

**MEN TRAINING TO BE SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS:
A CASE STUDY**

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Men training to be secondary English teachers: a case study

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Abstract

This is a case study of seven men training to be secondary English teachers on a one year Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) in a university department of education. Men training to be English teachers are worthy of investigation because men are in a minority both on PGCE secondary English courses and in English departments in schools in England. As more women than men teach English in secondary schools, initial training takes place in predominantly female English departments and school mentors are more likely to be female. Within this statistical context, this qualitative study attempts to understand what happens to a group of men during their initial training as they enter part of the education profession that is predominantly female. Men's socialisation and processes of adaptation have been widely researched in the predominantly female areas of early years and primary education, but have been hitherto overlooked in the secondary sector, in spite of the perception of the feminisation of the subject of English.

In the study, female mentors are shown to possess gendered stereotypical expectations of male trainees regarding their ability to work hard, organise paperwork, plan effectively and exert forceful power. With limited access to other male English teachers, the male trainees resist the classroom management strategies they observe, preferring to be 'comfortable', 'laid back' and 'jokey'. They develop more gentle teaching styles and personae that they see as appropriate for male teachers working with teenagers. Their relationship with the subject of English also shifts as they reject the new emphasis on functional literacy and embrace the literature components of the English curriculum, which are more familiar to them.

Their experience of training forces the men to reconsider their masculinities and to renegotiate relationships with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English. The analysis of the interrelationship between the three areas of masculinities, initial teacher development and the subject of English reveals deeper knowledge of each. Within the richness of the findings, the interconnections between the three areas are explored and a unique body of knowledge about male English teachers during their training is revealed.

Introduction

This is the first study of men training to become secondary English teachers. More women than men teach and train to teach English in secondary schools in England (Howson, 2000), yet research has overlooked male English teachers and traineeⁱ English teachers. The aim of this case study of men during their initial teacher training course, uses ethnographic approaches to investigate how a group of seven men learn to become secondary English teachers. It reveals how their perceptions of and relationships with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English undergo interconnected adaptations. Their socialisation and processes of change involve their identities as teachers, men and consumers and doersⁱⁱ of English. The study explores the interrelationship between these three areas of their personal and professional lives. This socio-cultural, multi-dimensional study took place at a particular time in education and initial teacher training, the academic year 2001-02. It explores the micropolitics of initial teacher training within the politics of English teaching by focusing on a group of men studying on a one year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The study is located in a department of education in a new university, which I refer to as 'Soulbridge University', and secondary schools in the south east of England.

'Please, can we have a man?'

At Soulbridge University, where I led the PGCE secondary English course, I met many secondary English teachers, in school and at the university. Several asked if they could have a *male* trainee teacher, saying, "Please, can we have a man?" Similar requests from mentors, phrased as "Do you have any men?" and "We'd really like to have a man in the English Department", were the original catalyst for my study. I was intrigued and wanted to find out more.

On a PGCE secondary English course with 26 trainees, there are usually 20 women and 6 men. This is a typical ratio, of about 5:1 women to men, both on PGCE

secondary English courses and mirrored in English departments in schools (cf. Howson, 2000). Numerically, a male English trainee and male English teacher carry a premium. At mentor training events at the university during 1999-2001, I asked those mentors who had stated a preference why they wanted a male English trainee. They gave the following reasons:

“It would be good for the department.”

“It would make a change.”

“It would be good for the boys to have a role model.”

“It would be good to get some fresh ideas.”

“It would be exciting and a challenge.”

“We haven't had a man in the department for ages.”

Out of professional loyalty, I did send a male trainee to English departments where mentors had voiced a preference. What happened next sharpened my research interest. Consistently the men experienced a disproportionate number of problems when on school placement. I noticed a worrying trend: more men required extra support and university supervision; more men found it hard to meet the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); more men dropped off the course; more men failed the PGCE. I was concerned and developed some materials to use on mentor training events. The following extract from the materials presented, with some humour, an account of what I believed was happening in English departments:

Want a man

Sent a man

Not that sort of man

Problems with the man

Why can't this man be more like a woman?

Don't want a man again

The mentors, who were mostly female, recognised and agreed with the sequence of events caricatured in the materials. Their negative perception of male trainees was a further catalyst for the research. I wanted to uncover the significance of the men's gender on their training. Men were repeatedly in a numerical minority on the PGCE

secondary English course and their experience of the school-based training components was in predominantly female English departments, where few men were involved in their training. The study took place during one of the most politicised eras of English teaching as it coincided with the implementation in secondary schools in England of the non-statutory *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9* (DfEE, 2001). The seven men who are the focus of the study are well qualified: all hold first degrees in English and some have higher degrees. They brought to their initial teacher training knowledge, enthusiasm and a passion for English literature, which they expected to pass on to pupils. Instead, they found themselves being trained by mentors to 'deliver' a utilitarian and reductive English curriculum based on functional literacy that bore little resemblance to the subject they had studied and wanted to teach.

