of the study.

Finally, in relation to the development of the theoretical framework, the arguments for the development and integration of the ontology and the methodology seek to acknowledge and address alternative positions within discourse analysis, and arguments which present potential challenges to the framework (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., p. 279). These include, in Chapter 3, Carter and Sealey’s (op. cit.) “realist sociolinguistics” and the critiques of it developed by Potter (op. cit.) and Fairclough (2000); Moore’s (2003) work on the relationship between linguistic and social categories; and Fairclough’s distinction between description, interpretation and explanation (1989, p. 26, 1992, p. 231). In the

operationalisation of the theoretical framework, this acknowledgement of competing arguments and positions continues with the development of linguistic and social-theoretical options for operationalising the different perspectives, and the arguments for the options taken in the design and implementation the study.

#### 9.324 External validity/transferability/fittingness

The terms in this heading refer to the extent to which findings are significant beyond the context of the study itself. In explaining this area of “goodness”, Miles and Huberman (loc. cit.) stress that there are numerous ways in which findings may be “generalized”, that this notion itself can be problematised, and, drawing on Noblit and Hare (1988, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), caution that “the generalizing process is far from mechanical... It is careful interpretation, not just ‘adding up’” (loc. cit.). Citing Firestone (1993), they distinguish between three “levels of generalization”. These involve, respectively, the capacity of the findings to be inferred from the samples to a wider population; the extent to which measures are taken to check the transferability of the findings to further cases; and the extent to which connections are made between the findings and relevant theory. With this last level can be included the notion of “theoretical” validity (Maxwell, 1992b, cited in Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), which depends on the extent to which a “more abstract explanation” connected to “theoretical networks beyond the immediate study” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) is developed to explain the phenomena under scrutiny.

The questions Miles and Huberman (ibid.) propose for evaluating the “generalizability” of research can be broadly grouped according to the three “levels” described by Firestone (op. cit.). First, in relation to sampling, the questions focus on whether the description of the context studied and samples collected is detailed enough to enable comparison with other cases; whether limitations on the representiveness of

samples have been identified; and whether the selection of samples is diverse enough to allow generalisations to be made. Regarding the relationship between the findings and theory, the questions focus on whether the study is consistent with, confirmatory of, or otherwise connected to prior theory; and whether the broader application of such theory is identified in the study. The final group of questions focus on whether measures have been taken or proposed to support the transferability of the findings to other contexts, such their consistency with the experience of a “range of readers” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), and the replication of the study on comparable cases.

### *9.3241 Sampling*

As explain above, the analysis ELICOS teachers’ practices is developed by operationalising and combining the perspectives of the theoretical framework. The extent to which this analysis facilitates generalisation to other cases is, then, partially dependent on the success of the theoretical framework in modeling the perspectives of discourse and the relations between them. The question of whether the description of context enables generalisation is, then, linked to that of the relationship between the study and prior theory, which is explained below.

On the other hand, decisions on sampling, while contributing to the operationalisation of the each of the perspectives, depend on the particular aims, scope and constraints of the study, guided by the research methodology adopted – in this case the “interactive” (ibid., pp. 12ff) model of data analysis. The requirement that the samples facilitate generalisations to other cases is addressed in Chapter 4, and in the subsequent data chapters, in which the sampling criteria and relevance of the samples to the study are explained, and the data sets described in relation to the populations and contexts from which they are drawn.



The limitations which these samples set on the generalisability of the study arises primarily in the diary study, in which limitations result both from the size and diversity of the samples, and the populations they represent. In relation to sample size, it is regrettable that only eight of the original twenty seven participating teachers completed the diaries because a larger sample would, of itself, have strengthened the generalisability of the study, and would also have included a greater diversity of teachers, thereby adding again to value of the sample. A further limitation results from the absence of data operationalising the social practice perspective, and the restriction of the participants' perspective to data reflecting teachers' perceptions, excluding those of managers, students, agents and the other 'absent participants', and thereby raising the question of the extent to which the findings can be generalised beyond the perceptions of teachers. In the study, these limitations have been addressed in three ways: through the inclusion of the narratives reflecting my own perceptions as a teacher, manager and NEAS panelist, through the selection of data samples – the brochures, NEAS regulations, EA News, and CELTA materials – which shape and are shaped by the interests of managers and 'absent participants', and through the links established with prior theory – explained below. The population whose interests are not represented in the data are students, whose representation in the data may have been valuable but was not possible because of practical constraints on the scope of the study.

