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This paper explores contradictory constructions of teacher work across policy discourse and professional practice. It draws from a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis of 363 political speeches published on England's Department for Education website between 2010 and 2018, and qualitative interviews with two executive leaders working in English primary academy schools. Findings indicate a contradiction in the way that teacher work was constructed by government ministers, with hard work constructed positively as leading to improved educational outcomes, but workload negatively constructed as a problem which needed to be solved. This contradiction was echoed in school leaders' discursive constructions of teacher work. Extending previous research on teacher workload, I raise the possibility that it is not only workload, but the requirement to navigate contradictory discursive constructions of teacher work which may cause damage to teachers' professional identities.

Keywords: teacher workload; discourse analysis; education policy; Conservative

Introduction

Workload has been identified as a significant issue impacting upon teachers' commitment and resilience (Barmby, 2006; Bridges & Searle, 2011; Perryman & Calvert, 2020), with the high workload experienced by teachers often identified as a cause of attrition amongst teachers (Hong, 2010; HOCEC, 2017; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018).

In this article, I explore the 'constitutive intertextuality' (Fairclough, 1992) between political discourse concerning teacher workload, and senior leaders' discursive constructions of the same issue. Past research on teacher workload has explored teachers' working hours using quantitative measures, and teachers' opinions of their workload using qualitative methods. This paper makes a case for better understanding how teachers *discursively negotiate* issues around working and workload, facilitating a more holistic understanding of why teacher workload remains such an intransigent problem.

Teacher Workload and English Education Policy

Apple's 'intensification thesis' (Apple, 2004) has been influential in explaining why teachers' workloads increased dramatically in the later decades of the twentieth century (Hargreaves, 1994; Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008; Beck, 2017). Apple argued that global and economic changes led to increased expectations being placed upon teachers by politicians and wider society, with teachers experiencing:

> *considerably heavier workloads and ever escalating demands for accountability, a never-ending schedule of meetings, and in many cases a growing scarcity of resources both emotional and physical* (Apple, 2004, 25).

The experience of intensification involves increased complexity for teachers (Easthope & Easthope, 2000), and mirrors wider intensification which has taken place within neoliberal societies since the 1980s (Nealon, 2008). In terms of the working conditions of teachers, the increased accountability associated with intensification has led to a widely critiqued performativity culture within English schools (Ball, 2003; Perryman, 2009; Keddie, 2017). The OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) in 2013 found that secondary teachers in only two jurisdictions - Japan and Alberta - reported working longer hours than those in England (Sellen, 2016). The effects of workload intensification on teachers are multiple and complex. For some, factors associated with intensification and higher workload - such as increased targets and evaluations – have led to anxiety, dissatisfaction and resistance (Ball, 2003; Keddie, 2017). However, these same accountability demands provide 'the ontological frameworks for teachers to know how to be "good" teachers' (Holloway & Brass, 2018, 363), and produce discursive positionalities within which

teachers can construct their professional selves as having ‘a passion for excellence’ (Ball, 2003, 215).

The high level of workload experienced recently by English teachers can be explained - at least in part - as a result of political change since 2010. After more than ten years of Labour governance, in 2010 no party gained an overall majority in the general election and a Coalition government was formed, bringing together the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats. Michael Gove was appointed the Secretary of State for Education; his white paper *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010) set out priorities for the Coalition government, involving ‘profound structural change and rigorous attention to standards’ (7). Resulting changes to curriculum, assessment and management practices led to increases in teacher workload (NEU, 2018).

Policymakers also have a complex relationship with teacher workload. Decisions made by policymakers have a direct impact on teachers’ workload, often resulting in teachers being subjected to an increase in required activities (West et al., 1994; Male, 1999; Perryman, 2007). However, teacher workload is also regularly positioned by policymakers as the reason for teacher dissatisfaction and consequent attrition, with the result that ‘recent teacher retention policy initiatives have focused almost exclusively on reducing workload’ (Chiong et al., 2017, 1084). Such workload reduction initiatives have been criticised for placing the onus of responsibility on individual teachers at the expense of addressing systemic issues underpinning high levels of teacher workload (Stacey et al., 2020).

Such complexities and tensions within policy could also be observed within the shifting priorities of the Conservative party. In 2014, the Prime Minister removed Michael Gove from the post of Education Secretary and replaced him with Nicky Morgan, an appointment widely understood to be an attempt to rebuild damaged relationships with the teaching community in the run up to the general election in 2015 (Watt, 2014; Saul, 2014) .