The significance of the male English trainees' gender on their experience of being trained to become English teachers is examined across three main theoretical constructs: masculinities theory, models of trainee teachers' development, and historical and current perspectives on the subject of English. The exploration of the interconnectivity between the three areas reveals new and interesting findings about male English teachers at the beginning of their careers. This research into a group of male trainee English teachers emerges from the multiple relationships I had with the participants: PGCE course tutor, English teacher, researcher, PhD student and gay man. Within this study the data, analysis and conclusions are infused with my personal experience and professional knowledge of masculinities, teaching and English, and set against a contextual numerical backdrop.

Personal experience

Early on the PhD journey I wrote the autobiography of the research topic identified at that stage. Influenced by the potential of autobiography when researching education (Abbs, 1974), masculinities (Jackson, 1990) and teachers' sexuality

(Jennings, 1998) I analysed stories told in my family, looking for the seeds of my research interests in teaching, men and English. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) offer an explanation:

Qualitative researchers self-consciously draw upon their own experiences as a resource in their inquiries. They always think reflectively, historically, and biographically.

(Denzin and Lincoln, 1998: xi)

Thinking and writing reflectively, historically, and biographically was central to my early quest for a research voice (cf. Dadds and Hart, 2001). First person autobiographical writing was more than a self-conscious decision to utilise the rich seam of experiences in family stories. Arnot's (1995) reflection on her involvement with Bernstein's (1975) theories provides an arresting parallel:

I have often wondered whether it was my (Polish) Catholic upbringing, which urged me to make sense of the world according to structures, rituals and order or whether it was my father's Jewish family culture, which emphasised that knowledge is a precious inheritance and a source of wealth that made me choose the path I eventually took through the maze of sociological theory A structural analysis seemed, from where I started, not just attractive but essential to an understanding of the patterns of social inequalities and power relations in society.

(Arnot, 1995: 298, cited in Arnot 2002: 230)

Transposing Arnot's reflections to fit my autobiography reveals several explanations for my initial autobiographical mode of writing, thus:

I have often wondered whether it was my (German/Welsh) Catholic/Protestant upbringing, which urged me to make sense of the world according to stories, anecdotes and oral tradition or whether it was my father's hidden illiteracy (and my brother's dyslexia), which emphasised that writing is a demanding skill and a source of anxiety that made me choose the path I eventually took through the maze of sociological theory and autobiographical accounts of English teachers and other researchers A narrative approach seemed, from where I started, not just attractive but essential to an understanding of the patterns of personal and professional relations in the aspect of society I was researching.

Early in my study of male English trainees, it was essential to make my own understandings explicit; I did so by writing autobiographical accounts. Upon embarking on the main data collection during 2001-02 my writing style shifted into a

more discursive and analytical mode, but was informed and deepened by the understandings obtained by the earlier autobiographical writing, which I now examine.

In my predominantly male, working-class family, stories were told and retold. Writing about them revealed my early experience of some of the themes in my study, such as the role of gender in support relationships, preconceptions of male achievement and beliefs about masculinities in the workplace. My father recounted how his grandmother Sarah Maroney would say, 'Sarah Maroney ne'er reared a jibber' to motivate the men in her family who showed signs of self-doubt, becoming dispirited or giving up. Her words have been used to support and encourage men in the Thomas family during difficult times. For example, my father telephoned me every morning of my undergraduate final examinations, said these words and put down the receiver. A keen amateur boxer in his youth he spent his working life as a crane driver in the East Moors steelworks in Cardiff. In both pursuits, he enjoyed the danger, the physicality and the camaraderie of these exclusively male environments.

Literacy and the subject of English also feature in my family stories. My mother, a bright grammar school girl, described by her female teachers as a 'plodder' (Miller, 1996:131), often told my brothers and me the story about Mr Jenkins, a newly qualified English teacher in her grammar school in Dowlais. In 2003, I asked her to write down the story:

We had a new English Master called Mr. Jenkins (Jinks). He was young and good looking. It was a mixed class with the girls sitting in the front and the boys at the back. Behind me sat two boys who were Welsh speaking. The one boy I liked, called Byron, would make funny remarks to me in Welsh which set me giggling. This lesson, I started giggling at what he said, so Jinks sent me out of the class until I controlled myself.

(Powell, 2003)

Looking again at my mother's story through the lenses of my research, I can see some parallels between Mr Jenkins early in his career and the experiences of male trainee English teachers in my study.

Other family stories written by my mother allowed me to find in my childhood early signs of my interest in English. When I was a schoolboy, struggling to start a piece of homework, my father tried to help me, quoting words his own father had said to him, 'Never mind the spelling, put it down.' The idea was to get something written on paper before worrying about surface features. It is likely that his emphasis on content rather than accuracy attempted to disguise his literacy problems. He denied for himself and recognised in others the value of literacy. My mother views the disparity between my father's limited literacy and my success with learning to read as the source of my becoming an English teacher:

Keith, his dad and myself usually went to town on a Saturday afternoon. On this particular day we visited a bookshop. Money was quite short in those days, and when Keith started looking at the children's books he picked up a large A B C book which cost five shillings, quite a lot of money to spend on a book, unless it was a birthday or a Christmas present, and as he would have been only three or four years old. Anyway his dad said we should buy it for him, as he was so taken up with it. We bought the book and travelled home on the bus. He kept asking us about the letters and the illustrated pictures, and by the time we arrived home, I think he had memorised most of the alphabet. This was the beginning of him wanting to teach English.
(Powell, 2003)

At school, I was happy and successful, especially in languages and English where I found myself in groups with more girls than boys. At university, where I studied English and French, and then trained as an English teacher, most of my fellow students were women. Thus, the experience of learning in a predominantly female environment was familiar to me prior to this study.