A further limitation on the generalisability of the study is the time which has elapsed since 1997, when the diary data was gathered. While changes in the ELICOS sector in the intervening period could have reduced the relevance of the study to the present, there is no reason, based on my experience, to doubt that the diary data is any less representative of teachers' perceptions now that it was at the time it was gathered. However, it lies beyond the scope of the study to explore this question in more detail.

Finally, there is the restriction of the data gathered to reflect the operations of private ELICOS colleges, the rationale being that these would more clearly exhibit the influence of commercial pressures. While this rationale narrows the selection of data to meet the aims of the study, it also reduces the grounds for generalising the findings to public sector colleges, in, for example, universities. Similarly, the extension of the findings beyond English language teaching to other education sectors, indeed to commercial pressures on professional practices more generally is limited by the focus of the data gathered for the study. However, while the sampling may limit the generalisability of the study, an additional warrant is provided by its links to prior theory, the focus of the next section.

#### *9.3242 Links to prior and emergent theory*

The study is linked to prior theory because it operationalises the ontology of the theoretical framework, which, in modeling how the perspectives of discourse are potentially interconnected, offers links to linguistic and social theory. In relation to generalisability, the key point is that the potential for these links is built into the theoretical framework, and that actual relations between prior theory and the findings of the study emerge through the reflexive process of analysis. In the current study, these links are made through the development of the social-theoretical account of commercialisation, and through this to the broader themes of contemporary society identified in Chapter 3. While these links add to the generalisability of the findings by situating the commercialisation of ELICOS teachers' practices within the national and international contexts of social, economic and workplace change, the study does not examine in detail connections between these findings and those of other studies of comparable workplaces. Though, then, the social-theoretical resources which inform the account of the discourse of commercialisation – in particular, the work of Sarangi and Roberts (1999b), Fairclough

(1992, 1996) and Bourdieu (1991, 1998a; Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.) – imply that the findings are applicable to other workplaces, and to contemporary social life more generally, it lies beyond the scope of the current study to further strengthen these claims.

#### *9.3243 Evidence for generalisability*

The use of measures to gather evidence for the study's generalisability – by, for example, using a "range of readers" (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.) or the replication of the study in other contexts – raises again the question of the resources and memberships of those from whom this evidence would be drawn. Thus, as argued above in relation the use of "auditing and replication" (ibid., p. 278) to secure the external reliability of the study, and of the "original informants" (p. 279) to strengthen its internal validity, measures aimed at securing the generalisability of the study by checking its findings against the perceptions of a "range of readers" (ibid.) are included below under "pragmatic validity" (Kvale, op. cit.), rather than its external validity. This is because, viewed from the analyst's perspective, the relationship with readers involves not only the presence or absence of correspondence between the findings and their "experience" (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), but with the resources and memberships they bring to the study, and how these align with or transform those of the analyst and the participants.

In this light, then, the relationship of the study to readers is not one in which its generalisability is measured against their perceptions but, rather, involves a dialogue which contributes to the process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) of which the study is a part. It is the relationship of this process to the "practical relevance" (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 43) of the study – its ethical dimension – which is the focus of the next section.

### **9.33 Utilisation/application/action orientation**

As explained above, this section evaluates the implications of the study for participants (Miles & Huberman, *op. cit.* 280), its “pragmatic validity” (Kvale, *op. cit.*), operationalised within the analyst’s perspective in terms of its “ethics of practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 2). Here, the evaluation questions proposed by Miles and Huberman (*loc. cit.*) focus on the effectiveness of the study in addressing the concerns which motivated it – specifically, on whether the study identifies changes which would address these concerns; whether there is evidence that these changes are realisable; and how it is proposed that the study can contribute to bringing them about.

#### 9.331 Implications for social change

As explained in Chapters 1 and 5, the current study was motivated by my concern both to understand and contribute to the reduction of inter- and intra-personal conflict in the professional lives of ELICOS teachers. The implications of the study depend, in the first instance, on its effectiveness in addressing the first part of the concern. While acknowledging the limitations and uncertainties identified above, then, the argument here is that the quality of the study is sufficient to identify the need for change by explaining the struggles teachers face and the challenge confronting efforts to alleviate them.

