

**INVESTIGATING THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF  
THE *LEVEL THREE CLASSROOM TEACHER* IN WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Education of Murdoch University,  
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I declare that this thesis is my account of my research and contains as its main content work, which has not been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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## Abstract

Increasingly, schools are urged to rethink leadership based on positional authority and move towards more participative styles of governance, embracing teachers as leaders (Andrews & Lewis, 2004; Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2007; Frost & Harris, 2003). This study examines the enactment of teacher leadership in the context of the West Australian *Level Three Classroom Teacher* classification, an initiative that recognizes and promotes the leadership of expert classroom teachers. The researcher investigated the extent to which the initiative engenders teacher leadership and, the nature and scope of the leadership. Competing discourses of accountability and empowerment that promote and constrain teacher leadership were examined to interrogate the extent to which the Level Three Classroom Teacher program, in creating another space at the leadership table, provides a genuine opportunity for teachers to lead.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to interrogate Level Three Classroom Teachers' survey responses and Department of Education policy to identify the binaries or slippage between the rhetoric of policy and the practice of teacher leadership in schools. In recognition of the centrality of language, discourse analysis and narrative deconstruction informed by Mockler's (2004) and Boje's (2001) frameworks were employed to map leadership practices and the cultural narrative of the Level Three Classroom Teacher.

Highlighted in this research is the importance of emotions. The study affirmed that motivation to lead is bound up in teacher identity, self-efficacy and collegiality. The creation of categories of teachers such as expert and non-expert or leader and non-

leader in policy discourse and school practices resulted in a form of *othering* that could be deemed counter-productive to participative leadership. An implication of these findings is the need for further study to examine how policy may constrain teacher leadership. If more teachers are to seize this leadership opportunity and make a real difference to how schools are led, there is also a need for professional learning that explicitly targets teacher leadership. Such learning also needs to acknowledge the complexity of emotions and the micro politics of schools.

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This is a study about teachers working as leaders in school. My interest in the lives of teachers is testament to some amazing individuals who taught me, those that mentored me in my early days as a teacher and those that I have worked alongside since. My motivation to write about teachers is the courage and integrity of my peers. I acknowledge those teachers who have shared my teaching journey, many of whom are dear friends. I dedicate this thesis to them, in particular to Eleanor who began the journey with me so long ago. You are always with me.

## **List of Abbreviations**

AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and learning and School Leadership
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CMIS	Classroom Management in Schools
CMS	Classroom Management Strategy
DET	Western Australian Department of Education and Training (Formally also known as Education Department of WA, The Ministry of Education of WA, Department of Education of WA and since 2010, known as WA Department of Education, DoE).
DoE	WA Department of Education
EA	Educational Assistant
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ESU	Educational Support Unit
ETWR	Experienced Teacher with Responsibility
IDEAS	Innovative Designs for Enhancing Australian Schools
GATE / G&T	Gifted and Talented Education
GIR / GIRL	Getting it Right Literacy Teacher
IEP	Individual Education Plan
LCT	Level Three Classroom Teacher
LOLSO	Leadership for Organisational Learning and Student Outcomes project (LOLSO)
MCEEDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs.

MCCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
PD	Professional Development
PP	Pre-Primary
SAER	Students at Educational Risk
SES	Socio Economic Status
S&E	Society and Environment
SMTs	Senior Management Teams
SIS	Student Information System
TEE	Tertiary Entrance Examination
TIC	Teacher in Charge
SSTUWA	State School Teachers Union of Western Australia
WALNA	West Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	3
DEFINING TEACHER LEADERSHIP .....	4
TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND THE L3CT .....	8
THE L3CT PROGRAM .....	9
L3CT APPLICATION AND SUCCESS RATES 1997-2006 .....	12
THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCHER.....	15
TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND DISCOURSE.....	18
CHAPTER SUMMARY .....	19
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>20</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	20
THE IMPETUS FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP .....	21
<i>Teacher leadership and the school reform movement</i> .....	23
<i>Transformational teacher leadership</i> .....	30
THE DISCOURSE OF POWER .....	34
<i>Gender and the leadership debate</i> .....	36
<i>Organizational Discourse</i> .....	39
THE MOTIVATION OF THE TEACHER LEADER .....	42
<i>Teacher motivation and collegiality</i> .....	45
TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN THIS STUDY.....	49



<i>Parallel or distributed leadership</i> .....	52
NURTURING AND SUSTAINING TEACHER LEADERSHIP .....	53
APPROACHES TO EXAMINING TEACHER LEADERSHIP.....	56
CHAPTER SUMMARY .....	57
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS .....</b>	<b>60</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	60
METHODOLOGY.....	60
<i>The researcher’s perspective</i> .....	62
RESEARCH DESIGN .....	64
<i>Research questions</i> .....	64
<i>Selecting a population</i> .....	65
METHODS FOR GATHERING DATA .....	67
<i>The survey</i> .....	67
<i>Survey design</i> .....	69
DATA ANALYSIS.....	73
<i>Analysis of quantitative data</i> .....	74
<i>Analysis of qualitative data</i> .....	76
SYNTHESISING THE DATA .....	86
CHAPTER SUMMARY .....	88
<b>CHAPTER 4: QUANTITATIVE DATA .....</b>	<b>90</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	90
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA .....	91
<i>Gender</i> .....	91
<i>Employment sector</i> .....	92
<i>Teacher age and level of experience</i> .....	93

<i>The year L3CT was awarded</i> .....	93
BELIEF STATEMENTS ABOUT THE L3CT .....	94
<i>Satisfaction with the L3CT work parameters</i> .....	100
<i>Satisfaction with career pathway</i> .....	101
<i>Relationships between category A and B responses</i> .....	101
<i>The selection process</i> .....	103
THE L3CT AND LEADERSHIP.....	104
SPECIFIC GROUPS OF INTEREST .....	105
<i>Early career teachers</i> .....	106
<i>Late career teachers</i> .....	107
<i>Those no longer working as L3CT</i> .....	108
<i>Country teachers</i> .....	109
SUMMARY OF QUANTITATIVE DATA .....	110
<b>CHAPTER 5: QUALITATIVE DATA .....</b>	<b>112</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	112
THE ROLES PERFORMED BY L3CT .....	113
<i>Coding of Data</i> .....	115
<i>Curriculum</i> .....	116
<i>SAER</i> .....	119
<i>Mentoring</i> .....	122
<i>School Review</i> .....	123
<i>Special Programs</i> .....	125
COMPARISON OF L3CT ROLES: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY .....	127
OTHER DUTIES PERFORMED BY L3CT .....	128
ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTED FROM RESPONSES TO QUESTION 17 .....	129

<i>Leadership</i> .....	129
<i>Status</i> .....	130
<i>No change to the work</i> .....	131
DETERMINING THE ROLE OF THE L3CT .....	131
RESPONSES TO QUESTION 18.....	133
<i>Increased Time to Carry out Tasks</i> .....	136
<i>Additional or Broader Roles</i> .....	137
<i>Increased Work Load</i> .....	139
<i>Increased Status</i> .....	139
<i>The Role of the Administrator</i> .....	140
SUMMARY OF DATA FROM QUESTION 18 .....	142
<i>Gender Differences</i> .....	143
RESPONSES TO QUESTION 19.....	144
DISCOURSE.....	146
SUMMARY OF QUALITATIVE DATA FROM SURVEY QUESTIONS.....	150
<b>CHAPTER 6: DOE L3CT DOCUMENTATION .....</b>	<b>153</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	153
ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA .....	155
DESCRIPTION OF THE L3CT PROGRAM.....	156
<i>The benefits of becoming a L3CT</i> .....	159
<i>Extrinsic versus intrinsic rewards</i> .....	161
L3CT AND THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK .....	163
DETERMINING THE ROLE OF THE L3CT IN SCHOOLS .....	166
DISCOURSE.....	168
SUMMARY OF DATA FROM DOE DOCUMENTS .....	170

<b>CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>172</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	172
MAPPING THE L3CT STORY.....	173
<i>Identifying the L3CT</i> .....	177
<i>Gaps and silences</i> .....	190
COMMON THEMES .....	194
<i>Workload</i> .....	195
<i>Status</i> .....	196
<i>Betrayal</i> .....	200
DISCOURSE.....	202
THE NATURE OF L3CT LEADERSHIP .....	205
CONCLUSION .....	208
<i>Implications for practice</i> .....	212
<i>Implications for policy</i> .....	213
<i>Implications for further research</i> .....	215
<i>Limitations of the study</i> .....	216
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>219</b>
APPENDIX A: LETTER TO SURVEY PARTICIPANT .....	219
APPENDIX B: SURVEY .....	220
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>222</b>

## Index of Tables

Table 1: L3CT and Success Rates.....	12
Table 2: Data Sources and Methods of Analysis.....	74
Table 3: Narrative Conventions.....	86
Table 4: Categorization of Survey Questions.....	95
Table 5: Survey Data sorted according to gender.....	96
Table 6: Responses to Q10-16 by Employment Type.....	99
Table 7: Primary L3CT Roles.....	116
Table 8: Secondary L3CT Roles.....	116
Table 9: L3CT Change to Work Practices.....	135
Table 10: Verbs Employed to Describe L3CT Work.....	147
Table 11: Verbs Describing Treatment of L3CT by Others.....	148
Table 12: Nouns Employed in the L3CT Description of Roles.....	149
Table 13: Description of the L3CT.....	160
Table 14: L3CT Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards.....	162
Table 15: Activities Associated with Leadership.....	165
Table 16: DoE Requirements for Determining the Role of L3CT.....	167
Table 17: Story Mapping of the L3CT Experience.....	179

## Chapter 1: Introduction

“In the search for what distinguishes the human species, the use of narrative to decipher human existence is significant. We might even say humans display a narrative instinct...” (Ochs, 2006, p. 64). Whilst this is not narrative research as such, if we are all just a collection of stories, then this study is in some ways, a story about the enactment of teacher leadership in Western Australia. There are stories within stories and so consequently there are many aspects of individual leadership stories that are captured as part of the larger narrative, not the least of which is my story or journey as a novice researcher and leader in schools. The commonality of the narrative archetype of the journey or quest will be recognised and employed in the final chapter of the study as a means of understanding the larger narrative of the teacher–leadership story.

This first chapter of the research story is the exposition. I aim to orientate the reader so that the purpose of the study and the choices for how the study was undertaken can be understood in the context of both the researcher and the current debates surrounding teacher leadership. The discussion entails defining in a broad sense what teacher leadership means, as well as explaining the rationale for studying teacher leadership. In addition, my decision to study teacher leadership in the specific context of the Level Three Classroom Teacher (L3CT) program in West Australian Government schools (DoE)<sup>1</sup> schools will be explained for the reader. I will also highlight the

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<sup>1</sup>In October 2009, The WA Department of Education and Training (DET) separated into two departments, the Department of Education (DoE) and the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

significance of my own identity as a classroom teacher and researcher in the context of this era for teachers.

The chapter includes an overview of the L3CT program. This discussion will include a brief summary of the history of this initiative, its popularity and the emerging trends. The purpose of the explanation is to allow the reader to contextualize this program and gain some insight into its purpose and potential for developing teacher leadership. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the overarching premise and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 will enlarge on the understandings of teacher leadership and present a review of the literature. Here, I will demonstrate how teacher leadership needs be seen as a product of particular discourses with respect to notions of creating successful schools and implementing reform (Connell, 2009; Cranston, 2000; Gale, 2006). There is also an examination of the expectations of teacher leaders, the means by which teacher leadership might be engendered and the specifics of policy and practice in schools that potentially sustain or threaten the realization of teacher leadership. In particular, the examination of the literature will demonstrate the significance of competing discourses in the understanding and enactment of teacher leadership.

In Chapter 3, I outline the research stages and present the methods for this study. The discussion includes a more in depth examination of the significance of context, including that of the researcher in the interpretive approach taken in my study. The discussion will also explain the rationale for specific methods for data analysis and in particular, the decision to employ discourse analysis and narrative deconstruction methods as a means of examining both the policy and practice of teacher leadership in DoE schools.

There are three data chapters. Chapter 4 is the first of the data chapters and presents the quantitative data collected from the survey. There is an identification of groups of interest and presentation of data relating to the attitudes and values held by these different groups with respect to their work as leaders in schools. Chapter 5 presents the qualitative data from the survey and extends the investigation of the actual leadership practice of these teachers. Respondents are given an opportunity to describe their work in more detail and identify ways in which their work has changed subsequent to becoming a L3CT. Chapter 6 is the final data chapter. It is an examination of DoE policy documents pertaining to L3CT leadership. Discourse analysis is employed in this chapter to highlight employer expectations of teacher leadership and to identify the way in which DoE policy shapes leadership practice.

Chapter 7 concludes this study. The discussion includes a synthesis of the data and offers a final reading of the teacher leadership story in DoE schools. Narrative deconstruction is employed as a means of presenting the diversity of the leadership story, as well as the identification of common themes. The chapter identifies factors that promote, sustain and threaten the realization of teacher leadership and highlights implications for policy, practice, theory and future research.

### **Significance of the Study**

I ask myself how my examination of teacher leadership can inform the practices of teacher leadership in schools in such a way that there is a positive outcome for the profession. In answer, I highlight two issues; the relatively low level of academic research carried out in schools and the surprisingly low numbers of classroom teachers who have applied and been successful in becoming L3CT. My study provides the opportunity to examine a specific leadership program that promotes the viewpoint of the



classroom teacher and makes a small contribution to bridging the spheres of school and academic research. There is also the potential to illuminate why the take up of this initiative among experienced teachers remains so low. Moreover, there is the potential to understand why teacher leadership on a broad scale has not yet been realized.

Ideally, my study will contribute to a greater understanding of what the L3CT program looks like in practice and provide an evaluation as to the extent to which the L3CT program can effectively engender and engage teachers in school leadership. The study will acknowledge the complexity of the school environment, where the paradigm of leadership invested in positional authority is still much in evidence. I believe my study has the potential to illuminate examples of successful practices of teacher leadership amidst much complexity so that strategies to promote and sustain teacher leadership can be identified.

### **Defining Teacher Leadership**

The term teacher leadership or teacher leader is generic and does not have a fixed meaning. Descriptors such as leadership, leading and leader are ubiquitous terms (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008, p. 331). The terms teacher leader and teacher leadership are prevalent in current leadership discourse. Increasingly, school leadership has evolved from the notion of the single leader to more participative styles of leadership (Andrews & Lewis, 2004; Crowther et al, 2007; Frost & Harris, 2003).

The enactment of teacher leadership varies according to specific contexts. Arguably, we have always had teachers who are also leaders. Teacher leadership can describe teachers working as experts, leading peers to implement pedagogical change and/or teachers working with school administrators to design and implement policies (Harris & Muijs, 2003; Harrison & Killion, 2007). However, as a new initiative,

teacher leadership can be understood both in the context of the current discourse on teacher professionalism and in terms of specific leadership practices. Therefore, I have chosen to examine the L3CT program, an example of a specific and localized enactment of teacher leadership.

Whilst the exact nature of teacher leadership is open to some interpretation, the literature on school leadership for more than a decade has flagged the notion of classroom teachers working as leaders in schools. “In extraordinary schools, rarely is there one person acting as the singular fount of all knowledge or continually placing themselves as the focal point of all processes” (Avenell, 2001, p. 1). Seemingly, if you are a teacher at this point in time, you are also called upon to be a leader. Despite the fact that the exact nature of this leadership varies, the literature affirms that this leadership is something more than being in charge of one’s own classroom pedagogy and/or leading hearts and minds to greater understanding. Increasingly, teacher leadership is about working collaboratively and performing complementary roles with more traditional leaders, such as deputies and heads of departments, (Andrews & Lewis, 2004).

Teacher leadership in the current era is paradoxically broader and more specific than the idea of teacher as expert or as the beacon of good practice and guidance. Leadership is not related solely to the craft of teaching, although this expertise usually forms part of the initial qualifying criteria for recognition as teacher leader. A teacher leader is not bound by the confines of their classroom and will usually have a sphere of influence across their school community (Silins & Mulford, 2000). The leadership role may or may not be associated with a specific title or authority. In some instances, the leadership role is a formalized position that is bound up with awards and competency frameworks, whilst in other instances, it is an informal and perhaps more fluid role that

sees teachers branching out from their classrooms to lead specific projects, potentially slipping in and out of recognized leadership roles throughout their career (Huberman, Thompson & Weiland, 1997).

The Literature Review in Chapter 2 will expand on these understandings and demonstrate how the notion of teacher leadership is informed by the sometimes, competing interests of school reform, teacher professionalism and teacher empowerment. The Literature Review will also demonstrate how the notion of teacher leadership intersects a number of key debates including, the need to reinvigorate the profession and re-think traditional notions of authority in schools as inevitably hierarchical (Donaldson, 2007). Developing a definition of teacher leadership to inform this study then will require an identification and examination of the main philosophical positions that underpin such discourses.

In much of the literature, teacher leadership is about being at the forefront of school decision-making and school reform. Schools are called upon to embrace teachers as leaders and harness the agency of teachers to make significant changes to improve educational outcomes for students (Leonard, 1999; Kermit, Buckner & McDowelle, 2000). Teacher leadership is viewed as a means of addressing the failure of schools to enact broad scale reforms. The promotion of the school as a learning community foregrounds the agency and significance of teachers working in distributive or parallel leadership with administrators (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2007). The oft-quoted metaphor of the “sleeping giant” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001 p. 2) represents the unrealized potential of teachers as leaders. My study then is an examination of some of the steps undertaken in Western Australia to rouse and engage the sleeping giant.

To some extent, the study will enable an interrogation of the aptness of sleeping giant as a metaphor for teacher leadership. The metaphor of the “sleeping giant” may in fact be an unfortunate choice, as not only are giants invariably male, they are also largely the domain of fairy tale and myth. Moreover, literature is full of tales of relatively insignificant individuals who slay or render impotent such a giant. In interrogating this analogy, the study becomes an examination of how real the opportunity for and practice of teacher leadership is, in WA schools. Whilst there are strong and compelling arguments to recognize the agency of teachers and embrace them as leaders in schools, I am interested in the extent to which teacher leadership has been achieved and what impact this has had on the work of teachers in schools. The study is also interested in whether classroom teachers offer alternative metaphors to explain the leadership phenomenon.

I am also interested in which teachers become leaders. The study will enable an examination of the qualities of the teacher leader, the commonalities of their experience and to some extent their motivation for embarking on the journey. It may also be possible to identify the typical career trajectories the L3CT. I am interested in the extent to which the L3CT may also be a stepping-stone to a more formalized leadership position, such as, Head of Department or even Principal. Such questioning will allow me to explore some of the micro politics of the school site, including the impact of gender on school leadership and the way in which power associated with authority informs all leadership practices (Ehrich & Cranston, 2004; Smyth, 1999).

My study aims to interrogate the notion of teachers as leaders. One question that informs this study is the extent to which teachers may be given a genuine opportunity to lead. I will examine the extent to which authority or power is invested in teachers to make decisions in their school, as opposed to teachers embracing an

increased range of managerial tasks (O'Brien & Down, 2002). In the same way that the discourse on leadership as an administrator distinguishes between leadership and management, so also must any debate on teacher leadership (Gunter, McGregor & Gunter, 2001). If there is to be any broad scale adoption of teachers working as leaders in schools, there will need to be evidence of something more than an intensification of teachers' work (Blackmore, 1999).

As well as offering a definition of teacher leadership that has currency and practical application in the WA school setting, my study attempts to understand the extent to which teacher leadership is achievable in practice on a broader scale. If teachers are called to leadership, I am interested in how such leadership can be effectively enacted and sustained in schools. The study then is concerned with how widespread teacher leadership is and the extent to which teachers who are leaders in their schools may be representative of the profession. It is possible to find examples of teachers and others in schools that have a sphere of influence beyond the confines of their classroom. These teachers are capable of motivating others and of drawing from them, the skills and knowledge required to oversee projects and initiatives that make a difference to the lives of students and the school community. However, it is pertinent to ask how representative these individuals are of the teaching profession? Is this what we mean by teacher leadership? I am interested in what motivates these individuals and how this teacher leadership is engendered and sustained.

### **Teacher Leadership and the L3CT**

The decision to investigate a leadership initiative in WA makes sense in terms of access. Whilst the L3CT program was part of an agreement between the State School Teachers Union of Western Australia (SSTUWA) and DoE, it is not unlike other

programs, both national and international, largely because such programs are responses to shared circumstances and ideologies. Globally, education is beset with challenges, including concerns regarding low levels of recruitment and retention of teachers, attributed largely to low levels of status and an ageing teacher population (*The Senate Report*, 1998; DEST 2006; DET, 2010; Mackenzie, 2007). Australia has a qualified and experienced teaching work force with the average teacher having taught for more than 25 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). The reform agenda and the impact of this agenda will be explored further in Chapter 2.

### **The L3CT Program**

The L3CT initiative is in many ways a targeted response to the afore-mentioned issues. The program aims to retain quality teachers by increasing their recognition through a change in level and increased salary (DET, 2004b). The L3CT position was introduced in Western Australia in 1997 to recognise and reward outstanding teachers, who remained in the classroom, rather than take promotional positions within the Department or leave the profession (Jasman, 1998). It is a formalized program that explicitly targets leadership and requires teachers to work collaboratively in schools as leaders to enact significant change.

The L3CT initiative was developed primarily to recognize accomplished teachers. The program emphasizes quality teaching and the notion of expert and experienced teachers providing mentorship and professional development for their peers. The specific purposes outlined in the 1996 agreement (Jasman, 1998) are to:

- Support the retention of competent, experienced teachers in duties directly related to teaching and learning;

- Give status and recognition to the commitment of teachers to the development of their colleagues and school communities, as well as their own ongoing professional development;
- Expand career paths for teachers who do not want, do not wish or are not able move into the administrative role; and
- Use these teachers' skills to maximise the outcomes of students.

In a review of the process, Jasman (1998) describes how the initial draft competency standards were based on 80 teaching portfolios (40 primary and 40 secondary). Teachers apply in two stages. The first stage requires a written portfolio of evidence where the applicant provides written evidence of their level of competence. If the applicant is successful at the first stage, the second stage involves a presentation to a panel of educators about one of the competencies. Applicants are required to submit their portfolios in June and present in September/October if selected for Stage 2 (DET, 2004b, p. 9). If successful, L3CT are presented with the award at the start of the next school year and commence their new duties

Aspirant L3CTs currently demonstrate their suitability against the *Competency Framework for Teachers*. The framework categorizes the role of the classroom teacher into 5 distinct but interconnected dimensions or competencies. Applicants must be able to demonstrate leadership. The framework is a continuum of skills and knowledge with respect to classroom teaching with beginning teachers entering as early phase teachers and developing at individual rates through the continuum to the final phase.

The competencies have a corresponding assessment rubric that uses indicators to articulate what a teacher should be able to do at each stage of the continuum. This assessment rubric is contained in DoE's *Guide to Becoming a Level Three Classroom Teacher* (DET, 2004b). The rating scale is 1-4 with a score of 1 (lowest) and 4

(highest). As the L3CT award is equated with teachers in the final phase of the framework, to achieve L3CT, a teacher needs to demonstrate a rating of 3 or 4 for each competency and achieve a rating of 4 for at least one competency.

It is important to note that there are no specific time frames or career milestones attached to the framework. An early career teacher may be able to demonstrate competency at the higher end of the scale in one or more competencies. Similarly, a late career teacher may only be able to demonstrate a 1 or 2 level rating for a particular competency. Therefore, whilst it is to be expected that more experienced teachers will be better able to demonstrate the required levels of competency in their application for L3CT status, beginning teachers are not excluded from applying as there is no specified length of service or requirement that applicants progress through stages such as Senior Teacher. In the context of the framework, “experienced” does not necessarily equate with “expert”. This is quite explicit in Principle 4 of the document.

“Teachers develop their knowledge, skills and practices throughout their professional lives. This development is not linear. Teachers enter the profession with varying levels of prior learning, work experience and professional preparation, working in a range of different contexts that combine to shape their professional profile” (DET, 2004b, p. 4).

The above statement from the Competency Framework emphasizes the notion of individual teachers progressing at different rates through the continuum and provides an opportunity for beginning teachers to be recognised for relevant prior learning. In this way, the initiative provides an avenue by which early career teachers can progress their career as a means of addressing teacher attrition due to lack of career opportunity (Matters, 2005).



Initially, the selection of suitable L3CT was a biennial process and had a quota (Ingvarson, Kleinhenz & Wilkinson, 2007). Success rates were low (Daniels, 2009). Below Table 1: *L3CT Application and Success Rates 1997-2006* sets out the numbers of teachers applying in the first six rounds of the program. It was envisioned that the teachers who participated in my survey would have been selected during this period.

Table 1

**L3CT Application and Success Rates 1997-2006**

Year	1997	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006
Number of teacher applicants	721	374	285	347	234	203
Success rate	33%	26%	39%	45%	56%	42%

In the first five rounds of the program, the number of teachers applying decreased each year but the success rate after 2000 increased. The most marked decrease in applicant numbers was between the 1997 and 2000 selection round. In this period, 2000 had the lowest success rate with only 26 per cent of applicants selected for L3CT status. In 2005, selection became an annual process.

Obtaining accurate data on annual application rates and success for the L3CT program post 2006 proved difficult. In July 2010, the Department’s Executive Director of Workforce commented on the increase in applications for L3CT and the record number of 304 applicants. He reported a 13 percent increase on 2009 applications. However, as previously illustrated in *Table 1: Application and Success Rates 1997-2006*, this number is still considerably less than 1997, and also less than 2000 and 2004. Of these 304 applicants in 2010, 141 (41percent) were successful. Success rates remain relatively stable.

In 2008, at the start of the present study, there were 768 teachers on the DoE database. Included in the database were teachers who had gained L3CT in 2007 and some teachers who had subsequently moved on to other promotional positions or resigned. The accuracy of the database was therefore an identified issue and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, the methods chapter.

In 2009, according to figures supplied by DoE's Workforce Directorate (Wainwright, K, 2009) based on salary information, there were 741(584 females and 157 males) teachers working in schools as L3CT. At the time, there were 22 770 teachers/administrators employed under the WA Education Act. L3CT represented only 3.2 per cent of DoE educators in 2009 and 3.75 per cent of teachers. Teachers are defined as school staff employed under the Education Act, who are not employed as administrators, including Heads of Departments. School administrators represented 13 per cent of school educators in 2009. There was minimal gender difference for L3CTs with 3.4 percent L3CT females and 2.7 percent males. However in 2009, 52 percent of administrators were male, yet they only represented 25 percent of teachers overall.

The most contentious aspect of the program has always been the selection process. The relatively low success rates in the first three years resulted in teacher dissatisfaction and criticism of the selection process (DET, 2005). Modifications were made to the selection process. In 2002, 'banking' was introduced. Banking allowed applicants who were successful at Stage 1, but unsuccessful at Stage 2, to bank their portfolios for the subsequent selection round in the next year. It is acknowledged that the application requires a substantial amount of work with many applicants taking two years to complete the process. The 2009 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs Research Report: *Rewarding Quality Teaching* (Daniels, 2009)

reported that it took between 60 and 200 hours to produce the teaching portfolio needed for Stage 1 of the L3CT application process.

The L3CT program has attracted considerable attention and is often hailed as one of the more effective teacher evaluation or quality programs. In a comparative study of systems that recognise and reward quality teachers, Ingvarson et al (2007) argue that the L3CT is superior to similar teacher evaluation programs such as Experienced Teacher With Responsibility in Victoria (ETWR) because the L3CT classification recognises educational leadership and the “technical core” and actively encourages teacher participation at all stages. According to these researchers, L3CT processes more clearly articulated a vision of educational leadership.

In 1999, Jasman studied the work undertaken by L3CT, aiming also to describe the negotiation processes. The 78 L3CTs surveyed would have been in the second year of their new leadership role. Jasman found a wide variation in the extent to which the L3CT met with the principal to negotiate the role. Issues identified with this lack of negotiation included the relationship with the principal, L3CT confidence, expertise and a lack of understanding about the role of the L3CT. Jasman identified, as of concern, the fact that there seemed to be a domination of traditional leadership styles with a significant number of L3CTs not working in collegial environments. She also highlighted conflict between the demands of the teaching role and the demands of the L3CT role. The investigation also determined that fewer teachers had a leadership role relating to teaching, than would have been expected. It was reiterated in this study that L3CT were not expected to undertake traditional management or administrative duties

In 2005, the first year the process was conducted on an annual basis, DET carried out an internal review of the selection process through the *Teachers Professional Competencies and Standards Committee* (DET, 2005). The review focused

on the support provided to applicants and assessors. The survey that was conducted as part of the 2005 review included teachers who had been successful applicants, unsuccessful applicants as well as those who had never applied. The review specifically targeted the 2002 and 2004 selection rounds and found that of the cohort of teachers who had not applied, 34 percent cited that the process was too time-consuming while another 22 percent said they were too busy. The review also provided an opportunity for successful applicants to comment on their role as an L3CT in schools with only 56 percent of these respondents indicating they were able to take part in negotiating their role as an L3CT. The review suggested a number of actions to improve understandings of the selection process, improve consistency of assessment practices and improve the recognition of L3CT. The latter included the design and production of a lapel pin to be presented to all L3CT, as a mean of increasing the recognition and raising awareness of the position.

Despite these reviews and changes to the selection process, the number of teachers applying for the L3CT classification remains low. Success rates are generally under 50 percent each year. It would seem that the teaching profession in WA has not embraced this opportunity. L3CTs still comprise a small percentage of the DoE's experienced classroom teachers. In asking what sort of opportunities are provided for these teachers to be leaders in schools, this study will seek to address to some extent the reasons why this scheme has failed to engage the majority of teachers.

### **The Context of the Researcher**

The decision to study teacher leadership is bound up with the context of my own personal experience and the political landscape in which all of us, who teach, find ourselves. My journey as a researcher has not involved a seamless transition from

classroom teacher to school administrator or academic researcher. Instead, it has been a winding road. Whilst I acknowledge that the self is multiplicitous, I have constructed myself primarily as a classroom teacher for 30 years. Throughout my doctoral study, I have been employed fulltime by DoE in the roles of classroom teacher, school administrator and educational consultant. My journey has been somewhat unusual as I embraced the multiple roles of researcher and teacher or school administrator.

My study is a type of insider research that owes much to my own professional journey as a school leader and a novice researcher. It is not focused on any particular school site in which I have worked, but the people who inhabit my study and their stories about leadership are familiar to me because I share many of these experiences. Although I have not applied for L3CT status, I have sought opportunities to work in schools as a leader in a range of quasi leadership positions and then more recently in a formalized administrative position. I have observed the impact of the L3CT initiative on the profession and witnessed the struggles of colleagues who have sought L3CT status. Like the teachers in this study, I have encountered the challenges of enacting significant pedagogical change in an era where low teacher morale and teacher dissatisfaction have been well documented (Senate Report, 1998; Dworkin, 2001; Haberman, 2004; Mackenzie, 2007).

I have undertaken a number of school leadership roles in the duration of this study, including Head of English Learning Area, Head of Department Student Services and the facilitation of specific school based leadership programs, including Innovative Designs for Enhancing Australian Schools (IDEAS.) In these roles, I have led school-based committees with change agendas, departments and had a key role in collaborative decision-making as a member of Senior Management Teams in schools. I also spent a period of time as a consultant for DoE, where my primary role was to develop and

facilitate professional learning for teachers in the field of professional ethics and school conduct. Hence, I am no stranger to teacher leadership.

One of the challenges I face as a researcher is to demonstrate that whilst my study is heavily influenced by my context, it has a theoretical lens and legitimacy. In the methodology chapter I will elaborate on how self-reflexivity is employed as means of establishing legitimacy (Pillow, 2003). My study is not the study of “the other” by a neutral observer. In fact, my study is informed by the notion that such neutrality is not achievable (Caelli, Ray & Mill, 2003). Rather my study embraces the knowledge that the researcher is not a dispassionate observer and is someone who believes that the gulf between academic research and school practices can be bridged. In addition I believe that my insider knowledge has the potential to enrich my study (Edwards, 2002; Le Gallais, 2003). In the methodology chapter and throughout this thesis, I will detail for the reader the points at which my experience as a teacher enriches a line of enquiry to assist the reader to understand and identify any bias as a result of studying a subject so close to my own experience.

In the first instance, the decision to study teacher leadership arises from an interest in the professional lives of teachers and the cumulative narrative of the profession, including the formation of professional identities. I am interested in the power of narrative to shape the profession both now and in the future. In asking what it means to teach, I am making sense of my own life choices and decision to be an educator, not just in 1983 when I first began as a classroom teacher but also in 2012, as an engaged teacher and school administrator. My background as an arts graduate with a major in English Literature explains my interest in the way in which discourse and in particular, metaphor shape the cultural narrative of what it means to be a teacher and

hence my need to interrogate the sleeping giant metaphor. It also explains my love of words and attraction to story telling as a device.

### **Teacher Leadership and Discourse**

The study is focused on the way in which discourse informs and exposes practices (Gee, 2001). Consequently the study allows me the opportunity to compare different discourses, such as the voice of the classroom teacher and that of the official policy maker to identify gaps in the ideology of teacher leader. I am interested in the way in which the interrogation of these discourses can inform the current teacher leadership debate by illuminating the binary of the rhetoric of official teacher leadership programs and the voice of the teacher leader (Sachs, 2005).

Similarly the study aims to compare the expectation of leadership held by L3CT teachers with the actuality of the lived experience. The investigation will include an examination of the ways in which authority and tradition impact on practice, as well as how the creation of particular groups or sets of people such as teacher leaders will invariably create other groups who are “other” (De Fina, 2006). Whilst it is the voice of the teacher–leader that is privileged in my study, there is a clear intention to highlight the voices of others, dissonant or not.

The study acknowledges the micro politics of the school site. Teacher leadership is often seen as a precursor for school democracy with an emphasis on shared decision-making. I want to demonstrate the complexity of this. “Democracy is not about achieving consensus; it is a way of making decisions in the absence of consensus; it is about struggle and opposition” (Blasé, 1990, p. 228). I am interested therefore to what extent teacher leaders in WA engage in this form of consensus making and may contest

beliefs about teacher leadership. In this sense, my study also seeks to describe what school democracy looks in the context of the L3CT program.

### **Chapter Summary**

The study examines teacher leadership in the context of WA government schools. My focus is the L3CT initiative that explicitly requires teachers to be working as leaders in schools. The study is primarily about the day-to-day enactment of this leadership. I seek to describe the work of these teacher leaders and their beliefs about their role as leaders. In interrogating the work of these teacher leaders, it may be possible to gauge the level of participation in collaborative decision-making or shared governance of schools. I seek to understand the extent to which L3CT leadership is empowering for teachers and how this might impact on the profession and the larger narrative of teacher-leader. Therefore my study also seeks to judge the extent to which the L3CT initiative can be equated with significant change to the way we traditionally think about leadership in schools

Teacher leadership is bound up with notions of identity. Currently, it would seem that quality or expert teachers are likely to be constructed as teacher leaders. This is a complex construction, as the professional identity of teachers is shaped by many competing discourses. Therefore, this study asks how these discourses are manifested in every day leadership practices in schools and involves an investigation of organizational culture. The examination of teacher discourse and DoE policy relating to teacher leadership aims to expose these practices and illuminate the expectations both of and for teacher leaders, and in so doing, enrich our understanding of teacher leadership and how it is engendered and sustained.



## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

In Chapter Two, I articulate the notion of teacher leadership and develop a definition to inform my research. I examine the philosophical positions that underpin the discourse of teacher leadership and investigate how this impacts on current teacher leadership initiatives. I am asking what the teacher leadership initiative offers schools and whose interests are served. The chapter includes a discussion of the impetus for the *teachers as leaders* agenda and an examination of how this initiative has been enacted both internationally and nationally. The discussion highlights the significance of discourse, in the examination of this agenda and how discourse relating to power might impact on the way teacher leadership is understood in the context of practice in schools.

I demonstrate how teacher leadership in WA is informed by both national and international agendas. The review includes a discussion of the way in which competing interests including debates about school reform, accountability, democratic leadership and empowerment all shape the teacher leadership debate. My review will also present a framework for teacher leadership in the Australian context and examine how this framework may be used to interrogate the means by which WA schools choose to engage with teacher leadership and the extent to which the engagement may be deemed successful. The framework will assist in the determination of the purpose of teacher leadership, of what counts as leadership work and how teacher leadership may be

distinguished from more traditional forms of school leadership. This process will also allow for the identification of factors that engender teacher leadership, as well as those that constrain this initiative.

Teacher leadership fundamentally requires a shift in the paradigm of school leadership (Crowther et al, 2007; Cranston & Ehrich, 2009; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011). In many models of teacher leadership, administrators work collaboratively with classroom teachers to determine school policy and practices (Andrews, 2008) Therefore, the review also addresses the impact of organizational culture and in particular, the role of the school principal in facilitating these changes (Dawson, 2011). The narrative of teacher leadership in turn intersects debates about teacher status, empowerment, collegiality and the motivation to lead. Bound up in this is the notion of teacher professional identity and the discourses that shape this narrative.

The chapter also presents the different positions from which leadership can be studied and understood. Gunter (2001) identifies four main positions for the study of leadership: critical, humanistic, instrumental and scientific. The discussion highlights the relevance of both the humanist and critical approaches for this research. This discussion is included because it is vital to understanding the choices that have been made in this study to privilege language and to employ it as a tool to deconstruct both the policy and practice of teacher leadership in WA.