Professional knowledge

In addition to perspectives created by my personal autobiography the study is informed by knowledge gained through my professional autobiography. My own initial teacher training took place in mixed schools in Liverpool, where I had male mentors. I started my teaching career in a mixed school in Manchester, with a male head of department. This was to be my career, a male English teacher in a mixed

school. A move to London turned into a belle époque, as I taught English in the predominantly female environment of a girls' state secondary school. Here my awareness of gender issues was sharpened, founded on feminist principles and equal opportunities practices designed to raise the achievement of girls in school and beyond. The school motto, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee', expressed the school's ethos of motivating girls. Back in 1986, the first book I read about gender examined the progress of working-class girls from school to the job market: *Typical Girls?* (Griffin, 1985). At that time, the position and aspirations of young women in a patriarchal society were being challenged by providing girls with access to the full range of subjects in the curriculum, especially science and information technology. As was the case in Auburn College (Connell, 1987: 178) the curriculum constructed a new hegemony that privileged academically successful young women from multi-racial backgrounds in a state school. The inspirational headteacher and newly appointed staff presented the entire curriculum as exciting and relevant. I noted the powerful influence of teachers, and therefore gender, on girls' subject choices and career decisions.

As an inexperienced male teacher in a predominantly female context, I set up a men's group to discuss issues arising from being a male teacher in girls' school. Twenty years ago I lacked the vocabulary of men's studies and masculinities to articulate the tensions and problems faced by the small number of men teaching girls and teaching English. As a male English teacher in a predominantly female department, I was sensitised to the complexity of relationships involved in working with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English. It is of significance for the study that I too worked as a secondary English teacher with predominantly female English teaching colleagues. In other London English departments, I noted a gendered pattern: men were consistently in the minority, typically one or two in a department of six or seven. Anecdotally, the English teachers I met at that time perceived male colleagues

as either exceptionally good or noticeably weak. A male English teacher stood out as he was in a conspicuous minority.

Statistical backdrop

This case study is infused with the personal and the autobiographical but is set against a quantified contextual backdrop, fitting Strauss and Corbin's (1998) description of qualitative research:

It can refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, *behaviors*, emotions, and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena ... Some of the data may be quantified as with census or background information about the persons or objects studied, but the bulk of the analysis is interpretative.

(pp. 10-11)

As will be shown, my research is situated within the identified pattern of the subject of English having been historically dominated by men but being taught by more women than men in schools. Recently, more women have moved into middle and senior management roles (Coleman, 2001) as heads of department, deputy head and headteachers.

As I began the study, a 'crisis' in teacher recruitment and retention was widely reported in the media during the summer of 2001. For the first time, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) deemed secondary English a shortage subject (Marshall et al., 2001: 201). Even though men offered places on secondary English courses were more likely to take up their places than women (Howson, 2000), when preparing the study during 2000-01 I was mindful that a fall in the number of male applicants could render the study not viable. This concern was based on emerging national statistical trends (TTA/Smithers and Robinson, 2001) that had been replicated at Soulbridge University in preceding years: three male English trainees out of twenty four in 1998-99; four men out of twenty five in 1999-2000. Anecdotal evidence from colleagues teaching on other PGCE secondary English courses presented a similar pattern regarding the consistently low number of male trainees. Moreover, in line with Foster (1995), male

trainees were less likely to be successful than their female counterparts. I judged that the research group of seven participants in my study was likely to survive, taking into account that drop out rates for PGCE trainees average between 5 per cent and 10 per cent (TTA/Smithers and Robinson, 2001).

A key feature of the statistical backdrop was the national and regional trend in teachers' gender across the entire teaching workforce. In 2001-02 more women than men were teaching in schools in England, illustrated by statistics for the age and gender of the teaching workforce in the East of England region, where the study took place:

Table 1: Age profile of FTE (full-time equivalent) qualified teaching workforce in England by gender

| Age | Men | Women |
|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Under 25 | 300 | 1,620 |
| % | 2.46 | 6.02 |
| 25-29 | 1,400 | 4,600 |
| % | 11.48 | 17.09 |
| 30-34 | 1,500 | 2,930 |
| % | 12.31 | 10.88 |
| 35-39 | 1,340 | 2,250 |
| % | 10.99 | 8.36 |
| 40-44 | 1,500 | 2,890 |
| % | 12.31 | 10.74 |
| 45-49 | 2,240 | 5,090 |
| % | 18.38 | 18.91 |
| 50-54 | 2,670 | 5,040 |
| % | 21.90 | 18.72 |
| 55-59 | 1,110 | 2,270 |
| % | 9.11 | 8.43 |
| 60+ | 130 | 230 |
| % | 1.07 | 0.85 |
| Total | 12,190 | 26,920 |

Source: Database of teacher records 2002, Teacher Training Agency, Regional Report, East of England, 05/2004

This data set shows that men accounted for the 31 per cent of qualified teachers in the region and within this, 32 per cent were aged 50 and over. Men accounted for 16 per cent of the teachers aged under 25. Again in the East of England regional context, the number of male and female new entrants to ITT (Initial Teacher Training) in 2001 is

shown in Table 2. This shows for 2001-02 the total number and percentage of new entrants to secondary ITT and the statistics for English, mathematics and science. Of particular note are the gender differentials in these subjects with fewer men than women training to teach English, compared with science and mathematics, when expressed as a percentage of the total figure. Analysis reveals that there were more men than women on PGCE courses in the following subjects: mathematics and science (chemistry and physics).