In addressing the first part of the concern, the study identifies that these struggles result from pressures on teachers to conform to the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation. It is this discourse which, operating through processes of “technologization” (Fairclough, 1996, p. 73), advances the interests of those whose habitus is synchronised with the economic field (Bourdieu, 1991, 1998a; Bourdieu & Wacquant, *op. cit.*) by subordinating social to economic capital to the detriment not only of teachers as ‘experts’, but also of students as learners and managers whose habitus is not synchronised with the economic field. This subordination is accomplished through

the interconnected operations of micro, meso and macro actors, advanced and legitimised by the discourse of neoliberalism, and enforced through a combination of “consent” and “coercion” (Gramsci, loc. cit.)

The need, then, is to intervene in this process of the subordination of social to economic capital. The question is whether this is feasible, and the answer, addressed in the next section, is itself an implication of the study.

### *9.3311 The potential for change*

The potential for raising the value of teachers’ capital depends on the extent to which this is possible within the social-theoretical account of commercialisation – in the first instance, on whether Bourdieu’s ‘theory of practice’ (1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.) includes the potential for individuals to initiate social change – and whether, therefore, the social-theoretical account of commercialisation allows for an “ethics of practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 2).

The answer to this question extends the account of the theory of practice provided so far in this study to include its implications for individual freedom<sup>101</sup>. As argued in Chapter 3, Bourdieu provides an account of the relationship between individual action and social structure in which one is not, *a priori*, subordinate to the other; but nor are individuals free to act irrespective of their own habitus (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 127-128). In developing an alternative position, he again draws on the notion of reflexivity, and in doing so distinguishes between two senses of freedom. According to the first, as explained in Chapter 3, when the habitus is synchronised with the fields in which it evolves, the individual is not thereby *constrained* to act, but acts according to “practical sense” (Wacquant, op. cit., p. 20ff), the habituated facility to conduct one’s self in

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<sup>101</sup> It lies beyond the scope of the study to develop further this account of freedom within the theory of practice though it should be acknowledged that this is not unproblematic, and that Bourdieu has been charged with determinism (see, for example, Erickson, 2001, pp. 153ff).

accordance with the demands of familiar fields. On the other hand, it is when habitus and field are “out of phase” (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 107) that individuals are more likely to become aware of and intervene in their habitus – but again the resources drawn on to do this will themselves be shaped by the habitus and the fields with which it is synchronised.

The latter sense of freedom is distinguished by two characteristics: by the difficulty of changing the habitus and by the tendency for resistance by weaker classes to be self-defeating.

On the first point, the reflexive account of freedom does not mean that the resources of the habitus, and therefore individual freedom, are locked in a vicious circle in which individuals have no more capacity to adapt to or change social environments than they already have; nor is this the freedom advanced by neoliberal discourse, which, as explained in Chapter 8, severs individual choices from the social conditions with which their habitus is synchronised. Rather, the exercise of Bourdieu’s notion of freedom is a potentially daunting process in which – as with the teachers in the study – individuals are simultaneously faced with the risks of failing to meet the demands of the social environment and with the task of working against the momentum of their own habitus, which “is pregnant with... [their] whole history” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit., p. 124). In the theory of practice, then, it is this reflexive relationship between habitus and freedom which enables the habitus to shape social action, and itself be shaped by the individual’s efforts to change the *status quo*; and it is the habitus which emerges through this process which produces and reproduces the fields with which it is, in turn, synchronised or “out of phase” (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 107).

On the second point, notwithstanding the capacity for individuals to bring about change, the question remains as to how far they can exercise it in contributing to change in ELICOS, in which the freedom of those whose interests are subordinated to the economic field is constrained by those who gain from it. In such cases, Bourdieu (Bourdieu &

Wacquant, op. cit., p. 82) warns that “the dominated seldom escape the antinomy of domination”, by which he means that, for those whose capital is devalued to the advantage of dominant classes, both resistance and conformity further devalues their capital so that, either way, the interests of the dominant class is advanced. The problem of escaping from this “antinomy of domination”, in which the habitus is trapped within the economic field, is exemplified in the current study. Thus, for teachers, what *counts* as resistance and “consent” (Gramsci, loc. cit.) is decided in accordance with the economic field, advanced by the discourse of commercialisation, according to which teachers who exert their expertise in resistance merely reaffirm their lack of economic capital – while “consent” entails working as an ‘operative’ in consumption processes.