### **The Impetus for Teacher Leadership**

Teacher leadership is not a new idea. Emerging strongly in the literature more than a decade ago, the longevity of teacher leadership is evidenced by the fact that the discourse of teacher leadership can be traced back to the 1970's (Frost, 2008). Teacher leadership in developed countries is prominent in leadership courses and research and

can be viewed to some extent as a recycled idea (Harris, 2003). In the last decade, the increased recognition of the significance of teacher leaders (York Barr & Duke, 2004) has resulted in a number of reviews of the literature on teacher leadership including Harris and Muijs (2003). The extent to which teacher leadership can be realised continues to be debated (Barth, 2007b; Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008; Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore & Geist, 2011; Youngs, 2007).

There is no fixed definition of teacher leadership (Millwater & Ehrich, 2009). The construction of teacher-leader varies according to context but generally teacher leadership is offered as something more than just recognizing the knowledge and classroom expertise of experienced and expert teachers (Harris & Spillane, 2008; York Barr & Duke, 2004). Instead teacher leadership is proffered as a new paradigm for school leadership where classroom teachers are at the forefront of school decision-making and school governance (Andrews, 2008; Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2002; Crowther et al, 2007). This construction of teacher leadership necessitates a redistribution of power (Harris & Muijis, 2003). Therefore, much of the literature on leadership in the last decade is concerned with offering alternative ways of leading, in order to effectively implement the broad scale reforms that have impacted on education globally (Andrews & Lewis, 2004; Crowther et al, 2007, Fullan, 2007). The notion that top down leadership is inadequate for meeting the challenges of the post-industrial, knowledge-based world accounts to some extent for the rise in popularity of the notion of teachers as leaders (Andrews & Lewis, 2004).

An examination of the literature on teacher leadership reveals two different ideological positions and in some cases a blurring of these positions. Muijis and Harris (2003, p. 438) note the, “overlapping and competing definitions that results in a conceptual confusion over the exact meaning of teacher leadership.” Whilst much of the

literature on teacher leadership is located within the movement towards more democratic forms of school governance and school reform (Andrews, 2008; Avenell, 2001; Cranston, 2000; Crowther et al, 2007; Duigan, 2005), teacher leadership has a mixed ancestry. In one sense, it is the response to the call to *re culture* schools (Leonard, 1999) utilizing transformational leadership. In another sense, it is undoubtedly, the product of the accountability and performance standards discourse (Mcleod, 2001). The discussion that follows will outline how teacher leadership intersects a number of current debates. These debates include: teacher status, teacher recruitment, teacher retention, as well as teacher and system accountability.

### **Teacher leadership and the school reform movement**

The first model of teacher leadership belongs to the school reform movement and the search for an effective means of enacting broad scale changes whilst at the same time satisfying the public's concerns about the quality of teachers and teaching (Connell, 2009; York Barr & Duke, 2004; Lieberman & Miller, 2007). In the Australian context, the linking of teacher leadership with increased professionalism and school reform was evident in the 1998 Senate Report: *A Class Act* and more recently in the *Review of Funding for Schooling—Final Report* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). Teacher leadership and professionalism are frequently equated with professional standards where attributes, including leadership are measured and may form the basis of merit promotion and reward (Invargson & Kleinhenz, 2006). Financial incentives designed in part to motivate the teaching profession to embrace the increased accountability (Leithwood, 2007) are offered via awards for demonstrated achievement of technical competencies, including leadership. These extrinsic awards are viewed as strong motivators but are also usually accompanied by “control strategies, such as

detailed job descriptions and direct supervision of employees, to ensure desired employee performance” (Leithwood, 2007, p. 189).

The inability to attract and retain quality graduates in teaching has lent considerable weight to the argument for professional frameworks that identify a clear career pathway and therefore accord teachers the opportunity for increased status. In Australia, more than a decade ago the 1998 Senate Report: *A Class Act* highlighted increased status and opportunities for promotion as important factors in the recruitment and retention of teachers. Teacher retention and predicted teacher shortages continue to be an issue (Richardson & Watt, 2005) and were flagged in the Department of Education Science and Training’s (DEST) 2009-2010 Report. Low teacher morale is linked to lack of professional status (Mackenzie, 2007) that in turn impacts on the profession’s ability to attract quality graduates.

### ***Teacher standards and accountability***

The movement towards increased teacher accountability, as a means of ensuring teacher quality and school reform has seen the development of numerous frameworks over two decades, for measuring and often rewarding teacher competencies, of which leadership is frequently, a dimension. Frameworks shape and define the work knowledge of the teacher (Mcleod, 2001) and are found in the USA, the UK, New Zealand and Australia. *The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards* (NBPTS) in the US was established as a forerunner in 1987. Regulatory bodies were also established in the UK, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. These developments have not been without controversy and the complexity of the task, in particular the difficulty of agreement on a universal standard is acknowledged (Sachs, 2005).

The term *standard* is contested among various interest groups (Sachs, 2005).

The fact that standards globally have so much similarity is attributed to the practice of policy borrowing and the use of international experts (Sachs, 2005, p. 5). Sachs distinguishes between developmental and regulatory approaches to standards and like Ingvarson (1998), advocates for developmental standards for teaching rather than for teachers. Educators need to be involved in the development of teaching standards (Ingvarson, 1998; Ingvarson, 2002; Jasman, 2003; Sachs, 2005). Ingvarson and Rowe (2007) highlight the difficulty of deciding what counts as quality teaching, in particular the identification of core components of teacher knowledge and practice. Ingvarson, Kleinhenz and Wilkinson (2007) acknowledge that professional standards are not just about measurement. These researchers construct professional standards as also having elements of “rallying” where the profession is re-energised. They describe rallying as the process whereby “a group of teachers come to discover and understand the distinctive features and aspirations of their profession” (2007, p. 17).

Competency standards and frameworks have continued to evolve over the last decade. The trend seems to be away from subject and context specific standards to a general set of standards. In the United Kingdom for example, a single set of standards was implemented in September 2012. These eight teaching standards replace over 30 different standards that were regarded as a duplication of different standards issued from different bodies. The review of the previous standards found that more than a “third of teachers did not believe the old standards provided a good definition of teacher competence” (<http://www.education.gov.uk>). Blatchford, Deputy Chair and Director of the National Education Trust, is quoted in the 2011 Press Release, “The Review Group has seized the opportunity to raise the bar for current and future teachers. “Our nation’s children and young people deserve no less” (<http://www.education.gov.uk>). These standards are firmly situated in the discourse of school reform and teacher quality.

### *Australian standards for teachers*

In the Australian context, the development of national standards has also evolved since 1998, when the State Employment Education and Training Reference Committee recommended the establishment of a national professional teaching standards and registration body. The Senate Enquiry into the Status of Teaching, *A Class Act* (1998) also recommended a national body to develop and maintain standards of professional practice. Various agencies were involved in developing the standards. The Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Task force was established in 2003 and produced a national framework for teacher quality and professional standards for teaching in 2003. These standards were to be an organizing structure that “provided an agreed language using commonly understood terms and definitions, with which to discuss professional teaching practice at the national level” (MCEEDYA, 2003, p. 2). As well as describing the work and practices of teachers, the intent was to improve the status of teachers.

The initial Australian Standards framework embraced the notion of teacher as life-long learners and embedded the requirement for ongoing professional learning into the proposed framework. The different dimensions of a teacher’s career were acknowledged with the categories of *graduation*, *competence*, *accomplishment* and *leadership*. Teachers who would be deemed to operate within the dimension of leadership were described as, “transformative for their profession, for students and their community (MCEEDYA, 2003, p. 10). In 2007, the National Professional Standards consultation group under the auspices of Teaching Australia proposed instead, three organizing categories, including leadership in the category of *Commitment* and viewing it as being, “accomplished both formally and informally” (2007, p. 10). The Ministerial

Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA) commenced work on the national standards in 2009. Final responsibility for the standards was given to The Australian Institute for Teaching and Learning and School leadership (AITSL) in July 2010. The final document was published in February 2011 (AITSL, 2011).

The current Australian standards comprise seven standards across the three domains of teaching: *Professional Knowledge*, *Professional Engagement* and *Professional Practice* and are standards for teachers rather than teaching. They are a “public statement of what constitutes teacher quality” (AITSL, 2011, p. 2). There are four identified career stages: *Graduate*, *Proficient*, *Highly Accomplished* and *Lead*. Lead teachers not only demonstrate “exemplary” classroom practice, they also “lead processes to improve student performance, mentor and inspire colleagues and represent the school and the teaching profession in the community” (AITSL, 2011, p. 7). Across the three domains of teaching, the Lead teacher has a key role to play in implementing new policies, school evaluation and school reform.

At a State level, teacher competency standards and frameworks were in place ahead of the national standards. These frameworks acknowledged “leading teachers” or the notion of teachers working in schools as leaders. New South Wales appointed leading teachers at the end of the 1980s as part of government reform policies. Similar classifications exist in most states. The Experienced Teacher with Responsibility (ETWR) was introduced in Victoria in 2001 and the Level Three Classroom Teacher in Western Australia in 1997 (Ingvarson et al, 2007). In South Australia the classification of Advanced Teacher is utilised. In the Northern Territory, the classification is referred to as Teachers of Exemplary Practice to recognize and reward classroom teachers who remain in the classroom (Ingvarson et al, 2007). In each instance, the main impetus for



the program has been the need to retain quality staff in teaching positions. Whilst different states in Australia have previously established various standards and frameworks to address notions of professional competence and teacher status, the principal strategy for addressing teacher status in each instance is increased salary. Increments in salary are accompanied by increased responsibility for performing higher-level duties, usually with a leadership component. However, such frameworks do not always result in providing opportunities for teachers to realise their potential as leaders (Cranston, 2000).

### *Teacher quality and the deficit model*

The extent to which competencies and standards can deliver improved educational outcomes and the motivation behind the rise in popularity of these measures, have been widely contested (Bourke, Ryan & Lidstone, 2012; Connell, 2009; Gale, 2006; Hattie, 2003; Howie, 2006; Kelchtermans, 2008; McLeod, 2001; Smyth, 1999). It is argued that frameworks and standards may constrain the teaching profession. “The typical redress to restore faith in the public school system has been to devise so-called idiot-proof solutions where the proofing has been to restrain the idiots to tight scripts underpinned by a structure of accountability” (Hattie, 2003, p. 1). Rather than an invigoration of the teaching profession, these measures are deemed driven by economic rationalism (Gunter, McGregor & Gunter, 2001; McLeod, 2001; Nichols & Parsons, 2011).

That teacher leadership emerges, in part, from the school reform agenda is problematic. Teacher competence and professionalism in the arena of school reform is essentially a means of addressing a perceived deficit in the teaching profession (Bourke et al, 2012). Fitzsimons (1997) highlights the tensions between the discourse of deficit

and its management systems and teacher professionalism. The deficit ideology is demonstrated in Fitzsimons's account of the debate on teacher competence in New Zealand that ensued after the Education Review Office were asked to substantiate their claim that, "there were significant numbers of incompetent teachers in New Zealand" (1997, p. 7). Fitzsimmons also reports the statement made by then Associate Minister for NZ education, that such a claim could not be substantiated because there was "no clear national definition of a competent teacher" (1997, p. 7).

Government policy is seen as driven by markets and accountability discourses arising out of a neo-liberal doctrine (Bloomfield, 2006; Bourke et al, 2012; Davis, 2007; Fitzsimmons & Haynes, 1998; O'Brien & Down, 2002). Smyth (1999, p. 13) argues for a refocussing on the primacy of teaching as opposed to what he terms, "the toxic waste of managerialism, outcomes and accountability measures". Similarly, nearly a decade later, Leithwood (2007, p. 183) acknowledges the dilemma of "the call to transformational practices in a policy environment that largely endorses transactional practices". Transactional or accountability discourses work against transformational leadership (Dinham et al, 2006).

In much of the literature, we are encouraged to ask what rewards are offered by the new professionalism (Dworkin, 2001, Fielding, 2006, Gale, 2006; Kelchtermans, 2008). Professionalism is also seen as a mechanism by which intensification of teachers' work can be achieved (Blackmore, 1999; Gunter et al, 2001; Nichols & Parsons, 2011; O'Brien & Down, 2002). Moreover, quite often this discourse on change and teacher professionalism is a thinly disguised attack on an ageing teaching population. "Teachers are depicted as being passed their use by date and in need of 'renewal', re-skilling' and 'reinvention' (Blackmore, 1999, p. 5). Accountability and school reform discourses have ensured that teacher professionalism is of national

interest (Howie, 2006). There is a perceived crisis in teaching and teachers are positioned as the problem (Gale, 2006, p.12). Similarly, Dworkin (2001, p. 8) argued that in the US, the first wave of school reform saw teachers as the problem, the second wave saw them as the solution but the final wave of reform constructed all participants in schools as problematic and had particularly negative effects on certain groups of teachers. Teachers are vulnerable in a policy climate of performativity (Kelchtermans, 2008).

Fielding (2006) argues that new ways of leading have had an over concentration on performance and excellence and have consequently failed to deal with the personal dimension and the broader philosophical aims of the “knowledge society”. Fielding (2006, p. 347) attributes the lack of engagement with the kind of learning required of a 21st century ‘knowledge society’ to a system based on compliance. Teachers are caught up in the immediacy of testing regimes and need more time for collaborative conversations with their peers (Nichols & Parsons, 2011). Regulatory approaches to professional learning construct “knowledge of teachers and teaching as unproblematically avowed” (Howie, 2006, p. 70). Similarly, Sachs (2005) argues for a more activist teaching profession where teachers are more empowered.

### **Transformational teacher leadership**

The second model of teacher leadership or transformational model positions teacher leadership as an organic movement that is not necessarily monitored externally or tied to any particular reward or accountability system. Neither, in this model, is teacher leadership aligned to a particular position or authority. The transformational model draws on the notion of a new democracy or knowledge economy (Peters, 2001). Teacher leadership in this model has broader aims than increasing technical capabilities

and is seen as a more democratic way of re-imaging and reforming schools. Transformational teacher leadership has the capacity to offer both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Building capacity and increasing individual commitment to the goals of the organisation are achieved through an emphasis on emotions and values (Leithwood, 2007, p.191). Whilst not excluded, extrinsic rewards such as increased salary are secondary in the transformational model of teacher leadership.

The discourse of transformational leadership has also been highlighted in the literature for more than a decade. The “teachers as leaders” movement is viewed as, “a critical agenda for the new millennium” (Cranston, 2000, p. 123). The new millennium is constructed as needing different skills and knowledge (Andrews, 2008). Teachers are viewed as being at the heart of this change (Lambert, Collay, Dietz, Kent & Richert, 2007; Leithwood, 2007; Taylor et al, 2011) and are acknowledged as powerful people in the lives of children (Hattie, 2003). They are also seen as having considerable agency (Cranston, 2000) and as having almost privileged status because of their direct and immediate link to students. Teachers' daily contact with students, other teachers, and the instructional program, places teachers in a unique position to influence school reform efforts (Kermit et al, 2000). Donaldson (2007) sees this connection to the classroom as their greatest asset as leaders.

In the transformational model, schools are viewed as complex learning organisations where leadership work is collective work (Avenell, 2001; Andrews, 2008). Traditional models of top down authority are seen as inadequate because they fail to “address the emotional aspects of the multiplicity of people within our organisations” (Avenell, 2001, p. 1). Allen and Glickman’s’ (1998) investigation into League schools in England affirmed that significant changes in schools only occur when teachers embrace changes as a result of a democratic governance. The embracing of

change was more likely to occur in schools where teachers were perceived as having expertise. Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 437) argue that in “dispersed leadership, leadership is separated from person, role and status and is primarily concerned with the relationships and the connections among individuals within a school.”

The leadership discourse is shifting towards distributed leadership (Frost & Harris, 2003). These researchers argue that this move to teacher leadership has been drawn from a large body of work, which is increasingly centered on capacity building. This accounts for the popularity of distributed leadership and the notion that all teachers are capable of leading. They highlight teacher agency and the need to examine this potential as a means of evaluating school effectiveness and teacher morale. Teacher leadership is credited as the essential element in the renewal of the teaching profession and a means of re culturing schools as learning communities. Distributed leadership may involve what Smeed, Kimber, Millwater & Ehrich (2009, p. 32) term, “flat team structures” as a means of engaging teachers in school decision-making. In this way, school leadership becomes shared across all levels of the organisation.

The emphasis on shared decision-making means that democracy and advocacy are often key elements of the transformational leadership discourse. Lambert and colleagues (2007) highlight advocacy in their discussion of how teachers can move beyond a set of skills and take a constructivist approach to leadership. They describe the leadership experience of emerging teacher leaders and cite the example, of one teacher, Nina, “where the courage to speak the truth and to move towards a goal were central to her perception of herself as a leader” (2007, p. 125). Similarly, Sergiovanni (2007) emphasises moral principles in his discussion of steward or what he refers to as “power to leadership”. Duignan (2005) argues that schools can address the rise of individualism that has beset contemporary society. “Schools especially as formative

societal agencies can become beacons of hope for a more just, tolerant and democratic society (Duignan, 2005, p. 1). Often transformational approaches to leadership are championed as a means for schools to address challenges, including increased accountability (Leithwood, 2007).

Increasingly in the Australian context, successful school reform is equated with quality teaching and effective teacher leadership (Andrews, 2008; Crowther et al, 2002). Crowther and colleagues call for a new paradigm for the teaching profession where the capacity of teachers to provide school leadership and lead school revitalization is recognized (Crowther et al, 2007). For Crowther and colleagues, the creation of a democratic school community involving parents and the wider community accompany distributed leadership. It is also important to build pedagogical relationships with students rather than see them as the receivers or beneficiaries (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008).

The transformational model of leadership in school has also drawn criticism. Gunter (2001, p. 98) claims that transformational leadership in education has been critiqued and is in fact, “underpinned by a discourse of what can and cannot be said and done.” For Gunter, evidence based auditing means that teachers may be seduced by the opportunity for leadership only to find that is a mechanism of control. Another criticism of transformational leadership is the extent to which it is realised beyond the rhetoric. In particular, the extent to which teachers are given genuine opportunities to lead is questioned. The potential of school leadership may be lost because school leaders are limited in their thinking about school leadership (Youngs, 2007).

Youngs (2007) also foregrounds the political nature or power embedded in school leadership and argues that this needs to be distributed across the school community. Rather than distribute leadership to others, Youngs believes it is necessary

to think more broadly and acknowledge that leadership may come from anywhere within the school community. Moreover, Youngs argues, given the increased workload and role intensification of school leaders that it was inevitable that distributed leadership would become popular. He also cautions that, “popularisation does not necessarily equate to best practice” (2007, p. 3).

Transformational leadership recognises the agency of teachers and engages them in decision-making. This approach to leadership is collective and recognises that leaders can come from anywhere in the organisation. Leaders do not need to be invested with titles (Dinham, Aubusson & Brady, 2006; Donaldson, 2007; Dempster et al, 2011; Harris & Spillane, 2008). Increasingly in this model of leadership, school governance is opened up to the wider school community and encourages students and parents to participate in decision-making. The implementation of this approach to school leadership requires a rethinking of traditional notions of power and authority.

### **The Discourse of Power**

It is not possible to discuss teacher leadership either as a transformational power in schools or as means of reinvigorating the profession without acknowledging the school as a micro political site (Acker, 1995; Blackmore, 1999; Ehrich & Cranston, 2004; Smeed et al, 2009, Smyth, 1999). “Individuals compete using, whatever power they possess to achieve improved outcomes for themselves” (Acker, 1995, p. 132). Teaching is a social act; therefore the relationships with the other participants, teachers, parent and children, will be relevant to how the act is constructed and understood (McLeod, 2001). Power is both protective and a means of influencing and protecting others (Smeed, Kimber, Millwater & Ehrich, 2009). Moreover, Smeed and colleagues argue power in these contexts is often unspoken and not easily observed.

In the same way that there is a need to recognise the potential of micro politics for illuminating school senior management teams (Erich & Cranston, 2004), it is also pertinent to consider the impact of micro politics on the teacher leader. The question as to who the teacher leaders are is also relevant. Leadership in schools is traditionally equated with notions of positional authority, of having power over others. This is evidenced in school nomenclature, where titles such as ‘senior management’ and, to some extent, even ‘expert teacher’ connote authority based on age, experience and position. The ‘teachers as leaders’ agenda invites us to interrogate these notions and to ask whether or not teacher leadership in opening up schools to more democratic rather than autocratic leadership, might promote a different discourse.

The significance of authoritative titles or labelling is pertinent to this study because the title ascribed to the teacher leader and the expectation of the role is a product of discourse. Gee (2001) foregrounds the political nature of language and the way in which social identities are formed and enacted in different settings. The formation of teachers’ professional identities is ongoing and needs to be understood in the context of recognition (Cohen, 2010). Labelling enfranchises some participants and disenfranchises others (Mockler & Sachs, 2006). Teacher leadership suggests a reordering of the power relationships that may be invested in titled positions (Lambert et al, 2007). Lambert and colleagues argue that traditional hierarchical structures constrain democratic discourses and more participative styles of leadership and call for new images of leadership (2007, p. 109).

The teacher leader may have a formalized position with a title that relates to a specific role, such as “curriculum leader” or a higher salaried position, such as L3CT (in WA). It is worth considering whether or not such titles invest a teacher leader with more power. Fitzgerald and Gunter (2008) question the attachment of labels to different



types of work in schools and highlight the binaries of leader and follower. Donaldson (2007) distinguishes between natural or informal teacher leaders and those teacher leaders with formalized positions. For Donaldson, natural leaders are potentially more powerful because they are likely to have built relationship trust. However Donaldson argues that whilst natural leaders may have a naturally earned influence, this influence or power does not necessarily equate to school-wide collaboration.

The creation of formal positions such as the L3CT position in WA may promote teacher leadership. However, schools that operate as learning organisations encourage teachers to assume informal leadership roles (Allen & Glickman, 1998). These researchers also found there were positive effects for schools when leadership teams were elected democratically. Distributing the opportunities for leadership in schools was seen as an effective means to build leadership capacity (Crowther et al, 2007). Taylor et al (2011) affirm the significance of schools as learning organisations for the development of teacher leadership. The notion of teachers successfully creating their own leadership roles challenges beliefs in merit selection and selection processes, such as the L3CT as the preferred method for recruiting leaders in schools.

### **Gender and the leadership debate**

The highly gendered nature of teaching means that any discussion of power and leadership invariably requires an understanding of the politics of gender. There is a considerable body of work examining the impact of gender in school administration and leadership debates (Acker, 1995; Blackmore, 1999, Knowles, Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2009; Limerick & Anderson, 1999, McGee Banks, 2007; Mills et al, 2004). Teaching is a highly gendered profession. Females are overly represented in classrooms and under-represented in formal leadership positions. Male teachers are usually seen as advantaged

with respect to career advancement. “The lack of promotional opportunities shouldn’t deter men from teaching, they are usually promoted within five minutes of becoming a teacher” (Mills et al, 2004). Williams (1992, p. 230) argues that there were definite and hidden advantages to being a man in a female dominated profession, referring to it as the “glass elevator.” The glass elevator was not necessarily viewed by all men as positive. “Often, despite their intentions, they face invisible pressures to move up in their professions. As if on a moving escalator, they must work to stay in place” (Williams, 1992, p. 230).

Reay and Ball (2000) argue that leadership has always meant men. It is not just the traditional discourses of leadership that act as a barrier for women, but external factors including the social discourse of what it is to be a good mother (Limerick & Anderson, 1999; Knowles et al, 2009). Lambert et al (2007) question whether or not the gendered nature of teaching limits the potential to lead. For these researchers, it is the fact that, “historically leadership texts are seeped in the metaphors of “great men role models” and not associated with the nurturing of children that may impede teacher leadership” (2007, p. 108). Teaching, as distinct from leadership is viewed as an extension of mothering (Limerick & Anderson, 1999).

It is pertinent then to ask whether creating increased opportunities for teachers to engage in leadership can address the gender imbalance without addressing these broader social issues. Taking on the additional duties associated with leadership is invariably time-consuming. Does this preclude certain demographics of women who are already juggling demanding careers with the responsibilities of raising a family? Limerick and Anderson (1999) also found evidence of the glass ceiling, of women being given the ‘little jobs’. It may also be pertinent to consider whether teacher leadership is an

example of female teachers embracing “little jobs” including informal leadership roles rather than seeking traditional leadership or administrative roles in schools.

With its emphasis on consensus and the affective domain, new style leadership is sometimes viewed as more feminine in style. It is argued that female teachers may be drawn to more democratic forms of leadership and school governance. Blackmore (1998, p. 149) argues that “notions of post-modern leadership, premised upon self-governance and managing diversity are seductive to feminists”. Similarly, Sergiovanni (2007, p. 88) argues that, ‘power to’ or what he terms steward leadership is closer to the feminist tradition than traditional models. This could in part be explained by cultural expectations of women in the work place. Smeed et al (2009) highlight the fact that women who exercise more authoritarian or “power over” leadership are viewed more negatively than men who adopt the same style of leadership.

The extent to which distributed forms of leadership equate with increased female leadership is questionable. Female leaders may be fearful of power and sensitive to their performance as leaders being criticised in terms of their gender (Blackmore, 1998). The male discourse of rationality competes in schools with the feminised discourse of service, or caring for others (Blackmore 1998). Leadership may be viewed by female teachers as taking them away from what they value most, teaching children. Acker (1995) cautions against narrow definitions of the concept of ‘woman’ and highlights, class, race, age, ethnicity and marital status as important variables. Presumably we need to be similarly cautious about constructing masculinity in schools too narrowly. Not all males in schools occupy positions of authority.

## **Organizational Discourse**

Discourses create and allow for the negotiation of both social categories and identities (Keating & Durranti, 2006). The key to discourses is recognition (Gee, 2001). Teachers require recognition from others to be successful (Cohen, 2010). Any analysis of discourse needs to be sensitive to context and acknowledge multiple readings as an individual's interpretation is filtered through the lens of their own knowledge and experience (Fairclough, Muldering & Wodak, 2005).

The post-modern turn in the analysis of organizational discourse examines how organizations reflect the new workplace where power is likely to be decentralized or dispersed within the organization (Mumby & Mease, 2006; Gale, 2006). The notion that dispersed leadership is more democratic than traditional leadership styles is contested by Mumby & Mease (2006) who argue that such systems can result in increased surveillance and consequently increased insecurities. For Crump and Ryan (2001) it is the interplay between macro and micro politics. "The management of educational change needs to be aware of the policy-practice dichotomy that requires practitioners to adjust to a work environment characterised by paradox and ambiguity" (2001, p. 4).

Educational policy documents construct a particular discourse of teachers that is relevant to this discussion (Bourke et al, 2012; Bloomfield, 2006; Connell, 2009). Teachers are under represented in public discourse (Cohen, 2010). Standards are political texts that serve particular interests (Sachs, 2005). Moreover, Sachs argues that policy makers underplay the political nature of standards. Meanings are viewed as unproblematic and in this way the promotion of standards as neutral or common sense may be an intentional strategy. Discourse analysis in this study is about making meaning problematic. Hewitt (2009) foregrounds the application of a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis of policy to expose the influences that define a policy

problem and the way in which behavior is regulated through structures and hierarchies. “Foucault’s ideas challenge the notion that policy making is a ‘rational’ process based on incontrovertible evidence or truth” (Hewitt, 2009, p. 6).

Thomas (2005, p. 46) asserts that, “improving teacher quality is a key issue in Australian educational policy and that all education policies work, implicitly or explicitly, to construct a particular version of the ‘good’ teacher”. Thomas provides an examination of both the discursive constructions of the ‘good’ teacher and the authoritative voice in three specific reports: *Shaping the Future* (Wiltshire, McMeniman & Tolhurst 1994), *Teachers for the 21st Century Making the Difference* (Department of Employment Education Training and Youth Affairs, 2000) and *Queensland the Smart State – Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* (The State of Queensland, 2002). In her analysis, Thomas employs critical discourse to demonstrate how policy discourses both define teacher quality and legitimize who can speak with authority on the subject of teacher quality. Thomas (2005, p. 54) demonstrates how, the creation of deictic categories in these documents, were used to denote inclusivity or exclusivity, where teachers are positioned to agree with particular constructions. According to Thomas all three policies construct deficit discourses about teachers so that teachers are marginalised from policy-making and decision-making. Thomas, like Sachs (2005) argues for a more activist construction of the teaching profession.

Crump and Ryan (2001) also highlight the marginalisation of teachers in policy implementation, attributing the lack of teacher engagement with change to this marginalisation. “Policy implementation has too often isolated practitioners to receptive and passive roles that build upon each other in an ageing workforce to breed cynicism and resistance to new initiatives” (Crump & Ryan, 2001, p. 3). Similarly Connell (2009, p. 14) cautions that the neo-liberalist approaches to policy and organizational

practice is divisive and may destroy the teaching culture. The striving for recognition and competition for selection for merit-based positions such as the L3CT is seen to work against the more traditional notion of teaching as a collective exercise.

This discourse of educational policy is situated within a global framework. Lingard, Rawolle & Taylor (2005, p. 3) highlight the fact that educational policy is global. They foreground the work of Bourdieu on social fields and argue that: “Bourdieu’s theoretical stance and methodological disposition together allow a way beyond such spatial and national constraints, a necessary position for analyzing and understanding global effects in contemporary educational policy and the emergence of a global policy field in education”. Globalisation produces the notion of the world as one place as evidenced in phrases such as: “global warming” “world economy” and “world heritage sites,” which in turn are also used rhetorically to legitimate government policy (Lingard et al, 2005, p. 5). The resulting educational policy field is a site that is contested both within and beyond the nation by policy makers and teacher unions alike (Lingard et al, 2005).

In the Australian context, researchers have highlighted the intertextuality of Commonwealth texts that link quality teaching with improved student outcomes and competitiveness in the global market (Bourke et al, 2012). Teacher quality is cited 13 times in the new National Standards (AITSL, 2011) and is co-located with standards (2012, p. 994). The discourse of teacher quality and school revitalization is a metapolicy (Connell, 2009). We are encouraged to examine this lexical cohesion to identify what is silenced or excluded.

## **The Motivation of the Teacher Leader**

Given the complexity of the social setting of schools, what motivates teachers to embrace a leadership role? Understanding teacher motivation is possibly a key to evaluating the potential of both the discourse of new professionalism and the discourse of transformational leadership for reinvigorating the profession. Both discourses aim to engage teachers in new ways of constructing their roles in schools and both offer intrinsic and, to some extent, extrinsic rewards. Each claims to be a means of reinvigorating the profession. Transformational leadership offers the opportunity to participate in collaborative decision-making and thereby to ‘own more of the product’, whereas new professionalism has as its starting point as the need to demonstrate mastery of certain competencies to attain certain levels and rewards. One of the rewards of demonstrated mastery of these competencies being increased participation in leadership or school governance. Whilst these discourses are not mutually exclusive, they do appeal to different ideologies.

Demystifying and investigating motivations to lead in schools is important (Matters, 2005, p. 3). Increasing teacher shortages and high rates of attrition globally have resulted in increased research into teacher motivation (Richardson & Watt, 2008). The value of extrinsic rewards, particularly those relating to remuneration and status cannot be underestimated. One of the main findings of the 2006 Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) research into attitudes towards teaching in Australia was that, “while people who have chosen teaching as a career are chiefly motivated by ‘intrinsic’ rewards such as wanting to ‘make a difference’, enjoyment of children, etc., extrinsic factors such as remuneration, workload, employment conditions and status are the most significant factors influencing people not to choose teaching, and to leave the profession.” (DEST, 2006, p. 3).

Mackenzie (2007) cites workload and related stress, the status of teaching and salary as reasons for low teacher morale. Similarly, in their study of a group of Australian and German Education students, Beltman and Wosinitza (2008) determined that whilst students who selected teaching were motivated by intrinsic rewards, both Australian and German students identified negative comments by others about teaching or the teaching course as the most negative influence. Negative comments were attributed to the fact that teaching was largely perceived by the public in both these countries as being hard work and of low status. A ‘teachers as leaders’ agenda that addresses the concerns of extrinsic rewards, particularly status, would seem to make good sense. The importance of recognition should not be underestimated. “Teachers will not for long go through the heroic efforts of leading schools in addition to teaching classes if the consequence of their work goes unnoticed, unrecognised, or undervalued by others” (Barth, 2007b, p. 33).

Teacher motivation to remain in the profession and to embrace new roles such as leadership is not solely attributed to extrinsic rewards. The typology developed by Richardson and Watt (2008) suggests that the values or motivations of a graduate shape their decision to remain in the profession as highly engaged professionals. Their study highlighted that “those teachers classified as highly engaged persisters at the beginning of their career retained the highest level of satisfaction with the choice of career” (2008, p. 420). Their category of “highly engaged persisters” foregrounds the importance of social educational background including NESB to high levels of motivation and satisfaction with a career. The highly engaged persisters were more likely than other categories of graduates to perceive teaching as higher status, have a lower SES background, be older and have a NESB. Whereas the opposing category of ‘highly engaged switchers’ “had the highest levels of parental income, were younger and had



the lowest concentration of NESB (2008, p. 425). Interestingly, these “switchers” planned to be highly engaged and seek leadership opportunities for the period of time they remained in the profession. The importance of perceived status and career opportunities as significant factors in the retention of teachers is also foregrounded in this study.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2007) emphasize the impact a teacher’s career stage can have on their willingness to take on leadership roles. These researchers highlight the fact that there may be times in a teacher’s career when they do not want these responsibilities. Teacher engagement and commitment is not a stable entity. “The unfolding career is, after all, a story of waxing or waning satisfaction, commitment and competence” (Huberman et al, 1997, p. 12). Interestingly, Day (2008), like Beltman & Wosinitza (2008) argues that the early stages of a teaching career were significant in the determination of values and commitment to teaching. Day (2008) extended Huberman’s 1993 study of career stages and identified six essential stages: 0–3 years—*commitment: support and challenge*, 4–7 years—*identity and efficacy in the classroom*, 8–15 years—*managing changes in role and identity: growing tensions and transitions*, 16–23 years—*work-life tensions: challenges to motivation and commitment*, 24–30 years—*challenges to sustaining motivation and* 31+ years—*sustaining/declining motivation, coping with change, looking to retire*. These six career stages correspond to experience rather than age. In the first stage, the focus is on developing self-efficacy in the classroom. Confidence and efficacy increase at each stage for the majority of teachers. In the latter stages, Day identified struggles with transitions, challenges with managing workload and juggling other commitments. At 8-15 years, 80 percent of the participants had some additional responsibilities. In the last stage, 46 percent of teachers were identified as losing motivation. However, career advancement was linked to

increased motivation and commitment.

Day (2008) also highlights the manner in which performativity agendas and continual monitoring affect teacher commitment and burn out. He foregrounds the emotional context of teachers' work and argues that teachers need to sustain commitment and resilience to be effective. Teachers in the latter career stages were more vulnerable to disengagement. It is pertinent to consider then the stage at which teachers embrace teacher leadership or are successful in gaining leadership roles. The lack of opportunity to lead formally and the time potential leaders may wait to be offered such positions means that potential leaders are lost to the profession (Matters, 2005). Teacher leadership in its various guises is a means of addressing this dissatisfaction and potentially engaging teachers in leadership early in their careers. Gibbs (1999) links empowerment to intrinsic motivation and participation in decision-making.

### **Teacher motivation and collegiality**

The need to address teacher status and subsequently teacher morale via extrinsic awards is not without its own complexities. Mackenzie (2007) found evidence that the bestowing of awards to recognize excellence, for example, added to the complexity of the micro politics within schools. Negative effects included resentment, apathy and jealousy on the part of those who were not recipients. Mackenzie's study of award and non award winning teachers in New South Wales found that state or national awards did not have the capacity to recognise sufficient of the nation's educators and consequently excellence awards did not have a significant impact on the profession. Just as Mackenzie found that the extent to which awards were viewed negatively was dependent on individual schools and their organizational culture, the same could be true

for leadership initiatives such as L3CT even though they have the ability to recognize considerably more teachers.

WA State School Teachers Union (SSTU) Goldfields executive, Lois Nagle, and SSTU delegate, Waerta Da Siva spoke out when the WA government announced in 2007 a plan to “select an executive class of teachers, offering them \$100, 000 salaries in an effort to address state wide shortages and an ageing workforce” (kalgornie.the west.com, 2007, para. 1). Nagle questioned the fact that the salary increase was for a select few: “What are they offering for the everyday teacher? Because I can tell you now there are very few level-three teachers in the Goldfields because it’s very hard to get out here” (2007, para. 5). Da Silva affirmed that there were probably less than five L3CT in the Goldfields region at the time and warned of professional jealousy, adding, “I don’t think I would want to share my ideas with a teacher that made that much more than me” (2007, para. 10).

The significance of organizational culture on the way in which extrinsic awards are viewed is not unexpected. Teacher collegiality or the social dimension to teaching has been linked to teacher motivation and wellbeing. Jarzabrowski (2002) argues that positive social interaction improves emotional wellbeing, which, in the longer term may result in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. This argument is based on the increased collaborative nature of teachers’ work and the notion that “collaboration is a sub set of collegiality” (Jarzabrowski, 2002, p. 2). Similarly, Zinn (1997) in her study into conditions that impede or support teacher leadership, found that in addition to self-motivation, teacher leaders were empowered when they had a network of friends in the workplace to support them and were appreciated for their work (1997, p. 9)

However, teaching is not necessarily a collegial practice. Barth (2007b, p. 19) argues that the primitive quality of the relationships among teachers is one impediment to the development of the teacher-leader in many schools. Yet these relationships are central to a teacher's working life. Hargreaves (1998) highlights the emotional labour of teaching and the impact of relationships with peers. For Hargreaves (2001), these relationships generate more emotion than classroom teaching. Hargreaves' 2001 study into the emotions of teaching that included interviews of 53 teachers in Ontario, Canada across a range of school types and sizes foregrounded the emotions of teaching or "the emotional geographies" of teachers (2001, p. 7). Emotions included professional geographies determined by the "definitions and norms of professionalism and political geographies determined by differences in power and status." The study identified four significant emotional aspects. The most frequently cited was recognition and appreciation by colleagues. The second was personal support and social acceptance and the third most frequently cited positive emotion was, "professional engagement and interaction among colleagues" (2001, p. 18).