Teacher recruitment had started to fall (DfE, 2014), and teacher workload was positioned as a possible cause. Following Morgan's appointment, the Department for Education (DfE) launched the Workload Challenge, followed by the School Workload Reduction Toolkit (DfE, 2018).

Methodology

This paper reports on selected findings drawn from a wider study which explored education policy post-2010 and its impact on early career primary teacher professional identity.[1] The research was designed in two phases (Figure 1). The first phase consisted of a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis (CDA) of 363 speeches published on the DfE website between May 2010 and March 2018 (the 'DFEMS corpus').[2] Wordsmith 7.0 software (Scott, 2016) was used for analysis, enabling an exploration of word patterns within the DFEMS corpus that would be difficult to identify through manual analysis (Fairclough, 2003a). The second phase involved semi-structured interviews with practitioners working across four primary schools, which took place between September 2018 and February 2019, after Phase 1 policy analysis had been completed. These interviews were transcribed using a simplified version of Jefferson Transcription Symbols (Appendix 1). In total six senior leaders were interviewed. In this paper, statements made by two senior leaders (namely, Rachel[3] from the Rosemary Trust and Charlotte from the Dahlia Trust) were isolated because they evidenced presuppositions which were manifested intertextually with those of policymakers. I focus in

[1] Ethical approval for this study was granted through the University of Worcester's Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HASSREC) (Approval reference HCA17180022(A))
[2] All 363 speeches were published on the DfE website, with the majority delivered by those in DfE ministerial posts. There were six exceptions, as follows: four were delivered by the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister, one by the Schools Commissioner, and one by the Chief Executive of the National College of Teaching and Leadership.
[3] All names of individuals, schools and MATs in this paper are pseudonyms, in order to preserve participants' anonymity and confidentiality, in line with ethical guidelines (BERA, 2018). Ethical approval for the study was granted by the researcher's institution.

detail on a few, specific statements made by these two senior leaders, which are directly relevant to policy discourses concerning teacher workload.

The analytical framework which underpinned both phases was derived from Fairclough's (1992) framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Following Fairclough, the research presented in this paper starts from a 'policy as text' approach, seeking to ground the analysis of text within a specific political and historical context (Regmi, 2017). This approach, which considers the complex and multi-faceted production and reception of policy alongside its inherent features, is useful when explaining diachronic shifts in discourse, or the tensions experienced by those attempting to enact policy in practice.

Fairclough argues that choices of text structure, vocabulary and grammar simultaneously both reflect and produce ideologies, which 'position subjects – those who produce them, but also those they are addressed to – in particular ways' (Fairclough, 1992, 43). During the analysis of phase two interview data, attention was paid to how structure, vocabulary and grammar were used by senior leaders to self-position and to position other teachers. Fairclough's later work utilised corpus-assisted methods to analyse the language of New Labour (Fairclough, 2003b), with a particular focus on patterns of words which occurred in close proximity to 'work'. The analysis of policy documents during phase one was more closely aligned with this method, prioritising patterns of language around key words of interest within a corpora of related texts, rather than closely analysing the structures of individual texts.

Several stages of analysis were undertaken during the first phase of corpus-assisted discourse analysis, including: frequency analysis to determine how often words were repeated within the corpus; collocation analysis to identify how often target words were associated with other words; and Key Word In Context (KWIC or concordance) analysis, which enabled an exploration of target words in their immediate context, with five words prior and five

words following, facilitating a more thorough exploration of patterns of vocabulary and grammar.

Findings from phase one informed the design of phase two. Prominent discourses identified in phase one were used to create a skeleton interview framework, which guided the progression of semi-structured interviews. Interview questions to senior leaders were focused on early career teachers, but within this focus were quite broad, enabling leaders to interpret and respond to these questions in ways which foregrounded their own specific concerns. Questions included, for example, 'How are early career teachers developed in your School/Trust?'; 'Tell me about the different teacher training routes supported within your School/Trust?' and 'What characteristics, qualifications and/or qualities do you look for when hiring an early career teacher to work at your School/Trust?' It was this final question which prompted both senior leaders discussed in this paper to introduce issues of workload within their research interviews.