While Bourdieu’s ‘theory of practice’ (1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.), then, includes a qualified potential for individuals to initiate social change, the question posed for the ethical dimension of this study is how it could contribute to addressing the subordination of teachers when this is advanced and legitimated on a national and international scale by the interconnected operations of macro, meso and micro actors. Given these findings, and the fact that the market in English language products continues to expand, there would appear to be limited scope for change, unless this involves a reduction in the dominance of neoliberal discourse itself. The implication of the study is, then, that improvement in teachers’ ability to manage their professional practices is dependent on profound changes in contemporary society – and that, in the absence of such changes, the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation are likely to remain. This is not to deny the possibility of subversion in particular cases, in which, for example, a teacher might introduce students into modes of learning which depart from the construction advanced by the discourse of commercialisation but which nevertheless meet the college’s aim to satisfy students. Rather, the point is that, *ipso facto*, such cases are likely to be exceptional.



Notwithstanding this implication, there has been some evidence of changes brought about by the study, though these too provide few grounds for optimism. These changes are explained in the first part of this section. This is followed by an explanation of further action which extends the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) to the ELICOS sector more generally, to other workplaces and to further research.

First, then, participation in the study has affected the teachers who participated in it. While they were not asked to comment on how participation had affected them – in hindsight, a failing in the design of the study – they did provide verbal feedback which focused on how keeping the diaries had changed their perceptions of their work. Their comments focused on how keeping the diary had made it easier to cope with the conflicts they experienced, captured by D3, who commented in his diary that “this diary has been great therapy for me” (217). Though his observation suggests that participation had reduced the tensions he experienced, his construction of this benefit as “therapy”, and himself as passive in the role of patient, is consistent with the findings of the study that teachers subordinate themselves within these struggles. These effects of participation, then, may not so much signal an increase the value of these teachers’ “social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) but – consistent with the “antimony of domination” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, loc. cit.) – provide further evidence for their complicity in its devaluation.

Beyond the influence that diary keeping had on the participating teachers, there is also the question of the influence of the *findings* on them and on managers at participating colleges. This raises the question of how to make the findings “intellectually and physically accessible to potential users” (Miles & Huberman, loc. cit.), a challenge which, as explained in Chapter 5, draws in the problem of “incommensurable discourses” (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 42). The particular challenge posed for this study is that the discourses of participating teachers and managers are, *ex hypothesi*, in a relationship of

struggle, raising the question of how these differences between their discourses are to be acknowledged in the communication of the findings, while avoiding the risk, explained in Chapter 5, of the “*tragic consequences* of making incompatible points of view confront each other, where no concession or compromise is possible because each one of them is equally founded in social reason” (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 3). The implication is that reports of the findings for teachers and managers will reflect their interests. Thus, for example, the report to managers might emphasise how the contradictory construction of students may impact on consumer’s ‘happiness’ levels.

While this issue is yet to be addressed, there has been an attempt to communicate preliminary findings, not specifically to those teachers and managers who participated, but in a workshop conducted at the ACTA/ESLE<sup>102</sup> national conference in 2002. Consistent with the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.), the workshop sought to initiate a dialogue between teachers and managers on their different constructions of teaching and learning. As evidenced by the report on the workshop (Crichton, 2002)<sup>103</sup>, the participants – who represented both management and teaching interests – engaged in this dialogue both with me, and within and between their interest groups. In doing so, they drew attention to their conflicting constructions of teaching and learning, and suggested measures to improve their understanding of each other interests. It is, however, as argued above, another question as to the extent to which such initiatives can contribute to social change.