Of particular interest to this study were Hargreaves' findings relating to trust and betrayal. Whilst trust was rarely flagged, its counterpart, betrayal was the strongest source of negative emotion for teachers. The fall-out of fear of betrayal was a lack of risk taking when it came to dealing with conflict. "Teachers avoided conflict with peers and in so doing insulated themselves from learning and constructive disagreement" (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 393). Examples of betrayal, including what was termed, 'competence betrayal' highlights the complexity of teachers' relationships with their peers as a source of affirmation and denial. Similarly Cardno, (2008) argues for all staff in a school to receive training in dilemma management so that there are productive conversations around contentious issues rather than avoidance.

The study of 17 teacher leaders by Lieberman & Miller (2007, p. 407) identified that the building of collegiality was a necessary but complicated process for teacher leaders. Collegiality building included building trust and rapport, managing the work and building skill and confidence in others. Effective teacher leaders were able to build collaborative structures in schools and were seen as being risk-takers in that they were not threatened by new ideas (Lieberman & Miller, 2007). Barth (2007b, p. 10) argues that, “something deep and powerful within school cultures seems to work against teacher leaders” and that, “In our society we are clearly uncomfortable claiming to be a leader and even more uncomfortable with those that claim to be leaders”. The egalitarian nature of teaching can also work against teacher leadership (Dempster et al, 2011). Frost (2008, p. 340) poses the question as to “whether teacher leadership is for the chosen few or whether can it be seen as a dimension of the role of any teacher?”

The notion of teaching as a social act rather than a set of technical descriptors requires an examination of the interactions and relationships within the school community. How are teacher leaders identified within an organization? The act of being a leader privileges the work of some individuals over others (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008). Related to this is the notion of othering. Individuals compare themselves with the space occupied by the other (Mockler & Sachs, 2006; Palfreyman, 2002). Similarly, De Fina (2006) foregrounds the relational process of identity or the concept of positioning where the definition or understanding of the self is a product of the process of opposition or differentiation. The “in groups and out groups are represented in text and talk by the pronouns, ‘us’ and ‘them’”(Van Dijk, 2006, p. 397). Any definition of teacher-leader then is dependent to some extent on those that are not. Sachs (1999, p. 5) argues that identity is continually negotiated and that a fixed idea of teacher professional identity becomes a mechanism by which teachers can be controlled.

## **Teacher Leadership in this Study**

If the leadership torch is being passed to teachers, it is necessary to define teacher leadership and articulate what teacher leadership has to offer. It has been demonstrated that any definition of teacher leadership is largely dependent on which of the ideological positions is favoured and that these positions and their accompanying discourses overlap. Producing a definition of teacher leadership is complex. For some it is questionable whether or not teacher leadership represents a real change in school leadership, as opposed to being “simply reconstituted professional development” (Muijs & Harris 2003, p. 438).

In the context of this study, teacher leadership is fundamentally different from administrative or managerial concepts of leadership (Wynn, 2002). The teacher leader is not necessarily invested with a title (Donaldson, 2007). Teacher leadership then in this study is defined to some extent by articulating what it is not. Teacher leadership is not about to being co-opted into assisting with managerial tasks. To assess the extent to which teachers are leading, it is pertinent to distinguish between leadership and management. Management is often associated with the corporate culture and increased measures of surveillance and control (Blackmore, 1999; Gunter, McGregor & Gunter, 2001). Corporate culture is seen to alienate classroom teachers, in that values associated with teaching and learning are marginalised (Nichols & Parsons, 2011; O’Brien & Down, 2002). Management is about results. The devolution of management to schools and the creation of the ‘self-managing school’, means that management is now everybody’s business and is seen to de-professionalise teaching (Davis, 2007).

The impact of managerialism is that teachers are cynical about the rhetoric of “teachers as leaders” and are apt to view it as a means of burdening them with even

more administrative tasks. This could be viewed as another example of managers, “faxing the crisis down the line” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 10). Similarly, Gunter et al (2001, p. 27) argue that participative or distributed leadership may even be detrimental to teachers and pedagogy because it diverts teachers from the learning process. Some teachers are diverted into undertaking leadership tasks because they see it as the only means by which they can gain professional recognition (O’Brien and Down, 2002). Malen (1999, p. 214) uses the term ‘authentic participation’ to distinguish between genuine opportunities for teachers to participate in shared governance and practices in schools and those that give the appearance of teacher participation. Genuine teacher leadership is not preparing teachers for a pseudo-administrative role (Dempster et al, 2011).

Leadership in this study then is not the same as managerialism. Leadership is paradoxical. Leaders move beyond operational matters and into the territory of vision making and yet invariably they are good managers. Leadership is about teachers working in collaboration with principals to build capacity and achieve the desired outcome for the school (Andrews & Lewis, 2004). Leaders make decisions. Thus, leadership for teachers is about making decisions that impact on curriculum and pedagogy to achieve improved outcomes for students beyond the boundaries of his or her own classroom.

Harris and Muijs (2003, p. 3) highlight collective leadership and construct teacher leadership as having three main areas of activity. The first area is the leadership of other teachers where the teacher leader is engaged in a coaching or mentoring role. The second area of activity is the leading of specific working groups to improve teaching and learning. The third activity is pedagogical leadership, where the teacher leader is engaged in the development and modelling of pedagogy. Harris and Muijs

argue that these teachers are foremost, “expert teachers” who spend the majority of their time in the classroom but take on leadership roles as required. They do not see these teachers as having a formal leadership role but view leadership as, “more a form of agency where teachers are empowered to lead development work that impacts directly upon the quality of teaching and learning” (2003, p. 3).

Similarly, Harrison and Killion (2007) identify ten roles for teacher leaders: *Resource Provider; Instructional Specialist; Curriculum Specialist; Classroom Supporter; Learning Facilitator; Mentor; School leader; Data Coach; School leader;* and *Catalyst for Change*. The roles are equated with being an expert teacher and using expertise to support and coach peers. *School leader* is seen as a distinct category where the teacher has a role on a committee such as a school improvement team. The notion of teachers as change agents is also foregrounded in many of these roles. These researchers also believe that teachers exhibit leadership in multiple and sometimes overlapping ways (Harrison & Killion, 2007).

There is a rough-hewn typology of teacher leaders (Frost & Harris, 2003, p. 480). The typology includes those with designated leadership roles, such as lead teacher or middle manager, for example, subject Heads of Departments, those who have been allocated a mentoring role of other teachers and those who have assumed an informal leadership role. The informal role can be of the teacher’s own initiative, as opposed to a delegated role. The potential for all teachers to be leaders is foregrounded by this typology. In addition, Frost and Harris argue for the “importance of distinguishing between those activities that are described as leadership by others and those activities that are planned and exercised deliberately by teachers (2003, p. 483).



### **Parallel or distributed leadership**

In practice, it is expected that there will be evidence of parallel leadership or distributed leadership where teachers work collaboratively with principals and senior administrators, in ways that are different and yet complementary (Andrews & Lewis, 2004). Spillane (2005) foregrounds the notion of distributed leadership as a result of the interactions of leaders in a school and highlights the importance of interdependency. In this model of transformational leadership, there is also a clear emphasis on community involvement (Crowther et al, 2007).

The work of Andrews and Crowther (2002) is influential in the context of Australian schools. For these researchers, parallel or distributed leadership has three characteristics: mutual trust; a development of shared purpose; and individual expression. Andrews and Crowther highlight the term parallelism and liken the characteristics of this concept in education to the same concept in contexts such as far ranging as mathematics, philosophy and biology. This parallel leadership is contextual and reflects the diversity of schools and the ideologies and personal qualities of individual educators. Their research was conducted in four distinct phases. Phase Three of the study focused on the organizational dynamics of nine schools across Australia that had demonstrated improved student outcomes as a result of school-based reform. The researchers found that in all nine phase three case studies, parallel leadership encompassed three distinct qualities: mutual trust and respect; a sense of shared directionality; and allowance for individual expression.

The research undertaken in Queensland in conjunction with the *Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievements in Schools* (IDEAS project), which has gathered momentum across Australia, is used to validate this model of teacher leadership (Andrews & Lewis, 2004). Crowther and colleagues (2007, p. 57) provide

the following definition of teacher leadership, “Teacher leadership facilitates principled action to achieve whole-school success. It applies the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth and adults. And it contributes to long-term enhanced quality of community life”. Similarly the *Leadership for Organisational Learning and Student Outcomes project* (LOLSO) demonstrates how leadership contributes to the stimulation of organisational learning and how the effects of leadership and organisational learning impact on student outcomes (Silins & Mulford, 2000).

One of the four key dimensions identified in learning organisations was the extent to which teachers participate in decision-making. Again teacher leadership is seen as having a whole of school focus, where teachers make decisions beyond their classrooms. The teacher as leader contributes to school reform rather than executes it (Dempster et al, 2003). Equally significant was principal support for teachers. Interestingly, this project found that teacher leadership was more apparent in schools with lower SES students. The increased challenges experienced in these schools necessitate greater autonomy for making decisions.

### **Nurturing and Sustaining Teacher Leadership**

If teacher leadership has so much promise, why don't we see more of it? Cook and Gallagher (2003) evaluated the Teachers as Leaders Framework and argued that the most significant of the five premises of teacher leadership is that it can be nurtured. Moreover, they evoke the sleeping giant metaphor first proposed by Katzenberg and Moller (2001) and suggest that it is a lack of nurture that keeps the giant asleep. Much of their study is concerned with highlighting, through the use of a variety of metaphors, the ways in which principals can nurture collaborative leadership. The role of the

principal as a nurturer of teacher leadership is also fore-grounded in the work of Crowther and colleagues (2007).

If teacher leadership can be nurtured, it can also be impeded. The failure to attract more participants is attributed to work conditions, the lack of time, the regime of standardised tests and the criticism of fellow teachers (Barth, 2007b). The negativity of peers in particular is highlighted as a constraining factor in the sustainment of teacher leadership.

“If they can get by past the sirens of time, tests and tight budgets, their reward is the Scylla and Charybdis of fellow teachers and administrators who, together, wield an immense power to extinguish a teacher’s involvement in school leadership” (Barth, 2007b, p. 17).

Once again, the emotional dimension of teaching and the significance of collegiality is highlighted. Barth’s study of Rhode Island teachers demonstrated the need for teacher leaders to overcome inertia, become risk taking and develop the interpersonal skills that such leadership requires. In the same vein, Zinn (1997) argues the importance of supportive principals and other administrators for their capacity to support teacher leaders verbally to create new opportunities to lead and remove barriers to leadership. Specific barriers identified by Zinn (1997) included inconsistent administrative support and poorly defined leadership roles in addition to expected barriers such as the lack of time and overwork.

Kermit and colleagues (2000) argue that efforts to involve teachers in decision-making and school leadership have met with little success. In an article that targets secondary principals, the authors highlight strategies principals can employ to assist teachers to overcome common obstacles. According to these researchers, the fact that teachers are not taught leadership skills is the obstacle. Kermit and colleagues also

contend that teachers who want to be leaders must be willing to take risks. Principals are encouraged to define teacher leadership for teachers and to help them develop leadership skills. Interestingly, these researchers also foreground the significance of power in leadership and highlight this as a potential problem for teacher leaders. They argue that, “preparation for teacher leadership should include study of the use and abuse of power and discussion about the proper application of power for effective leadership” (Kermit et al, 2000, p. 4). Similarly, Harris and Muijs (2003, p. 5) argue that, “... for teacher leadership to become embedded, heads will therefore need to become ‘leaders of leaders’ striving to develop a relationship of trust with staff, and encouraging leadership and autonomy throughout the school”. They argue that teacher leaders need to be given time, empowerment and opportunity.

In the Australian context, Cranston & Ehrich (2009, p. 16) highlight the complexity of the dynamics of school management teams (SMTs) in particular, “the political nature of SMTs and their susceptibility to internal conflict, individual group manipulation, defensive behavior and power struggles”. These researchers argue that not all micro-politics are negative tactics, but understanding micro-politics will help team members. They also highlight the characteristics of effective teams. Effective teams are constructed as having a shared goal, clear vision and defined roles (Cranston & Ehrich, 2009). Also in the Australian context, Dawson (2011, p. 1) reports the experience of teachers who embraced leadership roles as part of the IDEAS process and argues that when these experienced teachers, “were provided with leadership opportunities and with an explicit teacher leadership framework they were able to learn, adapt and begin to incorporate leadership roles into their perceptions of their work as teachers.” Dawson highlights the significance of principals’ support as a means of giving clarity to teacher leadership roles. According to Dawson, teacher leaders

experience greater confidence and less conflict with peers when there is greater understanding about their leadership role.

Dawson, like Zinn (1997) highlights the importance of teacher leaders having a clearly defined work role so that their colleagues know what the teacher does. The lack of a clearly defined role is considered a major challenge. Dawson argues that, the explicit use of a 'conceptual framework for teacher leadership' has increased staff familiarity with the concept of teacher leadership. This results in teachers associating leadership with their work as teachers. Furthermore, the use of an explicit leadership framework legitimises teacher leaders and increases opportunities for teachers to embrace leadership as a dimension of their work.

### **Approaches to Examining Teacher Leadership**

The position I have taken in the examination of teacher leadership is underpinned by my ideological position, principally the recognition of multiple truths and the desire to describe the experience of teacher leadership in WA. The critical approach which draws on the social sciences for techniques to analyse power structures is also appealing because it is emancipatory and is concerned with "revealing social injustice and the oppression of established power structures" (Gunter, 2001, p. 95). Conversely, leadership research that presents teachers' stories, as a form of narrative biography, can be seen as occupying the humanist position and are insightful as to the reality of teaching (O'Brien & Down, 2002). The argument that this type of study is "tolerated so that case studies can be 'cherry picked' to validate national standards" is thought provoking (Gunter, 2001, p. 96). Bullough (2008, p. 11) argues that there are two lenses, narrative and paradigmatic, through which teacher stories are told. The first

is essentially the telling of stories in the biographical sense whilst the second involves identifying patterns and drawing conclusions.

The instrumental position links leadership strategies and particular models of leadership to improved organisational outcomes whereas the scientific position seeks to measure the effects of leaders on “follower behaviours, functions, emotions and on student outcomes” (Gunter, 2001, p. 95). For Gunter, it is the instrumental and scientific positions that are privileged by western democracies in the construction of official policy documents relating to competency frameworks. If the humanist position is about capturing the complexity of teachers’ work, the critical terrain is about challenging the common view. These studies politicize the question of leadership and problematize language and beliefs. Given that teacher leadership overturns traditional notions of positional authority, I deemed this critical stance more appropriate for this investigation.

### **Chapter Summary**

I have demonstrated that teacher leadership is a widely used term that needs to be understood in context and belongs to a number of discourses. These discourses are global and respond to the issues of teacher recruitment, retention and status as well as notions of quality with respect to teachers and teaching. For me, these are competing discourses of deficit and empowerment. In all of these discourses, teacher leadership is constructed as having enormous potential to positively shape schools and reinvigorate the profession. However, the extent to which these discourses promote and sustain teacher leadership is widely contested and is largely dependent on the researcher’s ideological position. My review of the teacher leadership literature affirms that an investigation into the enactment of teacher leadership requires an examination of the

way in which such discourses reveal and shape the formation of professional identities and influence the work of the teacher leader.

There are compelling arguments that link transformational and distributed leadership to improved student outcomes. In these examples, teacher leadership is equated with genuine participation in school-decision-making, authentic pedagogy, school wide practices and engagement with the wider community. These models recognize the power of individual teachers to shape meaning for students and whole communities. Improved outcomes for students and schools are directly linked to increased democracy. The ‘teachers as leaders framework’, offers a model that can be used to evaluate the extent to which teacher leadership is authentic. Key components of this framework include: school wide approaches, the participation of the wider community and a strong sense of advocacy for those stakeholders who are marginalized. In this model, teachers operating as leaders have autonomy and a shared responsibility for enacting pedagogical change for a better world. There is also an element of risk taking and challenging the status quo.

The context of the individual school site has significant bearing on the nature of teacher leadership and the extent to which it is nurtured and sustained. The Principal is a key determiner of the success of teacher leadership initiatives, but the power to promote or impede teacher leadership also extends to the school’s management team and the wider teaching community. Collegiality and peer support for the teacher leader is related to teacher morale, self-efficacy and motivation to lead. Conversely, teacher leadership is viewed as impeded by a lack of collegial support, the absence of a clearly articulated role for the teacher leader and the lack of a genuine opportunity to lead. Teachers need to be given the opportunity to gain leadership skills.

Teacher leadership remains a key element in policies aimed at recruiting and

retaining quality teachers. These policies are underpinned by the belief that increased professionalism and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for demonstrating expert teaching and leading will address the issues of teacher burn out and disengagement. “As a response to job stress and related to a sense of meaninglessness and powerlessness, burnout is a malady of human service professionals who are denied professional autonomy, status, and respect” (Dworkin, 2001, p. 77). To some extent, the achievement of authentic teacher leadership not only needs change in the mindset of those governing schools but also a more activist teaching profession that defines for itself the profession and the practices of teacher leadership. It could be argued that if teacher leadership does not actually result in a more distributed leadership and rewarding experience for classroom teachers, but rather in an intensification of their work, teacher leadership becomes another weapon to wield against teachers.



## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods**

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology that informs this study and the methods employed to interrogate the experience of teacher-leadership in Western Australian DoE schools. I foreground my theoretical lens to orientate the reader and assist them to contextualise my choice of methodology and methods. I present the rationale that underpins my decision-making with respect to the choice of L3CT program as an initiative to study, the conceptual framework and the specific methods chosen, including the prominence given to discourse in the search for meaning. Discussion encompasses research design, sampling and the techniques used to analyse and present data. I demonstrate how these choices both directed the course of the investigation and evolved in response to the investigation. The chapter is in part reflective, allowing me the opportunity to consider my choices at each stage and then review the impact of these choices.

### **Methodology**

My epistemology or belief in how subjective knowledge is understood (Ernest, 1995) has shaped my methodology and methods. While my study is informed by the literature on teacher leadership, it does not seek to validate any particular philosophical position or theory about teacher leadership. My study instead foregrounds the experience of teacher leaders. I aimed to gain insight into the nature of teacher

leadership in DoE schools, that is, to gauge the extent to which the L3CT program engenders teacher leadership. Consequently the study does not set out to test a hypothesis and is shaped by the recognition that there are multiple realities (Lather, 2006). Therefore my study can be viewed as being located within an interpretive paradigm, in that there is a desire to understand both the “lived experience” and the way in which knowledge is socially constructed and shared by a community (VanDijk, 2011). This positioning necessitated qualitative methods that would allow for an investigation of how a particular social world is interpreted or constructed by the people involved (Williamson, Shauder, Wright & Stockfield, 2002).

However I initially grappled to articulate an epistemology. The difficulty in articulating a particular paradigm lies in the fact that paradigms are both “connected to others and contested” (Schram, 2003, p. 33). Therefore while I make a connection to the interpretive paradigm, I acknowledge that this study draws on a number of poststructuralist influences. Influences include discourse analysis and deconstruction which whilst interpretive are also techniques that are often connected with a critical paradigm. My critical leanings, and strong belief in the centrality of language, position me to privilege qualitative research, principally for its ability to examine multiple truths. This occurs by virtue of the fact that respondents are less constrained in their responses and their elaborations can essentially direct some of the enquiry. Whilst I am framing the questions, I am not limiting their response (Patton, 2002). I also want to work with the thick rich description that qualitative research can elicit. I am attracted to working with words rather than numbers.

The practice of teacher leadership is in DoE schools shaped by the discourse of teacher quality. “Discourses dominant in an historical period and a geographical location determine what counts as true, important or relevant...” (CherryHolmes, 1998,

p. 35). I am interested in how the identity of the L3CT is shaped by the cumulative cultural narrative of what it means to be an accomplished teacher and a teacher leader. The use of the term narrative is a reminder of the notion that we live storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The teachers in this study all contribute to the larger narrative of what it means to be a teacher leader. My belief in language as the way of knowing necessitates that close attention is paid to language in unlocking this cultural narrative. The understanding that language is political (Gee, 2001) underpins my choice of discourse analysis. In examining discourse, it should be possible to identify competing discourses, including the dominant discourse of teacher leadership within the L3CT initiative.

Despite this bias towards working with words, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed, a decision based on pragmatism to better understand the research problem (Creswell, 2008). To access the range of data relevant to the research questions, given the size of the sample, the use of quantitative questions to collect demographic data and teacher responses to belief statements about leadership was required. However the gathering of quantitative data does provide some triangulation or a means of convergent reflexivity (Lather, 2006). To satisfy my desire to include “teacher voice” as much as possible and to conduct discourse analysis, qualitative data were collected. My belief in the subjectivity of knowledge explains the considerable weight that has been given to qualitative data in this study.

### **The researcher’s perspective**

The theoretical orientation of the researcher is a key element in the research design. My belief in the complex and shifting nature of meaning (Pillow, 2003) shapes my choice of methodology and methods. I have a fierce loyalty to the profession of

teaching and a strong belief in the agency of teachers that underpins my desire to hear the voices of teachers (Acker, 1995) and give them prominence in my study. This loyalty accounts for my fondness for the use of direct quotes from the qualitative data as a means of integrating teachers' voices. I also acknowledge the school as a micro-political site (O'Neill, 2000; Strachan, 1999; Smyth, 1999). This awareness has shaped my desire to employ discourse analysis to identify these often competing discourses.

Whilst a researcher's choice is never naïve (Caelli, Ray & Mill, 2003, p. 10), I am conscious that I have selected a subject close to me in time and place (Carpenter, 1999). My extensive leadership experience in schools has influenced both my subject matter and my research design. I need to satisfy myself and the reader that my own experiences, although they have shaped my choice of study, have not compromised my study. I am doing what Edwards (2002, p. 72) terms "deep insider research to which the researcher brings knowledge, concerning history and cultures and an awareness of body language, semiotics and slogans operating within the cultural norms of the organisation or group." I have a shared history with this group and in reading teacher accounts identify with particular situations and experiences. It is not possible or even desirable to put aside my contextual knowledge and understanding of school operations when analysing the data on teacher leadership. I acknowledge that my research is not and cannot be entirely separate from my experiences (Ramazangolu & Holland, 2002).

Studying the profession to which you belong brings particular challenges. Bruni (2002, p. 30) highlights the "crisis of visibility" and the need to deconstruct the self. Similarly Pillow (2003, p. 176) foregrounds the need for attention to researcher subjectivity and how the researcher needs to ask how who they are and where they have been have affected data collection and analysis. Knowing oneself means understanding how the self is located historically and within the tensions of the discourses (Pillow,

2003). Whilst there is a danger of over familiarity, there is also the opportunity for greater insight or sensitivity to the subject that might not be available to an outside researcher (Le Gallais, 2003, p. 2). To advance my credibility, I aim to maintain what Pillow terms a questioning voice. Choosing to write my account in the first person assists me to be transparent about my role in the enquiry (Patton, 2002) and as much as possible, I will indicate for the reader the points at which my decision-making is influenced by my prior knowledge or experience.

### **Research Design**

I expected that teacher leadership in schools would be varied and largely context specific. In WA, teachers work in many different contexts with respect to the size, location and the organisation of their schools. The need to capture this diversity, as well as the breadth of teacher leadership, was a key element in the choice of research design.

### **Research questions**

In mapping teacher leadership, the research questions that inform this investigation are:

1. Who are the teacher leaders?
2. How is teacher leadership engendered?
3. What expectations are there of teacher leaders?
4. What specific roles/duties L3CT undertake?
5. To what extent does this count as leadership work?
6. What expectations do L3CT have of leadership?

### **Selecting a population**

One of the first decisions was choosing a population and site(s) to study. Having established that teacher leadership is a broad term and in practice takes many forms in the context of schools in WA, I needed to define the practice of teacher leadership in a way that was broad enough to capture the diversity of the work. Consequently, the L3CT program was selected for close study because of the program's specific requirement for teachers to demonstrate leadership. Whilst teacher leadership does not reside solely in the L3CT program, these teachers are expected to be leaders in their schools. DoE's L3CT guidelines (DET, 2004b) specifically cite leadership as a key component. Teachers are required to demonstrate leadership in terms of their pedagogical practices and in terms of reaching beyond their classroom to form effective and collaborative partnerships with other teachers, parents and the wider community. To achieve the L3CT classification, teachers need to demonstrate evidence of this wider leadership practice.

The cohort of L3CT teachers is an identifiable group of teachers who are working as leaders in DoE schools. The L3CT is a specific sub-group of the teaching workforce, linked to a formalised program and an industrial award (Daniels, 2009). However the group cannot be viewed as homogenous. Within the L3CT population there is a variety of contexts, experiences and viewpoints. Therefore, it is also reasonable to expect that the 700+ L3CT working across the state, in both the primary and secondary sectors, would be somewhat representative of the diversity of teachers working as leaders overall.

### *The Sample*

All 768 L3CT registered on the Department of Education's database were selected for the study. The database included those L3CT who received this award in the first cohort in 1998, up until those who were recipients in 2007 (selected in 2006). The population included both genders and varying ages and levels of teaching experience, both primary and secondary sectors, as well as teachers in country and metropolitan settings. By selecting to survey the entire population of L3CT, I hoped that the study would capture the scope of their work and identify contextual elements in the practice of teacher leadership. It would be possible, for example, to compare working as an L3CT in a large metropolitan secondary school with working as an L3CT primary teacher in a rural setting to identify how different contexts impacted on the role. Similarly, the inclusion of all L3CTs on DoE's database allowed for the identification of patterns that related to gender and length of service. With respect to gender, the two key questions were whether or not L3CT is largely a female phenomenon (Limerick & Anderson, 1999) and whether or not gender makes a difference in the determination of the sort of work undertaken by teacher leaders, or the conditions under which the work is performed. My own gender and experiences in schools or self-location (Pillow, 2003) positions me to interrogate this aspect of leadership.

In the conceptual stages of the research, I considered a form of purposeful sampling where I would select cohorts of interest, such as the initial cohort selected in 1997 and compare their role in schools with a more recent cohort. The initial cohort is of particular interest because the L3CT program has evolved significantly over the last decade in terms of the selection process (DET, 2005; Jasman, 1998), as has the culture of schools, particularly with respect to the discourse on teacher leadership. The initial L3CT cohort is also interesting in terms of examining the career trajectory of the L3CT.

What proportion of these teachers, for example, have remained in schools as teacher leaders and what proportion have been promoted to administration? However this form of sampling had the obvious limitation of possibly failing to capture the diversity of the roles. There would also be less transferability of the findings to the teaching population at large. Consequently, the whole population of L3CT was selected for study.

### **Methods for Gathering Data**

As this study involves an examination of some of the possibly competing discourses to determine their impact and identify any slippage between policy and practice, there is a need to compare the different sources of information about teacher leadership. Consequently, there are two sources of data. The primary source of data is the survey of L3CTs working in DoE schools that was designed to interrogate the experience of L3CT leadership. The second source of data is the DoE documentation pertaining to the L3CT program. There is a very obvious binary here between what would be considered “the official discourse” pertaining to the role of the L3CT as leaders and the discourse relating to the “lived experience” of teacher leaders. Therefore qualitative document analysis of policy relating to teacher leadership is vital to my study. The comparison of policy with the practice of leadership allows for an investigation of the expectations of, the employer, DoE and the teacher and the variance between expectation and actuality.

#### **The survey**

Approval was received from Murdoch University’s Human Research Ethics Committee. In addition to fulfilling the university’s ethics requirements, permission was sought from the Director General of Education to conduct research in WA schools.



Following approval, DoE was approached for access to the L3CT database. The L3CT project officer, acting essentially as the gatekeeper with whom I would negotiate, (Patton, 2002), advised me that the database was sensitive information and, as such, could not be released to the researcher. Whilst concerns were not raised about the research or design of the study, there was a concern that these teachers could be targeted or poached by other employers, such as the Independent Schools if the database was inadvertently made public. However Department personnel agreed to mail out the surveys on the behalf of the research team.

One of the frustrations at the outset was the fact the DoE personnel were unable to determine the accuracy of the database which had the last recorded address for each L3CT teacher. Accuracy was dependent on teachers who had relocated to update the changed address on the system. Whilst it could be assumed that teachers who were currently on the DoE payroll would have accurate addresses in the data base, it was acknowledged that some L3CT would have resigned, retired or moved address recently and not updated their contact details. This would obviously affect the survey's return rate, but it was reasoned that those on the current database were likely to be currently working as L3CT in DoE schools.

There was also some concern on my part that the mail out by DoE could negatively affect the outcome of the study, particularly the return rate of the survey. Based on personal experience in schools, teachers are presented daily with a heavy load of paper work and are often asked to complete surveys on a range of subjects within their school setting and as required by their employer. In addition, the survey occurred during an industrial campaign where there was a ban on certain "out of hours" activities such as, excursions and additional meetings. My concern regarding the uptake of the

survey was one example of how my insider knowledge directed some of my choices, in particular the need to ensure the survey was user friendly.

My concerns were in part alleviated by the fact that the surveys were mailed to the home address recorded for the teacher in the database. As a result, teachers could read the document at their leisure and hopefully see it as separate from their work in schools. It would be less likely to be mislaid among the multitude of documents handled each day in the course of a teacher's duty. To further encourage participation, contact was made with the president of the L3CT association who agreed to publicise the study in the association's newsletter. Only one respondent communicated his concern about being asked to complete a survey during the industrial campaign.

Close attention was also paid to the design of the questionnaire to maximise its visual appeal to engage participants. The university logo was prominent and stylistic devices such as colour and font were used to draw attention. The survey was designed so that the questions fit onto a one-page document printed back and front and the covering letter (Appendix A) was a single page. The idea here was to avoid the appearance of a dense or bulky document that would appear time consuming to complete. The decision with respect to types of questions and the balance of closed and open questions was underpinned by the desire to make the task relatively straightforward for respondents.

### **Survey design**

The survey (Appendix B) comprises of both closed and open questions. The first section of the survey was designed to collect relevant demographic data relating to gender, age, and level of teaching experience. It also classified teachers according to their current employment, that is, primary, secondary or other and identified whether the

teacher worked in a metropolitan or rural school. These closed questions were designed to examine the relationship between age, gender and location with the type of work undertaken as teacher leaders, the level of autonomy experienced and the levels of satisfaction with the L3CT role. It was possible to compare the impact of these variables on the respondents' beliefs about the role of L3CT and identify particular cohorts of interest.

In view of the fact that some of the respondents on the data base may have been promoted to administrative positions, respondents were also asked whether they were still working as L3CT and, if not, requested to specify their current role/classification. Those no longer working as L3CT would provide some insight into the career trajectories of these teacher leaders. I decided that it would be beneficial to identify L3CTs who had been promoted to administrative roles within DoE and possibly why they may have sought a different sort of leadership role. Career trajectories of the L3CT are interesting to interrogate because the impetus behind the L3CT initiative is the retention of experienced and exemplary teachers in the classroom (Jasman, 2001).

Key purposes of the study were to ascertain the type of work undertaken by the L3CT as part of their role and examine the extent to which this could be deemed leadership work. Consequently, the survey allowed for an investigation of the work undertaken by these teachers. The second section of the survey used a Likert scale to interrogate the work of these teacher leaders. The aim in this section was to discover how strongly the respondents agreed or disagreed with statements that related to the nature and organisation of their work in schools. The questions in this section of the survey were derived from the literature on teachers as leaders (Crowther et al, 2002). Several of the survey questions targeted the level of satisfaction with the role with respect to career enhancement and role expectation.

Despite the fact that this study was not an evaluation of the L3CT project or its selection process, a question about the selection process was included in the survey (See Appendix B, Question 13). The selection process was deemed important because of the fact that most of the controversy about L3CT program surrounded the selection process. It seemed appropriate to gauge the strength of feeling about the process, as dissatisfaction with the selection process may have some bearing on the way in which the teachers viewed their subsequent roles. The inclusion of the selection process allowed for a comparison between the level of satisfaction with the selection process and the level of satisfaction with the L3CT role.

The third section of the survey consisted of three questions, two of which were open-ended (Questions 17 and 18). They were designed to map the scope of the work and allow respondents an opportunity to elaborate on their L3CT role and comment on how it was different from their work prior to gaining L3CT. The function of these open-ended questions was to “enable the researcher to understand and capture the view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire components” (Patton, 2002, p. 21). Respondents were guided but not limited to the confines of the question and could choose to make additional observations that they felt were relevant. In this way, the conversation about teacher leadership was extended.

The final question of the survey was a closed question (Question 19) that asked respondents whether or not they believed L3CT assisted them to engage in leadership. These data were used in conjunction with the information provided in the open-ended questions to collect information about the extent to which the L3CT engenders leadership in classroom teachers. Approximately 30 percent of respondents added

qualitative detail in response to this question. In Chapter 5, qualitative data from these responses are analysed with data from the open-ended questions.

The study was originally conceived in two parts. The first part was to be a survey that employed both quantitative and qualitative questions. The survey was chosen as a data collection instrument largely because of the breadth of coverage that this method makes possible (Kelley, Clark, Brown & Sitzia, 2003). The second part would be a follow-up interview of a selected number of teachers to discuss at length the L3CT role. Teachers were asked to nominate their willingness to participate in a follow up interview as part of the survey. However a decision was made after an initial analysis of the data collected by the survey, that the planned interviews were not necessary. Largely this was determined because of the unexpectedly high volume and quality of data collected in the qualitative section of the survey. The data were rich in detail with respect to the work carried out by L3CT, their attitudes towards this work, the organization at a site level and the perception of the L3CT role by others. The open-ended survey questions that allowed teachers to describe their work as teacher leaders gave teachers an opportunity to foreground particular experiences and to some extent direct the research. Extensive data were collected from responses to these questions. In addition to identifying the key roles undertaken by the L3CT, these open-ended questions provided rich detail and an opportunity to some extent to deconstruct the discourse of teacher leadership. The strong belief that the school is a micro political site underpinned my decision to examine this binary.

The assumption that face to face interviewing necessarily equates with a more personalised candid response is also subject to debate. It has been argued that the close proximity of the researcher and the unfamiliarity of the situation may be counter to freedom of expression. The influence of the location of the interview and who is

present needs to be acknowledged (Partington, 2001). Elwood and Martin (2000, p. 651) argue that the interview site itself produces “micro geographies” of spatial relations and meaning where multiple scales of social relations intersect in the research interview. The extent to which many respondents gave additional detail and wrote with passion about the subject reinforced the value of the researcher being one step removed. In these responses the teachers were determining what aspects of their work and situation they felt had weight. In this way, they contributed to how the narrative was shaped.

### **Data Analysis**

I determined that the two key sources of information were the survey data and DoE’s L3CT policy and supporting documentation. Having identified these sources, the next stage involved mapping the research questions and identifying the most appropriate source of data and means of analysis. In some instances, a question is analysed using both quantitative and qualitative data. A number of different processes were employed. The processes and techniques involved will be described in detail later in this chapter. Presented on the following page, Table 2: *Data Sources and Methods of Analysis* sets out the data sources, links to the research questions and the selected methods for data analysis.

Table 2

*Data Sources and Methods of Analysis*

Questions	Data Source	Data Analysis
Who are our L3CT teacher leaders?	Work force statistics provided by DoE Demographic data collected from survey: Questions 1-8	<b>Quantitative</b> Document analysis Statistical analysis to determine the importance of gender, age, level of experience and setting
How might the L3CT program engender leadership? What is expected of L3CT in terms of leadership?	Documentation from DoE: • Competency framework for teachers • L3CT Guide	<b>Qualitative</b> Discourse analysis. Triangulation with survey data to determine the tensions between: • Policy and practice • Expectation and experience
What specific roles / duties do L3CT undertake?	Responses to survey: Questions 17-19.	<b>Qualitative</b> Content analysis Discourse analysis
To what extent does this work count as leadership?	Survey Questions 9-19 Survey Questions 17-19	<b>Quantitative</b> Statistical analysis
What expectations do L3CT have of leadership?		<b>Qualitative</b> Discourse analysis

**Analysis of quantitative data**

The quantitative data from the survey mapped the diversity of the L3CT population and the contexts in which they work. These data were analysed primarily to identify the characteristics of the L3CT and to identify whether or not demographic factors such as, age and gender were related to L3CTs' work and their beliefs about this

work. These data identified L3CTs, where they work and if they have moved to other roles. Quantitative data were gathered primarily to provide answers to quantitative questions (Muijs, 2011) and for their ability to capture the features of such a large population. However, quantitative data were also useful as a means of triangulation.

The statistical software program SPSS was used to enter all the data and develop an excel spreadsheet for ease of use. SPSS software was selected over other software as I had easy access to the program. SPSS is user friendly and compatible with windows operating systems, which partly explains its popularity (Muijs, 2011, p. 86). Statistical analysis allowed for the identification of groups of interest or cohorts and the relatively easy analysis of variables. This allowed for the comparison of these variables in terms of their significance with respect to the experience of teacher leadership. It was then possible to use the program to create graphs to visually display these data.

For the purpose of analysis, the quantitative data from Questions 10-16, which were designed to elicit belief statements about the L3CT role, were divided into two categories. The first category addressed the dimension of the actual work undertaken in terms of its organisation at a school level with respect to workload and the extent to which the teacher was autonomous or empowered to make choices about their role or had autonomy. The second category addressed the dimension of satisfaction with the role including the extent to which the role met the respondents' career aspirations. The responses to these questions were then categorised in terms of their level of agreement as either: Agreement, Non Agreement, and Unable to Rate or Missing. The number and percentage in each range were then charted within each of the two categories. The categorisation allowed for the comparison of responses to questions within a category and also across categories. Consequently, it was relatively simple to determine the



attitudes of subgroups towards their work and the extent to which these attitudes could be related to a particular dimension.