Table 2: Number of new entrants to ITT in 2001-02 in the East of England in by gender

| Secondary subject | Number | | | Percentage of total | |
|-------------------|--------|------|-------|---------------------|------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male |
| English | 141 | 39 | 180 | 78.3 | 21.7 |
| Mathematics | 49 | 31 | 80 | 61.3 | 38.8 |
| Science | 132 | 76 | 208 | 63.5 | 36.5 |
| Secondary total | 765 | 369 | 1,134 | 67.5 | 32.5 |

Source: Teacher Training Agency Performance Profiles 2001-02, Regional Report, East of England, 05/2004

Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) statistics showed not only that fewer men applied to PGCE courses but that fewer men were offered places. This was particularly the case on secondary PGCE courses where 50 per cent of male applicants and 62 per cent of female applicants were offered places. For secondary English courses out of 658 men who applied, only 49 per cent were offered places, whereas out of 2034 women who applied, 62 per cent were offered places. Interestingly, on PGCE secondary English courses fewer men than women decided not to accept their offer of a place (15 men; 46 women). Figures for applications for PGCE courses during the years before the study showed a consistent trend of more women than men being accepted on PGCE secondary English courses in England as shown below:

Table 3: Summary of those accepted for secondary English PGCE courses, 1999-2001

| PGCE Secondary English | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Male | 421 | 376 | 425 |
| Female | 1309 | 1401 | 1447 |

Source: Graduate Teacher Training Registry, 2003

Focusing on the secondary sector and secondary English in particular, 2001-02 saw an increase in the number of new entrants to ITT courses in England:

Table 4: Registrations to Initial Teacher Training Courses in 2001-02

| New entrants to ITT Postgraduate | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | % change from 2000-01 to 2001-02 |
|--|---------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Secondary English | 1,910 | 2,092 | 10% |
| Secondary Total | 12,996 | 14,468 | 11% |

Source: Teacher Training Agency Press Release, 1/11/01

The statistics in this press release showed that trainee teacher numbers in 2001-02 were the highest for seven years. The seven per cent rise across primary and secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate courses was described by Ralph Tabberer, the TTA Chief Executive, as a 'remarkable achievement' (TTA, 2001). The overall increase in all secondary subject undergraduate and postgraduate training registrations showed, with a figure of 15, 912, an increase of nine per cent. The rise in numbers was attributed to the success of the TTA's press and media campaign, 'Those who can, teach', which attracted 308,512 enquiries over the twelve months ending 31/8/01. A further factor was the introduction of a 'Training Salary' of £6,000 payable to all PGCE trainees in monthly instalments. This exuberant picture of 2001-02 painted by the TTA glossed over the previously well-reported statistic that nearly one third of all secondary trainee teachers failed to take up a teaching post at the end of their training

(TTA/Smithers-Robinson, 2001). These were the significant public contexts of the academic year 2001-02 when the study took place.

The shape of the thesis

This is a study of what happens to a group of men as they train on a one-year PGCE course. The research sought to answer the following research question: What are the experiences of men who are training to be secondary English teachers? The study focuses on the experiences of one group of seven men who are training to be secondary English teachers, specifically in relation to their gender, their understandings of their masculinities, their relationships with teachers, and with the subject of English. Hence, the study contributes to the debates around gender and education, from the perspectives of masculinities, initial teacher training and secondary English.

In the thesis, to assist presentation, the overview of relevant research literature is arranged in two chapters. In Chapter 1 the masculinities literature is examined to locate the position and significance of gender and masculinities for male trainees. This leads into Chapter 2 where initial teacher training and the subject of English are explored.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used during the pilot and main studies. Ethnographic approaches are shown to be particularly appropriate for a case study of masculinities, initial teacher development and the subject of English. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 present the findings, analysis and interpretation of the data and reveal a set of theorised constructs regarding the processes of adaptation of male trainee English teachers. Chapter 4 is an analysis of the masculinity themes, specifically the male trainees' experience of entering a predominantly female profession, being trained to become a teacher in a feminised environment and by a female mentor. Chapter 5 focuses on the theme of being a teacher, including the male trainees' communication and changed perceptions of their relationships with pupils when teaching English.

Chapter 6 considers the way the trainees' expectations of the subject of English changed during the year because the subject they knew from their schooling and university education had changed. The trainees revised their understanding of the subject of English in comparison to the version of English they studied at university which bore little resemblance to the centralised curriculum content and delivery of secondary English. Chapter 7 is an analysis, interpretation and consideration of the territory where the three theorised constructs meet, overlap and influence one another. A central feature of the chapter is the identification of a masculine way of being an English teacher adopted by the male trainees. Finally, Chapter 8 presents a number of conclusions including implications for changes to practice, future research and policy within the arena of initial teacher education and secondary English teaching, with particular reference to male trainees.