### *9.3313 Further action*

Following these initial steps, further action will extend the communication of the findings to these groups, and, it is anticipated, to the macro actors who shape the struggles in which

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<sup>102</sup> Australian Council of TESOL Associations/English as a Second Language Educators

<sup>103</sup> Appendix 12

they are involved. Further research into issues raised by the study would support these actions by strengthening their credibility – thereby supporting and extending the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, *ibid.*) with participants.

Further dialogue with participants, however, again raises Sarangi and Roberts’s (*loc. cit.*) problem of “incommensurable discourses”. One approach to communicating the findings to the competing classes might be to promote the argument that emerged in the ACTA/ESLE workshop (Crichton, *op. cit.*) that, in a market in which product differentiation is an imperative, teaching ‘expertise’, as understood by teachers, may itself provide an attraction for consumers. It is hard to see, though, how the promotion of such ‘mutual dependence’ between commercial and pedagogic interests would not still subordinate teaching expertise to the economic interest of maximising the number of consumers – prioritising, therefore, the need to maintain their ‘happiness’, and leading back to the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation.

In relation to the macro actors represented in the social/institutional perspective, the findings point to a number of initiatives which, if feasible, might enhance the value of teachers’ “social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) These include raising NEAS’s awareness of the exclusions/minimisation in the “Standards and criteria” (NEAS, *loc. cit.*) and their consequences for teaching and learning. A further implication for regulation concerns the construction of teaching and learning in promotional materials. Thus, while NEAS (App. 8: 1012-1017) currently requires these to be “clear” and “comprehensive... to enable prospective students to make an informed choice”, the brochure analysis provides evidence that the construction of learning as a consumption process does not align with the pedagogic construction of ‘quality’ asserted by NEAS. This point goes beyond the current study by raising the question of how students interpret promotional materials and what, therefore, might constitute “informed choice”.

On the other hand, in regard to training, the dialogue to be opened would seek to problematise the 'quality' of the CELTA course by focusing on the relationship between training as product and as pedagogy, raising questions about, for example, the exclusions from the course, and the construction of teachers and teaching it advances. Such a dialogue would extend Littlejohn's (op. cit.) critique of the PPP methodology to include the tensions, identified in Chapter 8, between the value of PPP as a method of language teaching/learning and its commercial value as a product which advances teaching and learning as consumption processes.

The questions raised by these initiatives in turn have implications for further research, which might focus on investigating these questions with a view to providing further insights into the processes by which the social is subordinated to the economic in the ELICOS sector. Such research might, for example, focus on operationalising the social practice perspective by gathering data representing interactions between the micro, meso and macro actors represented in this study, and investigating whether their employment of social resources in socially-situated practice contributes to advancing the identities and relationships constructed by the discourse of commercialisation. Also building on the current study, and thereby extending the process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.), further research in the ELICOS sector might seek to operationalise the participants' perspective using data reflecting managers', students', agents' and the other absent participants' interpretations of the discursive practices which shape and are shaped by the identities of, and relationships between, micro, meso and macro actors.

Beyond the ELICOS sector, further research might focus on the extent to which the theoretical framework, and the social-theoretical account of commercialisation developed through the study, can be operationalised in studying other workplace contexts, such as those in ELT more generally, in other areas of education, and in other sectors, such as healthcare (see, for example, Candlin, 2002). Of particular interest would be

whether such research would support the finding that it is the identities and relationships advanced by the discourse of commercialisation which compromise the “integrity” (Keat, loc. cit.) of these other professional practices. By focusing on this question, such research would extend the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) beyond the context of the current study, and in doing so provide further checks both on its generalisability and the credibility of its findings.

### **9.3 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS, EVALUATION AND IMPLICATIONS**

Consistent with the aim of acknowledging the “interpenetrating contexts” (Cicourel, op. cit., p. 309) which are the focus of discourse analysis, and within which discourse analysis itself is situated, this chapter has presented the findings of the study, and has argued for and developed the reflexive relationship between the study and its evaluation which is implied by the theoretical framework. This has led to the inclusion of the implications of the study as a focus of the evaluation, and has foregrounded the question of how the evaluation of the study aligns with or transforms the perspectives of the analyst and the participants (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., 379). By thus situating the evaluation within the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.), the chapter has sought to construct evaluation as part of a dialogue which links the analyst, the participants, the study, its implications, and the question of its “goodness” (Miles & Huberman, op. cit., 277).

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