Whilst there are many sub groups within the L3CT population, analysis of the quantitative data highlighted four particular groups of interest. These were early career teachers, late career teachers, those no longer employed as L3CT and country teachers. The early career teacher was the smallest of these cohorts, comprising less than 10 per cent of the total sample. Each of these cohorts differed in various degrees from the total sample in aspects of their beliefs about L3CT and/or highlighted different aspects of the L3CT experience.

### **Analysis of qualitative data**

The qualitative data served two purposes. They extended the discussion of teacher leadership in practice by giving teachers the opportunity to “paint the picture”. Qualitative data also allowed the respondents to direct the discussion in some ways and in so doing, illuminate particular considerations that the researcher may have overlooked. Whilst the inclusion of the open-ended questions achieved the purpose of providing thick description and multiple voices, the analysis of the qualitative data posed some challenges.

A challenge was the volume of data generated by these open-ended questions. Another challenge lay in determining which tools should be employed to code the data. In the first instance, the method employed was what Patton (2002, p. 438) terms, “inductive analysis and creative synthesis beginning with an immersion in the details and specifics of data to describe patterns, themes and inter-relationships”. The inductive process involved verbatim transcribing of the data, and then constant reading and rereading in the search for meaningful patterns. During this reading process, key words

that suggested emerging patterns were highlighted and reflective notes were made. In these initial stages, I did not want to constrain the data by searching for predetermined signifiers. Instead I sought to remain open to emerging themes. In the examination of the open-ended survey data and the data collected from the written documents pertaining to L3CT both content analysis and discourse analysis were employed and blended. In this way, there was an eclectic approach to analyzing the data.

### *Content Analysis*

The content analysis employed at the initial sorting stage most resembles summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), where key words are identified and quantified. These key words were derived from the text itself but were also informed by studies highlighting, for example, the issues of teacher status, workload and authority (Blackmore, 1999; Mackenzie, 2007). Summative analysis can provide insights into how words are used. However, the findings from this approach are limited by their inattention to the broader meanings in the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

In my initial interrogation of the qualitative data, I tallied the frequency of mention of a specific role or responsibility. For example, in Question 17, teachers were asked to describe their role. It was evident, using summative analysis that the responsibilities undertaken by L3CT could be divided into categories. Here the categorisation was also informed by my own work in schools. As a result of this coding, it was possible to identify the percentage of teachers who had particular roles and whether contextual factors relating to age, gender and experience had any bearing on their allocated role or responsibility. As a means of examining distributed leadership, I also identified the frequency of reference to working in collaboration with others as a means of examining distributed leadership in practice. The categorization of

roles enabled mapping of the scope of the work of the L3CT so that the practice of leadership could be compared with policy documents and the literature on teacher leadership.

With respect to Question 18, the initial interrogation was to identify the percentage of respondents who believed that the nature of their work had changed since becoming a L3CT and to identify the ways it had changed. Similarly in Question 19, I counted the number of respondents who believed they engaged with leadership. Lupton (1992) distinguishes this content analysis from discourse analysis, which focuses on style and structure as well as the subject matter. Content analysis is in effect a form of quasi-statistical analysis. It facilitates the reduction of data. It also assisted me to contextualise the findings from the second stage of analysis, where discourse analysis was employed to explore in depth particular patterns or concerns that emerge in depth. Whilst useful for mapping the scope of work undertaken by teacher-leaders, content analysis cannot do justice to the richness of the data. It is, for example, unable to convey the depth of feeling of the L3CT that was evident towards their work.

The qualitative questions yielded a considerable amount of rich data pertaining to the experience of working as an L3CT on a specific site, the viewpoints of other staff on site towards L3CT and how that impacts on self-belief as well as other events and processes that affect the work of L3CT. Coding and analysis of such rich data is complex. I could not simply count the number of times a particular word or phrase had been employed. To do so is to ignore much of the contextual detail that gives these words their meaning. Whilst content analysis was useful for the organisation of much of this data, other techniques were required to interrogate the data more fully.

### *Discourse Analysis*

For almost all qualitative methods of research, language is at one and the same time subject and medium (Schmitt, 2005, p. 358). At this second stage, language was central to the investigation. In addition to the words chosen to add weight to the words, respondents used a range of stylistic devices including spacing, bolding, underscoring, capitalization and punctuation, such as the exclamation mark, to add weight to their words. These devices assisted in the construction of meaning. They revealed how a writer renders tone and emphasis in a text and imitates in a sense the dynamics of speech, whilst simultaneously using visual markers to draw attention to the statement. For the researcher, these words and their accompanying stylistic devices appeared more powerful and persuasive than the statistics. The use of stylistic devices had considerable impact. The following quotes illustrate the way in which punctuation and stylistic devices position the reader:

- The principal tells me to do ICT-I do ICT whether I like it or not! (66)
- Given my time again, I would have applied for a ‘Deputy’ position to side step the “Misuse of power” politics! I feel that the “System” has exploited my “WORK ETHIC” and PROFESSIONALISM by not making all Level 3 Teachers members of the School ADMIN TEAM! (108)

Consider the reduction of impact if the stylistic devices were removed from these statements. The tonal qualities that indicate depth of feeling would be lost. Therefore in the recording of data, the original punctuation and style of writing was maintained in the understanding that these are devices of argumentation.

Throughout the analysis process I aimed to engage in what Coffey, Holbrook & Atkinson (1996) describe as genuinely 'grounded' engagement with the data. At times,

the task seemed overwhelming both in terms of the amount of data and the multiple strands. Content analysis allowed me to group the data so that I had some semblance of order. The second stage of analysis involved the dissecting of these ‘chunks’, exploring the relationships between them and searching for meaningful patterns. In searching for patterns, I examined language more closely and moved beyond counting words. I employed discourse analysis to unlock the cultural narrative of what it means to be a teacher leader. Because I am questioning the extent to which normalising regimes impact on beliefs about teacher leadership, I am interested in patterning across texts (Luke, 1995). Therefore, through an examination of DoE documents or texts, I compared the official discourse of teacher leadership with the discourse of teachers.

Content analysis of documents pertaining to the L3CT was used to identify key features of official discourse. A comparison of different texts allowed for the identification of dominant images of teacher leaders and the interests that are served by these representations. I was interested to see if there was any evidence of what Smyth (1999, p. 1) calls the “discourses of resistance” or “teachers’ indigenous knowledge” as opposed to the discourses of competency and appraisal. Once again, the way in which texts, particularly authoritative texts such as policy documents positioned the reader was analysed (Thomas, 2005).

I employed what Luke (1995, p. 11) terms “critical discourse analysis to demonstrate how discourse and power are manifest in the everyday”. It was expected that this would raise issues relating to power and authority, including gender. Acker (1995, p. 137) argues that we should pay more attention to the “gender-divide because it is under-played in much of the literature”. It was expected that other variables such as age, class and ethnicity would also be relevant. Consideration of these factors allowed for a more in-depth investigation into who the leaders are and the extent to which power

regimes including those related to gender pertain to teacher leadership and the L3CT program.

In the examination of patterns, linguistic devices such as imagery, symbolism and repetition are valuable in the deconstruction of ideas about teacher leadership. I had envisaged that metaphor would be a useful tool. The analysis of metaphor is frequently employed as a tool for establishing patterns and themes. Identification and patterning of metaphor is revealing of particular discourses. Metaphor does not merely reveal ideology; it also shapes ideology (Groundwater-Smith, 1998). I was interested in interrogating the metaphor of the sleeping giant as an appropriate analogy and identifying alternative images of teacher leaders offered by teachers. Schmitt (2005) however cautions about reducing complex data to a single metaphor. Northcote and Fetherston (2006), foreground the influence of metaphor on educational practice and research. “Participants frequently used unprompted metaphorical language to express their beliefs about the concepts and processes associated with teaching or learning” (Northcote & Fetherston, 2006, p. 253).

Metaphor is an oft-used means of “reducing complex meaningful structures yielded by qualitative data into clearly structured patterns” (Schmitt, 2005, p. 360). Whilst metaphors are powerful and frequently employed in educational research, the use of metaphor also poses a challenge for the researcher. Schmitt (2005) cautions the researcher about the assumption that the subject employs metaphors consciously, when in fact they are often not, but instead are revealing of “unconscious metaphorical thinking patterns” (Schmitt, 2005, p. 360). In looking for metaphor, I also asked myself whether or not I was searching for particular metaphors that I expected would construct the world of the teacher-leader.

In my analysis, I could not limit my search to metaphor. As illustrated earlier in the discussion on the importance of stylistic devices, including punctuation and grammar, meaning in discourse is not only manifested in the figurative. In addition to exploring the choice of metaphor, I also needed to consider the choice of individual words. In particular I examined verbs and adjectives, as tools for conveying the experience. In comparing the discourse of the teacher with the official discourse of DoE policy, it was necessary to pay close attention to the use of verbs. A verb describes an action. The policy documents employ a number of verbs that specify which actions are expected of teacher leaders and of the L3CT. In the search for revealing discourse, I paid attention to the way in which the self as a teacher leader was constructed. In describing their role as an L3CT, a number of respondents referred to their perception of how others viewed them and how they viewed others. Others in this context were predominately teachers who were not L3CT and/or school administrators.

The Literature Review highlighted the relevance of the notion of othering to this investigation. The theory of othering comes from cultural theory and is usually associated with race and ethnic differences where discourse is used to marginalise those who are constructed as “other” (Palfreyman, 2002). The definition of self then is dependent on the other. Frequently, teacher identity and the discourse of teachers’ work in this study, is defined by comparison with the space inhabited by the other. For example one respondent commented: “I am doing “admin’s work but am not accorded the same status”.

At this more micro level of analysis, I wanted to identify which of these discourses was dominant. This does not mean merely resorting to quantifying qualitative data. Rather than view dominance in terms of numbers, it is necessary to consider the notion that a particular discourse may be more powerful or persuasive,

irrespective of whether it has the most subscribers. In deeming a discourse to be dominant, it is necessary to ask why this might be so and what interests might be served in the enacting of a specific social identity. I asked myself whether a particular discourse had more authority and whether or not this was context specific. Similarly, there was a need to explain which viewpoints or themes were signified by alternative discourses. I also needed to consider in this analysis, whether specific contexts gave rise to alternative discourses and whether or not these discourses were situated primarily in the individual or in the broader setting in which the individual operated. These questions underpinned my decision to map the discourses in such a way that their role in the larger narrative of teacher leadership could be explored. These investigations also deepened my understanding of the nature of teacher leadership and how it is engendered.

The mapping process required a rereading of data to determine which data should be included. Moreover, I also needed to address in this interrogation, my role as the receiver of what Gee (2001, p. 93) terms the reflexivity of language. Are particular discourses more resonant for me and why? Mindful of the need to deconstruct the self as a means of reflexivity (Pillow, 2003), in my analysis of the data, I needed to be explicit about my perspective and provide substantial evidence of the text being analysed so that the reader can evaluate my reasoning (Lupton, 1992). Data display then is very important in the data analyses. Consequently I constructed charts to display the key features of each discourse with the notion of linking these to particular themes. The overlapping of the lexicons could have been illustrated by using a Venn diagram. However, at this stage it was obvious that I would have to construct a means of capturing the bigger picture of this experience. As I sought appropriate methods for analysing and presenting data, my approach to the data evolved, becoming more



eclectic, I was grateful that my choice of an interpretive framework (Lather, 2006) allowed me this flexibility.

### *Narrative*

In dealing with the lexicon or diction of these discourses, I was working at the micro level, interrogating individual words. However these snippets of text belonged to a bigger story. Whilst my study is not narrative research as such, it became impossible to ignore the unfolding narrative of teacher leadership. Narrative is an increasingly popular tool for analyzing qualitative research and the way in which our communications are shaped and understood as stories (Riley & Hawe, 2005). “Narratives are important sense-making devices as people often encode into narratives the problems that concern them and their attempt to make sense or resolve these problems” Gee (2001, p. 135). Many of the respondents created a story about their life as an L3CT. My familiarity with literary theory and deconstruction positioned me to see narrative as a means of putting the pieces back together and of understanding how teacher professional identity is shaped (Cohen, 2010).

The narrative mapping in this study acknowledges what Boje and Rosile (2002, p. 316) refer to “interplot” that is the relationship between the production, distribution and consumption of stories. Consequently, to create my cultural narrative of teacher leadership, I turned to deconstruction tools to study on this macro level. In seeking to map the cultural narrative of teacher leadership, I aimed to identify key elements of the story, as well as demonstrate that the narrative is essentially made of many individual stories. Due to my personal context as a teacher, I also connected with narrative as a means of analyzing and organizing this data.

In the process of constructing a story map or narrative, I was influenced by Mockler's (2004) study of representations of teachers in public discourse that employed Boje's (2001) framework as a deconstruction tool. I found this framework useful for the identification of rebel voices and gaps and silences across the different texts.

Consequently at a macro level of analysis, I framed four key questions to unlock the narrative of teacher leadership:

1. In the larger narrative of teacher leadership whose is the dominant voice?
2. Whose interest does it serve?
3. Which rebel voices are present?
4. Whose voices have been silenced?

To answer these questions, I created a story map for the teacher leader. The map is a basic tool, similar to maps I employ in the classroom when teaching narrative analysis and is based on generic narrative conventions, that is: *Setting, Character, Plot* and *Theme*. The use of story mapping allows students to retell stories (ACARA, 2011). Stories are broken down into elements such as character, setting and plot to assist students to organize and understand the events in a story (Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen & Payton, 2002). In my study, the story map allowed for the deconstruction of the different discourses, including the official discourse, whilst simultaneously representing the larger narrative of teacher leadership. The work completed at the individual word or micro level of analysis was used to complete the story map and added nuance and tone to the narrative. The story map was also an efficient means to organise and present a vast amount of qualitative data. On the following page Table 3: *Narrative Conventions* sets out the narrative conventions and accompanying questions to demonstrate how these conventions were used to unlock narrative.

Table 3

*Narrative Conventions*

The Protagonist	Key Characters	Setting	Plot	Conflict	Themes
Teacher-leader Who am I?	Who else is in my story and which roles do I ascribe to them?	In which contexts do I work?	What do I do? What happens to me in my story?	What challenges do I face?	What are the concerns of my story?

**Synthesising the data**

Having settled on a way of organising and presenting the qualitative data, the challenge was to balance the quantitative and qualitative data. Ward (2007) argues that policy-makers often ignore the relevance of qualitative data because it is gendered as opposed to the hard science of numbers, which is often constructed as masculine. Again these comments had some resonance for me, as I am positioned to value words and perhaps privilege them over numbers. In my analysis, I am mindful of the persuasive nature of these words and the ability of individual respondents to provide compelling arguments to support their viewpoints to which I may well find myself drawn. The challenge lies in deciding the extent to which these compelling views are representative of the L3CT experience.

In the initial analysis of the qualitative data, the counting of words was a potential weapon to defend a position that I might take in my final analysis of key themes. I could fall back on this earlier stage as a means of persuasion. Whilst this has some merit, particularly for illustrating the extent to which a particular belief or position is representative in terms of qualitative research and discourse analysis in particular, it does not do justice to the data (Brace-Govern, 2002). If the strength of qualitative

research lies in its ability to widen the lens, then I need to be cautious about narrowing my focus based on positivist measurement.

In these deliberations, I considered the extent to which there was convergence with respect to groups of interest and their beliefs. The quantitative data, for example, identified four groups who diverged somewhat in their belief about the L3CT experience. It was important to consider whether or not the qualitative data illuminated these same groups and concerns. The quantitative data also illuminated particular beliefs about the role of L3CT. The qualitative data provides an opportunity to interrogate these beliefs and to see how they might belong to a larger narrative. As with all qualitative research, I do not seek a universal truth. Rather, I am interrogating the way in which cultural hegemony is reproduced. Discourse analysis was used to demonstrate how “the subject is inevitably positioned within a socio-political context” (Lupton, 1992, p. 183).

Throughout the analysis of data, I questioned my understandings of theory, my own position and the processes I had selected. My theory and methodology were rigorously interrogated throughout the stages of data collection and analysis. In constructing the story map, this internal debate began all over again. Would this approach stand up to scrutiny? After all of this dissecting and rebuilding into texts, would I have anything meaningful to say about teacher leadership? Certainly I was unprepared for the enormity and complexity of dealing with the qualitative data. Brace Govern (2002) writes amusingly of how largely texts on research gloss over the reality of the mental chaos that the coding of qualitative data generates. My choice of framework to code and display data was determined not only by my methodology but also, by my need for making the processes of analysis visible to the reader. In the full knowledge that alternate readings are possible, I offer a particular reading of the cultural

narrative of teacher leader. In literary theory, the reader is an essential element in the making of meaning, so whilst I lay out my decision-making and understandings for the reader, they will inevitably and are encouraged to bring their own understandings to the text and make their own meaning.

### **Chapter Summary**

The study is located in the interpretative paradigm but is also informed by the critical paradigm. The methodology choices were shaped by the belief that there are multiple realities. There was an overarching desire to examine the teacher leadership experience and compare this to the rhetoric of teacher leadership. To capture this diversity, the data in this study were collected from two sources: responses to a survey sent to all teachers who were identified as L3CT on the DoE's database at the time and DoE policy documents relating to the L3CT classification. The need to examine this binary also determined to a large extent the methods that were selected to analyse and present the data.

My approach to analysis of data was eclectic and evolved partially in response to the data. This approach allowed for triangulation, as well as a means of collecting and coding data. Quantitative data were collected to identify the characteristics of the L3CT. The statistical software program SPSS permitted smooth entry of all data onto an Excel spreadsheet; this format allowed me to identify groups of interest and compare variables.

The first stage of analysis involved an initial sift through the qualitative data utilizing content analysis and to some extent a quantitative approach to coding, where the number of times a particular keyword is employed was counted. The second stage

of analysis involved discourse analysis and narrative deconstruction to understand these categories and their relationships to each other. The choice of discourse analysis and narrative as tools to examine the qualitative data in more depth are related to my own context and informed by the literature that highlights the complex and political nature of schools and teaching. My study aims to present data in such a way that the reader is able to interrogate the reading that is offered and as much as possible make their own reading.

## Chapter 4: Quantitative Data

### Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative data from the survey mailed to all of the L3CTs on DoE's Database in April 2008. It was anticipated that some of the L3CT on the database would possibly have taken up different positions, so the survey also included the category of, 'Other' to capture this demographic. A total of 768 surveys were mailed to L3CT, of which 238 surveys were returned completed, representing a return rate of 31 percent. Another 41 surveys (5 percent) were returned to Murdoch University marked, "*return to sender*", due to the teacher no longer residing at the specified address. Presumably, some of these returned surveys had been mailed to teachers who had resigned or retired.

Essentially, the survey (see Appendix B) comprised 19 questions and included both quantitative and qualitative questions. The rationale for the specific questions was presented in Chapter 3. The survey was divided into four sections. To identify the characteristics of the L3CT, the first section collected demographic data (Questions 1 – 9). The second section collected information regarding respondents' beliefs about the L3CT role and their work in school (Questions 10-16). The third section included three questions, two of which were open-ended (Questions 17 and 18). These questions provided an opportunity for respondents to detail the nature of their work as an L3CT and the extent to which their work had changed subsequent to becoming an L3CT. With

a tick-the-box format, Question 19 asked whether or not respondents (yes or no), believed L3CT had assisted them to engage in leadership in a school setting. The final section thanked participants for completing the survey and provided space for recoding the contact details of those participants who consented to be interviewed. An opportunity to enter a draw was provided as an incentive to return the survey. Chapter 4 presents the survey data yielded by the quantitative questions in all three sections followed by a summary of the quantitative data. Data collated from the qualitative section are presented in *Chapter 5*.

### **Demographic Data**

In the first section of the survey, Questions 1-9 collected demographic data relating to: gender, teacher age, years teaching, the year L3CT was awarded, employment sector, current L3CT status and current position. Question 1 asked for the participant's name, but this was voluntary. Names were sought because initially some follow-up interviews were considered. These demographic data were used to identify subgroups for closer analysis within the L3CT population.

#### **Gender**

Not unexpectedly, 192 (81 percent) of the respondents were female and 46 (19 percent) were male. These figures reflect the gender ratio of the teaching population in WA. Whilst ratios differ slightly from year to year, females usually make up approximately 75 percent of the teaching workforce. DoE's workforce statistics for September 2009, for example, show that 75 percent of the teaching staff, that is, those employed in schools under the School Education Act was female. As of September 2009, there were 741 L3CT, of which 79 percent were female. Therefore, with respect



to gender, the survey sample can be viewed as representative of the L3CT population as well as the general teaching population. However, it is important to note that whilst the gender ratio of female L3CT closely reflects the gender ratio of the teaching population in general, females are considerably under-represented in administration (DoE Statistics, 2009). According to these figures, females comprised only 20 percent of school administrators.

### **Employment sector**

In terms of employment sector, the most represented group in the survey was the 98 metropolitan primary school teachers who comprised 41 percent of the sample. The 62 metropolitan secondary teachers was the next largest cohort, with a representation of 26 percent. The 56 Country teachers represented only 24 percent of the sample. The majority of these were primary teachers. Of those 9 L3CT identified as country teachers, only 16 percent were male. Gender is relevant to employment type. Male respondents were predominately secondary teachers (70 percent). Only 23 percent of male respondents were employed as primary L3CT and only 6 percent as other. Female L3CT were overly represented in primary (63 percent). Only 28 percent of the female respondents were secondary L3CT and 9 percent were employed as other.

As expected, a small percentage of the respondents (9 percent) identified themselves as 'other'. This group included teachers who were still L3CT and worked outside of school settings, for example at Distance Education, working with both primary and secondary students. Those respondents who were no longer L3CT included teachers who had taken up other positions both within and outside of DoE. Some of these positions were fixed term or 'acting' positions and some were substantive.

### **Teacher age and level of experience**

The majority of the sample, that is, 135 respondents (57 percent) was aged between 45-54 years. The next largest cohort with 54 respondents was the 55 and over group. This cohort represented 23 percent of the sample. There were 101 respondents (42 percent) with more than 25 years teaching experience. These 'expert' teachers are also therefore some of DoE's most experienced teachers. The least represented group had only 22 respondents, (9 percent of the sample) and was aged between 25 and 34 years. This was not unexpected, given that applicants for L3CT need to demonstrate high levels of competence and expert teaching. Again, this is quite representative of the general teaching population with respect to age and number of years teaching.

### **The year L3CT was awarded**

Each of the selection rounds for L3CT was represented. The greatest representation was the 1997 cohort, which represented 20 percent of the sample. The 2004 and 2007 cohorts were the next most represented with 13 percent and 15 percent representation respectively. Question 5, which asked respondents to identify the year L3CT was awarded, was misinterpreted by some L3CT. Teachers are awarded the status of L3CT if they are successful in the selection round for that year. Successful applicants are usually announced around September. They then commence their duties and receive their salary increase at the start of the next school year. It would seem some L3CT selected the year they commenced their L3CT duties, rather than the year they were awarded the status. It was not possible to cross-reference this information, as there was no access to the DoE's database.

## **Belief Statements about the L3CT**

Questions 10-16 used the Likert scale to determine the level of satisfaction with the L3CT role. Respondents were presented with five options and asked to circle the response which most closely corresponded to their belief about each of the seven statements: *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, *Agree*, *Strongly Agree*, *Neither Disagree or Agree*. These statements interrogated both the level of satisfaction with the L3CT work, in terms of how that work is defined and organised at the school site and the degree to which the role provides career satisfaction, or is viewed as a positive experience.

For the purpose of analysis, six of these belief statements were grouped into two categories that reflected dimensions of job satisfaction. Category A pertains to the nature of the work undertaken as an L3CT and Category B to the extent to which the L3CT role provides career satisfaction. Whilst this dichotomy allows for the unpacking of separate dimensions of the role, it is necessary to recognise that the division is somewhat arbitrary. It was expected that there would be a relationship between responses within these categories as well as a connection between these two categories. In terms of investigating teacher leadership, Category A questions were designed to indicate the extent to which teachers operate autonomously in an identifiable or defined role and the degree to which that is satisfying. Category B Questions explore the link between a leadership role in schools and career satisfaction. This includes expectations and career goals. Question 13 pertained to the selection process. These data do not relate directly to either of the previously mentioned dimensions.

Table 4: *Categorization of survey questions 10-16*, on the following page presents the categorization of questions 10 -16 into the two dimensions.

Table 4

*Categorization of Survey Questions*

<b>A. The Work of the L3CT</b>	<b>B. Career Satisfaction / Advancement</b>
Q10 <i>I have clearly defined duties as an L3CT</i>	Q12 <i>My current work meets my expectations of the role</i>
Q11 <i>I have a high level of discretion in my work as an L3CT</i>	Q15 <i>My experience as an L3CT has enhanced my career</i>
Q14 <i>I would not change the L3CT work parameters</i>	Q16 <i>I would recommend the L3CT to my colleagues</i>

On the following page in Table 5: *Survey Data Sorted According to Gender*, responses to each category were coded according to the respondents' level of agreement with each statement. **High** corresponds to agreement with the statement, that is; either *agree* or *strongly agree* was selected as a response. **Not Rated** corresponds with *neither agree nor disagree* selected as the response. In this instance, participants may be undecided, indifferent or lack relevant experience to answer the question. **Low** corresponds to non-agreement with the statement, that is either *disagree* or *strongly disagree* was selected. Data were also coded according to gender, in recognition of the fact that teaching is a gendered profession. There is an expectation that there may be gender differences in terms of belief about work practices, expectations of the program and levels of career satisfaction.

Table 5

*Survey Data Sorted According to Gender*

Question	High Female	High Male	Not rated Female	Not rated Male	Low Female	Low Male	Missing Female	Missing Male
Category A								
10	(112) 58%	(29) 63%	(7) 4%	(4) 9 %	(58) 30%	(10) 22%	(15) 8%	(3) 7%
11	(147) 77%	(32) 70%	(11) 6%	(2) 4%	(16) 8%	(9) 20%	(18) 9%	(3) 7%
14	(109) 57%	(29) 63%	(25) 13%	(7) 15%	(45) 23%	(8) 17%	(13) 7%	(2) 4%
Category B								
12	(122) 64%	(32) 70%	(14) 7%	(2) 4%	(37) 19%	(8) 17%	(19) 10%	(4) 9%
15	(126) 66%	(31) 67%	(19) 9%	(7) 15%	(37) 19%	(6) 13%	(10) 5%	(2) 4%
16	(145) 76%	(36) 78%	(16) 8%	(1) 2%	(23) 12%	(7) 15 %	(8) 4%	(2) 4%

Question 13 is not included in these data, as it does not relate to either category.

The majority of L3CTs were in agreement with all of *Category 'A'* questions, selecting either *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*. Question 11 elicited the highest level of agreement for both genders, with 77 percent of female L3CT and 70 percent of male L3CT agreeing that they had a *high level of discretion in their work*. Considerably fewer female respondents (58 percent), believed they had *clearly defined duties* (Question 10) and that *they would not change their work parameters* (Question 14), scoring similar levels of agreement for these questions. This suggests to some extent, that for female L3CT in particular, the lack of a clearly defined role is a factor in their desire to change their work parameters. The majority of these female L3CT agreed that they had a high level of discretion in their work (Question 11). The fact that this did not necessarily equate with a satisfaction regarding work parameters (Question 14) also suggests that the lack of a clearly defined role is linked to dissatisfaction with the work for these L3CT.

A similar relationship between questions in *Category A* exists for male respondents because responses to Question 10 relating to clearly defined duties and Question 14 which related to satisfaction with work parameters received equal rates of agreement (63 percent). However, while male L3CTs scored highest for Question 11 with 70 percent agreeing that they had a high level of discretion and had similar levels of agreement for Questions 10 and 14, the difference between Question 11, Question 10 and Question 14 was not as great. It seems that the majority of L3CT (both genders) experience a high level of discretion but that female respondents do not necessarily view this as positively as male respondents. For a significant proportion of L3CT of both genders, it seems that the lack of clearly defined roles could be a factor in the desire to change their work parameters.

The majority of L3CT respondents also had high levels of agreement with *Category B* questions. Generally, these statements indicated a higher level of agreement

than those in Category A. Levels of agreement for Category B ranged from 64 percent to 78 percent. Question 11 that asked respondents about the level of discretion in their work as an L3CT, is the only question in Category A that had a higher level of agreement than some of the Category B responses.

Gender differences are not as apparent in Category B responses as they were in Category A. In Category B, male respondents have a higher level of agreement (70 percent) with Question 12 and the belief that, *their current work as L3CT meets their expectations of the role*. There are similar levels of high agreement for both genders with respect to Question 15 and the statement, *their experience as an L3CT has enhanced their career*. However, there are 6 percent more male respondents in the unrated category for this statement and 6 percent more females in the low range, which indicates females are slightly less in agreement with the statement in Question 12. Question 16 was designed as an indicator of the level of satisfaction with the role of L3CT, in particular with respect to meeting career aspirations. Question 16 had the highest level of agreement for both genders in Category B and for male respondent in both categories. Irrespective of their responses to the other questions, 77 percent of all respondents would recommend L3CT to their colleagues.

Overall, respondents were more satisfied with the career dimension of L3CT (Category B questions) than they were with the nature and organization of the role on a day-to-day basis (Category A questions). There are relatively similar rates of agreement for both genders. Females were generally slightly less in agreement overall than males, scoring lower rates of agreement in four of the five questions.

On the following page in Table 6: *Responses to Questions 10-16 by Employment Type*, responses are categorized according to employment type, that is, whether or not the L3CT is a Primary L3CT, Secondary L3CT or Other. The category of other refers to

those L3CT currently working in an alternative setting such as a Senior Campus or Education Support Centre.

Table 6

*Responses to Questions 10-16 by Employment Type*

Question	High Primary	High Secondary	High Other	Unrated Primary	Unrated Secondary	Unrated Other	Low Primary	Low Secondary	Low Other	Missing Primary	Missing Secondary
Category A											
10	(88) 66%	(42) 50%	(11) 50%	(1) 1%	(7) 8%	(3) 14%	(33) 25%	(30) 36%	(5) 23%	(10) 8%	(5) 6%
11	(107) 81%	(58) 69%	(14) 64%	(4) 3%	(8) 10%	(1) 5%	(9) 7%	(12) 14%	(4) 18%	(12) 9%	(6) 7%
14	(78) 59%	(48) 57%	(12) 55%	(15) 11%	(14) 17%	(3) 14%	(31) 23%	(17) 20%	(5) 23%	(8) 6%	(5) 6%
Category B											
12	(90) 68%	(53) 63%	(11) 50%	(5) 4%	(10) 12%	(1) 5%	(25) 19%	(14) 17%	(6) 27%	(12) 10%	(7) 8%
15	(92) 70%	(53) 63%	(12) 55%	(15) 11%	(7) 8%	(4) 18%	(19) 14%	(21) 25%	(3) 14%	(6) 5%	(3) 4%
16	(101) 77%	(64) 76%	(16) 72%	(11) 8%	(6) 7%	(0) 0%	(14) 11%	(12) 14%	(4) 18%	(6) 5%	(2) 2%

Question 13 is not included in these data, as it does not relate to either category.

Coding according to employment type allows for the identification of difference related to employment sector. Primary and secondary schools, for example, are usually



quite different in size, with some secondary schools having more than 1500 students and small primary schools having less than 200. They are also organized differently with secondary schools generally having larger management teams that reflect subject specialization and school size. Similarly, rural schools are usually smaller and management teams may have a different composition. It would be reasonable to think that contextual factors may have some bearing on leadership practices.

When the data are coded according to employment type, similar patterns exist with respect to Questions 10 and 14. As with data coded by gender, Questions 10 and 12 are lower scoring than Question 11. Again, Category B questions that related to career enhancement tended to be higher scoring than Category A questions that related to the work carried out as an L3CT. Primary respondents have higher rates of agreement in their responses to all questions, a difference more apparent in Category A questions pertaining to the L3CT role than Category B questions pertaining to career satisfaction with the L3CT classification.

### **Satisfaction with the L3CT work parameters**

Responses to Question 10 show the most marked differences. In responses to Question 10, 16 percent more primary L3CT had *clearly defined duties*. Question 10 had the lowest rate of agreement for Secondary L3CT and the highest rate of non-agreement (36 percent). More than 33 percent of secondary teachers do not believe they have a clearly defined role. It is also the lowest scoring question for those L3CT who are 'other'.

In response to Question 11, 12 percent more primary than secondary L3CT had a *high level of discretion* in their work. The level of agreement with work parameters (Question 14) shows very little difference between the three groups and has a markedly

lower level of agreement for primary L3CT than all of the other primary L3CT responses. Again, there are more secondary respondents in the low section than in the unrated section, indicating that secondary respondents have the least satisfaction with work parameters. Those respondents who identified as ‘*Other*’ had the lowest levels of agreement or satisfaction with all of the questions.

### **Satisfaction with career pathway**

The responses to Questions 12 and 15 in Category B of those who were identified as ‘*Other*’ were markedly lower than other respondents, with only half of this cohort agreeing that the L3CT role met teacher expectations. Despite the lower levels of agreement to all questions, this group still was largely in agreement that they would recommend L3CT to their colleagues.

Responses to Question 16 show little difference with respect to those in agreement or high scoring with the statement, *I would recommend the L3CT to my peers*. There is a difference of only 5 percent between the highest scoring primary respondents and the lowest scoring *other* respondents. However while primary and secondary have nearly an equal number of respondents in the unrated section who are neutral in response to this statement, there are no L3CT identified as ‘*Other*’ unrated. This data combined with the fact that 18 percent of respondents were not in agreement that they would recommend L3CT confirms that this group was the least satisfied with the L3CT role.

### **Relationships between category A and B responses**

Comparing responses across categories illuminated some of the L3CT beliefs, in particular with respect to Questions 12 and 15. In Category B, Question 12 asks

respondents the extent to which their *experience as an L3CT met their expectations of the role*. Whilst the majority of L3CT agreed with this statement, 26 percent of female respondents and 21 percent of male respondents were unrated or disagreed that the role met their expectations. With respect to these responses to this question, the year L3CT was awarded was not relevant. Neither was location or employment type. However, the responses to Category A Questions were relevant in the unpacking of these data for Question 12. Of the cohort of respondents who had a low level of agreement with L3CT meeting expectations, only 23 percent believed *they had clearly defined roles*. Similarly, only 28 percent agreed that *they would not change the work parameters*.

Less than half (46 percent) of the low scoring respondents for Question 12 were in agreement with Question 11, *that they had a high level of discretion in their work*. The same respondents agreed that L3CT enhanced their career in their responses to Question 15. This is further evidence that the lack of a clearly defined role and the work parameters of L3CT were key factors in whether or not the L3CT role met expectations or was *perceived as enhancing the L3CT's career*. Despite the fact that this group did not believe L3CT met their expectations and were low scoring in Category A, 64 percent would still recommend L3CT to their peers.

A close examination of the negative responses to Question 16 also affirms the relationship between career satisfaction with L3CT and the work undertaken, particularly the work parameters. Again the demographics of the low scoring group with respect to age, years teaching and employment type is not particularly relevant. However, an examination of the responses to other questions in both Categories A and B is illuminating. With respect to the questions relating to the nature of the work undertaken, 40 percent of respondents believe they have clearly defined roles and only 23 percent agree that *they would not change the work parameters* (Question 14).

However, 63 percent of this cohort agrees that *they have a high level of discretion in their work as an L3CT* (Question 11). The level of discretion experienced by the L3CT in the role seems less relevant to satisfaction with the role than the work parameters or the degree to which duties are clearly defined. This suggests that there is an industrial aspect such as workload to satisfaction or lack of satisfaction with the L3CT role.

In terms of the other questions relating to career satisfaction in Category B, only 30 percent of this low scoring group for Question 16, agree *that L3CT has enhanced their career* (Question 15) and only 40 percent agree that *the role meets their expectations* (Question 12). It would seem that those L3CT who lack a defined role are also more likely to be dissatisfied with the way the work is organized and possibly the volume of work, perhaps because the lack of a clearly defined role means there are no clear boundaries. This in turn leads to dissatisfaction with the L3CT initiative and the belief that it has not enhanced the individual's career, making them less likely to recommend it to peers.

### **The selection process**

Question 13 of the survey addresses L3CT satisfaction with the selection process. Only 37 percent of all respondents agreed *that they would not change the selection process*. This question or belief statement therefore has the lowest level of agreement and is markedly lower than all of the other responses. Over half (53 percent) of the respondents disagreed with the statement and only (4 percent) were unrated. Another 5 percent were missing a response to this question.

The fact that the majority of L3CT were not satisfied with the selection process was not unexpected. Evidence from other reviews of the process, including the Selection Process Review carried out by the *Teachers Professional Competencies and*

*Standards Committee* (DET, 2005) indicated the selection process is contentious. One of the key findings of 2005 review was the perception held by a considerable number of respondents, that the selection process was inconsistent. Factors discouraging teachers from applying for L3CT included: the complexity of the process, the fear of rejection and the time involved in preparing an application. The data collected from this survey confirms the fact that the selection progress continues to be contentious.

### **The L3CT and leadership**

Question 19 is a *Yes/No* response question and the final quantitative question of the survey. In fact, 58 respondents (24 percent) added qualitative comment to this question. Question 19 explicitly addresses the notion of leadership with respect to L3CT and is very relevant to this study. Overall, 171 (72 percent) respondents believed that L3CT assisted them to have a leadership role in schools. This included 73 percent of females and 65 percent of males. There is a similar rate of agreement with Question 19 and questions in Category B that relate to career satisfaction.