Interview transcripts were first deductively coded, mapping emergent discourses and identity positionings against the discursive positionings which had been identified in the first phase of policy analysis. Specific answers to interview questions were then analysed in more detail using Fairclough's CDA framework, to explore the precise relationship between policy discourse and how this was received and enacted in practice. At points, phase one data was returned to, to more fully explore discourses which appeared peripheral or minor during the first phase, but which became more prominent in the light of data analysis at phase two. The research therefore employed a 'recursive model whereby analysis was carried out in a number of stages, moving back and forth' (Baker, 2012, 248), and like much research in the qualitative tradition, involved a 'two-steps-forward, one-step-backward path […] reaching always toward the goal of insightful understanding of your cases' (Bazeley, 2013, 13).

Findings

From 'Hard Work' to 'Workload': A diachronic shift in policy discourse

Figure 2 shows the number of occurrences of *workload* and *hard work* across all ministerial speeches in the DFEMS corpus, with occurrences by Education Secretaries isolated in order to give an indication of the shift in discourse over time. Figure 2 shows a noticeable change of emphasis from *hard work* to *workload* which took place after 2014, indicating a change in the way that teacher work was constructed in ministerial discourse. Michael Gove's speeches show a clear emphasis on *hard work*, with 19 occurrences of *hard work* and only one reference to *workload*. However, for the following three Education Secretaries, this trend is reversed, with more of an emphasis on workload and fewer occurrences of *hard work*.

In order to understand this sudden shift in the discourse, it is important to understand policy texts as a 'discursive practice' (Fairclough, 1992, 73); that is, texts are the outcome of historically located struggles and tensions which impact both on their production and their consumption. Key to understanding this sudden discursive shift is not only Michael Gove's departure from the DfE, but also some of the issues surrounding teacher retention and recruitment during this period. Statistics compiled by the DfE for the 2014/15 teacher training year showed that the absolute number of teacher trainees in 2014 fell between 2013/14 and 2014/15 (DfE, 2014); whereas in 2013 95 per cent of teacher training places were filled, this fell to 93 per cent in 2014. Teacher recruitment in general appeared to have peaked in the 2009/10 academic year, just prior to the election of the Coalition government; since this date, applications to teacher training had declined, most notably in the Secondary sector. Applications to Primary ITT had remained more stable during the initial transition from New Labour to Coalition governance, but even in the Primary phase applications appeared to have peaked in 2012/13, and to have declined since then (DfE, 2014, 5). An NFER study in 2016 found the proportion of teachers considering leaving increased from 17 to 23 per cent between

2015 and 2016, and stated that 'Retaining working-age teachers is becoming harder' (Lynch et al, 2016, 3).

The sudden shift in emphasis here indicates a cruce as the process of teacher work is re-constructed in the discourse, as a response to increased concerns about teacher recruitment and retention. A cruce is a contradiction within the discourse which provides 'evidence that things are going wrong: a misunderstanding which requires participants to repair' (Fairclough, 1992, 230). What was going wrong in the mid-2010s was teacher recruitment and retention; the discursive shift from *hard work* to *workload* indicates an attempt by policy participants in this discourse to repair this problem by clarifying a perceived misunderstanding. The focus on *workload*, which becomes increasingly apparent in the speeches of education secretaries after the departure of Michael Gove, indicates an attempt by discourse producers to reconstruct teacher work, in the light of changed socio-economic conditions (in this case, increasing problems with teacher supply).

In order to analyse why this discursive shift was undertaken, it is important to analyse the connotative value of *hard work* and *workload* within the DFEMS corpus, and the presuppositions which underpin these constructions.

Hard work = student success: a presupposition about teachers' work

In the DFEMS corpus, the collocation *hard work* had a positive connotation. There were 140 occurrences of the collocation *hard work*, of which 129 positioned hard work in a positive manner, ten in a negative manner, and one neutrally. *Hard work* was most frequently associated with the positive characteristics *dedication* and *commitment,* indicating a positive connotation (Table 1). The lexical clusters *thanks to the* and *hard work of teachers* both occurred 14 times throughout the DFEMS corpus. The strong relationship between these three terms *thanks*, *hard work* and *teachers* indicates that hard work, and specifically the hard work of teachers, was commonly used throughout ministerial speeches as an explanation for educational success.