Chapter 1

Masculinities and being a teacher

Introduction

Research has hitherto overlooked men training to be secondary English teachers. Related research into men often foregrounds the ‘crisis of masculinity’ in its colloquial sense, for example: the place of men in society; teacher recruitment and retention; boys’ attitudes to school and literacy. Meanwhile, the gender of English teachers in secondary schools has been viewed as unproblematic. My study is positioned within extant research in the three overlapping areas of: masculinities, initial teacher training and the subject of English, in order to gain a deeper understanding of a group of men training to be secondary English teachers.

My aim here is to show how the masculinities arena is the rightful home for my study and which aspects of masculinities theory are applicable to my analysis and theorising. Whilst an exhaustive history of research into gender, masculinity and masculinities is not my intention, I do identify movements, theories and concepts relevant to my thesis. The masculinities literature is vast as it features in a wide range of spheres that include inter alia: sociology, psychology, linguistics, history, literature, politics, as well as studies on culture, gender, sexuality and queer theory. In the absence of an epistemology of men training to be secondary English teachers my aim is to position the study by describing the etymological and wider theoretical landscape and then by focusing on more directly related perspectives. Here, I will concentrate on theories employed to understand and articulate men, masculinities and education. The intention is to move towards identifying the theory that is most relevant and congruent, and which can then be applied to the data analysis.

Disentangling 'sex' and 'gender'

Many understandings of men and women are based on an essentialist paradigm and often conceptualised in binary form. In related fields dualistic distinctions are embedded within theoretical constructions. Biological understandings of sex difference have meant that understandings of men and women are informed by anatomy. Evolutionists, including socio-biologists and evolutionary psychologists, draw on the work of Darwin (1871) to identify biologically determined features of men and women, jettisoning 'the false dichotomy between [the] biological and social' (Buss, 2004: 14). In the 1930s the social psychologist, Lewis Terman (cited in Kimmel and Aronson, 2004: 71) represented gender difference on a continuum between masculinity and femininity. The language used to explain differences between sexes and genders operated within a binary system. Chodorow (1984) urges that essentialism and biological determinism should be avoided when researching men by eschewing a pseudodichotomy between men and women. Lorber (1993) challenges the biological determinism viewpoint of 'Whatever a "woman" is has to be "female"; whatever a "man" is has to be "male"' (p.568). Her position goes beyond what feminists believe about gender being a cultural overlay, acknowledging that whilst male and female bodies are different physiologically 'they are transformed by social practices to fit the salient categories of a society, the most pervasive of which are "female and "male" and "women" and "men"' (ibid.: 569). The problem of categorisation brought about by binary opposition needs to be avoided. So for my study, understanding men does involve looking at them in relation to women (Arnot, 2002) but also understanding them in relation to other men and themselves. Beyond biological, embodied, determinist and essentialist distinctions of masculinity, more complex and subtle understandings of men are gained by considering the discourses of masculinities. As I will be working with two distinctive sets of concepts I will explain how I use the terms: masculinity and masculinities. For clarity, in the following sections I divide these opposing political perspectives, drawing on the work of Skelton (2001a), into

these differing and opposing perspectives, under two broad headings: *masculinity* (a perspective based on men's rights, that is conservative, biological, essentialist) and *masculinities* (a perspective that is plural, nuanced, pro-feminist and group specific, often couched as *discourses* of masculinities). Discourses of masculinities allow for more fluid, relational and multi-dimensional understandings of individual men, who are located and see themselves in different times, spaces, contexts and cultures.

Masculinity

Understandings of masculinity, in the singular form, are rooted in biological or sociological models of men. Essentialist in nature and based on biological determinism these understandings are pervasive. From this perspective, masculinity is seen as embodied and to do with men's sex or their maleness. Hence, such understandings of men are simplistic and present easy solutions based on a polarised and biologically determined view of males and females.

Masculinity is not a recent concept and its historical interpretations are worth considering in a study of men who are interested in English literature. Petersen (1998) traced the use of 'masculinity' back to the mid-eighteenth century by locating its etymology in the Latin 'masculus'. Newsome (1961) found that related terms, such as 'manly', 'manliness' and 'being manly', were used during the Victorian and Edwardian periods with associations of godliness and goodness. Whitehead (2002:14) synthesises Peterson and Newsome to create a catalogue of eighteenth and nineteenth century traits of the male: Christian virtue, straightforwardness, simplicity, openness, honesty, stoical endurance and intellectual energy, not feminine, physical strength and endurance, muscularity, denial of luxury. Whitehead (ibid.: 15) traces the concept of 'the male' back to the sixteenth century and aristocratic Renaissance man. In so doing he identifies a contrasting list of male qualities: setting the pace and standards of the times, a symbol of Englishness, ruthlessness and brutality. However, the same male was also in possession of gentler characteristics and able to display deeper emotions,