However, 18 percent of females did not believe that L3CT assisted them to engage in leadership. Of this cohort, 77 percent either disagreed or were unrated with respect to whether L3CT had enhanced their career. Nearly half (48 percent) of these female L3CT either disagreed or were unrated as to whether or not the current role meets their expectations. However, only 28 percent disagreed or were unrated with respect to whether or not they had a high level of discretion in their work. More than half (57 percent) of this cohort disagreed or were unrated as to whether or not they had clearly defined duties and 60 percent disagreed or were unrated as to whether the work parameters should be changed. Females who believed that L3CT assisted them to

engage in leadership in their school setting tended to rate highly for all questions, particularly questions 15 and 16 (81 percent).

Similarly, 83 percent of male respondents, who believed they were assisted to engage in leadership, reported a high level of discretion in their work. The same respondents believed L3CT had enhanced their career while 23 (77 percent) believed they had clearly defined roles. There were 13 (43 percent) males who reported they did not believe that L3CT had assisted them to engage in leadership. Only 6 (46 percent) of these respondents reported a high level of discretion and only 5 (38 percent) believed they had clearly defined roles.

Examination of the responses to Question 19 indicated that high levels of satisfaction with the work dimension and the career opportunity provided by L3CT corresponded to the belief that the teacher was assisted to engage in leadership. The belief that L3CT had a high level of discretion in their work (Question 11) seems more relevant to the belief that L3CT was assisted to engage in leadership than whether or not the role met expectation or had enhanced the L3CT's career.

### **Specific Groups of Interest**

The survey allows for an examination of whether factors such as age, gender, years teaching, location or context (primary, secondary or other) are relevant to L3CT belief about their role. As noted in previous discussion of specific questions, factors such as age and teaching experience do not appear to be as important as the working conditions on particular sites or the perception of these conditions as reported by the respondents. However, in the next section, four cohorts are examined to determine whether they highlight any particular beliefs about L3CT. These cohorts are: *Early Career* teachers, teachers who are *No Longer L3CT*, *Late Career* teachers and *Country* teachers.

### **Early career teachers**

The term *early phase* is generally used to describe teachers in the first five years of teaching. In the context of the L3CT, which is both a leadership and promotional position, I have employed the term *early career* to describe teachers who have been teaching less than 10 years, in recognition of the fact that teachers have usually taught for longer than 10 years when they take up a leadership position. As previously outlined, the respondents to this survey had predominately been teaching more than 25 years. Only 20 respondents have been teaching less than 10 years. This cohort represents only 8 percent of the sample. Whilst L3CT is not recognition of seniority (Jasman, 1998), the requirement to demonstrate whole of school leadership and develop a comprehensive portfolio of examples would presumably be more difficult for “early career” teachers to achieve. Predictably, 70 percent of the ‘early career’ cohort is aged between 25 and 34 years. All but one is female. Only two are employed in the country.

Early career teacher leaders report higher levels of agreement for all questions, except Question 10. In particular, this cohort is very positive about the worth of L3CT, with 85 percent reporting that they would recommend the program to colleagues, in comparison with 76 percent of the whole sample. In terms of career satisfaction, 70 percent believe it has enhanced their career and 70 percent believed that it meets their expectations of the role. Moreover, 85 percent agree they have a high level of discretion in their work and 70 percent believe that they would not change the work parameters, whereas this is true of only 58 percent of the whole cohort

Only 55 percent of the early career cohort believed they had clearly defined roles. This is not markedly different to the response of the whole cohort, where 59 percent agreed they had clearly defined roles. The lack of a clearly defined role was less

important a factor in whether or not the role met early career teachers' expectations or whether they would change the work parameters than it is with the overall L3CT. It would appear that a higher value in terms of career satisfaction is placed on the high level of discretion within this particular cohort. In response to Question 19, 85 percent agree that the L3CT role assisted them to engage in leadership. The value that is placed on high levels of discretion by this cohort could reflect the fact that as a result of the L3CT classification, these less experienced teachers are able to have more responsibility than is usually afforded them.

### **Late career teachers**

Forty-nine of the respondents would be considered a late-career teacher, that is, teachers with more than 30 years experience. This cohort represents 20 percent of the sample. Interestingly, while 67 percent of this cohort agreed they had clearly defined duties, only 49 percent agreed that they would not change the work parameters. However, this group had a higher level (81 percent) of agreement with the statement that they had a high level of discretion in their work. Again this affirmed that having discretion or autonomy in the role does not necessarily equate with a satisfaction with workload or the organization of the L3CT workload at the school site. Despite these data, 73 percent of Late Career L3CT agreed that the L3CT role met their expectations. Only 53 percent of late career L3CT agreed that the role had enhanced their career but 77 percent would recommend it to their colleagues. Of these respondents, 65 percent believed they have been assisted to engage in leadership.

In comparison with the *early career cohort* there was a higher degree of late career respondents in agreement that they had clearly defined roles but considerably less satisfaction with the work parameters. Like *early career*, the late career cohort



experienced a high degree of discretion in their work but as with the whole sample, this was not necessarily viewed as favorably when the degree of satisfaction with the work parameters is factored in. This cohort has a higher rate (26 percent) of low scoring teachers for Question 19.

### **Those no longer working as L3CT**

Some of the respondents (23 percent) were no longer working as L3CT. Of these respondents, 44 (81 percent) were female and 10 (19 percent) were male. This corresponds to the gender ratio of the entire sample. Of this particular cohort, 19 (35 percent) were secondary teachers and 26 (48 percent) were primary. This closely resembles the demographics of the entire sample. Another 9 of these respondents were classified as *'Other'*. Of those who were no longer employed in DoE schools as an L3CT, (78 percent) were clearly in a promotional position. This included 30 who were employed as *Level 3 Administrators*, 8 as *Level 4 Administrators* and 4 as *Level 5 Administrators*. These roles encompassed administrative roles such deputy principal and principal. Another 5 were employed outside of the State school sector in roles that could also be constructed as promotional. Two of these respondents were employed as Education Officers in the DoE: one was a literacy coordinator in schools; one was in the university sector and one was employed at SciTech<sup>2</sup>. Two of the respondents retired and one left teaching for unspecified employment. Thirty-seven (68 percent) of this cohort believed that L3CT was relevant to gaining promotional positions and 27 of these respondents were in school- based promotional positions.

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<sup>2</sup>Sci Tech is a science education centre located In Perth WA. It is a non-profit organization that promotes participation in science and technology.

Forty four (81 percent) of the cohort who were no longer working as an L3CT agreed that L3CT assisted them to engage in leadership in a school setting, slightly higher than the 71.8 percent of the whole sample. Only 6 respondents disagreed that they were assisted to engage in a leadership role. These 6 still agreed that they would recommend L3CT to their colleagues. Similarly, only 7 (15.9 percent) of those who believed they had been assisted to engage in leadership did not believe L3CT was relevant to gaining a promotion. Teachers in promotional positions generally identified a link between teacher leadership and promotional opportunities.

The cohort of respondents identified as no longer working as L3CT had lower scores with respect to Question 14, with 57 percent agreeing that they would not change the work parameters and 43 percent in agreement with Question 12 that the role met their expectations. The lower rate of agreement with these questions is likely to be a factor in these respondents moving out of the L3CT role and in many cases seeking promotional positions.

### **Country teachers**

Only 56 (23 percent) of respondents were employed in the country. This included 34 primary teachers and 22 secondary teachers. The majority (47) of this cohort was female. For this cohort, the responses to questions in both categories generally mirrored the responses of the entire sample. There was a slightly higher rate of agreement with Question 11, as 80 percent of these respondents believed they had a high level of discretion, as opposed to 74 percent of the whole sample. Only 20 percent believed that L3CT had not assisted them to engage in leadership within the school setting. As with the other groups of interest, this was a slightly higher level of agreement than the whole sample.

## **Summary of Quantitative Data**

The survey respondents were predominately female, the majority working in primary schools in the metropolitan area. Male respondents were primarily employed in the secondary sector. In general, the majority of L3CT were in agreement with all of the belief statements about the L3CT. Respondents tended to take either a positive or negative stance to all questions. The percentage of respondents with an unrated response for any of the questions was low. Question 14 had an overall unrated response rate of 14 percent and question 15 had a 13% unrated response rate. All other questions had less than 10% of responses unrated. Males scored slightly higher levels of agreement for all categories, except for Question 11.

Respondents were more satisfied with the career enhancement aspect of the role than the way the role is structured or organized at the individual school site. The quantitative data indicated a relationship between the way the L3CT role is structured at a particular school site and the extent to which the role is perceived as rewarding. Teachers who had low satisfaction with the work parameters were less likely to have clearly defined roles. This low scoring group was much more likely to disagree that the L3CT met expectations.

The majority of L3CT experienced a high level of discretion in their work. Female L3CT were more likely to have a high level of discretion in their role and were more likely to want to change the parameters of their work, with the exception of those who were in the first ten years of a teaching career. Country teachers and Late Career teachers also reported higher levels of discretion in their work. Primary L3CT generally had higher rates of agreement with questions than either secondary or those who were categorized as 'other'.

A majority of teachers would recommend the role, irrespective of their level of satisfaction with either dimension. Based on these data, it would seem that the perception of worth of the L3CT role is not related to satisfaction with the work undertaken or the extent to which the role is perceived as having enhanced teachers' careers. Dissatisfaction with the selection process did not seem to have any real impact on whether or not respondents would recommend the L3CT to their colleagues.

The majority of the sample perceived the role as a leadership role. A high level of discretion in the role was linked to the belief that L3CTs worked as leaders in schools. The belief that L3CT assisted these teachers to have a leadership role in schools was particularly true of early career teachers and teachers who were in promotional positions. The data also suggest those respondents in promotional positions believe that they were assisted in gaining those positions by having gained L3CT.

The respondents were most negative about the selection process, followed by the work parameters. Those L3CT who were most negative about the role tended to be particularly negative about work parameters and the lack of a defined role. The nature of the L3CT role, including work parameters, will be probed further in Chapters 5 and 6 in the analysis of the qualitative data.

## **Chapter 5: Qualitative Data**

This chapter presents the qualitative data from the responses to the open-ended survey questions (See Appendix B). Responses were analysed to identify the roles performed by the L3CT and the extent to which the L3CT role is different to work undertaken prior to becoming a L3CT. To enrich the understanding of the L3CT leadership experience, answers were also examined for contextual information. The examination includes the conditions in which L3CT work, the factors that impact upon their work and their beliefs about their work. This mapping allows for an identification of commonalities and difference between the L3CT leadership experiences.

Initially there was a categorization of roles and to some extent a sense of quantifying the qualitative data. I aimed to identify the specific roles performed by L3CTs. Summative content analysis was used to code data. Afterwards at a micro level, the data were analyzed using qualitative methods, specifically techniques of text deconstruction to map the L3CT experience and gauge the extent to which the initiative engenders teacher leadership.

The chapter firstly presents the data from Question 17, which describes the work of the L3CTs. This is followed by the presentation of data collected from Question 18, as to how the work of these teachers has changed since becoming an L3CT. Finally, data pertaining to Question 19, with respect to whether or not L3CT status assisted teachers to engage in a leadership role is presented. Throughout the chapter, the choice

of specific words to describe the role, practices and beliefs ascribed to the L3CT role is highlighted to demonstrate how the various nuances of language reveal identity and belief systems about L3CT leadership. The presentation of these data is also designed to allow the reader to observe the process of deconstruction. Following a discussion of data from responses to each of these three questions, there is a summary of language employed by the respondents to describe their work. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

In many ways, the responses to Questions 17 and 18 provided snapshots of these teachers' lives as L3CTs. The longer responses contained elements of narrative, in that they described a setting, other characters such as their non-L3CT peers and sometimes provided a detailed plot of the individual L3CT experience. Writing predominately in the first person, the participants' choice of language was deliberate. It was possible to hear in these snapshots diverse voices telling different stories. The tone ranged from relatively neutral, formal language to highly colloquial emotive responses. The telling of the story therefore is as significant as the story itself.

### **The Roles Performed by L3CT**

Question 17 asked respondents to *provide a brief description of any duties or responsibilities in their current role as L3CT* to interrogate the scope of work undertaken by the L3CT. Responses also provided insight into the extent to which L3CTs had responsibility for specific roles and/or programs in schools. Responses varied in length from 1-15 lines, with one respondent attaching a separate page length typed role statement. In many instances, respondents gave additional contextual information such as the amount of time released from teaching, the extent to which the role was negotiated, the way the L3CT was organized on different sites and the size and

nature of the school site. Respondents expressed particular attitudes towards their L3CT role and/or referred to the views held by other staff members or the school's administration towards the L3CT role.

Whilst respondents generally cited roles for which they believed they had primary responsibility in their capacity as L3CT, there were also references to collaborative work. This collaboration included working as a member of the school leadership team, a committee or in partnership with other schools or community groups. Respondents tended to highlight when they had sole responsibility for a project and when they worked in a partnership.

Based on the information given in response to Question 17, L3CTs perform a diverse range of roles. The majority of respondents (58 percent), who provided descriptive detail, articulated more than one role. Whilst the work of L3CTs was in many instances multi-faceted, it was possible to identify five key roles that L3CTs perform in schools. Therefore the data collected from this question were categorized into these five roles. The identified roles are: *Mentoring*, *Curriculum Leadership*, *Coordination of Special Projects*, *School Review and Students at Educational Risk (SAER)*. Each of these roles encompassed a number of specific duties determined by the school context.

Whilst five categories were selected to represent the work of L3CT, it is important to acknowledge that there are inter-relationships between these categories. For instance, SAER programs are clearly linked to curriculum improvement that is then often linked to school review. Consequently, the majority of respondents performed two or more complementary roles and are represented in multiple categories. The determination as to which category to assign a role was based primarily on the individual teacher's labeling and the emphasis or information given in supporting detail.

### **Coding of Data**

Qualitative data were sorted according to whether respondents worked in the primary or secondary sector to determine whether or not these different contexts have an impact on the type of roles performed and/or the conditions under which they are performed. Of the 117 primary school respondents who responded to the Question 17, only three were not working as a L3CT at the time and gave no details pertaining to the L3CT role (either past or present). In their responses, 81 secondary school respondents provided qualitative detail for Question 17. Five secondary school respondents did not describe their employment because they were on leave which included: extended sick leave, long service leave or working in fixed term promotional position such as “Acting Deputy Principal”. The other 76 respondents made a statement about the nature of their work as L3CT.

On the following page Table 7: *Primary L3CT Roles* and Table 8: *Secondary L3CT Roles* present the number and percentage of the L3CT working within each category. Commonly a respondent is included in more than one category so the percentages do not add up to 100 percent. The tables illustrate the scope of the roles undertaken by the L3CT, the commonality of the experience and allow for the identification of the impact of either the primary or secondary context.



Table 7

*Primary L3CT Roles*

Category	Mentoring	Curriculum	School Review	SAER	Special Projects
Number of Primary L3CT Respondents	27	78	17	48	17
Percentage	20.45%	59%	12.87%	36.36%	12.87%

Table 8

*Secondary L3CT Roles*

Category	Mentoring	Curriculum	Professional Learning	School Review	SAER	Special Projects
Number of Secondary Respondents	25	51	7	3	18	5
Percentage	31.25%	63.75%	8.75%	3.75%	21.25%	6.25%

**Curriculum**

In the primary school context, curriculum was the most frequently cited role, with 78 (59 percent) of the respondents engaged in this endeavor. In this context, curriculum usually involved the responsibility for a particular learning area or a specific curriculum program, such as literacy, integration of learning technologies, science or numeracy. For example, one primary L3CT defined her role as:

*Mainly I am a curriculum leader in literacy. I am a Getting it Right Literacy (GIR) Specialist Teacher. Much of what I do encompasses*

*“Level 3 duties”, e.g. curriculum leadership, mentoring colleagues, etc. However I am also the Literacy Coordinator and so get directly involved with whole school planning processes and implementation of that plan. I also promote literacy based on extension activities- reading club and writing competitions.*

This example also illustrates the way in which respondents often described their role in detail, explaining the allocation of roles, in this case in part attributed to L3CT and in part, attributed to another school literacy funded position (GIR). This response to Question 17 also illustrates the way in which respondents tended to list specific tasks or outcomes they had achieved as part of their role.

Frequently these teachers had the responsibility for the curriculum school-wide. For example, one respondent highlighted that whilst she was a teacher of the Year 2 class, she also had responsibility for the environmental science program for every student in the school. This respondent also details the exact time allocation and the number of children involved which highlights the magnitude and complexity of this task. She says:

*My role has not changed. I teach Yr. 2, 4 days a week. I am in charge of Environmental Studies from pre-primary to Year 7 – 377 children and work with them once a month – each class for 40 minutes = 11 classes.)*

These responses both have a sense of audit in that they are explicit in their explanation of how their time is managed.

Technology was another specific responsibility that tended to be school-wide in the primary sector. Again these roles tended to be broad and complex. One L3CT commented: *My role is in the IT section. I am the IT co-coordinator at my school and I*

*am responsible for planning, budgeting, hardware maintenance and generally setting the direction of IT in the school.*

The example also highlights the fact that in many instances, primary school L3CTs had responsibility for all aspects of a particular curriculum program, from planning and implementation to the maintenance of equipment.

In the secondary context, curriculum was also the most frequently cited role, with 51 (64 percent) respondents articulating curriculum responsibility as their L3CT role. Curriculum in this context was not vastly different to the scope of work undertaken in the primary context. Curriculum responsibilities encompassed the provision of professional learning to other staff and the development and purchase of resources, including testing materials. For example, the following L3CT described her role as:

*Maths and Thinking Leader to support teachers in developing understanding of maths curriculum and pedagogy. Lead development of whole school “culture of thinking”. Model lessons, collaborative planning with teachers. Develop whole school curricula in maths and thinking. Manage whole school assessment in maths.*

Rather than leading a particular area, some secondary respondents were responsible for developing new cross-curricula materials. One L3CT reported designing her own role and program: *I took on the role and created the role myself: “Cross-curriculum Sustainability Organiser”.*

Unlike their primary counterparts, curriculum leadership for secondary respondents was less likely to entail the responsibility for a specific learning area across all year groups and more likely to entail management or leadership of a program for a specific year group. However, it was surprising to find that some secondary L3CT

seemed to have curriculum leadership in a particular area, including the performance management of staff. One L3CT described her role as:

*Teacher in Charge of Education Support Unit (ESU) of 25 students, 3 teaching staff and at the moment 17 EAs of various rates of full and part time positions. A huge role. Fortunately the current admin (different from 2002/4) appreciate my work and recognize the contribution to the school and ESU.*

This respondent also highlights the complexity of the task by citing the number of people to be taught or managed, rather than just describing L3CT as a “huge role”.

Some respondents also had curriculum responsibilities across their school district. Despite the fact that many respondents in both the primary and secondary sectors highlighted the magnitude or complexity of work as the school’s curriculum leader, many of them had an additional L3CT role. Of the 51 respondents who cited Curriculum as a L3CT role, 42 (82 percent) cited at least one other role.

## **SAER**

In responses to Question 17, SAER was the next most frequently cited role for primary school L3CT with 48 (36 percent) of primary respondents describing a SAER role. Teachers in these roles are engaged in programs that target all students who are at risk of not achieving their potential due to poor attendance, behavioural issues, disability, socio-economic or cultural disadvantage and/or limited access to appropriate curriculum. All schools are required to have formalized plans for the identification, monitoring and provision of programs for SAER.

The work undertaken by L3CT in this role encompassed the identification of SAER students, responsibility for behavior management programs, including supporting

peers, or coordinating specific programs to target SAER, such as Boys Education, or talented and gifted education programs (TAGS). The following L3CT details how they dovetail the L3CT role with their usual teaching role of Learning Support Coordinator. The quote also illustrates the propensity of the L3CT role to relate to the interests and teaching experience of the individual teacher:

*I work as the Learning Support Coordinator in the rest of my work fraction so my L3 focus remains within the SAER parameters, supporting staff with SAER students, parent case conferences, liaison with school psych. Whole school SAER plan, etc.*

As with curriculum leadership, the SAER role often involved the provision of professional learning to teaching peers. The following example typifies this building of capacity in others to differentiate the teaching curriculum:

*I provide PD in gifted education to schools. Provide one on one assistance to classroom teachers to help them better cater for gifted and talented students in regular classroom. Demonstration lessons for teachers. Working on individual case studies of G&T children in junior/ECE field. Coordinate and teach G&T enrichment programmes for aboriginal students across district.*

The SAER role also often encompassed evidence-based planning with respect to programs such as literacy and the development of individual education or documented plans for students at risk. In the context of primary school L3CTs, this responsibility was generally school-wide, rather than a responsibility for a specific year group. The following example highlights school-wide responsibility and illustrates the connection between accountability for SAER programs and school planning and review:

*My level 3 time is used to fulfill SAER (Student at Educational Risk) role. Within the school in this role, I ensure Literacy Net data is collected across the school, K-7. I collate this data, which is subsequently used for whole school planning I assist teachers in writing Individual Education Plans and provide them with teaching and learning strategies to help address identified needs.*

Other primary respondents cited as part of their SAER L3CT role involvement in specific programs, such as Aboriginal education or the coordination of pastoral care, including school chaplaincy.

SAER roles were cited by 18 (21 percent) secondary L3CTs. In the secondary context, SAER tended to involve responsibility for a particular Year group, such as Year 12, with the L3CT performing the role of Year Coordinator or the leadership of specific programs such as, students with special needs, including Talented and Gifted Students (TAGS) and students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).

This role is illustrated in the following example:

*My 2008 role is to manage the special needs of the significant number of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students in Year 11 ACCESS at my school. This includes teaching them and providing learning experiences suited to their needs as part of my larger ACCESS class. It also involves enrolling them in the correct courses according to their eligibility and dealing with the repercussions on the school due to this. It also includes building a network of contacts and increasing my own knowledge of CALD students.*

## **Mentoring**

Mentoring was undertaken by 27 (20 percent) primary L3CT respondents who cited a number of mentoring roles, including: staff induction, mentoring L3CT aspirants, coordination of student teacher practicum, and the management of relief teachers. In some instances, mentoring other staff was relatively informal, that is, the teacher encouraged other staff members and perhaps assisted at the point of need with curriculum resources or classroom management strategies. In the following example, the respondent had responsibility for mentoring in a range of contexts:

*I currently mentor four graduates, however I was doing this before L3CT. I am on the school development committee and I am a level 2 Classroom Management Consultant. Every now and then I am acting Deputy when other deputies are absent. I was doing ALL of these things before I was L3CT-the only difference is now I have 3 hours a week to do it in.*

Often mentoring involved some involvement in more formal school- based programs such as the following respondent, who is engaged in mentoring in the context of specific behavior management programs:

*Training – I train all teachers who use Applied Behavior Analysis in WA.*

*Mentoring – I mentor all new teachers in ABA in the Autism Units and the Early Intervention Trial Project. Supervise and feedback to new teachers on their classroom practice.*

All primary teachers who cited mentoring as a role had at least one other role. Typically they were also engaged in curriculum and/or SAER.

Mentoring was the second most frequently cited role for secondary L3CT with 25 (31 percent) respondents engaging in this task. Mentoring was similar in scope to the primary sector and encompassed mentoring student teachers, new graduates and peers, including L3CT aspirants. Unlike the primary respondents, there was some evidence of mentoring being the sole activity performed as the L3CT role. For example, the following L3CT fulfills the L3CT role by mentoring in a range of contexts: *I act as a mentor for graduate teachers, or for teachers that require a little extra assistance outside of the teacher-line manager relationship. I also provide observation-conferences for Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) Level 1 teacher.*

However, the majority of secondary L3CT respondents performed mentoring in conjunction with at least one other role. For example, the following respondent combines mentoring with curriculum leadership and describes the role as: *Working 'with' classroom teachers in cross curriculum arts projects through 8 learning areas. Presenting student work as a learning resource across the school community and wider community. – Mentoring first year classroom teachers in the Arts.*

### **School Review**

Only 17 (12.8 percent) primary respondents cited responsibility for school review or school planning. School review is an annual accountability process, whereby schools provide an analysis of performance data based on measures such as NAPLAN and Year 12 exam performance and develop targets for improvement. This role usually encompasses analysis, planning and facilitation of professional learning to achieve



desired outcomes. The following example highlights the various aspects including, monitoring, reporting and managing resources:

*I plan and implement all PP for development and progress towards school targets to achieve success in priority areas. Monitor SAER students K-3. Purchase/manage resources. Conduct social skill classes in values education. Monitor maintenance of values priority in classrooms K-7. Collect/evaluate MI's in school.*

All of the respondents who had school review as a responsibility cited at least one other role.

In the following example, the respondent had a diversity of roles that encompassed SAER, mentoring and the analysis of data for school review purposes. She detailed the role as:

*2 ½ hours per week. Providing PD for staff and workshops for parents. Developing policies. Member of all committees. Moderating with staff members and assisting or writing IEP's. Modeling lessons in language at point of need. Providing resources and ideas for staff as I used to be a GIR specialist. Also meeting with parents if requested. Collating Lit Net data PP – YR7 and evaluating results.*

In this case, the L3CT has a school wide curriculum responsibility, as well as a SAER role with links to school review and mentoring. As with many respondents, in this example, the L3CT made reference to a time allocation.

Only 3 (3.75 percent) secondary L3CTs were engaged with school review as part of their L3CT role. As with primary L3CTs, the task of school review or planning was largely related to analysing school performance data and programing to address

identified needs. The following example illustrates this connection between performance data and school-wide programming. The role is described as:

*Analysis of WALNA (Yr 7) data for incoming Yr 8 students to plan and prepare general teaching programmes and individual education plans (IEP's). Mentoring students with behavioral problems and advice on classroom management' strategies. Providing literacy assessment PD to faculty staff.*

School Review was also undertaken with other additional tasks, particularly SAER programming illustrated by both the above example and the following example:

*Careers Advising. Curriculum Support and Extension Support to the students of the Intensive English Centre children of migrants and refugees. Statistical profiling of the campus.*

As with L3CTs in other roles, those teachers with responsibility for school planning often had skills or a high level of interest in that particular area, as indicated in the following secondary L3CT example:

*Slightly reduced teaching load (thank god). I negotiated my role with the principal (who I have taught with before in a different school) who was aware of my skills and interests. School planning. Focus on middle schooling and student centered learning strategies.*

School review or planning appeared to be a task in schools that secondary L3CT contributed to rather than had a program they managed.

### **Special Programs**

Only 17 (12.8 percent) primary teachers made reference to specific school-wide programs that they coordinated. Generally these special programs are initiatives

adopted by individual schools in response to identified needs, rather than mandated curriculum programs or system requirements. Programs cited included: recycling initiatives, *Tribes* (values program), the national values program, publicity and marketing of the school within the community. The most commonly cited task in this category was the promotion of the school in the wider community. In some instances, these programs related to specific student year levels but more commonly they were school wide programs, as seen in the following example:

*I am the Waste Wise Schools' Coordinator and Coordinator of the Sustainable School's Initiative at my school. I am responsible for embedding sustainability in the School Development Plan then I'm responsible for its implementation. I in-service teachers at our school and recently from a large number of schools, on implementing environmental programs into the school curriculum. I designed a parent survey to evaluate the 'flow on' effect into the home – of school initiatives. I organize whole school environmental excursions and whole staff PD days based on sustainability. I liaise with Dept. of Environment of Conservation and Sustainability Schools Initiative Director. I am responsible for the student 'Eco-Rangers' and chair all student meetings. I update the school website on recycling.*

Whereas the above respondent liaises with external agencies to facilitate a program at their school, there was also evidence of L3CT engaging in community-wide programs. In these cases, the L3CT networked across two or more school sites, such as the following example where the respondent describes the role as: *Initiation of education for sustainability across two schools.*

In all but two examples, the L3CT with responsibility for Special Projects had at least one other additional role.

Only 5 (6 percent) secondary respondents were engaged with the coordination of special projects. As with the primary L3CT, teachers who had responsibility for a special program in the secondary school context had at least one other task, as part of their L3CT role. The example below typifies the way special projects might be undertaken in conjunction with curriculum programs:

*I have chosen, each year, to run after school free English TEE writing workshops for any Year 12s (we have about 200 TEE students) – and these are well attended. I have run the Writing Club, act as a member of The School Council and have acted as Incoming Teacher Interviewer. I've also regularly acted as Assessor of Level 3 applicants.*

In both sectors, there were L3CT involved in community wide projects, particularly in environmental sustainability projects, as illustrated in the following example where the L3CT states that his role is to:

*Coordinate environmental activities within the school: - Clean Up Australia Day, National tree day, our own paper recycling program, kerbside recycling. Also in my role as a D&T wood studio manager, I take on many extra projects and coordinate student activities in this area.*

### **Comparison of L3CT Roles: Primary and Secondary**

Based on data collected from Question 17, primary and secondary respondents performed similar duties as part of their L3CT role. Curriculum leadership was the most frequently cited role in both sectors. Key differences between roles performed by

secondary and primary L3CT were that there were fewer secondary teachers (15 percent) engaged in SAER, as part of the L3CT role and more secondary respondents (11 percent) involved in mentoring other teachers.

In addition, fewer secondary teachers (4 percent) were engaged in school review and special projects. Whilst these categories were also the least represented in the primary sector, considerably more primary teachers (13 percent) were engaged in these roles. Similarly, 13 percent of primary respondents had responsibility for special projects but only 6 percent of secondary respondents had the same responsibility. Factors such as age, level of experience or gender did not appear to be relevant to the type of role undertaken by L3CT in either the primary or secondary sector.

### **Other Duties Performed by L3CT**

It was evident from the responses to Question 17 that some L3CT were also performing roles outside of the five categories assigned to L3CT work. There were references to performing tasks such as timetabling, maintaining records and organizing minor works. These tasks would generally be considered administrative or managerial in nature. Once again, both the literature on teacher leadership and my contextual knowledge of school operations assisted me to classify such tasks as largely administrative rather than leadership. The respondents did not necessarily nominate such tasks as administrative. Only 7 primary respondents made direct reference to performing the role of an administrator. These respondents specifically cited ‘admin work’, in addition to detailing one or more of the categorized roles. Responses ranged from a simple notation such as “*admin work*” to the respondent, who described her role as “*General Admin, dog’s body*” and clearly viewed “admin work” as a burden and not in keeping with the L3CT role.

Respondents had different perspectives on what constituted “Admin work”. Within the five categories of work cited by respondents, many roles and responsibilities are, in fact, often performed by school administrators and have managerial components. There was also evidence that some L3CTs viewed administrative duties as an opportunity to gain valuable skills that could lead to further promotion.

### **Additional Data Collected from Responses to Question 17**

In addition to a description of roles, responses to Question 17 provided data with respect to the organization of the L3CT role, the conditions under which the role was performed and the perception of the role. These data included the way the individual L3CT viewed their role and the way they perceived others to view them. Therefore, the data were also analyzed with respect to direct references to leadership and the status of L3CT. Data were also examined for references to the impact of industrial aspects such as teacher shortage, budget constraints and any change in work subsequent to being awarded L3CT.

#### **Leadership**

In the responses to Question 17, 28 respondents explicitly cited leadership as an aspect of their L3CT role. In the primary context, there were 21 (16%) specific references to leadership, whereas in the secondary context there were 7 (8 %). In each of these responses the words “leader”, “leading” or “leadership” were employed by the respondents to describe their work. Typically, this was a description of a specific role, for example, “Curriculum Leader” or a notation such as “engaging in leadership”. In two instances, the type of leadership was qualified. In these examples, the phrases, “low level leadership” and “back up leadership” were employed to describe the leadership.

## **Status**

For 14 respondents, status or recognition was significant in their response to this question. This included 4 primary and 10 secondary respondents who made a direct reference to status or the lack of status and/or recognition in the depiction of their roles. The discourse with respect to status generally related to the perception of the respondent's status on a particular school site but in some instances this was widened to include the general perception of L3CT and the selection process. All but one reference to status was negative.

Essentially, despite their hard work and the complexity of their role, the respondents who made reference to status felt that they had not been accorded appropriate status or recognition. For example, one felt "*ignored and undervalued*" while another said he was "*teacher in charge of Biology but get no recognition*". There were several references to negative reactions from peers as a result of the L3CT's change in classification or status, such as, "*cringe factor for those with L3CT...those without it can't stand us*" and "*nobody in their right mind would want the extra work involved in applying when the status achieved is unrewarding*". These examples highlight the frustration of some L3CT who feel they have worked hard to gain L3CT status only to find that their peers do not accord them any recognition.

For some respondents, the lack of a defined role meant there was a sense of not being accorded any recognition at all. For example, one respondent equated the lack of a defined L3CT role with a lack of recognition. When asked what her L3CT role was she responded, "*none. I feel ignored and undervalued.*"

Whereas another respondent felt that they had no clarity about the L3CT role and as a result there had been an intensification of workload. *“I have so many extra duties at the school, I am not sure if they are level 111 ones or not!!...”*

Respondents who felt they had not been accorded appropriate recognition were unhappy with the status of L3CT. Sometimes there were tensions because L3CTS were not accorded the same status as Level 3 administrators. The lack of recognition by peers was particularly significant. Those respondents that felt there was a lack of recognition questioned the worth of the L3CT award, given the arduous selection process.

### **No change to the work**

In their description of their role, 9 respondents explicitly stated that their work in schools had not changed subsequent to being awarded L3CT. One of these respondents was given no L3CT role whilst the others continued with roles or tasks they had undertaken prior to becoming L3CT; so essentially they experienced no change. In some instances, these respondents highlighted the fact that gaining L3CT status was a result of having performed these roles prior to making their application for L3CT status. In addition to these respondents, there were another 7 respondents (3 primary and 4 secondary) who were employed as a L3CT who had not been allocated a L3CT role.

### **Determining the Role of the L3CT**

Based on responses to Question 17, the determination of the role of the L3CT is site-based. Whilst DoE guidelines provide a framework for defining the type of work expected of the L3CT, the individual school determines how the resource shall be used. This decision is influenced by the availability of staff, funds and the attitude and



leadership style of the school's administration. Of the respondents without a role, 6 respondents (1 primary and 5 secondary) referred to industrial conditions such as a lack of funds or the teacher shortage as mediating factors. For example, one respondent gave a reason for the lack of a L3CT role as: *No L3CT role due to teacher shortage.*

Across both sectors there were 22 (10%) respondents who made direct reference to having experienced the role of L3CT on more than one site, who explicitly discussed the differences in these experiences. These teachers were particularly insightful in foregrounding the role, played by the school's administration, highlighting how roles were organized differently on different sites and how their perception of self worth changed accordingly.

The fact that the determination of L3CT roles was site specific is clearly emphasized in these responses to Question 17. One respondent said for example, "this was the first year I have been valued as a level 3 teacher in my arrival to a school negotiating the role in the past has been difficult". Similarly another commented: "I am not working as an L3CT at present because I believe my skills and knowledge are not appreciated at my substantive school. I have no desire to return to that school" In the last example, the teacher took an acting position elsewhere and attributed this relocation to the way in which the L3CT program was facilitated at the previous school.

Despite the fact that there is a requirement for school principals to negotiate an appropriate role with L3CTs and record the roles, some L3CTs have not been allocated a role. Generally teachers were unable to negotiate a role that they felt was suited to their interests and abilities. For those who were unsuccessful in negotiating their role, the L3CT experience was less satisfactory.

## Responses to Question 18

Question 18 asked respondents how their *work changed subsequent to becoming a L3CT*. The question was designed to assess the extent to which the work undertaken as an L3CT differs from their work prior to receiving this level. In total, 80 (95%) secondary respondents and 117 (88.6%) primary respondents addressed this question, with only 5 providing no qualifying detail. Of the respondents who supplied no qualifying detail, 4 replied, *No* and 1, *Yes*. All but 7 secondary respondents provided qualifying detail to their response. The 7 respondents without any qualifying detail all stated that there had been no change to their work.

The majority of the respondents chose to give some qualifying detail comparing their work prior to and post becoming an L3CT. As with responses to Question 17, in addition to a description of their work, many respondents included references to other factors. These included perceptions of self-efficacy as an L3CT, the way work was negotiated, the L3CT selection process, the impact of the L3CT role on the lives of the respondents and the perception held by colleagues of the L3CT. As with Question 17, some respondents were negative about their work and the roles they had been given or in some cases not given, whilst others were positive and/or went to some length to demonstrate their achievements since becoming L3CT. In their responses to this question, only 4 respondents made negative comments about the selection process for L3CT.

Responses to Question 18 were varied in detail. Some respondents made a short statement outlining the key difference subsequent to gaining the L3CT classification, such as, “less teaching”, or “more time”, whereas others gave a brief description of their current role illustrating either the change or lack of change in their work. As with

responses to Question 17, some respondents reported the fractions of time allocated to the various roles they performed in schools. In some instances, respondents referred to their response to Question 17 as evidence of the role they performed.

On the following page Table 9: *L3CT Change to Work Practices Subsequent to Becoming an L3CT* maps the responses to Question 18. These responses identified changes to work practices for both primary and secondary respondents. Commonalities were identified and then data were categorized accordingly.