An exploration of concordance lines (Figure 3) further indicates how closely hard work was associated with teachers by government ministers. An association between *teachers* and *hard work* dominates, as in 17 of these 28 occurrences *hard work* is described as being *of teachers*. In contrast, Figure 3 shows that *hard work* was directly associated with school pupils on just two occasions (lines 72 and 75).

Moving beyond concordance lines, it is possible to identify how the lexical cluster *thanks to the* constructs a causal link between hard work and educational improvement, as in the following examples:

> *Today, over 1.4 million more children attend schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' than in 2010,* ***thanks to the hard work of teachers.***
>
> *Since 2010, the number of children in failing secondary schools has fallen by 250,000. This is* ***thanks to the hard work of the best generation of teachers ever.***

In these examples, hard work is constructed as the reason for improved Ofsted grades and reduced school failure, causally entwining *hard work* with educational success.

A key presupposition evident in the DFEMS corpus is that hard work by teachers leads to improved outcomes for children. This presupposition was also evident in the interview with Rachel. Rachel was the Director of Primary Education in The Rosemary Trust, a small MAT with responsibility for two primary academies in one urban area. When answering a question about the characteristics she looked for when hiring new teachers, Rachel explained that her decisions were driven by a consideration of how to maintain 'high standards':

> *about setting those high standards. Don't come to this school and think you're just gonna coast* […] *If you wanna work here, you're gonna have to work ↓hard.*

The same presupposition which underpins the positive connotative value of hard work in the DFEMS corpus is also evident in Rachel's discourse at this point; that hard work by teachers

necessarily, or inevitably, leads to high standards. Rachel's foregrounding of hard work as the key aspect in maintaining high standards concomitantly backgrounds a number of other possible factors which could have an impact on children's progress – for example, the presence of experienced, well qualified staff, high-quality curricula and resources, and students' socio-economic background. Rachel's discourse aligns within the construction of hard work in the DFEMS corpus in attributing pupil success to the hard work of teachers, indicating a constitutive intertextuality. Constructions of hard work in the DFEMS corpus, and Rachel's stated desire to employ hard working teachers, both rest upon a presupposition that hard work by teachers necessarily leads to better student outcomes.

Here, Rachel draws from policy discourses which value hard work, 'making meanings with the discursive possibilities available to [her]' (Ball et al., 2011, 612), and it is important to identify the benefits which using such discourses confer upon her and her school. By constructing her school as a place where teachers are required to work hard, Rachel sought to draw a hierarchical distinction between her school and others, using hard work as a marker of prestige and excellence. Rachel's utterances also constructed a divide between different types of teachers according to their capacity or willingness to work, and strongly associated teachers' hard work with school quality. As such, Rachel positions herself as a manager who is able to identify the right type of teachers to support children in her school. Drawing from this particular discursive possibility therefore enables Rachel to position both herself and her school in a positive light.

The problem of teacher workload

As discussed previously, after the departure of Michael Gove in 2014 references to *hard work* became less frequent within ministerial speeches, and instead occurrences of the term workload began to dominate ministerial talk about teacher work. Overall there were 98 occurrences of

the term *workload* in the DFEMS corpus. The majority of these were negative (n=79), and a minority positive (n=3) with a more significant number of neutral positionings (n=16). The most frequent adjective (n=10) associated with workload in the DFEMS corpus was *unnecessary* (Figure 4). The prominent use of the evaluative adjective *unnecessary* constructed workload in a negative fashion, which appears to be at odds with previous constructions of *hard work* as playing a pivotal role in school improvement and student attainment.

The verbs most commonly associated with workload were reduce (n=12) (Figure 5) and tackle (n=13) (Figure 6). The association of the word *reduce* with *workload* within the DFEMS corpus indicates an attempt by government ministers to construct themselves as orientated towards teacher workload, and as actively engaged in efforts to lessen the amount of work teachers were required to do. The association of the verbs *reduce* and *tackle* construct *workload* in a negative fashion, in contrast to constructions of *hard work.*

By reading beyond the concordance lines, we are able to see how teacher workload was constructed by government ministers in this period as a problem which needed to be addressed:

> *Too many of our teachers, and our school leaders, are working simply too long hours - and too often on tasks that the evidence shows are not helping children to learn. We need to get back to the essence of successful teaching; strip away the* ***workload*** *that doesn't add value and give teachers the time and the space to focus on what actually matters.*
>
> *Another key strand of the government's work to support and empower teachers is the government's priority of reducing teacher* ***workload****. Teachers should be freed from spending hours on marking and entering progress-data, particularly when evidence suggests these do not improve pupil outcomes.*