dance, play music, sing and compose. Whitehead (ibid.: 5) provides a thought provoking summary of men in the Elizabethan age: 'a complex combination of emotional, sentimental, foppish beau and militaristic aggressor'. He then traces the changes undergone by men through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries noting the malleability and variability of masculinity and manliness across history and social groupings. His synthesis of histories of masculinity in the twentieth century identifies the influences of politics, war, economics, industry, religion, race and nationhood. His warning to gender theorists is 'that notions of "men and masculinity" are always likely to remain, to some extent, idealized products, representative of both the social conditions of the time and dominant ideological or discursive "truths"' (p.16). Kimmel (2004: 2) provides clear definitions of how the terms sex, male and female are biologically framed, whereas gender, masculinity, femininity and the social meanings of maleness and femaleness are culturally defined. There is widespread acceptance that men cannot be treated as a homogenous group and that the biological and sociological labels of 'male' and 'men' apply to a complex and diverse set of human beings, that will vary across groups, cultures and time (Cohen, 1996). This seems clear in promoting masculinities as social, historical and cultural constructions. However, Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003: 85) signal the opposing viewpoint that exists in some research, which by applying a structural functionalism approach, aims to reveal the 'ubiquitous male' or the notion that all men are the same, and that all masculinities share similar fundamental structures. Studies of trainee teacher socialisation from a gendered perspective and seen through the lens of masculinity to look at male trainees' adaptations and development have been carried out by Lortie (1975), Hanson and Herrington (1976) and Thornton (1999). However, Petersen (2003) observes a wide rejection of essentialism in work on men. Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994: 3) indicate that 'Essentialist interpretations of the male/female dichotomy are a major problem in comparative studies of gender' and that 'notions of masculinity, like the notion of gender, are fluid and situational'. When writing about an interview with Lynne Segal

(1990), Wetherell and Griffin (1995: 100) remark that 'she summarized the history of work on masculinity as following a path from optimism to pessimism'. This is a reminder for researchers of men to avoid positioning them as intrinsically problematic and to choose carefully the lenses through which to view their masculinities.

Researching men requires an awareness of the biological associations of 'male' and the more sociological and social constructionist meanings of 'men'. I use the words 'male' and 'men' to identify the sex and gender of the research participants, and separate them from their counterparts who are 'female' and 'women'. However, grammatically and syntactically this is not without its challenges. Therefore, throughout the thesis I use 'male' as an interchangeable word for 'men' although they are not synonymous. Whilst the term 'men teachers' is used frequently when investigating teachers' gender in the workplace of school (Allan, 1994, Sargent, 2000, 2001), 'male' is also used by the same authors (for example, Allan, 1993). At times, the choice of word is an attempt to avoid unnecessary clumsiness at the expense of consistency. Grammatically, 'men' works as a plural noun, as when I use it in the thesis title 'Men training to be secondary English teachers: a case study', but 'men' is not always used successfully as a qualifier or adjective, as in the awkward sounding 'man teacher', 'man English teacher', 'men English teachers' and 'men role models'. In keeping with many writers, when differentiating between teachers who are men and women, I use 'male' and 'female' as well as 'men' and 'women'. I use the words man, male, men and masculine to highlight the aspects of masculinities involved in being an English teacher. This leads me into the opposing political perspective, in line with Skelton's definitions (2001a:169), that I group under the heading, 'Masculinities'.

Masculinities

Masculinities in the plural form, based on poststructuralist notions of discourse, enable the study of men who are located in different times, spaces and cultures. In understandings of plural masculinities perspectives are located within

conceptions of power and gender is perceived as relational. Seminal writing on men and masculinities comes from countries with established traditions of men's studies, such as the United States of America (for example, Brod, 1987; Kimmel, 1987a, 1987b, 1987c, 2004; Messner, 1993, 1997; Kegan Gardiner, 2002) and Australia (for example, Connell, 1987, 1995; Lingard and Douglas, 1999; Martino, 1999, 2001). In the United Kingdom there is an emerging body of work on masculinities (for example, Mac an Ghail, 1994; 1996; Epstein, 1997; Kehily and Nayak, 1997; Epstein et al., 1998; Hitchcock, 1997; Whitehead, 2002) which is pro-feminist in nature.

From 1918 to 1968 second-wave feminism had been concerned with social reform and revolution in the private sphere (Delamont, 2001:9). From 1968, third-wave feminism exploded in the USA and the UK and tackled social justice and public issues. Masculinity discourse emerged in the 1970s as a reaction to feminism as men realised they too had a gender. Connell (1995: 220) noted a pro-feminist reaction to feminism. Being a man involved an acceptance of the radical feminist view of all men as misogynistic and sexist (Lingard and Douglas, 1999: 38). Lingard and Douglas (1999) examine the links between feminism, pro-feminism and the resulting backlash against feminism. Kimmel (1987c) sees the 'crisis' of masculinity in this historical perspective. The crisis for men has been blamed on feminism, as an engagement with feminism requires a repositioning of masculinity (Kimmel, 1998). The essentialist standpoint of much popularist writing is based on the men's movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which was founded on a backlash in reaction to feminism. Positioned as pro-feminist, masculinities evolved as a separate sphere of academic study in the 1980s.