Table 9

*L3CT Change to Work Practices Subsequent to Becoming an L3CT*

Change	Primary	Secondary	Average
Minimal or no change	22%	41%	30 %
More “admin work”	4.27%	3.75%	4.08%
Increased leadership role	11.1%	6.25%	9.69%
Increased responsibility	8.54%	1.25%	5.61%
Increased autonomy	3.41%	1.25%	2.55%
Increased status	10.25%	10%	10.20%
Increased self efficacy	4.27%	5%	4.59%
Additional or broader role(s)	16.23%	10%	13.77%
Less teaching	3.41%	3.75%	3.57%
Increased work load	10.25%	15%	12.24%
More engagement with other teachers	9.40%	3.75%	7.14%
More involvement in decision making	8.45%	1.25%	5.61%
Working across district	5.12%	2.5%	4.08%
Promotional opportunities	2.56%	5%	3.57%
Increased time	22.22%	6.25%	15.81%

The most frequent response (30%) for both primary and secondary L3CTs was that subsequent to becoming L3CT, there was in fact no real or minimal change to respondents’ work in schools. Little or no change to work performed was more a secondary phenomenon, with nearly twice as many secondary respondents, as primary

respondents saying there was little or no change. This was generally qualified by a reference to having worked as a leader prior as a means of gaining the L3CT classification. The following typifies this kind of response, where engagement in school leadership prior to gaining the award is highlighted:

*I consider I received my L3 status in recognition of the ongoing leadership roles I have played and continue to play in, in the schools in which I work. I work at the highest possible level all the time both in my classroom roles and in any leadership role I undertake. This level of commitment has not changed.*

For many respondents, gaining recognition for the additional work they regularly undertook was the only significant change.

### **Increased Time to Carry out Tasks**

Increased time to carry out additional roles was the next most common response for both primary and secondary respondents (16%) to this question. There was a sense that in many respects the L3CTs were performing the same or similar roles to what they had been doing prior and now there were being given some actual time allocation for the task. Some respondents made a point of stating that this time allowance was still insufficient for the demands of the role. “I have more time each week, 2hrs 30min, to accomplish these tasks. (It is still not enough!)”

In some instances, there was a sense that subsequent to becoming L3CT, there was less time, as release from teaching previously had been by negotiation, or as required rather than to a strict time allocation. The following respondent for example, highlights scrutiny or accountability:

*Yes, my duties being supervised more closely and not spontaneous, but ongoing and more time consuming ... whereas previously I may have been released from teaching to fulfill various leadership roles for short periods, now my 0.1 L3 time is seen to be ample, which it isn't.*

### **Additional or Broader Roles**

The next most frequent response to Question 18 was that L3CTs undertook additional or broader roles since becoming L3CT. A total of 13.7 percent of all respondents cited additional or broader roles since becoming an L3CT, for example, “There has been an increase in work-load and a diversity of roles.” In some instances, an existing role was broadened. For example, it was extended across the school, whereas in other cases the L3CT took on an entirely new role. The following respondent describes how the role became district wide and entailed the provision of more professional development in schools: *As my role was the same as above I continued but became more involved in running AGQTP (Aust. Govt. Quality Teacher Projects) across the district plus more PD in schools.*

There was some evidence in the responses to Question 18 that described additional roles of an increased pressure to undertake additional roles subsequent to becoming an L3CT. The following example highlights how the pressure to undertake additional roles was often related to perception about how the L3CT may be perceived by others:

*I tend to take on more roles – don't want to be seen as not earning the status – so I seem to keep on doing more and more stuff – even if it is not Level 3, e.g. organizing camps to Canberra.*

Stress as a result of struggling to cope with the increased workload was cited by some respondents. The following example highlights the pressure of teaching, undertaking additional duties and fulfilling expectations that an L3CT is a “super teacher”:

*I am under a lot more stress to do duties at L3 and at the same time teach in a classroom. Staff think that you're going to be a “super” teacher and that puts a lot of pressure on myself...*

The citing of additional roles was slightly higher in the primary cohort than the secondary cohort, where 6 percent more teachers had a more expanded role post L3CT than the secondary cohort. Consequently a number of primary respondents cited increased workload (12%) as a significant factor since becoming L3CT. Again, in these examples, there was a belief that the school’s administrators and colleagues expected this increased workload. The following example highlights the way in which an L3CT can feel coerced to undertake a significantly increased workload:

*All extra work was pushed on to me by administration and other teachers without consultation. Administration saw me as an extra pair of hands and also a curriculum developer, ‘teacher-leader’. In short – my workload tripled beyond what I was previously doing that helped me to attain L3CT status.*

As evidenced in the following example, there was also a sense of respondents being unsure as to just how much work they should be doing:

*I am still doing a lot of extra work in my Faculty, which does not make up part of my Level 3 duties. I feel next year I will be much stronger in ‘Negotiating’ my role. I have completed a number of surveys for DET, the Union and L3CT Assoc. about our role but I rarely get feedback – what are other teachers doing for the same time and money??*

### **Increased Work Load**

Interestingly, whilst primary L3CT reported a greater expansion in roles, increased workload was cited more often by secondary L3CT (15%). The fact that primary L3CT reported greater expansion of roles corresponds to the fact that almost double the amount of secondary respondents (41%) reported minimal or no change to their work as opposed to only 22.2% of primary respondents. However, the higher rates of increased work load reported by secondary respondents is not explained by these data and may be due in part to specific aspects of the secondary curriculum and school structure.

### **Increased Status**

As with responses to Question 17, a number of respondents highlighted status in their responses to Question 18. Positive and negative comments were made in reference to the status or recognition for performing valuable leadership roles and the efforts made to gain the L3CT classification. Similar numbers of primary and secondary respondents and 25 percent of all respondents reported a change in status subsequent to becoming an L3CT. This change in status was generally viewed as recognition of L3CT leadership and hard work in gaining the level. The following examples are illustrative of this particular viewpoint:

- *Usually it gives me more status in the eyes of colleagues.*
- *...Recognition of my ability and experience...*

In response to Question 18, 4 primary and 5 secondary respondents commented negatively about their status as L3CT. This negativity was largely centered on the lack of respect shown by non-L3CT peers. Some respondents felt that there was a certain



degree of ambivalence towards L3CT on the part of colleagues, whereas other respondents reported that non-L3CT teachers were actively hostile towards them. The following examples demonstrate the range of these responses. In the first example, the respondent highlights the fact that her status is not seen as equal to Level Three Administrators, such as Deputy Principals. Here leadership is equated with hierarchical authority.

*I still think that many Principals do not recognize Level 3 teachers as being in a leadership role. Deputies are still seen as being of a higher status. I think Level 3 teachers need to be seen as equal but with a different role.*

Some respondents, including the following, wrote more emotively about their perceived status. “I know L3CT’s are perceived as sycophants who work too hard and make others feel uncomfortable or threatened (only the ones who, I suppose, should feel uncomfortable)”.

The use of the word ‘sycophant’ highlights the tensions around status in the workplace. Similarly, the following respondent says that to an extent, there is a degree of professional jealousy as a result of the L3CT role. As these quotes illustrate, concerns about the lack of status were primarily related to the way the L3CT felt they were treated, rather than the lack of any extrinsic award, such as salary or title.

### **The Role of the Administrator**

Like Question 17, Question 18 elicited comments about the role of administration. Comments generally referred to the way in which school administrators allocated tasks to the L3CT, or the expectations administrators had of the role. There were 13 respondents (7 percent) who were overtly critical of the attitude and behavior

of the school's administration team. The majority (77 percent) of these respondents were primary L3CT. Respondents who were critical generally focused on the negotiation of the L3CT role or failure to include the L3CT in meaningful decision-making. On primary L3CT explained, "In my current school, the role of L3CT is not highly regarded. Rather than me selecting special projects/focus, I have been "told" what I will do – no negotiation what so ever".

In addition to the lack of negotiation about the role, there were also comments about the tendency to give the L3CT a multitude of jobs that the L3CT did not consider was part of their role, as seen in the following examples given by primary L3CTs,

- *More administrative – Admin. handball lots of jobs.....*
- *The Level 3 status in Classroom Teacher is an excuse for senior management to impose their work that they cannot do, but would love to be seen to have achieved so they can add any measured success/achievement to their own portfolio and advance their own goals.*

In some instances this situation had a profound effect on the individual's motivation and/or ability to perform the L3CT role. For example, the following primary L3CT respondent describes her reasons for taking stress leave as being directly related to increased workload: *My workload has increased – my time in the classroom reduced. I am currently on stress leave due to this and other factors linked to poor administration practices. I am not feeling very satisfied or positive toward teaching at present.*

Some also experienced increased workload and no increase in status or sense of being valued by senior administrators, for example one primary L3CT said there was *"more work, less time and no "leadership" status. I have had to work hard to maintain*

*my “Role”, due to Male Deputy actively undermining “Curriculum” development initiatives.”*

Again this example highlights the role played by other staff members in determining the level of satisfaction with the L3CT role.

Some respondents were not overtly critical of the administration in determining their role but acknowledged that the school’s administrators were insufficiently guided in managing L3CT or lacked time to adequately address the issue because of system demands, for example one respondent commented, ...”Administrators don’t have the time or space to utilize this new concept properly”

There was a sense that some L3CT felt that administration may actually feel that the management of L3CT was an added burden, as highlighted in the following two examples given by secondary L3CTs

- *The need to allocate a role to the L3CT could be seen as another task imposed on the school’s administration.*
- *In my last school where I achieved Level 3 status, the role was not defined and seen as a bit of a nuisance as I had to be given a “job”.*

Again these responses highlight time as a key factor in effective application of the L3CT program in schools. Some respondents indicated that their school could not release from classroom duties and did not prioritize the L3CT program or plan effectively for its implementation.

### **Summary of Data from Question 18**

In both sectors, the relatively low reports of change, such as increased leadership and autonomy, is related to the high level of respondents who reported no real change

and/or the belief that they had performed a leadership role prior to being awarded the L3CT.

For many respondents, the L3CT was a positive experience that had led to opportunity and professional growth, in particular engagement with the professional learning of their colleagues. Many respondents valued the opportunity to take on leadership roles outside of their classroom. These roles provided increased career satisfaction and possible opportunities for further promotion, including administrative roles such as relieving deputy. For many respondents who deemed the L3CT as positive, the role provided challenges and an opportunity to engage in specific programs of interest. In comparison to their secondary counterparts, primary respondents reported slightly higher levels of increased leadership, responsibility, autonomy, and engagement with other teachers and involvement in decision-making.

Only 21 respondents (11 percent) across both sectors made explicitly negative comments in their response to Question 18 about the L3CT role. This total does not include those L3CT who commented that their workload had increased and/or that there was insufficient time to perform the role. Of the explicitly negative comments, 12 respondents (57 percent) complained primarily about the way they had been either bullied into undertaking particular tasks or had been disadvantaged in terms of the organization of their role by administration. Eight respondents (38 percent) commented negatively with respect to the way they were treated by others and/or the lack of status given to their role.

### **Gender Differences**

As with responses to Question 17, responses to Question 18 showed no discernible difference in terms of the type of work or change in the nature of work

undertaken by L3CT. However, when the percentage of respondents making negative comments about the L3CT role in response to Question 18 was tallied, gender was significant. Interestingly 17 (81%) of these overtly negative comments were made by male L3CT and 13 (87%) of these males were aged over 45 years. A number of these respondents highlighted conflict with administration. Only 4 females (19%) made explicitly negative comments. All of these respondents were aged over 45 years. Of the females who responded negatively to Question 18, three were concerned with workload issues and administration and one with treatment by other staff.

### **Responses to Question 19**

In addition to the qualitative detail yielded by Questions 17 and 18, some respondents added qualitative data in their responses to Question 19. Question 19 was a closed question. Respondents were asked: *Do you consider the L3CT has assisted you to engage in a leadership role in the school setting? YES/NO.* Unlike the two previous survey questions, lines were not provided for a written response because qualitative detail was not anticipated. However, 33 (34 percent) primary L3CTs and 25 (31 percent) secondary respondents used the space below the question to provide unsolicited qualifying detail to support their responses. These data also yielded valuable information as to how L3CTs viewed their role. Also apparent in the responses to this question were varying interpretations of what constitutes teacher leadership. Based on the fact that they were now considered part of the administration team, some respondents clearly viewed themselves as leaders, whereas others felt that they had always engaged in school leadership and constructed it in terms of their work with other teachers.

Respondents who supplied qualifying detail in their responses to Question 19 were divided almost equally, with respect to whether or not the L3CT program had assisted them to engage in leadership. There was no difference between the primary and secondary sectors. Of the respondents who answered in the negative, 9 primary and 5 secondary teachers qualified their response by saying they had previously engaged in leadership roles and /or the process of gaining L3CT required the demonstration of leadership. Of the respondents who answered affirmatively, the reasons given included promotional opportunities subsequent to becoming L3CT, an expansion of their role and a greater expectation of leadership from the school's administration.

Responses to Question 19 foregrounded similar concerns to those highlighted in Questions 17 and 18, namely the role of administration, status and workload. Again there were few explicitly negative comments about the L3CT role in responses to this question. These negative responses included: 4 comments about the L3CT process and 4 about the way the program was administered and/or the impact on the respondent's classroom teaching.

In these negative responses, there was a clear sense of being let down by the program. In a similar vein were comments about lack of time. For two respondents, there was less opportunity to engage in leadership subsequent to becoming a L3CT due to increased demands. Surprisingly, one respondent was adamant that they did not want to engage in leadership.

A number of responses to Question 19 also highlighted the role of the school's administration in determining the level of engagement in school leadership. This included 12 respondents (6 percent) who commented the ability of school administrators to value or utilize the program effectively. Of these, 9 respondents who had experienced L3CT on more than one site explained, that the extent to which leadership was

encouraged, varied from site to site. As with Questions 17 and 18, status was an issue for some respondents, with 6 respondents explicitly discussing the lack of status accorded to L3CTs and three citing increased status as a result of the program. In this way, these respondents linked the notion of teacher leadership with increased status.

## **Discourse**

The introduction to this chapter highlighted the choice of language at the micro level of the individual word. In some instances the punctuation was also significant in conveying the attitudes and values of the L3CT. The choice of language and stylistic devices were significant as a means of determining the extent to which the experience of L3CT differed to the expectation or intent of the program. Consequently, I interrogated the data with respect to choice of language and mapped the language respondents used in their responses to the three questions to describe their L3CT role. The tables on the following pages present all of the verbs employed by respondents to describe the work they do, the nouns used to describe themselves and the nouns and adjectives (where applicable) used to describe their non-L3CT colleagues.

### **Verbs employed by respondents to describe their work as L3CT**

The verbs employed by respondents were categorized according to the type of work described. The selected categories are: *Working with Others*, *Development of Resources*, *Planning and Organization*, *Facilitation of Professional Learning and/or Management of School Programs*. Table 10 on the following page presents these data.

Table 10

*Verbs Employed to Describe L3CT Work*

Working with others	Developing resources	Planning and organizing	Facilitating professional learning and managing programs
Lead	Purchase	Plan	Induct
Mentor	Order	Formulate	Conduct
Support	Apply (for funding)	Design	Facilitate
Collaborate	Collect	Identify	Deliver
Manage	Maintain	Implement Report Review Improve Enhance	Discuss Promote

In many instances, the respondents employed a variety of verbs to list or detail responsibilities. As previously discussed, there was often a strong sense of audit conveyed in the detailing of the L3CT role. Some of the verbs described specific tasks that could be constructed as managerial for example, “purchasing” or “ordering”. They may also be part of a larger project or role that encompasses more leadership. Verbs such as “formulate,” “design”, and “review”” tend to be more connotative of leadership practices. Working closely with others is implied in verbs such as “mentor”, “collaborate”, “induct” and “discuss”. Change management is also an implied component in a number of these verbs.

In addition to these specific task-orientated verbs, respondents used a number of verbs to describe the way in which they were treated by administrators or colleagues. In Table 11 on the following page these verbs are presented in the two categories of administrator and colleagues. The category of Actions of Colleagues refers essentially to non-L3CT, but also includes subject Heads of Departments.



Table 11

*Verbs Describing the Treatment of L3CT by Others*

Actions of Administrators	Actions of Colleagues
Exploit	Respect
Push	Resent
Marginalise	Recognise
Bully	Seek (assistance)
Appreciate	Loathe
Negotiate	
Value	
Embrace	

The L3CT were not asked explicitly about the way in which their colleagues treated them. This information was volunteered in responses to questions about the nature of L3CT work. Beliefs about the way others treated respondents illustrated the dichotomy of acceptance and non- acceptance, as well as that of appreciation and exploitation.

On the following page Table 12: *Nouns Employed in the L3CT Description of Roles* presents the nouns employed by the respondents to describe themselves and their non-L3CT peers.

Table 12

*Nouns Employed in the L3CT Description of Roles*

Nouns Employed in the L3CT	Description of Roles
L3CT	Non L3CT
Leader	Rank and file teachers
Mentor	Pre-service teachers
Facilitator	Colleagues
Administrator	Peers
Coordinator	
Teacher	
Head	
Admin assistant	
Admin. Dog's body	
Classroom management	
Consultant	
Director	
Collegiate support person	
Best practice role	
Model	
Outstanding practitioner	
Not 'proper L3's'	
Bit of a nuisance	
Extra pair of hands (for admin)	
Pleasing specimens	
Performance manager	
Resource	
"Super-teacher"	
Sycophant	

These data were interrogated to determine the way in which teacher identity was revealed and the extent to which this is situated in the discourse of the 'other' (Palfreyman, 2002). Traditionally, this binary was employed in relation to ethnic sub-groups but may also be applicable to gender and, as Palfreyman argues, based on his work on curriculum innovation projects, in institutional sub groups to professional identity. Given the relationship between leadership and power, it would be reasonable to assume that certain metaphors for example, the dichotomy between leader and follower, may well be evident in the discourse. A number of respondents clearly articulated the tensions and political struggles between themselves and administration and between themselves and their peers. Primarily, these tensions relate to negotiation and non- negotiation of the L3CT role, expectation, status and perceptions by peers.

### **Summary of Qualitative Data from Survey Questions**

Based on the data collected from the open-ended survey questions, in addition to their classroom teaching, L3CT perform a diversity of roles in schools. They are involved in curriculum leadership, programs relating to SAER, mentoring of other staff, organization of special projects, school review and school planning. Often these roles are collaborative. The majority of L3CT undertake more than one specific role at any given time. Some L3CT are also called on from time to time to perform more administrative duties such as, relieving for the absent deputy principal or principal. Generally, this is viewed as an opportunity to further develop skills, particularly where there is a desire for promotion.

The type of work undertaken generally is not related to gender, age or level of experience. The experience of the L3CT differs markedly from site to site in terms of

the nature of the role and time allocation. The experience of those L3CT who had worked on more than one site illustrated that there were different expectations of the role from both the larger school community and the L3CT themselves. Resourcing and budget constraints were also highlighted as a factor in the determination of the role and/or the time released from teaching to perform additional tasks.

Commonly, respondents reported little change to their work in schools subsequent to becoming a L3CT, primarily because they had been working as leaders in schools as a precursor to L3CT status. In many cases, the L3CT role is a continuation or development of programs that the teacher was already engaged in, prior, to becoming a L3CT. Respondents highlighted the fact that performing these roles was a means of demonstrating their ability in their evidence portfolio to be an L3CT.

Many respondents cited as a benefit of working as an L3CT, the positive contribution they felt they made to improve student outcomes. They also valued the opportunity for professional growth and the opportunity to work more closely with other teachers to develop programs. Other positive outcomes cited by respondents included: formal recognition of their expertise, enhanced status, increased salary and increased time to develop particular programs or areas of interest.

Negative responses to the program primarily related to, work load, lack of negotiation about the type of work to be performed in the role and/or lack of status. Concerns relating to work load were expressed by respondents who were generally very positive about their role as L3CT, as well as by those who had more negative views on the L3CT role. The next most common concern related to status, in particular the lack of acknowledgment or value placed on L3CT work in schools by super-ordinates and/or peers. Feelings of self worth were connected to others not valuing the respondent's

contribution and/or recognizing the complex and difficult process the L3CT had undertaken to gain the status, rather than the lack of extrinsic rewards.

I was surprised that explicit use of the word, “leader” in responses to all open-ended questions was relatively low. However, the majority of respondents cited programs that they led in schools. Based on the responses to these questions, the decision as to whether or not the L3CT engage in school leadership is complicated, due to the differing viewpoints as to what constitutes school leadership. In their articulation of their roles, some respondents constructed leadership as performing the role of an administrator, whereas others based their construction of leadership in terms of their level of autonomy in their role and/or their involvement in whole school decision-making. Respondents were evenly divided as to whether or not the L3CT assisted them to engage in school leadership. Again this would seem to be primarily due to the fact that these respondents believed they had been working as leaders, although not formally recognized as such prior and in some cases in order to gain L3CT status. Therefore the work of the majority of L3CT was more of a continuum, rather than a new role.

As I expected, the qualitative data highlight varying and competing discourses. To some extent, the different discourses represent the varying contexts in which the individual L3CT work. These discourses include the official discourse of the Department’s policy with respect to the program, the discourse of professional classroom practitioner and the more colloquial “insider view”. The discourses are dependent on individual experience, expectation of the program and setting.

## Chapter 6: DoE L3CT Documentation

### Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of qualitative data collected from DoE's written documentation on the L3CT, specifically the dedicated *Guide to Becoming a L3CT (L3CT Guide)* and the *WA Competency Framework* currently used to assess teacher suitability for the award. These texts are interrogated for their viewpoint on teacher leadership. In this chapter I discuss how language, including text organization and grammatical features, shape the situated identity (Gee, 2001) of the L3CT as a leader in schools. This is followed by a discussion of the policy discourse and a summary of the information on teacher leadership collected from DoE policy.

These documents are analysed because they represent the authoritative voice on the L3CT program and convey information about the purpose and expected practices of the L3CT. These documents are located online on the DoE website and are in the public domain. The target audience is teachers employed by DoE. These documents are examples of what Crump & Ryan (2001, p.3) term multi-faceted texts that both state policy direction and act as micro-political resources for educators, consultants and others in the community. Such texts contribute to what Gee (2001) terms a master cultural model, in this instance of the expert teacher as leader.

Whilst the web pages are updated regularly, the information in terms of the selection criteria and purpose statements remains much the same. The current online

document outlining the L3CT program contains a link to the *Teachers Agreement 2008*. In addition to setting out the industrial agreement with respect to time and salary conditions associated with L3CT, this agreement makes reference to how the role is to be organized at a school level. All of these documents are also included in a dedicated online *Guide to Becoming a Level 3 Classroom Teacher*. The Guide includes some specific information about the application process, as well as the application form. There are also some accompanying photos and teacher stories or snapshots of the L3CT experience as well as an introductory statement by the WA Director General of Education.

The teacher snapshots with accompanying photos have not been included in the analysis, as permissions have not been sought from these teachers. I have chosen not to include the more specific application information with respect to submitting portfolios, as this study is not focused on the application or selection process, except where it conveys information in relation to expectations of teacher leadership. The guide does contain a section entitled, “*your new role*”. This text was considered in the analysis as it contains important information about how L3CT is to be applied in schools.

The availability of these documents online means that at least in the first instance teachers will access these documents electronically and will be able to cross reference to linked documents. Consequently, design or production elements including font, text layout and pictures are part of the way in which information is communicated and therefore part of the production of the discourse. Red font is used for subheadings that guide the reader through the requirements and process of becoming an L3CT. Visual texts such as photos are not included in this analysis, as essentially they accompany the individual teacher experiences. However, the study acknowledges that these elements engage the reader in what would otherwise be quite dense written text.

The analysis of the written text in the L3CT Guide allows for the identification of both the purpose and the practice of the L3CT program from the viewpoint of the employer, DoE. This enables the program to be understood in terms of where it currently resides with respect to industrial agreements and overarching DoE workforce policy. In addition to identifying the overall intention of the L3CT initiative, these data were interrogated with respect to their engagement with the different discourses of teacher leadership. The examination of this policy document also allows for a comparison of official discourse on teacher leadership with teacher accounts of their leadership practice that were presented in Chapter 5.

### **Analysis and Presentation of Data**

As with the qualitative data collected from teacher responses, it is possible to quantify the direct references to leadership and use summative content analysis to determine key themes. Whilst leadership is a global organizer in the deconstruction of this text, as with the teacher-generated data, it is pertinent to examine the selection of language at the micro level to examine these themes. Again the data are presented in tables that emphasize the importance of nouns, verbs and adjectives as signifiers of meaning in constructing teacher leadership and practices of L3CT. The essential questions in the interrogation of these data include the expected attributes and role of the L3CT in schools and the degree to which the authoritative view of the program differs from the practice of the L3CT. The examination of language and text organization also considers the way in which the text positions the reader. Reader positioning is an important element in text deconstruction. Thomas (2005, p. 13) in her analysis of the policy, *Australia's Teachers Australia's Future* identifies specific discourses and demonstrates how the policy document “positions the committee as the



authority or giver of information and readers as receivers.” It was expected that the L3CT documentation would operate in a similar manner.

### **Description of the L3CT Program**

The opening statement in the Guide is by the Director General of Education. There is an accompanying photo of the Director General. This positions the reader to see the Director General as the author and the statements therefore as having considerable authority. Moreover, the opening statements are what Thomas (2005, p. 12) refers to as “grammatical features of modality or declarations or statements of fact that realize strong commitments to truth”. The document, for example, contains a declaration that highlights the role of the L3CT in school leadership and links quality teachers and leaders to the discourse of successful schools. “Leadership in our schools is vital to the success of our students’ education. Our exemplary teachers play important lead roles in facilitating this success” (DET, 2004b, p. 3). These statements or declarations operate in the same way as the statements in Thomas’ study of *Australia’s Teachers Australia’s Future* that constructed “teachers as pivotal to successful schooling, innovation and future growth” (2005, p. 16) and which constructed assumed agreement with the identity of the ‘good teacher’.

In the opening paragraph of the L3CT Guide, the use of the possessive pronoun, “our” is inclusive and encourages agreement with ‘statements of truth’ that link successful outcomes for students with specific leadership practices. A shared goal of facilitating successful leadership or alternatively a shared problem of addressing the need for better quality leadership is assumed. Later in the L3CT Guide, the reader is cast in the role of L3CT or an aspirant L3CT and addressed directly as “you”, thereby further personalizing these statements. *Amongst the resources of English, it is the*

*pronouns, I, you, we, they (and their variants), that have a special function in producing a social and political ‘space’ in which the speaker, the audience, and others are positioned* (Chiltern & Schaffer, 2009, p. 16). In casting the reader as an aspirant teacher leader, the modality of giver and receiver of information as illustrated by Thomas (2005) is also evident.

In the L3CT guide, leadership is clearly constructed as participating in far-reaching decision-making that includes the wider school and education community. The L3CT is said to “contribute to improvements in student learning in your school or across other schools, and influence the development of your school community” (DET, 2004b p. 3). In particular, the inclusion of the verb “influence” connotes the notion of these teachers playing a pivotal role in school decision-making rather than merely “contributing”. The role is described as “additional” to teaching and as being “rewarding” and “challenging”. Another desirable quality of the teacher leader that is highlighted is the ability to inspire others.

The positioning the reader as aspirant L3CT assumes a particular desirability. To increase this desirability, the document also highlights the esteem in which these L3CT teachers are held. The word, “exemplary” is used three times in the brief introduction. Other descriptors that connote success and even elite membership are used:

- “You will join a select group of teachers who are valued by their colleagues and the educational community”.
- “If you are an exceptional teacher who leads and inspires your colleagues” (DET, 2004b, p. 3).

Such teachers are described as having “high quality lessons” and “outstanding teaching practices”. The use of the word “select” is interesting because whilst it

suggests status and quality for some readers, it may also suggest exclusivity based on the notion that this group is expected to be small in number. At this point, the discourse of quality teachers and successful schools could be construed as more closely aligned with a discourse of teacher deficit (Bloomfield, 2006). Why would we expect these teachers to be few in number?

There is also a strong sense of a reward or acknowledgement being offered, with the expectation that this will lead to ongoing professional growth. L3CT teachers are described as being at the forefront of the teaching profession. It would seem that as such they have the capacity to be school leaders. Leadership is both an added quality and an expectation. This ability to lead is presented as a key determiner as to whether or not a teacher will be successful in their application for L3CT status. Also suggested in this statement on status, is the discourse of teacher professionalism and to some extent a more democratic or emancipatory teaching profession (Sachs, 2005).

The L3CT guide also locates the achievement of L3CT within the *WA Teacher Competency Framework*, which was developed out of the 1996 Enterprise Agreement (Jasman, 1998) to describe a career path for teachers. To achieve L3CT status, applicants are required to demonstrate that they are highly competent teachers working in the final phase of the framework. Contained within the competency framework is a more detailed description of the desirable qualities of the expert teacher or teacher leader. More in depth discussion of the framework and its relationship to L3CT is provided later in this chapter.

All of this information is linked to the DoE's statement on career advancement. Links to the L3CT Guide are on the website's general teaching information pages and those pages that relate specifically to career advancement. Documentation at time of writing still refers to the WA Competency Framework for Teachers. DoE's aim to

promote classroom teaching as a desirable and rewarding career is very clear. Teachers who wish to remain in the classroom but have a leadership role in schools are given the two alternatives, *Senior Teacher* and *Level 3 Classroom Teacher (L3CT)*.

### **The benefits of becoming a L3CT**

The L3CT guide also contains a specific section entitled *The Benefits of Becoming an L3CT*. This section contains a statement pertaining to L3CT that describes the qualities of the L3CT, their role as leaders and the benefits to the employee of becoming a L3CT. Again, teacher quality, teacher excellence and the rewarding of these desirable qualities are foregrounded. The statement about L3CT benefits repeats much of the information as the opening statement, providing through repetition a form of lexical cohesion (Bloomfield, 2006).

On the following page Table 13: *Description of the L3CT* presents all of the nouns and adjectives employed in DoE's description of the program to describe the attributes of the L3CT and the verbs employed to convey the nature of the work and the specific practices expected of the L3CT. In order for the reader to contextualise the information, where necessary, qualifying detail has been included. This contextual information is bracketed.

Table 13

*Description of the L3CT*

Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs
Asset	Exemplary	Recognized
Leaders	Exceptional	Rewarded (by the program)
Role model	Highly skilled	Provide (quality teaching and leadership)
	Experienced	Mentor (new teachers)
	Innovative	Develop, implement and evaluate (curriculum policy and programs)
	Successful	Manage (change effectively)
	Select (group)	Promote (consultation and collaboration)
	High (quality lessons)	Foster and support (productive teams)
	Outstanding (teaching)	Build (partnerships with teachers and community)

The description of the role statement creates a clear expectation of the L3CT having increased status, which is equated largely in terms of recognition by the employer. In addition to describing the role of the L3CT, which is specifically to “mentor”, “develop programs” and “foster partnerships” (DET, 2004b, p. 4), the role statement outlines the qualities of the L3CT. Emphasis is placed on the positive way in which the employer views the L3CT classification. The L3CTs are “recognised” for their expertise and “rewarded”. They are also described as an “asset” (DET, 2004b, p. 4). The language employed throughout this description is also highly connotative of success and achievement. Again there is frequent use of the superlative, including, “exceptional”, “highly” and “exemplary”.

In keeping with the Department's stated objective to recruit and retain quality, the document addresses the issues of career satisfaction, including salary and opportunity for advancement. In addition to being linked to the objective of recruiting and retaining quality teachers, there is also clear evidence of the discourse of teacher professionalism and revitalization. Quality teaching and successful leadership of L3CTs are linked to "advancement of their schools" and the opportunity to "pursue other professional goals". (DET, 2004b, p. 3). The reference to "advancement of schools" is suggestive of the more neo-liberal discourse of the marketization of schools (Bourke et al, 2012).

### **Extrinsic versus intrinsic rewards**

Some of the rewards offered to aspirant L3CT are clearly extrinsic, that is they are tangible and measurable and are set out in the current *Teachers Agreement*. Others are intrinsic in nature, that is, not so easily measured and will depend on the individual's perception of their worth and the specific contexts in which teachers work. On the following page Table 14: *L3CT Extrinsic and Intrinsic Rewards* presents the specific benefits of the L3CT classification that are outlined in the L3CT Guide (DET, 2004b). I have categorized these benefits as either intrinsic or extrinsic in nature.

Table 14

*L3CT Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards*

Intrinsic Rewards	Extrinsic Rewards
Career advancement	Salary increase
Sharing expertise with colleagues	Permanency if a temporary staff
A leadership role in schools	Member of a select group
Flexible role	Formal recognition

Because salary increases and permanency for temporary teachers are clearly measurable, they are classified as extrinsic. Formal recognition has also been classified as extrinsic, in that the successful applicants have a definite change of title. According to the L3CT Guide, “attainment of level 3 Status enables the teacher to be formally recognized as a school leader” (DET, 2004b, p. 5). Here, recognition is equated not only with a salary increase, but also with the accompanying change in level. The L3CT is placed on similar standing or rank with a Level 3 Administrator, who occupies the position of Head of Department (or in some contexts, Principal). Whilst there is a change in title, the extent to which the L3CT is accorded similar or equal status to a Level 3 administrator will vary in practice.

The rewards classified as intrinsic are those that are not obviously measureable. Essentially, these intrinsic awards are expectations of the program from the viewpoint of the employer. They are opportunities offered to L3CTs by the program including, flexibility and engaging with other staff in leadership roles. The notion of advancing one’s career whilst continuing to teach is given considerable emphasis in Departmental documentation and is constructed as a benefit. Here, there is an assumption that L3CTs primarily want to be school leaders, but also to remain as classroom teachers, rather

than have formal leadership roles such as principal. This duality of teacher and school leader is constructed as a benefit of the L3CT program.

The benefit of a flexible role is described in the L3CT Guide where it is explained that L3CT will determine, in collaboration with the principal or line manager, a role that “builds on their strengths and interests” (DET, 2004b, p. 5). This reflects DoE’s objective to provide opportunities for ongoing professional growth. These benefits have been classified intrinsic, as they cannot be guaranteed for every L3CT. They are dependent on the context in which L3CT works and the extent to which they are able to negotiate successfully within their school community. The worth of these particular ‘benefits’, will also depend on the perception of the individuals involved.

Whilst the L3CT Guide highlights leadership as a benefit for the L3CT, leadership is not explicitly defined in the Guide. There is an assumption that teachers have a shared understanding of what it means to be a teacher leader. Based on information contained in the WA Teacher Competency rubric in particular, leadership is equated with curriculum improvement, mentoring colleagues and working collaboratively with the wider community. L3CT are constructed as expert classroom teachers who have a sphere of influence beyond their classroom. Teacher leadership thus is defined as teachers moving beyond the confines of their classroom.

### **L3CT and the Competency Framework**

The L3CT Guide refers readers to the WA *Competency Framework for Teachers* that in 2012 is still the assessment tool for assessing suitability for the L3CT classification, despite the release of the *National Standards for Teachers* in 2012. The Framework was developed with reference to the then National Framework, in consultation with stakeholders as part of The Commonwealth funded National



Professional Development Program (NPDP). WA Teachers are generally familiar with the Competency Framework because it forms the basis for school based performance management, as well as its utilization as an assessment tool for both Senior Teacher classification and L3CT.

Competencies 1 and 2 are directly related to the craft of classroom teaching, including the development of appropriate curriculum, application of pedagogy and assessment and reporting. The evidence that teachers must provide for this competency is improved educational outcomes for students. This emphasis on academic performance links to the discourse of teacher quality and school reform. Competency 4 relates primarily to the provision of professional development to colleagues. This includes mentoring of peers, facilitation of professional learning in presentations and pre-service student teacher and beginning teacher induction programs. However, in this competency, the word leadership is not explicitly used however; “enhancing the knowledge and skills of other teachers” would generally be viewed as a leadership activity.

Competencies 3 and 5 make direct reference to teacher leadership. It is important to note that to be granted Level Three status, applicants must demonstrate to some extent that they are already operating at the level of leader or have achieved these competencies. Competency 3 implies leadership as a classroom practitioner, whereas Competency 5 indicates an expanded role engaging with the wider school community and involvement in school planning and decision-making. The data from the description for these two competencies allow for some determination of DoE’s understanding of what constitutes teacher leadership. On the following page, Table 15: *Activities Associated with Leadership* lists activities cited in competencies 3 and 5 that are equated with teacher leadership.

Table 15

*Activities Associated with Leadership*

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically reflecting on leadership practice</li> <li>• Generating new ideas in relation to teaching and leadership practice</li> <li>• Identifying professional development needs and engaging in activities that enhance teaching and leadership practices</li> <li>• Applying current teaching and leadership practices gained through professional learning</li> <li>• Seeking feedback to improve practice of self and others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to school development</li> <li>• Implementing system initiatives.</li> <li>• Imparting knowledge</li> <li>• Planning, developing and evaluating policy</li> <li>• Involving others</li> <li>• Leading and creating collaborative environments</li> <li>• Change management</li> <li>• Effective team building</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> <li>• Facilitating team processes</li> </ul>
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Competencies 3 and 5 highlight reflective practice, working collaboratively with others and change management. Change management is suggested in Competency 5, which highlights risk taking. Similarly in Competency 3, teachers are asked to “generate new ideas”, (DET, p. 15) thereby linking quality teaching and the L3CT to the discourse of school reform and innovation. Competency 5 also implies participating in shared governance of a school with a role in planning and developing school policy, rather than just a facilitation role. Evident in this competency then is an acknowledgement of both a more distributed leadership for schools and capacity building for the sustainment of this form of leadership. It could be argued that a more democratic discourse closer to the ‘Teachers as Leaders’ framework is emerging in this competency.

In addition to the assessment rubric, the L3CT Guide provides examples of evidence for each competency that teachers may use in the application portfolios. It is

suggested for Competency 3 that applicants cite “details of changes in practice as a result of professional learning” and “extract from an action research project” (DET, 2004, p. 15). Only one example specifically uses the word leadership. Applicants are advised that they could include an “*extract from a professional learning journal, diary or learning log that illustrates a high level of critical reflection on teaching practice and/or teacher leadership*” (DET, 2004, p. 18). The examples of evidence cited for Competency 5 explicitly foreground leadership. Nine examples are provided and six make direct reference to leadership. Salient examples include:

- “.... *extracts from relevant school development planning documents that confirm your leadership role and the outcomes achieved*”
- “*A colleague’s written verification describing your leadership role and the outcomes achieved*” (DET, p. 20)

Other examples highlight the role in school planning and policy writing, including new initiatives.