Again, there is a key presupposition underpinning these texts, which can be teased out by taking a critical discourse approach. Teacher workload is constructed as a problem which can be easily remedied by cutting 'unnecessary' demands which can be easily distinguished from important tasks, as they do not 'add value' or 'improve pupil outcomes.' The argument presupposes that administrative tasks, such as 'marking and entering progress-data', are both

separate and can easily *be* separated from the task of teaching. Such an argument appeals to common sense notions of teaching - that the important part of teaching is standing in front of a class and imparting knowledge, and that administrative aspects of the job, such as planning, marking and analysing data, are peripheral to this task, rather than integral. This presupposition is key to the argument that the problem of teacher workload can easily be remedied by removing or reducing certain administrative requirements, and could be read as a 'manipulative presupposition' (Fairclough, 1992, 121), which are both difficult to challenge and have an intent to manipulate the discourse receiver.

Negative constructions of teacher workload were also identified during the research interview with Rachel. Rachel spontaneously introduced this topic in order to construct a particular identity for herself as a school leader:

> *obviously the teacher workload we've done quite a lot on teacher workload and wellbeing reduction* […] *I'll go to other ↑schools and looking at how they can reduce their workload and things ˙hh so it's something that I'm mindful (.) <u>mindful</u> with. So however we haven't got it a hundred per cent ↓right erm and I need to work um er I (.) I'm doing sessions at <u>both</u> schools about the workload (.) wellbeing stuff (.) brown paper, lots of sticky notes and things*

Rachel's use of the discourse marker *obviously* indicated that she considered the dominant discourse concerning teacher workload to be negative. Rachel then positioned herself as being actively responsible for raising the profile of workload reduction for teachers in her setting; she achieved this self-positioning through repeated use of the first-person singular pronoun *I*. However, the lack of concrete examples Rachel presented when discussing workload reduction was notable. Although Rachel confidently positioned her Trust as doing 'quite a lot on teacher workload', when she moves on to illustrate what this entails in practice, her speech noticeably became more hesitant.

Rachel's hesitancy indicates the challenge Rachel faces when attempting to enact policy within her school setting. Rachel constructs workload as a complex problem that, despite her

efforts, remains a challenge to resolve. Although Rachel constructs workload as a problem, the presupposition underpinning her argument therefore differs from that of policy texts. Instead, Rachel's discourse relies on a presupposition that teacher workload is an intransigent problem that, despite everyone's best efforts, remains challenging to solve. This construction of workload enables Rachel to simultaneously inhabit a position of caring manager who acknowledges workload as a problem, while also maintaining the privilege of demanding hard work from her staff.

Competing political discourses, tensions in practice

The presupposed intransigence of the teacher workload problem also underpinned Charlotte's response to the question about the types of characteristics she looks for when hiring new teachers:

> *commitment to the children, commitment to the job, commitment t (.) to the school. It, it's teaching's not an easy job* […] *So you can't come in thinking it's an easy job. We all try and do everything we can to make it as easy as ↑possible but it's not an easy job so it's kind of I don't want someone with a <u>vocation</u> but neither can they think it's a nine-till-(.) three job*

Charlotte constructs an argument around teacher workload which presupposes that a high workload is an integral aspect of being a teacher. Charlotte's use of the generic *you* indicates an attempt to construct workload as a problem located within teaching generally, rather than being specific to her own school. Charlotte therefore constructed hard work as an unavoidable and generalisable part of being a teacher, distancing herself from taking responsibility for high levels of teacher workload at her school. The commitment that Charlotte positioned as important aligns closely with the discursive association between commitment and hard work in the DFEMS corpus, and constructed the measurement of teacher commitment in terms of hours worked (as opposed to, for example, length of service).

Charlottes' hesitation, self-repair and use of disclaimers when discussing her expectations of teacher work also indicates the challenged faced by senior leaders when attempting to navigate competing and multiple political discourses concerning teacher work.The first disclaimer Charlotte used was 'We all try and do everything we can to make it as easy as ↑possible but it's not an easy job', constructing herself and her team in a positive manner, as trying to make life easier for teachers. However, she negatively constructed teaching as an inherently difficult job, and implicitly critiqued teachers who were not willing to accept this. This tacit critique is further supported in the next disclaimer Charlotte constructed: 'I don't want someone with a vocation but neither can they think it's a nine-till-(.) three job.'