To investigate such social and cultural constructions of masculinities, sex role theory needs consideration. Popular in men's studies during the 1970s and 1980s, sex role theory is now widely disregarded as it produced two homogenous categories, exaggerated differences between men and women whilst downplaying the importance of culture, race, class, sexuality and nationality (Newton, 2002). However, of greater

relevance is post-structural research, which takes note of micro-politics, subjectivity, difference and everyday life. In particular, Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity, provides a powerful way of looking at how male trainee English teachers 'do' their gender and how their gender is imposed on them and is not embodied by being biologically determined.

As I am a male researcher researching a group of men, I have paid attention to notions of embodied masculinity and relational masculinities. The work of a number of feminist and pro-feminist male researchers has been central to my thinking in these areas. Specifically, Connell (1987, 1995), Collinson and Hearn (1996a, 1996b, 2001), Hearn (1987, 1992), Jackson (1990, 1998), Kimmel (1987a, 1987b), Lingard and Douglas (1999), Mac an Ghail (1994, 1996) inform my study, which looks carefully at a small number of men. Also of importance is the work which examines gendered perspectives of teacher socialisation from a feminist viewpoint, such as De Lyon and Mignuolo (1989) and Skelton and Hanson (1989).

By looking at how men perceive themselves, but also how they are perceived and treated, I utilise aspects of socialisation theory (Stanley and Wise, 2002) to understand how men behave and change. Bem (1993) constructs three 'lenses of gender': gender polarization, biological essentialism and androcentrism. Sabbe (2003) borrows the metaphor in her 'genderlens'. Having considered gender polarization and biological essentialism in the previous section on 'Masculinity', the third lens of androcentrism is worthy of consideration. Writing about ethnographic research Warren and Hackney (2000) have explored the female researcher's entrée to a male dominated field, using the concept of 'the honorary male' (Sexton, 1969). The concept of the 'honorary female' is relevant to the men in my study, as 'honorary' gender status and feeling 'genderless' are part of the experience of male trainee English teachers.

Uncertainty prevails about the place and future of research into masculinities because of the challenges posed by trends in social theory (Petersen, 1998, 2003) and pervasive discourses that can be framed by dualistic distinctions. The caucus of

interest and research into gender difference during the twentieth century provides my study with a rich history. However, it is a history that is not merely theoretical. Participants in my study have been part of and influenced by that history. Academic discourses about men and masculinities have informed public awareness and popularist understandings. As men and as English students the participants have also had access to the gender lexicon and gender theories, which often feature on university English courses.

One of the central concepts of masculinities is hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995:77) which describes the power held by all males within social contexts. It describes the configuration of gender practice that embodies patriarchy, the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. Not all men, whose gender can afford them hegemonic masculinities, are automatically the most powerful people. Another view of gendered power structures is the concept of subversive masculinity (Sedgwick 2003: 12) where the status quo implied in hegemonic masculinity is viewed negatively. Sedgwick's exploration of the link between the affective and pedagogy is pertinent as it challenges the pseudo-dichotomy of the hegemonic and the subversive. Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994: 4) reconsider the assumptions that link masculinities and power in social interactions. These perspectives on masculinities and power inform my study, especially in the analysis of workplace relationships between male trainees and female English teachers. In education an anti-female teacher stance has antecedents in the anti-female position of the National Association of Schoolmasters (Miller, 1996), established in 1922 to defend the interests of male teachers (Littlewood, 1989; Oram, 1989). Post-industrial society (Delamont, 2001) of the 1980s and 1990s impacted on boys' and men's traditional work identities (Willis, 1977; Nayak, 2003), as exemplified in the film *The Full Monty*. As part of an anti-female backlash, proponents of men's resurgent power and recuperative masculinity, such as Biddulph (1997), advocate that men recapture men's traditional roles.

Heywood and Mac an Ghail (2003) are useful here as they differentiate between contemporary theories of masculinities, inter alia: the ubiquitous male, masculinism, modernization of masculinity, protest masculinity, remasculinization, private/public masculinities, dis-embodied masculinity. Also of relevance is Messner's (1993, 1997) recognition that in the politics of the mythopoetic men's movement, men's liberation, men's rights and masculinities studies, there are institutionalised privileges of masculinity as well as costs. They contrast starkly with earlier incarnations of 'new' men who were part of the mythopoetic movement, as advocated by Bly (1990, 1993). This movement encouraged men to get in touch with their masculine selves in order to find spiritual equilibrium. In Heywood and Mac an Ghail's (2003: 47) terms the men in my study see themselves as sensitive, anti-sexist 'new men' who are seen by others, such as school mentors and other teachers, as 'new lads', a term found in public and popularist understandings of men.

Popularist writing

Parallel to the development of masculinities as an academic area of study is the proliferation of popularist iterations of essentialist masculinity. Popularist books are important to acknowledge here as, by employing the language of stereotypes attached to men, they have provided a view of men and maleness that is essentialist in nature. Whilst some recent masculinities research has been re-packaged in more popularist writing, for example, Whitehead (2002, in Whitehead, 2004) and Skelton (2001b, in Murray, 2003), a popularist lexicon about men's role in society has emerged, most notably *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* (Gray, 1995). Gray adopted and exploited dualistic gender theories to caricature gender differences in the context of male/female partner relationships, which has been commercially successful and culturally influential. Popularist sociology with its emphasis on essentialist differences between men and women is frequently in opposition to an

academic study of masculinities, which is more concerned with differences between and within men.