### **Determining the Role of the L3CT in Schools**

In terms of determining the L3CT’s role in a school, the L3CT Guide provides advice as to the determination of the L3CT role and a link to the *Teachers Agreement 2008*. The L3CT Guide states that the L3CT teacher’s school will be given an additional 0.1 teacher staffing, provided that the L3CT is employed at a fraction of at least 0.4. The time allocation allows for the L3CT to undertake specialized roles within the school. It is implied rather than stated that the allocated role will fit within this time parameter. There are also responsibilities for school administrators to ensure that the program is effectively managed in schools. On the following page, Table 16: *DoE Requirements*

*for Determining the Role of L3CT in Schools* sets out the information pertaining to determining the L3CT role as prescribed in this section of the L3CT Guide.

Table 16

*DoE Requirements for Determining the Role of L3CT in Schools*

Administrative Requirements	Understandings	Examples Given
Role is formally recorded	Is responsive to specific context	Supervising pre-service Teachers
Communicated to the wider community	Enables application of L3CT competencies	Mentoring teachers
Regularly reviewed	Reflects professional knowledge and expertise	Provision of work
	Is significant and visible	Shadowing opportunities
	Does not interfere with teaching role	Assisting schools that do not have any L3CT

It can be seen from these data that the determination of the role is viewed as a process of negotiation, where the principal and the teacher identify an appropriate role. According to DoE policy (L3CT Guide), the role needs to suit the context of the school, whilst also being suited to the expertise of the teacher. It is expected that the role allows for the demonstration of the Level Three capabilities but does not detract from the teaching role. The implication is that a single role such as supervising student teachers would be sufficient. There is an accountability aspect in that the principal is required to “formally record” (DET, 2004b, p. 12) the role. Effective management of the L3CT as a resource then can be viewed as part of the principal’s accountability. The fact, that the role should be “significant and visible” (DET, 2004, p. 13) again affirms the status of

the Level Three classroom teacher, whilst also providing accountability, as the work undertaken by the teacher would be obvious to the school community.

The L3CT Guide foregrounds the importance of both retaining the teaching role and the requirement that the L3CT works in partnership with the Principal, to determine the additional role. The classroom-teaching role is viewed as having primacy. *“Becoming a Level 3 Classroom Teacher should not impact on your teaching responsibilities. Your Level 3 role is in addition to your normal teaching load”* (DET, 2004b, p. 12). This quote is specific about the role of the L3CT as a leader. *“Using the 0.1FTE allocated to the school, you will have the opportunity to continue teaching and take on leadership roles”* (DET, 2004b, p.12). In interpreting this statement, it is important to note that 0.1FTE is the equivalent to a half-day a week. Consequently, the importance of the L3CT continuing as a classroom teacher is acknowledged as well as the notion that the additional role be suited to this time allocation. The document also acknowledges that at times the two parties may not come to an agreement regarding an appropriate role. Teachers who have not come to a satisfactory agreement with their principal or line manager are advised to contact their local Director of Schools.<sup>3</sup>

### **Discourse**

The L3CT Guide is a persuasive text that promotes the merits of the L3CT Award. Much of the language employed in these data is highly connotative of reward or status and is complimentary of the benefits of the program. As previously noted, there is considerable use of the superlative. The reader is assumed to be an aspirant school leader/L3CT. The continued use of the personal pronoun and assumption that the reader will want to be part of this “select group” is a persuasive device. The discourse is aimed

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<sup>3</sup> The Director of Schools is the regional line manager for schools.

at persuading the audience that L3CT is a worthwhile exercise. This theme is not unexpected. “The extent to which teachers value intended policy outcomes, impact on the success of the policy” (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

The discourse of the L3CT Guide is concerned primarily with the individual L3CT and the reciprocal responsibilities of the employer and employee, rather than the way in which other groups such as teaching peers or the wider community might view the L3CT. This makes sense in light of the fact that the text is written with an individual teacher as the reader in mind. Teacher quality in policy texts is linked to “the individualized innovative capacity of the new professional teacher” (Bloomfield, 2006, p. 5). However, there is an assumption that the teaching community will share the view of what constitutes teacher quality (Howie, 2006), in this case, of the L3CT as an “asset” and “exemplary practitioner”. Discourse then operates as a series of truth statements or declarations that construct a particular identity for the L3CT.

As expected, the language used to describe the role of the L3CT is less varied and nuanced in the official DoE discourse than in the individual teacher responses. Whereas the survey data were more colloquial and sometimes less positive about the role, the official documentation tended to be more formal and use what is often referred to by the profession as “edu–speak”. The discourse refers to practices such as “critical friend” and “purposeful authentic strategies” (DET, 2004b, p. 13). Teachers are said to demonstrate skills such as “consistent exemplary practice” and “effective development strategies”. This language constructs the situated identity of the level L3CT by defining the expected attributes on the assumption that teachers will share this understanding or discourse.

## **Summary of Data from DoE Documents**

The documentation emphasises the benefits of the L3CT award to the employee. Salary and improved status are key components of the strategy to recruit and retain quality teachers and promote the program as an alternative to traditional career trajectories of exemplary teachers to school administrators. There is also an acknowledgement of the vital role these expert teachers play in schools and the benefit to the wider school community if these teachers remain in schools and classrooms. The documentation supports the notion of the L3CT negotiating their role at a school level and promotes the idea of L3CT building on their interests and expertise. This acknowledges that each school is a unique environment and each teacher is regarded as an individual. The L3CT role is complementary to the teaching role rather than superseding it. There is no mention in the L3CT Guide of the L3CT being expected to work as pseudo administrators in schools or acknowledgement that the award may be seen as a “stepping stone” to becoming a school-administrator.

As with the survey data, the official documentation pertaining to the L3CT highlights teacher leadership. The belief that these teachers were operating at the level of teacher leader, prior to receiving the classification is very prominent in the DoE’s discourse. Teacher leadership is viewed as an essential element in the body of evidence required in an L3CT application. DoE’s documentation recognizes that the L3CT classification may well be formal recognition of work already undertaken by these teachers. In this way, the L3CT is a reward for engaging at this level of competency. It also suggests that L3CT aspirants and L3CT perform a vital leadership role in schools.

Whilst the exact nature of teacher leadership is not explicitly defined for the reader within the official documents, there are several direct references to the term

“teacher leader”. It is possible to deconstruct the indicators for the competencies to determine the expected practices of the “teacher leader”. In particular, teacher leadership is equated with the ability to engage others in collaborative school decision-making and improvement practices. L3CT have a key role to play in change management. This is underpinned by high engagement in professional development, critical self-reflection and knowledge of system initiatives.

Similar to the findings of Thomas (2005), there is evidence of both the discourse of teacher competence and teacher revitalisation. It is possible to read these texts as a solution to the problem of a shortage of quality teachers and as strategy for teacher development and revitalisation. This is to be expected given that these problems are articulated through overlapping discourses. The context and ideology of the reader will determine how the text is read and deconstructed and the extent to which a particular discourse is embraced.



## **Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize the quantitative and qualitative data and describe the nature of L3CT leadership practices. In part, this discussion will also aim to determine the extent to which the L3CT initiative engenders teacher leadership in WA schools. I have sought to identify the characteristics of these teacher leaders and their beliefs about the L3CT as leadership practice. The discussion includes an examination of these leadership practices such as factors inhibiting or promoting teacher leadership in the L3CT program as well as the beliefs held by DoE and the L3CT about teacher leadership in the context of the L3CT initiative.

The discussion will highlight the significance of discourse in addressing these questions. In particular, I will demonstrate the way in which teacher discourse and “official” or DOE discourse informs this discussion (Luke, 1995). Evident in this discussion are the competing interests that inform these discourses. To some extent the L3CT program arises out of what Hewitt (2006) refers to as a policy problem. The L3CT is embedded in the discourse of the ‘good teacher’. The discussion examines the way in which the L3CT discourse may or may not serve teacher leadership.

This study has asked how the L3CT initiative engenders teacher leadership. I have framed questions to assist in the determination of the extent to which competency frameworks, which arise out of the discourse of the good teacher (Howie, 2006),

provide genuine opportunities for teachers to lead (Cranston, 2000). This chapter addresses these questions and offers a reading of the data that acknowledges there are different reading positions in the cumulative narrative of the L3CT as teacher-leader. The determination on the effectiveness of this initiative is therefore largely dependent on reader position or ideology.

To present these various positions, I begin by presenting a story map of the L3CT experience, followed by selected L3CT illustrative examples based on this mapping. This is followed by an identification of common themes within the larger narrative. The discussion will also include an examination of the way in which discourse was used to unlock particular narratives and highlight alternative viewpoints. I then summarize the findings and highlight implications for policy, practice, theory and further research with respect to how the L3CT program might better engender teacher leadership in WA schools.

### **Mapping the L3CT story**

In Chapter 1, I highlighted narrative as both a means of understanding and communicating teacher leadership. Therefore in recognition of the fact that we lead storied lives, I have employed a narrative framework or story map as a means of organising and understanding the data (Crandall et al, 2002). The story map enables me to demonstrate how it is possible to map some variations of the “L3CT story”. This framework, which is presented in this chapter allows for the identification of both commonality and difference. It presents not only the dominant discourse surrounding the L3CT as a leadership initiative but also reveals some of the alternative or rebel voices and offers an explanation for their emergence. This narrative mapping can then

be used to inform our understanding of how teacher leadership is engendered and to some extent stifled.

The narrative framework, which is informed by the work of Mockler (2004) and Boje (2001), recognizes the significance of binaries in unlocking meaning. It acknowledges the school site as a political space (Erich & Cranston, 2004) and the notion that particular discourses serve particular interests (Connell, 2009; Gale, 2006; Hewitt, 2009; Sachs, 2005). The four questions that I framed to interrogate the data are.

1. In the larger story of teacher leadership, whose is the dominant voice?
2. Whose interest does it serve?
3. What rebel voices are present?
4. Whose voices have been silenced?

Narrative deconstruction inevitably sheds light on marginalized groups. This in turn provides opportunities for the identification of regimes or practices that disempower teacher leaders (Smeed et al, 2009; Youngs, 2007) as well as those that sustain and promote them. The use of deconstruction techniques has allowed me to present a rich and nuanced picture of the L3CT leadership experience, whilst acknowledging the common experience. At this point of the study, I needed to reconsider my reflexivity (Gee, 2001). I am well aware that I cannot take myself entirely out of this story. In seeking to identify marginalized groups and rebel voices, I am firmly in the critical terrain and for me, in the familiar territory of championing the ‘underdog’. The stance that goes with the “belonging” is not a neutral one, nor necessarily a safe and politically correct one. It is a moral stance, with political consequences (Kelchtermans, 2008). Nevertheless, I am conscious of the need to be fair and equitable in my representation.

Narrative emerged quite naturally from the data. The teacher responses, although essentially short answers to open ended questions were rich in narrative elements including setting, plot, character and conflict. The L3CT generally responded in the first person and therefore created an obvious protagonist. Like all narratives, many of these stories were propelled by conflict, foregrounding the micro politics of the school site, affirming the work of Smyth (1999) and Acker (1995). Crises or obstacles included the selection process, DoE as a bureaucracy, unsupportive or critical administrators and/or teaching peers as participants, as well as the internal conflict experienced by some L3CT who were confused about their role or struggling to accommodate competing interests. Similarly, the experience of the L3CT from DoE's viewpoint has an identifiable character and plot. There is a strong sense of the L3CT character being on a journey, from beginning teacher or graduate to expert teacher leader, with L3CT status constructed as a reward. This discourse is foregrounded strongly in DOE policy that highlights the benefits of the L3CT program and assumes a shared belief in the way in which the identity of the expert teacher/leader is constructed (Howie, 2006; Thomas, 2005).

My choice of the quest or hero's journey as an extended metaphor therefore recognizes, not only the commonality of the teachers' experiences on this journey, but also the archetypal nature of this narrative. In this journey, the novice teacher leader embarks on their leadership quest presumably after some sort of initiation, possibly after having taken up the opportunity to work as an informal leader at the school site (Donaldson, 2007). Selecting the quest as my metaphor allowed me not only to map the journey that, in itself is revealing, but also to interrogate teacher leadership as one of the rewards or objectives of the quest. In assessing the extent to which the program offers a

genuine opportunity to lead, I began to consider whether teacher leadership is more of a poisoned chalice than a prize.

Common to all quests, the journey to L3CT status presents challenges and for many who make more than one attempt at the process, false starts. A number of applicants are unsuccessful in their first attempt. The success rate in the first decade of the program was usually less than 50 per cent (DoE statistics 1997-2006). Each year, a number of unsuccessful teachers bank portfolios for the next round, when they will try again. Others give up the quest. The challenging nature of the selection process is reflected in the survey responses, where the question relating to the selection process had the lowest level of agreement of the belief statements relating to the L3CT. The majority of the participants in this study believe that the selection process should be changed. This response was not unexpected, given the findings of previous reviews (DET, 2005; Jasman, 1998). Whilst the L3CT journey is individual and may have different stages and obstacles to overcome, much of the quest should in fact be a shared journey. A number of teachers travel this route and in this study there was evidence of collegial mentoring of aspirant L3CTs.

L3CT is not a final destination for all L3CTs. DoE's motivation for the creation of the L3CT program was the need to retain quality or expert teachers in the classroom, rather than have them relinquish classroom teaching for promotional positions. However, for some respondents, rather than a destination, the status of L3CT is a stepping-stone in a larger career journey (Dempster et al, 2011) to school administrator or employment outside of the Department. This is evident in the 22 percent of respondents who were no longer working as L3CT, 78 percent of whom were in promotional positions. Whether or not this was the initial intention of these participants or a decision based on their L3CT experience was not determined. Like the rest of the

respondents, the majority of these L3CT would recommend the L3CT program to their colleagues.

### **Identifying the L3CT**

At first glance, the L3CT in this study have much in common. They are predominately experienced classroom teachers with more than 20 years of classroom teaching and are aged over 45 years. They are representative of the teaching population at large and would therefore mostly be classified as ‘late career teachers’. They are thus both ‘expert’ and experienced. As with the general population of classroom teachers, they are likely to be female. Much of the research (Day, 2008; Huberman 1993,) and to some extent policy discourse, constructs these teachers as being in a *consolidated stage* or a stage where the challenge is to stay engaged in their career, rather than at the forefront of innovation. My study challenges the notion of teachers in a consolidated stage disengaging in innovation. Whilst the L3CT respondents with less than 10 years teaching experience were the most positive about all aspects of the program, in terms of quantitative data (see discussion in Chapter 4), the majority of all L3CTs in this study were positive, engaged and involved to some extent in change management.

The L3CTs in this study share similar experiences in applying and gaining L3CT status. Having successfully negotiated the selection process, they are generally proud of their achievement. Once having gained L3CT status, they continue to be hard working and usually have more than one additional role to classroom teaching. The majority of these L3CTs believe they continue to work as leaders in their schools and that gaining L3CT status has enhanced their careers and would recommend it to their peers. Predominately these teachers remain in the classroom.

Whilst there is commonality in the L3CT story, closer interrogation of the data reveals different characters that “voice” a particular version of this story. Whilst each L3CT has their unique story, to amplify the L3CT leadership experience, I selected three representative characters, the *Torchbearer*, *Weary Juggler* and *Heckler*. Each of these characters or representations is a protagonist in a version of the L3CT story. However, it is essential that these characters or personas are read as representations. They are narrative constructions based on the data that represent the wider L3CT experience, rather than literal descriptions of actual teachers. It is also acknowledged that discourses are connected as well as contested and are not discrete entities (Gee, 2001, p.22).

These three representations were chosen because they enrich our understanding of the contextual elements of the L3CT story. Contextual elements include organization at a school site, the degree of support given by peers, as well as teacher career expectations and the interests served by the discourse of teacher leadership. These representations invite the reader to interrogate the L3CT initiative from different perspectives. The provision of multiple readings highlights the notion that “knowledge of teachers and teaching is provisional and contestable” (Howie, 2006, p. 70). The representations I have chosen are not equally represented in the data. In the discussion of each, I will alert the reader to this so as not to misrepresent the state of play. The inclusion of the minority perspective in this mapping is deliberate as it allows for the demonstration of the full scope of experience. Often it is the extraordinary story that inspires action (Bullough, 2008).

On the following page Table 17: *Story Mapping of the L3CT Leadership Experience* presents the story map that was utilized to interrogate these data and voice three different stories or experiences. The key conventions of narrative: character,

setting, plot, conflict and resulting themes are used to demonstrate these different positions.

Table 17

*Story Mapping of the L3CT Leadership Experience*

Protagonist	Torch Bearer	Weary Juggler	Heckler
Teacher-leader Who am I?	I am a highly engaged teacher with a history of leadership roles. I feel valued by the administration and my peers.  My L3CT status assists me to be confident about future employment and/or career advancement.	I am a hard working teacher who has taken on a multitude of extra tasks and roles prior and subsequent to becoming L3CT. I am sometimes confused about how much work I should be doing and concerned about the impact these extra roles have on my classroom teaching.	I am disappointed with L3CT and do not think it was worth the hard work and effort. I have not achieved my career goals.
Key Characters Who else is in my story and how do I engage with them?	I interact with a wide range of people in the work place. I mentor and coach others routinely and often belong to collegiate groups, including aspirant Level Threes.  I am well respected by my peers and work collaboratively with them although some staff may envy me or resent my success.	Many other teachers are dependent on me for support, encouragement and provision of resources. I am a “go to person” in my school.  The School’s administration team relies heavily on me to help them accomplish a range of tasks.	I have peers who are indifferent or scathing.  A principal who does not engage with L3CT or is dictatorial in approach.
Setting In what contexts do I work?	I have a key role outside of my classroom. I work across the school and often have connections with community and other schools.	I work across the curriculum and often have a multitude of different roles.	My work place is not collegiate. I am often the only Level 3 on my site. I do not have a meaningful leadership role outside the boundary of my classroom.



Plot What happens to me in my story?	Throughout my career I am given opportunities to work outside of the sphere of my classroom. I am able to choose an area of interest in which to work.  I sometimes perform the role of a school administrator and I embrace these roles.	I am asked to contribute and manage a range of programs.  Shifting priorities mean that my work changes or sometimes does not come to fruition.	I seek opportunities to demonstrate excellence but am often frustrated by a lack of support.  No real role or opportunity is presented.
Conflict What challenges do I face?	The selection process was challenging but was an affirmation of my ability and determination.	The selection process was difficult and stressful. The biggest challenge is balancing the workload.  I also sometimes struggle to negotiate an appropriate role.	Selection process was difficult, stressful and unfair.  I experience isolation in the work place and there is a lack of leadership status.
Themes What are the concerns of my story?	Work load  Positive Recognition	Role confusion.  Lack of status.  Workload. Increased pressure to conform.  Guilt that I may be less than a perfect teacher.	Work load  Resentment  Lack of status  Betrayal

### ***The dominant voice: the torch bearer***

The majority of L3CT in this category have a narrative that attests to a long history in the work place of engaging in projects outside of the boundaries of their classroom; of mentoring and leading others and seeking to have a role in school decision-making. The Torchbearer has a history of successful practice and leadership. These teachers closely resemble the “highly motivated persisters” (Richardson & Watt, 2008). Torchbearers have undertaken additional duties in schools, sometimes for decades prior to receiving L3CT status, as a means of accomplishing the many tasks that are the responsibility of a self managed school (Blackmore, 1999). Tasks include the analysis of performance data, the development of school-wide curriculum and the facilitation of professional learning for their peers, as well as the responsibility for

identifying specific programs and interventions to assist students at educational risk. Many Torchbearers indicated that they had sought the status of Level 3 as recognition of their leadership work and often in the hope that they will have more time allocated to perform additional tasks.

The high level of engagement outside of the classroom by the Torchbearer means that workload and the resulting stress that comes from undertaking a multitude of tasks is a major concern. Many feel that the time allowance for the L3CT and the salary, whilst important, are inadequate. However, in terms of the intrinsic rewards offered by the scheme, there is a high level of satisfaction at being acknowledged as a school leader. This affirmation is valued more highly than monetary reward. An equally high value is also placed on the opportunity to work collaboratively with others, including mentoring other teachers and building capacity in others. In some instances, these teachers are key players in collegiate groups that assist other teachers to successfully gain L3CT status.

These teachers are more likely to construct themselves as having achieved a measure of success and of enjoying high status within their school community. The Torchbearer often embraces opportunities to work in “acting” positions as an administrator. They are also often encouraged by school administrators to continue on this trajectory. In some cases, they seek promotion to administrative positions but generally they have a strong desire to remain in the classroom. This level of satisfaction and engagement possibly prevents the burnout demonstrated by other over-worked groups of teachers.

The Torchbearer is likely to have a high degree of autonomy. These teachers have usually successfully negotiated a role within the school community that is related to their individual interests and specific expertise. Often this is a long-standing role that

has expanded since becoming an L3CT. They have either high level of support from the school administration team or are comfortable with determining their own course. Consequently, they have high levels of ownership of the programs and work they perform as L3CT.

These teachers are much more likely to have engaged with the audit culture. In their discourse, they frequently employ the language of audit. They tended to respond to questions almost as if addressing a competency from *the* WA Competency Framework. The fact that the framework forms the basis of selection for the classification and is used in schools to inform performance management means that most teachers are familiar with this language. In the case of the Torchbearers, they have mastered this discourse. They supply evidence of tasks and roles to illustrate their work, sometimes with reference to actual time allowances or to particular chronologies of their working life in schools. The language of this cohort most closely resembles the language of DoE policy.

In some instances, these L3CTs engage in distributed leadership (Andrews, 2008, Crowther, 2010), in that they share responsibility for implementing key initiatives at their school site with the school's administration. Some are involved in working at the level of the wider community. There is also evidence that some of the most highly motivated of these L3CTs play a key role in creating new leaders through their mentoring of Level Three aspirants. In this way, they are instructional leaders and build capacity in others. This underpins my choice of the metaphor of Torchbearer as the metaphor for this particular cohort.

Conversely, it could also be argued that these teachers have embraced the discourse of competency standards and increased accountability. They have internalized the WA Competency Framework to the extent that they often define themselves

according to the specific tasks they perform and the extent to which others have valued these tasks. To succeed and gain recognition, these teachers have embraced a multitude of roles outside of their classroom, whilst at the same time needing to demonstrate excellence as a classroom teacher. Consequently, they have intensified their work, but tend to see this as inevitable.

Predominately these L3CT acknowledge that the selection process is onerous and a stumbling block for some of their peers who are equally deserving of the status. If they could change any aspect of the L3CT program it would be the selection process. In this way, the Torchbearers resemble the other two representations. Despite this, Torchbearers believe that they have benefitted from the L3CT program and would recommend it to their peers. If these teachers have ongoing concerns, it is usually that they worry that their classroom teaching practice may suffer as a result of the additional roles undertaken. The Torchbearer is more likely to be a primary school teacher and more likely to be female. The following female primary teacher typifies much of the character of the *Torchbearer*. She is aged 45-54 years and has 25-29 years experience in schools. She works in a rural primary school and gained her L3CT status in 2007.

*My role is classroom management in schools (CMS) Level 2. I provide instruction and supervision to CMS Level 1 teachers in the school. I am the coordinator of school review/planning processes with the whole staff and Learning Support Coordinator.*

*My work hasn't really changed since becoming a L3CT. I have been engaged in leadership roles for the past 10-15 years. Being recognized as L3CT provides me with more in school time to do what I was already doing.*

The following respondent is a male secondary teacher. He is aged 45-54 years and has between 20-24 years experience as a teacher. He gained his L3CT status in 2004. He has many of the aspects of the Torchbearer.

*I'm responsible for Vocational Education Training (VET) in my school, which has a history of outstanding TEE success. My role is to enhance the standing of VET within the school community and develop new courses, which offer students a range of options, including TAFE link courses and traineeships. I mentor fellow teachers on a range of areas, especially those working with these students (especially SAER). Setting up alternative university pathways is also an area of mine.*

*Since becoming an L3CT I have more interaction with administration and I have assumed a role in senior staff. There is more administrative work and my profile in the school has changed in that other teachers will seek me out to assist them in a range of areas. I have more direct contact with parents and I'm required to speak at different significant parent evenings, especially in relation to courses I have implemented.*

### ***The weary juggler***

A significant number of teachers have less satisfaction with the L3CT program. The Weary Jugglers share many aspects of the previous narrative. They too have a long history of performing roles outside of their classroom prior to becoming an L3CT and continue to do so. Like the Torchbearers, they have sought recognition of their contributions to school improvement and school leadership. Some also hoped that the L3CT status would lead to more significant roles in schools and/or further promotion. Weary Jugglers are more critical of the intensification of their work (Blackmore, 1999;

Nichols & Parsons, 2011) than the Torchbearers and more likely to voice concerns that their additional roles have impacted on their effectiveness as a classroom teacher.

Weary Jugglers also acknowledge that the selection process was onerous and are more likely to have made more than one attempt before being successful and/or had peers who had been unsuccessful. These teachers are also mostly “persisters”. They have a strong desire to be involved in school leadership and continue to perform a multitude of tasks. However they are less of a torchbearer for L3CT and may well question the worth of the program, particularly in terms of the extent to which it delivers the promised rewards.

Their lower satisfaction or disillusionment with L3CT usually stems from negative experiences on the school site subsequent to taking up their L3CT role. They often have had little input into determining their role or autonomy, resulting in either a multitude of tasks or no definable role. They are unsure as to what exactly their role is or conversely have little or no leadership role at all. Instead, they are often responsible for a range of managerial tasks. For some of these teachers, increased workload and the stress resulting from having no clear boundaries around their work impacted on their classroom teaching and sense of wellbeing. Among the Weary Jugglers there is also often a strong sense of needing to prove their worth in the eyes of their peers (Cohen, 2010; McLeod, 2001).

Weary Jugglers sometimes feel overlooked by the school’s administration team and may have a strong sense that they are not accorded the status of school leader. They are particularly sensitive to the way they are viewed by their non-L3CT colleagues. This sensitivity illustrates the impact of the social dimensions of the work place and the impact of withdrawing the social benefits of collegiality (Jarzakowski, 2002). In their quest for L3CT status, many of these teachers were seeking recognition or have made a

bid for a particular identity (Cohen, 2010) and are disappointed that it has not been forthcoming. The monetary increase that accompanies L3CT status has had little impact on the Weary Jugglers' motivation to continue as an L3CT. Some of these teachers feel that they would have benefited more from following the career pathway of school administrator.

The language employed by the Weary Jugglers tends to be less formal. They are also less likely to speak in educational jargon or the language of audit, although they often provide specifics about time allocations and work ratios. The language is often more personal, colloquial and nuanced. They are eager to share the specifics of their L3CT journey, particularly with respect to the nature of their daily life in school. Sometimes there is a sense of weary resignation or self-doubt in response to a chaotic working life.

The following female primary teacher is typical of the Weary Juggler, in that she does not appear to have a clearly defined or designated role. Rather, she seems to have collected a multitude of responsibilities. She is aged between 45 and 54 years and has been working between 25-29 years in schools. She gained L3CT status in 2005.

*My role is the induction of new teachers to school regarding school policies, priorities etc. I have a mentor role for all teaching staff. I am a leader in the Mathematics area and have a leadership role in the implementation of TRIBES in school. I have a curriculum leadership role with the deputy principal, particularly in Maths, reorganizing/planning and facilitating PD days, curriculum meetings, data collection and analysis, investigation and purchase. I have so much more to do! I'm actually finding stress levels increasing. I sometimes feel "whole school"*

*Level 3 commitments detract from my ability to do my best for the students in my classroom.*

The following respondent also typifies the Weary Juggler experience. He suggested that he was struggling to cope with the workload and comments on the unrealistic expectations placed upon him. Interestingly this respondent questions the researchers in his response about what other L3CTs are doing for their roles. This exemplifies the confusion over role expectations and lack of negotiation experienced by some of these teachers. The respondent is a male secondary teacher aged 45-54 years with more than 30 years teaching experience. He gained L3CT status in 1997.

*I have been asked to be part of our IDEAS School Management Team- see attached sheet for details of my role. I have 2 periods a week for this (0.1FTE). I have found the process of negotiating an agreed upon role difficult. I do a lot of work as Teacher in Charge (TIC) of Biology, but get no recognition of this. Other Level Threes in the school are TICs and are not expected to do much more. Although we agree that the title L3CT often gets us doing more, for example if District Directors visit we are asked to contribute to the process etc. I am still doing a lot of work in my faculty etc. that does not make up part of my Level Three duties. I feel next year that I will be much stronger in negotiating my role. I have completed a number of surveys for DET, the union and the L3CT association about our role but I rarely get feedback- what are other teachers doing for the time and money? L3CT has not assisted me to have more of a leadership role than I already had. Leadership in a State school depends on those at the top of the pyramid. Where I work there is*



*little room for parallel leadership-which makes IDEAS difficult to work with!*

***Speaking as a rebel: the heckler***

The rebel voice in this study may be a small minority, but it is loud and strong. These teachers have a level of anger, rather than disappointment, at the way in which their L3CT experience has played out. As with the other protagonists, these teachers found the selection process difficult. Often there is explicit disdain for this “hoop jumping exercise”. *The Hecklers* have persevered in a deliberate attempt to improve their status and future job opportunities. However there is a strong resentment about the process and a belief that the rewards have not been forthcoming. Either they or a peer have had a negative experience or difficulty (including multiple attempts) in obtaining the status of L3CT.

Having achieved the status, Hecklers are more likely to report ambivalence and hostility from others with respect to the L3CT status. Hecklers are angry that their experience is not valued and that they are either ignored or given a multitude of tasks, including those they consider the domain of the school’s administration. This has resulted in a strong sense of betrayal (Hargreaves, 2001). Whilst some of these teachers are sometimes quite scathing of their peers who are not L3CT, they are most vocal in their condemnation of the way in which the school’s administration has failed to give them an appropriate and meaningful role to play in school. The respondents who most typified this persona were more likely to report high levels of burn out and/or express a desire to take extended leave or leave the profession (Mackenzie, 2007).

Hecklers generally write in the vernacular. There is little evidence of edu-speak or audit. They are the most emotive in tone and are more likely to use stylistic devices

such as bolding, block capitals and punctuation to persuade the reader to engage with their argument. In some instances, the Hecklers have written outside of the margins of the page and this in itself is a metaphor for the position taken by this type of teacher. Their language is that of strong argument, rather than educational discourse. Whilst this group includes both sectors and genders, these rebel voices are more likely to be secondary male L3CT.

The following L3CT experience has elements of the Heckler, particularly in the protest about the lack of status or genuine opportunities for leadership. The response is more emotive than the two previous examples and describes a combative situation at the school with respect to the L3CT role. The respondent is a female secondary teacher, aged 55 or over, who has been teaching for more than 30 years. She gained L3CT status in 2002.

*I coordinate the inclusion program for children with special needs in the Year 7 team. I performance manage and supervise a number of education assistants working in the Year 7 team. I liaise and assist whole school including teachers in Arts, Technology and Design and Physical Education to include special needs children into these programs. I liaise with administration regarding reporting proformas, timetabling issues and provide professional learning for staff on matters of inclusion.*

*My work has not changed at all since becoming an L3CT. All of the above roles were being undertaken by me prior to L3CT attainment. The assumption that more leadership responsibility would be gained has not happened for me at all. I actually undertook to do L3CT thinking that it might give education support more credibility in the school. Unfortunately this has not been the case.*

*I have had to fight very hard for any leadership initiatives. Statements made by administration like “only proper Level 3’s (team teachers) can do performance management” (i.e. L3 classroom teachers are not “proper L3’s”) is highly demoralizing and denigrating. This is a very common response across the school –not just in Education Support.*

### **Gaps and silences**

The three characters whose stories I selected to tell are not the only voices in the narrative of L3CT teacher leadership. A key aspect to my interrogation of discourse is the examination of what or who has been omitted (Bloomfield, 2006). A number of respondents shared examples of colleagues who had either decided not to apply after seeing what L3CTs went through and/or commented on peers who had failed the selection process. This suggests that there are many expert teachers across the State who have chosen not to apply for this classification and quite a few who have failed the selection process and consequently have withdrawn from this particular quest. DoE promotes the viewpoint of the “highly motivated persisters” (Richardson & Watt, 2008, p. 420). The teacher snapshots in the L3CT Guide are examples of this discourse. It is assumed that expert teachers will apply for L3CT status and be successful.

The teacher leaders such as the *Torchbearers* who are ‘highly motivated persisters’ are important. Qualitative data in this study suggest that these teachers are more likely than some of their peers to accept significantly increased workload both prior and subsequent to becoming L3CT. The acceptance of an increased workload assists schools to implement new policies and curriculum and manage the responsibilities of working in the devolved school (Youngs, 2007). Highly engaged teacher leaders such as the *Torchbearers* and to a large extent the *Weary Jugglers* are

vital to school reform. Moreover, these teachers embrace the notion that classroom teaching is professionally rewarding. *Torchbearers* in particular become role models for early phase teachers and often induct others including aspirant L3CTs via mentoring programs. This then is the privileged voice, which reinforces the cultural hegemony (Lupton, 1992) of the highly motivated teacher–leader, who enjoys greater job satisfaction and status.

School reform and accountability discourses promote a shared understanding of the expert or quality teacher (Howie, 2006; Thomas, 2005). There is no advantage for DoE in acknowledging alternative viewpoints or rebel voices. Therefore, there is minimal engagement by the employer DoE in L3CT policy guidelines with issues such as increased workload, teacher stress concerning the application process, or the lack of opportunity for some teachers to participate genuinely as a school leader. L3CT guidelines are clear that the onus is on the individual L3CT who is dissatisfied with their role to make a complaint. Once an external group has selected teachers for the L3CT classification they are essentially managed by their school. There is no other avenue for the disgruntled L3CT who has failed to negotiate an appropriate role. Therefore, there are gaps and to some extent silences in the DOE’s discourse on teacher leadership, in that the policy document is largely about assertions (Thomas, 2005), where best practice in terms of human resource management is assumed, rather than ensured. There is little acknowledgement in DoE’s L3CT Guide that some teachers may be effectively “locked out” of genuine school leadership opportunities, including the encouragement and support to become L3CT because of the specific context in which they work. For example, without the same opportunity for aspirant mentoring, teachers in isolated rural schools may be at a disadvantage when compared with larger

metropolitan schools where there may be a larger pool of L3CT providing collegiate mentoring.

The L3CT role in the L3CT Guide is not defined explicitly. Suitable projects are suggested but the onus is placed on the principal to determine an appropriate role. Policy does not mandate that L3CTs will be part of the school's management or decision-making group. There is an assumed truth, which is, that school principals are willing and capable of negotiating with individual L3CTs to determine an appropriate and rewarding teacher leadership role. There are allusions to distributed leadership in that teachers "will influence the development of the school community" (DET, 2004 p. 3) and will "improve teaching practices and professional development" (DET, 2004 p. 5). The discourse of transformational leadership is suggested, but it is not as prominent as the discourse of school renewal.

There is also an assumption in the policy discourse that all exemplary or expert teachers will apply for L3CT status and be recognized and valued as an "asset". There is little, if any, acknowledgement that expert teachers may not necessarily want to be a L3CT. The policy discourse suggests a narrow definition of expert teacher and teacher leader that may impact negatively on teacher professional identity (Mockler & Sachs, 2006) and possibly constrain the development of teacher leadership (Connell, 2009). Presumably, there is another cohort of expert teachers, who desire ultimately to be school administrators, rather than classroom teachers, who do not apply for this award. It would also be reasonable to assume that some teachers who are worthy of the status may not apply because of personal circumstances including mothers of young children that do not have the 60-200 spare hours (Daniels, 2009) to write the application on top of their work in schools.

The L3CT award is in a sense performance pay. WA was one of the States to develop “classifications that carry higher pay for teachers based primarily on systematically gathered, first-hand evidence of “accomplished” teaching performance” (Invargason et al, 2007, p. 11). Whilst there is an opportunity to recognize many teachers, in practice, few teachers are L3CT. In the present study some L3CT respondents described their non-L3CT peers as indifferent or hostile towards them. Negativity that is directed towards peers who have an elevated status is not unique to the L3CT program. Mackenzie (2007, p. 197) found in a study of award winning and non-award winning teachers in New South Wales that “fifty five per cent of study participants predicted that teaching awards could create resentment among staff. Mackenzie (2007, p. 198) also cites a respondent who states; “I have grave concerns that giving rewards to teachers is not part of our culture... not part of the culture of our organization”.

The privileging of a “select group” of L3CT positions them at the top of the ladder (Mackenzie, 2007), which by default, positions those that are not L3CT further down the ladder. Yet this study affirms that the non-L3CT cannot be constructed as a “non-leader” or “non-exemplary teacher” because these leadership and exemplary teaching qualities are a pre requisite for L3CT status. There exists a deep pool of teacher leaders and exemplary teachers from which L3CT are drawn. Teachers who do not apply for fear of failure or because of the belief that the application process is too onerous or unfair (DET, 2005) may well resent those who are successful in being recognized as leaders. Similarly, those who fail and give up after the first attempt are liable to feel betrayed because DoE’s discourse positions the reader to view the L3CT as the best teachers and the teacher-leaders in the State.