Charlotte's discourse highlights the difficulty faced by school leaders as they attempt to navigate competing discourses concerning teacher workload, as exemplified in the DFEMS corpus. During the period 2010-18, government ministers first foregrounded the necessity and importance of hard work by teachers, before this discourse shifted to problematize workload in order to resolve growing concerns about teacher retention and recruitment. In Charlotte's response to the question about what she looks for when hiring teachers, we see her difficulty in negotiating contradictory discourses concerning the nature of teachers' work.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I have explored the multiple and contradictory constructions of teacher work in education policy between 2010 and 2018, using corpus-assisted discourse analysis to produce a systematic analysis of ministerial speeches during this period. Drawing from a few small but significant extracts taken from interviews with senior leaders, I have shown how these political discourses are received and transformed in practice.

Apple's (2004) intensification thesis has been highly influential in explaining why teachers experienced a dramatic increase in workload during the later decades of the twentieth century, a trend which continued in England after the formation of the Coalition government in 2010. In line with Apple's argument, a policy analysis of DfE ministerial speeches delivered between 2010-18 indicates that the *hard work of teachers* was causally constructed as the explanation for school improvement and increased student attainment. In such arguments, structural reasons for underperformance are backgrounded as the agency of teachers is constructed as the primary solution for educational failure.

New entrants to teaching are aware of the high workload expected of teachers before entering the profession, and yet still choose to become teachers, indicating their desire to identify with the subject-position of the hard-working teacher (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Findings from this research project suggest that these discourses, which associate hard work with student attainment and consequently privilege teachers who 'work hard', were particularly dominant in English education policy during the 2010-14 period when Michael Gove was Education Secretary. Based on the interview extracts discussed here, I argue that this discourse can be used by school leaders to justify demands made of their staff, as well as to position their schools as prestigious places to work.

This paper has also identified a 'multiplicity of discourses' (Foucault, 1988, 33) concerning teacher work. 'Unnecessary' workload was constructed as a problem by politicians, which needed to be addressed by school leaders. Such discourse is aligned with much of the scholarly literature on teacher workload, which foregrounds workload as having a negative impact on the commitment and resilience of teachers (Barmby, 2006; Smethem, 2007; Bridges & Searle, 2011), and often associates workload with teacher attrition (Hong, 2010; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Perryman & Calvert, 2020). In line with this discursive construction of teacher work, Rachel positioned herself as actively working to reduce teacher

workload, and Charlotte was careful to position herself as not making unreasonable demands of her staff.

I argue, based on the interview extracts analysed here, that these multiple discursive constructions of teacher work and workload in policy discourse prevented senior leaders from serious engagement in meaningful workload reduction activities. Knowledges concerning the intransigence of the teacher workload problem and the link between hard work and improved student outcomes were reinscribed through leaders' consumption and deployment of discourses concerning work which were privileged in policy discourse between 2010 -14. In order to meaningfully address workload as an issue which impacts on teachers' working lives, there first needs to be some recognition of the privileged nature of political discourses which link hard work and student attainment, and how these discourses are presupposed in the justifications and positionings of senior school leaders. This is an analytical leap, but one which provides a justification for more critical, discursive research to be undertaken with teachers to explore how they construct and position the nature and meaning of their work. However, as this was a small-scale study which was not primarily focused on teacher work, there is potential for more critical discursive research to be undertaken in this area in the future.