The ranking of teachers, where some are afforded increased status, albeit earned, provides an opportunity for the sort of othering outlined by Palfreyman (2002) and Mockler & Sachs, (2006) where the non-L3CT is constructed as either less competent or as resentful. If the L3CTs as a select group or minority are recognized for the quality of their lessons and leadership, there is an implication that there are many experienced teachers in WA who may be constructed as “poor teachers”. This aligns with the notion that schools are in crisis, which positions teachers as the problem (Gale, 2006, p.12). The fact that many exemplary teachers may not choose to apply for L3CT status is largely ignored by the rhetoric of the official L3CT discourse. Where it is addressed, it is in the reference to improvements in the selection process, as this had previously been identified as a major stumbling block. There is no engagement with issues surrounding positional authority and status or with the notion that an expert classroom teacher may not choose to be an L3CT but is still an expert teacher and quite possibly a school leader. The fall out of creating classes of teachers appears to be a non discussable in DoE policy (Barth, 2007a).

### **Common Themes**

The narrative framework (Boje, 2001) that I employed for analysis identified commonalities in the L3CT leadership story, as well as difference. Commonalities included the desire for genuine recognition, the significance of peers in self-efficacy, the influence of specific settings, in particular the role of the school principal and issues dealing with the increased workload. The initial obstacle for most respondents was the application and selection process, which the majority of L3CT attest to being overly complex and time-consuming. Other common obstacles or barriers that impact on teacher leadership are lack of time and resources, competing and shifting interests and

teacher status subsequent to becoming an L3CT. Teacher work load and status were the most commonly identified issues for L3CT. Workload, lack of status and the negative treatment by or indifference of others (Barth, 2007b) are the likely reasons why 26 percent of the respondents said that the L3CT did not meet their expectations.

### **Workload**

Workload was a strong theme in all of the narratives. The L3CT voices were unified in the belief that working as a L3CT meant increased workload, either in the journey to becoming an L3CT and/or as a consequence of gaining the position. Whilst only 12 per cent of teachers specifically cited an increase in work load subsequent to becoming an L3CT, the main reason cited for there being no intensification of workload was that earning the classification required a substantial intensification of work load. Therefore the respondents' work had already been significantly intensified.

It would be difficult not to see teacher leadership via L3CT as intensification of teachers' work, particularly as the classification requires teachers to work significantly beyond the boundaries of their classroom. In fact, the majority of L3CT reported having more than one role or responsibility as an L3CT. In addition, some respondents reported an increased pressure to perform after the change in level. Many reported that the time allocation was insufficient for the expected work output. A significant number of respondents indicated a desire to change their work parameters. Qualitative data demonstrated that the majority of teachers were involved in considerably larger roles than examples given in the DoE policy (See *Chapter 6*). The intensification of work meant some L3CT were concerned about the impact on their classroom practice (Gunter et al, 2001).



Workload is an issue in teacher retention. It is also a factor affecting teacher commitment (Day, 2008). It seems counter-productive then that teacher-leadership initiatives, such as the L3CT invariably result in a markedly increased workload (Youngs, 2007). It could be argued that not only is this increase inevitable, it is also desirous from the point of view of the policy maker. It has been argued that teacher leadership is a means of seducing teachers to take additional tasks without the commensurate salary (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008, p. 334). This viewpoint was expressed by some of the more critical respondents who consequently saw the L3CT award as something of a poisoned chalice.

The extent to which this intensification of work is accepted depends greatly on the level of satisfaction with the work that is experienced by the L3CT. Teachers who desired school leadership and believed that the L3CT status provided a genuine opportunity for them to do so and/or advance their career were more likely to be accepting of the increased workload. Teachers who constructed themselves primarily as classroom teachers were the most likely to worry about the impact of additional roles on their classroom teaching. Teachers who viewed additional roles as useful experience for career advancement were more likely to accept the increased workload. The extent to which teachers felt respected and supported by the school's administration also had a bearing on whether or not the workload was acceptable.

### **Status**

Status is also a preoccupation of all of the L3CT narratives and a site of conflict for many. Increased status was the stated goal for many of the L3CT in this study, either as an alternative career milestone to becoming a school administrator or in the hope that success as a L3CT would propel them eventually into the role of a school administrator.

For some respondents, the difficulty of securing administrator positions was given as the reason for their desire to become an L3CT.

The motivation of the teacher embarking on the L3CT journey then has some bearing on their stance. Clearly, some L3CT had much greater expectation of particular rewards. This would seem to be particularly true of the secondary male L3CT respondents who tended to have the least satisfaction with the level of status. Lack of status is associated with low morale (Mackenzie, 2007). These expectations of status are not just limited to receiving extrinsic awards, such as increased salary. For many L3CT of both genders, the extent to which they felt acknowledged as leaders at their school site had significant bearing on their happiness in the work place and satisfaction with their L3CT role.

Recognition is not just equated with a change in title or an increase in salary. It is also bound up with collegiality. Recognition by peers then is significant (Barth, 2007b). “Although classroom responsibilities are at the core of teachers’ work, it is teachers’ relations with other adults that seem to generate the most heightened expressions of emotionality among them” (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 5). It would seem that the greater the sense of collegiality, the greater the likelihood of teacher engagement and belief in the L3CT program.

In this study, recognition then is more about the emotions that are bound up with teachers’ work and the way it is received than with the nature or organisation of the work. All four elements of Hargreaves’ 2001 study, appreciation and acknowledgement, personal support and social acceptance, cooperation and collaboration and conflict and trust and betrayal were present in the teacher discourse in this study. There is also evidence in this study of the ability, “other teachers have to extinguish a teacher’s

involvement in leadership” (Barth, 2007b, p. 17). The fact that teaching is a social act (McLeod, 2001) means that these responses are not surprising.

If the treatment of the L3CT by peers is significant, then equally so is the treatment afforded them by the school’s administration. This study affirms the work of Zinn (1997), Dawson (2011) and Andrews et al (2008). The present study found that teachers needed their school’s principal and the school’s management team to acknowledge their change in status and provide them with opportunities to engage with administrators in a meaningful leadership role. Those teachers who felt embraced in this way were the most likely to become the torchbearers for the L3CT program. The importance of nurturing teacher leadership is foregrounded in the work of Crowther and colleagues (2007). In my study, teachers voiced both approval and disappointment of their principal’s treatment of them subsequent to becoming an L3CT. For some L3CT, the lack of principal support meant they were unwilling to engage in ongoing school leadership. Zinn (1997, p. 2) cited expressed or passive resistance of teacher leadership from colleagues and inconsistent administrative support or modelling for teacher leaders as barriers to teacher leadership.

DoE’s discourse on L3CT clearly foregrounds improved status as one of the benefits. In terms of marketing the initiative, the opportunity to improve status is a key strategy. This makes sense in terms of the 2009-2010 DEST report that highlighted teacher status and retention. The extent to which the L3CT program delivers increased status is contentious. Some respondents in this survey highlighted their sense of frustration at not being accorded the same status as a Level Three Administrator, or of not being seen as a school leader. Similar dissatisfaction was also reflected in the 2005 review carried out by DET. A recommendation that came out of that review was a lapel pin for L3CT, as recognition of the L3CT’s new status. Whilst the pin is a visible sign

of the status, it does not address the underlying issue of some L3CT feeling that they are not given an appropriate leadership role in their school and treated as leaders by their peers.

Despite these concerns about status, evident in the quantitative data was a strong belief that the L3CT program had enhanced the teaching careers of many L3CT. The qualitative data extended this notion and highlighted higher levels of satisfaction among those who believed they were valued or had a higher status in their school community, as a direct result of gaining L3CT. Also related to these feelings of satisfaction were high levels of discretion in determining their role, for example teachers were able to explore areas of professional interest, participation in school decision-making processes and the sense that they had some control over their work load. Negative responses to the L3CT role were related to lack of acknowledgement and loss of control over workload, particularly where there was little or no negotiation with the school's administration. Jasman's (1999) investigation identified lack of negotiation with L3CT about their roles and the fact that in most instances negotiation was limited to an initial discussion only. It would seem that there are still a number of instances where this continues to be the practice. There is a sense that, in a devolved school, effective utilisation of the L3CT is a task that principals may struggle to accommodate, given all of the competing agendas.

The survey in this study did not have a specific question addressing motivation for seeking L3CT status, but a number of respondents discussed the motivation behind their application in addressing other questions. The most commonly cited reasons were the desire for recognition for having performed the role of school leader and undertaking a multitude of additional tasks. There was also, for many L3CT, a strong desire to become a school leader. Ongoing motivation was dependent on their current

working conditions, including the level of ongoing collegiate and administrative support (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Crowther, 2002; Dawson, 2011). The onerous application process was cited as a de-motivator, resulting in many of the L3CTs' colleagues choosing not to follow them down this leadership path. Implicit in DoE's documentation was the notion that teachers would be motivated by the desire for increased status including salary and the desire to work as a leader. In practice, very few teachers have applied for L3CT status. One respondent commented on the experience of applying for L3CT and concluded that those who had not yet decided to apply were deterred from watching what their peers went through in the selection process.

### **Betrayal**

Betrayal intersects both workload and status. A number of L3CT felt betrayed by the program. Those L3CTs that most resemble the archetypal Weary Jugglers often expressed a sense of betrayal because they had not been given an appropriate role or had been given a multitude of tasks. These teachers questioned whether or not the reward for L3CT status was worth the effort. But it was those who felt shunned or resented by their peers and/or the school management team that expressed the greatest sense of betrayal. Betrayal resulted in these teachers being less risk-taking and less inclined to embrace leadership roles, like the Hecklers.

There was evidence of two of the three dimensions of betrayal in the survey data (Hargreaves, 2002). In this study, contractual betrayal was usually related to the workload of the L3CT and the sense that other teachers, including sometimes the school's Level 3 Administrators, did not pull their weight. There was also a sense of contractual betrayal directed at school principals who had not fulfilled their obligations

towards the L3CT. Competence betrayal seems to be embedded in the discourse of the expert teacher. In creating a new elite category of teacher, the L3CT sets up a dichotomy, whereby teachers are measuring worth against another. Some of the L3CT respondents reported an increase pressure to perform as ‘the expert teacher’, whilst others reported jealousy from those who were not L3CT and believed they were as, if not more, competent. Similarly, those who have been unsuccessful in their application to be L3CT are likely to feel a sense of competence betrayal, increasing the tension at the work site.

One issue of the L3CT being deemed to have elevated status is the fact that these teachers are not necessarily more qualified or experienced than their non-L3CT peers. In fact, in the case of the L3CT who have been teaching fewer than 10 years, there is the potential for L3CT to be significantly less experienced than many of their peers. This fact, combined with the fact that even L3CTs tend to view the selection process as a “hoop jumping exercise” to validate work already being undertaken, suggests that those teachers who choose not to put themselves through the selection process for a variety of reasons are unlikely to perceive themselves as less expert than the L3CT. Given that the L3CT Guide can be read as constructing an exclusive category of teachers who are experts and leaders, it is likely that some teachers who choose not to apply are resisting this construction (Sachs, 2005; Smyth, 1999). For these teachers, the L3CT program may be perceived as an act of betrayal on the part of the employer, hence the perception of one of the respondents who reported that L3CTs are viewed as “sycophants”. There is then a sharpening of the politics of difference and identity (Crump & Ryan, 2002). This could partially explain why the number of teachers applying for L3CT status remains so low.

## **Discourse**

Discourse underpins all of the narratives that are presented in my framework. The L3CT program confers a new title on a teacher and a change of level, which constructs a new social identity (Gee, 2001). The language around this process was always going to be significant. The significance can be illustrated by my own deliberations in describing the L3CT program. I was conscious, for example, that words such as, “won”, “awarded” “selected” and “achieved” have strong connotations of success and merit, as opposed to verbs such as “received” or “became”. These more passive verbs fail to adequately convey the challenges faced by the L3CT in the selection process or indeed the intensification of work that these teachers reported prior to gaining L3CT. Much of the social language of the L3CT reveals what Gee (2001, p. 47) terms “performance and recognition work.” Clearly, because of the rigorous selection process, L3CT is a merit position. The language employed in the DOE’s documentation reinforces this notion with superlatives such as: “exemplary” and “outstanding”. The belief that these teachers are at the forefront of the profession is also explicit in much of the DoE documentation. As a researcher, I encountered this notion early when the then project officer responsible for the L3CT program informed me that I would not have direct access to the database as this list represented some of the State’s best teachers and needed to be safeguarded, so the “private system” or non-government schools could not poach these teachers. The stance taken by DoE towards these teachers and the associated discourse is best understood in terms of the meta-policy (Connell, 2009) or Big ‘C’ conversation (Gee, 2001) that links quality teachers to student achievement.

Discourse becomes particularly insightful in understanding the micro politics (Luke, 1995) when analyzing responses to the open ended questions and comparing

levels of satisfaction with the L3CT role. Whereas many respondents utilised the official language of merit applications and teacher competency standards, others chose more colloquial means to describe their work as L3CT. There was a sense in some responses of the teacher writing a job application and providing evidence of their ability to perform at a particular level, whereas some responses presented more personalized experiences. In this way, there was evidence of different social languages and of identity and political building blocks (Gee, 2001). The more personalized responses tended to invite the reader to share some of the tensions or challenges associated with being an L3CT.

Some respondents wrote with great passion and the challenge for me as a researcher was to refrain from giving these, sometimes very negative comments, too much weight due to the fact that they were often highly emotive. I needed to deconstruct my own identity (Pillow, 2003) and where I was situated as a teacher and researcher in this discourse. I have witnessed first hand the deep emotion that the L3CT program can evoke, but I needed to be mindful to place this in the context of the wider L3CT experience and the literature. In this study, the more emotive responses frequently employed a number of stylistic features including, the use of bolding or punctuation, such as the exclamation mark to compel the reader to engage with an argument. Some respondents engaged in a kind of dialogue where specific questions were directed at the researchers. In examining these responses, I was also conscious of my own bias towards words and rhetoric. Whilst these responses have to be read in context, these extremes did emphasize the fact that there were different voices and perhaps different authorities on the subject of teacher-leader.

The notions of status and betrayal were fore grounded in L3CT discourse. Some respondents were highly emotive in their discussion of these issues and employed terms



such as “boys club practices”, “exploited”, “dogs’ body”, “bully”, “bureaucratic hoop jumping”, “cringe-factor” and “sycophants”. Interestingly the theme of L3CT, as some sort of performing pet or servant is conveyed in the metaphors of “dogs’ body” and “hoop jumping” and to some degree, by the verbs “exploited” and “bully”. The use of the term “sycophant” also has echoes of a servant. Hence, a common theme in these particular examples is the construction of L3CT as lacking in agency.

The notion of marginalization, which is also conveyed by the term “boys’ practices”, was a common thread in the discourse on the role of L3CT. Frequently teacher identity and the discourse of “teachers’ work” are defined by comparison to the space inhabited by the “other” (De Fina, 2005). With respect to this study, the “other” is usually constructed as administration but often the non-L3CT teacher is also “other”. In this way, school is a micro-political site where individuals compare their advantage and status to the “other” (Acker, 1995). Power in this instance primarily relates to an individual’s ability to define their own role, to have some independence in their work and to work collegially with others rather than as directed (Taylor et al, 2011). L3CTs who perceived an unequal division of labor on their site were often quite scathing of the other.

Due in part to labeling and evident in some of the teacher discourse was the binary of expert teacher and non-expert teacher (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008; Mockler & Sachs, 2005), which revealed the tension that exists in some schools. Sometimes, non-L3CTs were represented as needy, demanding and critical. One respondent refers to them as, “*rank and file teachers*” whilst another describes these teachers as being, “*average*”. On the other hand, there was also a great deal of support for colleagues who had been overlooked or unsuccessful in their quest for L3CT status.

## **The Nature of L3CT Leadership**

L3CT requires teachers to be leaders in their schools. The qualitative data in terms of survey responses and Departmental documentation emphasized the engagement with leadership as a precursor or prerequisite to gaining L3CT. The Department expects applicants to be operating as leaders and for this to be enhanced by their L3CT status. The respondents who almost overwhelmingly constructed themselves as leaders, prior to becoming an L3CT, affirmed this expectation. L3CT status was seen as a reward or recognition for having embraced these roles in schools, albeit for some an insufficient one. Both the quantitative and qualitative data affirm the belief that the L3CT engages in teacher leadership. This was evident in that 72 percent of the respondents agreed that L3CT status assisted them to have a leadership role in schools. Many had also embraced leadership roles in the wider context of the educational community.

Close analysis of the open-ended questions was particularly illuminating in the interrogation of the actual work of L3CT, the range of attitudes towards this work and the factors that construct particular values and attitudes. The roles undertaken by L3CT are diverse as are the attitudes towards these roles. Work varies from loosely defined or ad hoc arrangements to highly negotiated specific roles. Similarly, respondents' attitudes towards these duties vary from pride to despair.

The difficulty is in determining the exact nature of teacher leadership. Is L3CT leadership the same practice across WA schools? The results from this study suggest this is unlikely. Whilst there is a lot of commonality to the L3CT experience, the nature and organization of the work seems context specific. Demographic factors such as gender, age and location have less impact on the way in which an L3CT is used in school than the individual school's culture and organisation.

Based on the survey responses, L3CT engage in many roles in schools that are associated with the discourse of school leadership. They act as mentors for others, coordinators of whole school and sometimes community programs and play a key role in school decision-making process. Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 6) identify as teacher leadership roles “curriculum developers, bid writers, leaders of a school improvement team, mentors of new or less experienced staff and action researchers”.

These roles were in evidence in my study. These roles fit the teacher leadership model that is embedded in DoE framework for teacher competency, with its emphasis on teaching excellence and school improvement. Teachers were often expert curriculum leaders in their schools. Clearly, many L3CTs had autonomy in their role and responsibility for specific projects where there was a leadership component, particularly with respect to mentoring and the provision of professional development.

Many teachers are leading their peers, modelling best practice and encouraging others. As such, they contribute to the development of quality teaching and improved educational outcomes for students. They are leading teachers, but are they teacher leaders? The definition of teacher leadership in this study is informed in part by the Teacher as Leaders Framework, where the key principles are: mutual trust, working in collaboration with administrators, involvement in school decision making processes and having a whole of school focus. Therefore, these criteria are used to some extent to interrogate the nature of teacher leadership in the L3CT program.

Many of the aforementioned examples of teacher leadership have the capacity for teachers to be involved in formulating, as well as implementing school policy and for them to work collaboratively with school administrators (Andrews & Crowther, 2008; Dempster et al, 2003; Harris & Muijs, 2003). Alternatively, many of the roles could also be constructed as largely managerial, for example, organizing resources,

managing cost centres and applying for funding. Jasman's 1998 study also highlighted this tendency. Similarly, some of the examples of roles cited in DoE documentation could be viewed as more managerial, rather than leadership, in nature.

Whilst there is certainly scope for distributed leadership and shared governance in the L3CT program, there is only a moderate amount of evidence of this occurring. In fact, only 6 percent of L3CT explicitly cited increased participation in school decision-making, as a result of becoming L3CT. Whilst this could mean they were already involved in these processes, the examples of responsibilities and roles cited by these respondents do not entirely support this idea. Crowther (1999) cites the need for teachers to question the paradigm of positional leadership in schools. Ideally, L3CT are key decision-makers in schools. The fact that L3CT do not participate in school decision-making or at least not at the same level as administrators was specifically highlighted by some L3CTs, who commented that they were not considered members of senior staff.

The data indicate that L3CTs are less likely to participate in shared governance in the secondary context. This suggests that the L3CT program has had minimal impact on the tradition of these schools having a senior management team, comprising of Level Three Administrators, such as Heads of Learning Areas, and Level 4 and 5 deputies and principals. Creating a new leadership position does not seem to have equated with creating another space at the leadership table. Harris and Muijs (2003, p. 1) argue that this is because "schools as organisational structures remain largely unchanged equating leadership with status, authority and position."

## **Conclusion**

The majority of the L3CT in this study viewed the program positively. Most L3CTs also constructed themselves as leaders in schools and viewed the L3CT classification as some reward for the many years they have taken on extra responsibilities, including leadership. Whilst they believed the L3CT program assisted them to have a leadership role in schools, they also tended to believe that they had worked as leaders in schools prior to becoming L3CT. The L3CT program can be seen as engendering teacher leadership, in the sense that those who seek this recognition, need to demonstrate school leadership. Therefore the L3CTs are teachers who have embraced roles outside of their classroom and in many instances, work as leaders informally often for years before they are formally recognized as leaders.

Based on this study, the L3CT leadership practices are varied and context specific. However the majority of L3CTs perform additional roles to classroom teaching that are broad and situated across the whole school. These roles are often a continuation of roles performed prior to becoming an L3CT and in some instances, possibly as a means of demonstrating competence for L3CT. In many instances, L3CTs negotiate a role for themselves that relates to a particular interest or expertise and then continue with these roles for a period of time. Most often these roles are focused on curriculum improvement. However, many L3CT find themselves undertaking additional roles or tasks and feel that there is an expectation for them to continue embracing these additional roles.

The most confident and satisfied of the L3CTs in this study feel they are well regarded in their school communities. They reported that they worked collaboratively with peers and administrators and felt that they have a voice in school decision-making.

In many ways, they are torchbearers for the L3CT initiative and in some cases for teacher leadership. The least satisfied L3CTs in this study usually felt isolated and alienated within their school community. They resented the often, unfair expectations others have of them and sometimes also felt there was a level of resentment directed at them. Some of these teachers were so disillusioned that they no longer wished to be a L3CT and/or had become quite adversarial in their approach to the Department. These individuals have been identified in this study as the *Hecklers*. These two opposing viewpoints or experiences highlight the importance of status, recognition and collegiality in a teacher leader's self-efficacy.

The desire for increased status and recognition seemed to be a primary motivation for many of the respondents seeking the L3CT classification and when this was not forthcoming, the L3CT concerned felt a sense of betrayal. This desire for increased status or recognition is possibly also a factor in more than 20 percent of L3CTs taking up promotional positions after becoming an L3CT. For many of the L3CTs in this study, the application process was time consuming and stressful. There was a sense of having to “jump through hoops” to prove yourself and to gain recognition. This compounded the sense of betrayal for those who feel that the desired or expected recognition has not been forthcoming. This also highlights the significance of intrinsic rewards over extrinsic rewards, such as salary increases. Genuine recognition by peers and the wider school community was more valued than any monetary reward. Teachers wanted to have their achievement communicated to the parent body and wider school community via school newsletters and for the staff to know exactly what the L3CT role entailed.

The lack of status or recognition in many instances was a product of the larger political discourse of teacher professionalism and identity (Connell, 2009). The

Departmental discourse promotes the L3CT as the flagship of teacher leadership in WA schools and possibly creates, “deictic categories to denote inclusivity and exclusivity” (Thomas, 2005). This construction creates to some extent a battlefield, where experienced teachers who construct themselves as “expert” but are not L3CT, sometimes resent those that are. This dichotomy or ‘othering’ (De Fina, 2005; Mockler & Sachs, 2005; Palfreyman, 2000) is particularly counter-productive to the creation of genuine democratic governance that essentially recognizes teachers who move into informal leadership roles, as well as those with formal positions. This tension is compounded by the fact that so few of the State’s experienced teachers are L3CT, so that those that are L3CTs are very easily identified as a select few.

Earlier, I posed the question as to whether the award of L3CT was a prize or a poisoned chalice. The metaphor of the poisoned chalice can certainly be employed to describe the impact of workload on the L3CT. Irrespective of the level of satisfaction with the program, the majority of L3CT in this survey had some concerns about workload and the impact this has on classroom teaching. There was evidence of: stress, burn out and in a small number of cases, the intention to leave the profession. The absence of a clearly defined role, or understanding on the part of the Principal, or School Management team, of how to best utilize the L3CT, were the main reasons cited for work load stress. Some L3CTs reported increased expectation from colleagues of the L3CT to take over particular tasks and assist in a range of areas, as required, or in some cases, on demand.

Lack of understanding of the role of the L3CT among the school staff (Dawson, 2011) meant that it was very difficult for the L3CT to draw boundaries around their work. This study affirms that there is a need for L3CT roles to be clearly defined and visibly reported to all staff. However some L3CTs acknowledged that they put pressure

on themselves to perform. In some ways, this was a natural progression from the process of demonstrating competencies that were required to be successful in the L3CT application.

Whilst there was evidence of teachers working in parallel with administrators and engaging in decision-making, this wasn't as widespread as might be expected. In this study, leadership more closely resembled L3CT taking responsibility for a particular curriculum project or school program and having a high degree of autonomy for that specific initiative. These teachers therefore may have had a sphere of influence within the boundaries of a particular project but were not really working in parallel or in distributed leadership in terms of whole of school planning. There was a sense in many of these endeavors that the L3CT was engaged in tasks to ensure that the school met its accountability with respect to curriculum and policies relating to student support (SAER). There was more evidence of the organized model of leadership where leadership is distributed to individuals, rather than a democratic distribution of school leadership (Young, 2007).

Teachers who reported that they worked collaboratively with administrators to implement school policy and change management valued this experience greatly. However decision-making, particularly in the secondary school context, still seems to be predominately invested in authoritative and titled positions such as, Deputy or Head of Department. This was particularly irksome to some L3CT, who felt undervalued due to this maintenance of the status quo. There was certainly evidence of the “organizational discourse structures that limit teacher leadership” (Lambert et al, 2007, p. 169). Some teachers had expected to have an equal representation in school decision making to Level 3 administrators, such as Heads of Departments, only to find this was not the case. The authority invested in the position of Level Three Administrator was



distinct because they had formal performance management responsibility for other staff, whereas the L3CT does not. For some L3CT, this was a line of demarcation that identified the L3CT as not a “proper Level 3”. This reinforces the equating of leadership as having authority over another.

### **Implications for practice**

In particular, this study makes apparent the need to address broader concerns, including the personal dimension (Fielding, 2006), rather than simply assess a teacher’s suitability for leadership, based on a framework of skills and assessment of expertise. Teacher-leaders whether they are L3CT or not, need explicit leadership training that acknowledges the micro-politics of school decision-making and provides skills in connecting relationships (Muijs & Harris, 2003). Frost and Harris (2003) highlight the need for situated understanding, which encompasses emotional intelligence and understanding of micro-politics. This is needed so that teacher leaders can overcome the barriers that binaries such as leader and non-leader create. Mackenzie (2007) also affirms this need for teachers to be given a specific set of skills to embrace collaborative leadership, arguing that these skills are usually only sought when teachers desire to move into school administration.

Similarly, this study suggests that school administrators need more specific training in the nurturing of the teacher-leader and development of democratic school practices. This includes the effective management of the L3CT and the significance of dispersed leadership in overcoming the limitations of hierarchical positions (Muijs & Harris, 2003). Teacher leaders need to have some authority or as Dawson (2011) describes an explicit framework. Certainly at the school level, there needs to be an ongoing and robust dialogue about leadership. Much of this dialogue needs to be about

creating trust. Frost & Harris (2003, p. 490) emphasise the need for teacher leaders to build trust so that their leadership is seen as legitimate. Many of the L3CT in my research suffered from a lack of legitimacy due to the absence of a title or traditional administrative role.

The study also highlights the need for teacher leaders such as the L3CT to play a larger role in what teacher leadership looks like in practice. Bodies such as the L3CT association need to have more advocacy (Lambert, 2007; Sachs, 2006), simply to ensure that L3CT have meaningful roles in schools and in the development of teacher leadership frameworks. L3CTs need also to take a more activist approach to the teacher leadership agenda. This advocacy may need to include greater promotion of the leadership role invested in initiatives such as the L3CT and the opportunities this offers for classroom teachers. This may in turn swell the numbers of those that choose to apply.

### **Implications for policy**

Did this study identify slippage between the policies or official rhetoric of teacher leadership and practice or lived experience? Indeed it did. DoE policy affirms L3CT as leadership experience and provides a space for this to flourish. It could be argued that there is both motive and opportunity, as the L3CT must embrace leadership to achieve the status and then is endorsed as a school leader. However, for this leadership to flourish, there must be more work done with schools and in schools. This is clear evidence of “two schools in one: an official school, as formally recorded in documents and the informal school as it exists in unofficial daily practice” (Crump & Ryan, 2001, p. 4).

The translation of teacher leadership policy documents into genuine school leadership requires more attention. More resourcing is needed for training teacher leaders. The L3CTs go through a rigorous selection process and then a welcoming ceremony but there is no induction to leadership workshop, nor any formal mentoring program or a requirement that these novice leaders engage in any subsequent professional learning in leadership studies. It is either assumed that these teachers are natural leaders, have gained these skills in the context of their journey or will be inducted at the school site. Furthermore, there is no formal follow up with these teachers about their role. Ideally, policy needs to include a more explicit leadership framework for teachers and a requirement for formal induction and leadership training. This could include clearer procedural steps for the implementation of a leadership framework for teachers.

The creation of the categories of non-leader and leader in the discourse of L3CT policy documents seems counter-productive to stated goals of recognizing the State's expert teachers. The implication that those who do not seek L3CT status for a variety of reasons or who are unsuccessful in demonstrating their competence are not working as leaders in schools ignores the fact that teacher leadership in schools is often informal (Donaldson, 2007) and may not be a stable entity (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2007). The tensions that surround status, recognition and authority to lead need to be addressed by the use of language in policy documents that is more inclusive and cognizant of the wider practice of leadership in schools.

My research reinforces the importance of teacher emotions (Barth, 2007b; Day, 2008; Hargreaves, 1998, Hargreaves 2001; Leiberman et al, 2007) in the realization of teacher leadership. Recognition by and the support of colleagues are crucial to the L3CT's self-efficacy as a leader (Cohen, 2010; Jarzabrowski, 2002; Zinn, 1997).

Moreover, it would seem that teachers in schools, in deciding whether or not to seek L3CT status are influenced by the degree to which they believe they will have increased status and recognition. Intrinsic rewards are valued more highly than extrinsic rewards. Greater understanding of what motivates or assists some teachers to develop the emotional intelligence to flourish as leaders in schools is needed.

Also illuminated in this research is the significance of the school's principal in determining whether or not the L3CT engages in genuine leadership (Dawson, 2011). This was highlighted by some of the respondents who had two very different leadership experiences at different schools, as well as by those respondents who had experienced a change in leadership at their school. These experiences tended to be markedly different. It would seem that effective teacher leadership occurs most frequently when the principal and teacher collaborate to determine a role for the L3CT, the role is appropriate for the skills and interests of the teacher and is adequately defined and communicated to the rest of the school community. The Principal or nominee can further assist the new teacher leader by providing a mentorship and creating a space in the school community for ongoing dialogue about leadership (Cranston & Ehrich, 2009). Many respondents attested to the fact that the busyness of schools, the lack of resources including, funding meant that Principals were unable to devote the time and energy to developing L3CT leadership.

### **Implications for further research**

Given the significance of the Principal in the implementation of teacher leadership, it would be prudent to examine more deeply the attitudes and beliefs of principals to teacher leadership. In particular, it would be helpful to examine how the principals' personal career pathways to leadership and exposure to specific leadership

training and/or models of leadership impacted on the roles and opportunities that were given to teachers including the L3CT. Rather than examine the leadership practices where a school is engaged in a specific program such as IDEAS, it would be insightful to study leadership practices across a range of different school contexts and/or to examine a school some time after engagement in a whole school renewal program like IDEAS to understand how teacher leadership practices may have developed or been embedded.

The significance of discourse in understanding how teacher leadership is engendered and sustained (Lambert et al, 2007) suggests this as an area for more research attention. Policy texts that assert particular constructions of leadership are normative and persuasive (Mumby & Mease, 2006). It would be pertinent to examine the extent to which teacher decisions to seek formal leadership, including L3CT roles are encouraged or impeded by specific policy documents and/or the current discourse of leadership.

### **Limitations of the study**

Teachers are not an amorphous mass. Teaching is both individual and collective. Consequently, there are many and varied enactments of teacher leadership in WA schools. This study is limited to being a snapshot of a particular enactment of teacher leadership at a specific point in time. The study is also limited in that it focuses only on teacher leaders who hold the position of L3CT, although many respondents in fact make reference to leadership work prior to receiving this classification. L3CTs remain a small proportion of the teaching population in WA. Many teachers who are not L3CT, but who are engaged in leadership work in a school, may feel slighted by the inference that they are not recognized as leaders. The work undertaken by these teachers is

acknowledged, but not specifically included in my research. Therefore, the study is limited to those teachers who have chosen a particular leadership pathway and may be considered narrow in its focus.

At the end of my research journey, I deliberated over the questions that informed this study. Had I fact identified what teacher leadership in terms of the L3CT looked like in practice? Yes I believe so. Whilst this study, ten years after the program's inception is essentially limited to a snap shot in time, it illustrated both the scope and some of the minutiae of the L3CT leadership practices. Although the responses are predominately based on L3CT activities in 2008, many respondents reflected over a number of years as an L3CT, providing insight into their career pathways and individual journeys. My own work in schools positions me to believe that little has changed since 2008.

In my introduction to this study, I also questioned the aptness of the sleeping giant as a metaphor for teacher leaders. This metaphor works on the level of describing the largely untapped potential of these educators. There is also the implication that this potential can be realized, that is, the giant can be awoken. This study suggests that simply providing opportunity and motive for teacher leadership to occur is not sufficient to awaken the giant. Strategic empowerment is also necessary. Teachers and school administrators need explicit leadership training and teachers need to be engaged in the process of deciding what teacher leadership looks like.


The metaphor of the sleeping giant also assumes to some extent, a collective body of teacher leaders that waits to be roused. Whilst teacher leadership as an enterprise may be collective, the understanding, expectation and actual practices of leadership, vary considerably. Individual teacher leaders make their own journeys, have specific motivations for engaging in leadership and are sometimes at odds with their

peers. Mackenzie (2007, p. 376) uses the analogy of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* to represent the teacher, as both “martyr and hero” and highlights the way in which teachers both “rail against and cherish their isolation”. This study suggests that many of our L3CTs still work in isolation, albeit in charge of a project, cherished or not. For teacher leadership to resemble a giant, there would need to be considerably more robust dialogue about leadership practices at the school level, during pre-service teacher education and in relevant professional associations. There is certainly a need for teachers to own more of this endeavor.

For now the giant still sleeps and dreams.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Letter to Survey Participant



**School of Education**

[www.murdoch.edu.au](http://www.murdoch.edu.au)

90 South Street, Murdoch  
Western Australia 6150  
Telephone: 08 9360 7476  
Facsimile: 08 9360 6280  
H.Wildy@murdoch.edu.au

### Doctoral Research

#### Teacher Leadership: Policy and Practice

I am a Doctoral student at Murdoch University investigating teacher leadership in Western Australian Schools under the supervision of Associate Professor Helen Wildy and Dr Wendy Cumming-Potvin. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature and extent of teacher leadership work undertaken by Level Three Classroom Teachers to better understand teacher leadership practices and career trajectories.

You can help in this study by completing the attached survey. It is anticipated that the time taken to complete this survey will be no more than 10 minutes. In addition to the survey, some teachers will be invited to participate in an interview to provide more detailed information about leadership work. This participation is voluntary. You will be asked to indicate on the survey whether or not you are willing to participate in an interview.

If you are willing to participate in interviews, you will be contacted to arrange a suitable time. It is anticipated that there will be two interviews of about 30 minutes in length, approximately three months apart. During these interviews you will be asked questions about your role as a Level Three Classroom Teacher in the school. You will also be asked to keep a log of the duties you perform in this role over a three month period.

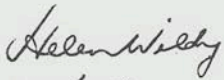

You may decide to withdraw your consent at any time without consequence. All information given in the survey and interview is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from this research. You will be informed as to the availability of the completed thesis at the conclusion of the study. Should you require any further information regarding the nature or conduct of this study please contact:

Helen Wildy  
Telephone: 9360 7476

Wendy Cumming-Potvin  
Telephone: 9360 2192

Rosana Stout  
Telephone: 9453 0100

Alternatively if you wish to talk to an independent person about this study, you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee on 9360 6677 or email at [ethics@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:ethics@murdoch.edu.au)

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Helen Wildy, Research Supervisor  
Rosana Stout, Doctoral Researcher

CRICOS Provider Code: 00125J



**Appendix B: Survey**

# School of Education

## Level Three Classroom Teacher Survey



1 Name .....

.....

.....

(optional: if you do not wish to be interviewed do not give your name)

2 Sex

Male  Female

3 Age

25-34  35-44

45-54  55 +

4 Please mark the number of years

(full time equivalent) teaching (including L3CT duties or other)

5 – 9  20 – 24

10 – 14  25 – 29

15 – 19  30 +

5 Please mark the year in which you were awarded Level Three Classroom Teacher status

1997  2004

2000  2005

2002  2006

2003

6 Please mark employment type

Metropolitan Primary

Metropolitan Secondary

Country Primary

Country Secondary

Other .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7 Is your current status Level Three Classroom Teacher?

Yes

If you answered YES to this question go to question 10

No

If you answered NO to this question go to question 9.

8 Which best describes your current position?

Level 3 Administrator

Level 4 Administrator

Level 5 Administrator

Other (Please specify)

.....

9 Do you believe your Level Three Classroom Teacher status was a significant step in gaining further promotional positions?

Yes  No

The next set of items require you to select one response that most closely corresponds to your belief about each statement

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree Or Disagree
10	I have clearly defined duties as a L3CT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I have high level of discretion in my work as a L3CT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	My current work as a L3CT meets my expectations of the role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	I would not change the L3CT application process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	I would not change the L3CT work parameters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	My experience as a L3CT has enhanced my career	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	I would recommend the L3CT to my colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 Please provide a brief description of any duties or responsibilities in your current role as Level Three Classroom Teacher

.....  
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.....

18 How has your work in schools changed since becoming a Level Three Classroom Teacher?

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.....

19 Do you consider the Level Three Classroom Teacher position has assisted you to engage in a leadership role in the school setting?  Yes  No

## Thank you for completing this survey

Completed surveys returned by April 15, 2008 will be eligible for entry into a draw for a \$100 Dymocks voucher.

Please complete contact details if you consent to be interviewed

Telephone: .....

Work Mobile: .....

Email: .....



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