Figure 1: Research Design

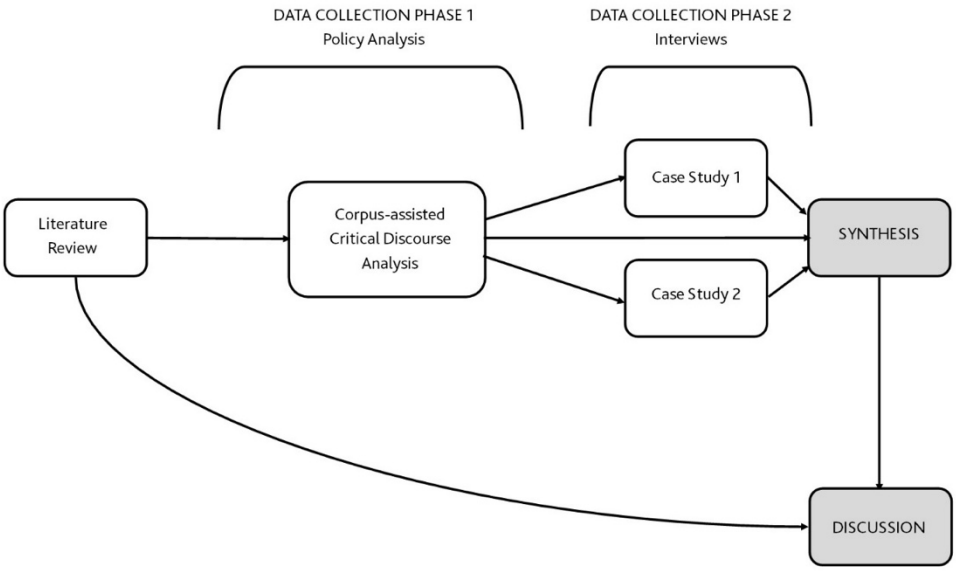

Figure 2: Occurrences of workload and hard work in the DFEMS corpus

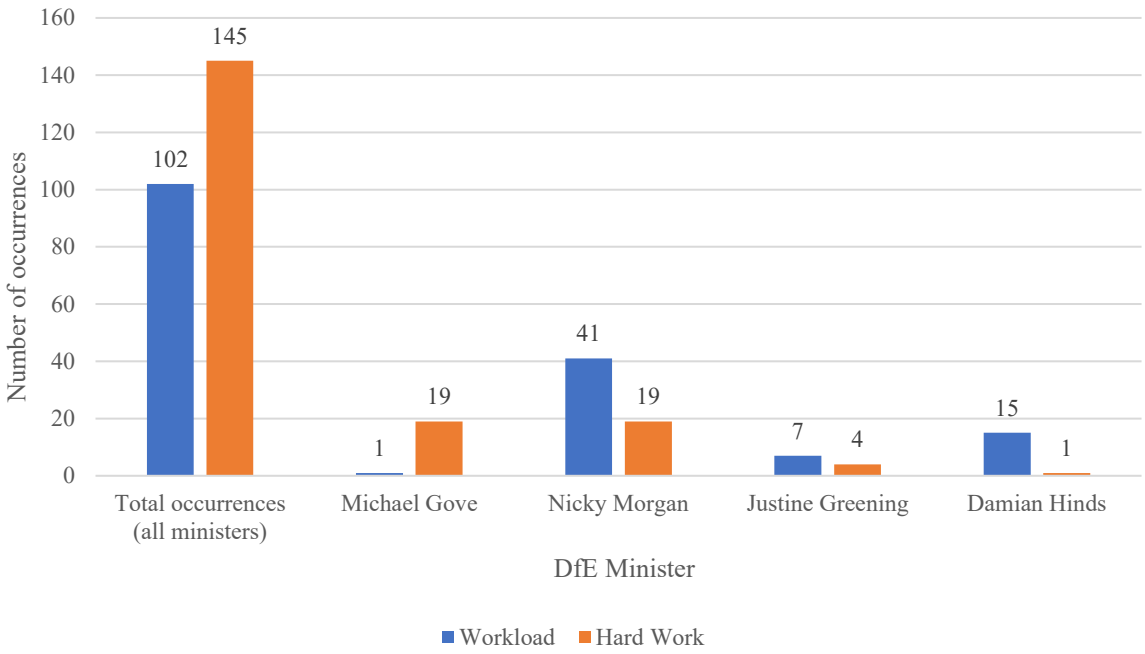

Figure 3: Concordance lines showing the lexical cluster *hard work of*

```
72      professionals, and the hard work of our children, the sad
73      leadership and sheer hard work of people in local government
74     organisations together. The hard work of people like Corin,
75      teaching. Thanks to the hard work of pupils and schools,
76     to improve, thanks to the hard work of school cooks,
77      and thanks to the hard work of school leaders. But
78      on the ground by the hard work of school leaders and
79      thanks to the incredibly hard work of sponsors, 11 new
80         fact. Despite the hard work of teachers all over the
81     phonics Check. Thanks to the hard work of teachers and by
82     list of 40. Thanks to the hard work of teachers and the
83      By 2016, thanks to the hard work of teachers and the use
84      in 2010, thanks to the hard work of teachers and the
85     organisations like FASNA and the hard work of teachers and headteachers
86      Last year, thanks to the hard work of teachers and the
87     and governance, and the hard work of teachers and headteachers
88     assessments. Thanks to the hard work of teachers and headteachers
89     no small measure to the hard work of teachers and school
90         As so, despite the hard work of teachers, it is still
91     to succeed. Despite the hard work of teachers, the least
92         to read. Despite the hard work of teachers there are
93         to read. Despite the hard work of teachers there are
94       This is thanks to the hard work of the best generation of teachers
95     pupils, as well as to the hard work of the governing bodies
96      the good intentions and hard work of the previous
97      This is testament to the hard work of the teachers and
98     tribute to the ability and hard work of the women concerned.
99         Today, thanks to the hard work of thousands of teachers
```

Figure 4: Concordance lines showing the collocation between *unnecessary* and *workload*

```
57    tackling unnecessary teacher workload. More than 44,000 teacher
[...]
69    reduce unnecessary teacher workload, following a consultation
[...]
90     it can drive unnecessary workload. I know that the current
91    can result in unnecessary workload in schools. These reforms
92       generating unnecessary workload, with a focus on the
93      in limiting unnecessary workload. These measures included:
94    use to tackle unnecessary workload, whilst also maintaining
95      to minimise unnecessary workload. Continuous professional
96    to combat the unnecessary workload which for too long has
97        effect of unnecessary workload. The 3 biggest concerns
```

Figure 5: Concordance lines showing the collocation between *reduce* and *workload*

```
37     their school and reduce workload. Teachers dedicate their
38     in schools and to reduce workload for the long-term. As I
39    structured textbooks reduce workload and the perpetual ritual
40     tools. And tools reduce workload. In the most commonly use
41    government can do to reduce workload and that the real battle
42        attainment and reduce workload. The data management
43     work, because reducing workload is not about one single
44    teaching unions, on reducing workload - including relentlessly
[...]
69    reduce unnecessary teacher workload, following a consultation
[...]
72     should reduce teacher workload. It should be another way
73     to reduce their teachers workload. Because all of us want
[...]
78     that actually reduce the workload burden, while supporting
```

Figure 6: Concordance lines showing the collocation between tackle and workload

```
28      to tackle the issue of workload across the teaching
[...]
47      we want to really tackle workload, then we also need to
48      for schools to tackle workload where it is most needed.
49      course. We're tackling workload so teachers and school
50     ambitious. We're tackling workload, encouraging recruitment
51         approach on tackling workload. And our key message is
52      better CPD, and tackling workload issues. From that work I
53      sure you know, tackling workload requires much more than
54     go beyond simply tackling workload. I want government to
55     groups looking at tackling workload related to marking,
[...]
61        to tackle is teacher workload. As I said in my very
[...]
68      tackle excessive teacher workload. The OECD's TALIS survey
[...]
94     use to tackle unnecessary workload, whilst also maintaining
```

Table 1: Highest frequency four-word lexical clusters involving hard work in DFEMS corpus, generated using concord function.

Rank	Cluster	Frequency within DFEMS corpus
1	THE HARD WORK OF	26
2	TO THE HARD WORK	21
3	HARD WORK AND DEDICATION	16
4	THE HARD WORK AND	15
5	HARD WORK OF TEACHERS	14
6	THANKS TO THE	14
7	OF TEACHERS AND	9
8	THANK YOU FOR	8
9	FOR THE HARD WORK	8
10	FOR YOUR HARD WORK	7
11	AND THE HARD WORK	6
12	YOUR HARD WORK AND	6
13	AND DEDICATION OF	6
14	ALL YOUR HARD WORK	5
15	ALL THEIR HARD WORK	5
16	THE HARD WORK THAT	5
17	FOR ALL THEIR	5
18	HARD WORK AND COMMITMENT	5
19	HARD WORK OF THE	5
20	DESPITE THE HARD WORK	5

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Appendix 1

Transcription symbols (derived from Jefferson, 2004)

↑	Upward inflection
↓	Downward inflection
(.)	A brief interval within or between utterances (increased dots signify longer pause).
and	emphasised
˙hh	inbreath

Note: […] is not a transcription symbol but indicates that the conversation has been edited by the author for purposes of brevity.