Paradoxically, the writing of Biddulph (1994, 1997), which adopts the widely rejected dualistic, essentialist way of discussing and explaining men and boys, is a publishing phenomenon. His premise is that boys are different from girls, men are in crisis and something must be done. His ideas for the education and socialisation of boys in school include several recommendations to increase the number of male teachers to act as mentors and role models (Biddulph, 1994: 144-145). Whilst he promotes the recruitment of greater numbers of men in schools, his emphasis is on the primary years. Secondary education is left untouched apart from a nod in the general direction of role modelling: 'Men can show boys that reading, writing, music, art and learning is as much a man's as a woman's world' (p.145). Similarly, Gurian (2002) whilst describing 'the Ultimate High School Classroom' (pp. 262-312) fails to mention male teachers. Again, teachers are treated as a homogenous, genderless group who should engage in recuperative activities that address boys' needs. These range from training in gender-brain difference, to curriculum and classroom management strategies. At the same time, he encourages teachers to invite fathers and other males into schools to tell their stories and act as mentors.

In the UK, there is a similar set of pro-boy texts that inhabit a space between the popularist and the academic. Interestingly, in the UK many authors are women, for example, Jenni Murray, the presenter of Radio Four's 'Woman's Hour'. Murray's (2003) book *That's My Boy: A modern parent's guide to raising a happy and confident son* challenges strongly the principles and approaches of Biddulph, distancing her analysis and recommendations from an essentialist view of masculinity rooted in the men's movement. She sees the value of recent and relevant research, extolling the work of Skelton (2001b), to underpin her message that boys need choices to avoid being forced into stereotypical male roles associated with violence and aggression (cf. Collier, 1998; Mills, 2001). Murray's starting point is that boys have been left behind

in all areas of life. From her perspective as a mother and a feminist, Murray challenges and warns against subscribing to boys' assumed superiority. She challenges the position held by Biddulph that society is intrinsically anti-male by reminding her readers that in most respects men still get the better deal (Murray, 2003: 169). Neall's (2002) premise is based on reconceptualising boys and valuing their strengths and attributes. Her approach is recuperative in line with Foster et al. (2001) and encourages teachers to use different communication strategies for boys in ways that celebrate masculinities with some unexpected and contradictory overlaps with Biddulph (1997) by seeing their masculinity as embodied.

In the UK in the 1980s and 1990s a combination of economic reasons, feminist ideology and an awareness of gendered educational practices (Lafrance, 1991) resulted in initiatives such as Women In Science and Engineering (W.I.S.E.). In spite of concerns about boys, there has been no equivalent pro-boy initiative. A project to encourage boys' engagement and careers in the literary arts, for example, Men into Arts, Languages and English (M.A.L.E.), would lack an equivalent economic and political ideology. Careers in these areas are perceived as poorly remunerated and therefore not suitable or desirable for boys who will become men and, in many cases, will carry the responsibility of earning a wage capable of sustaining a family. Consideration of boys in school needs to be squared with societal expectations that they display symbols of masculinity, such as cars and fashion (Galillee, 2002). Drawing on historical and contemporary understandings of masculinities, my study reveals aspects of masculinities involved in teaching and the subject of English.

Discourses on men teachers

In the following sections I set out the discourses I will be drawing on to investigate the experiences of men training to be secondary English teachers. My own theoretical position comes from one that recognises the interplay of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexuality, dis/ability as informing and shaping a range of

masculinities. For male trainee English teachers the discourses I will draw on have some overlap with some of those identified by Drudy et al. (2005:8-18), such as the feminisation of teaching, low rates of male entry to the profession and male role models. For clarity, I have grouped the discourses I use under the following headings: teaching as a predominantly female career; male trainees in a numerical minority, drawing on the work carried out into men in early years settings and primary schools; men in secondary schools; male teachers as role models; the 'what about the boys?' debate; men, emotion and humour; school culture and micropolitics, including sexuality and compulsory and assumed heterosexuality. Each of these discourses takes a particular view on the context in which the masculinities issues are situated. In that sense each of these discourses is informed by a particular political perspective on both the masculinities issues and the context in which the masculinities are played out.

Teaching as a predominantly female career

Teaching is carried out by more women than men as part of gendered labour patterns in the UK (EOC, 1997; Anker, 1998; Goodwin, 1999). The concept of teaching as a predominantly female career has been examined from a feminist perspective (Deem, 1980; Miller, 1992, 1996). The impact of previous experience of the world of work on trainee teachers' perceptions of the job of being a teacher has been documented elsewhere (Reid and Caudwell, 1997; Smedley, 1998a; Reid and Thornton, 2000, 2001; Thornton and Bricheno, 2000). The men in this study are entering a career where women doing the same job outnumber them. Given that more pupils are taught by female teachers than by male teachers, then numerically at least, teaching is a predominantly female profession that arguably is becoming more feminised (Thomas, 1990, 1991; Daly, 2000; Williams, 2005). The men in my study, in line with research into men in non-traditional occupations (Apple, 1983; Allan, 1993; Bradley, 1989, 1993; Williams, 1992, 1993, 1995; Smedley, 1998b; Roulsten and Mills, 2000), are regarded as anomalous. Their rarity challenges how they are

perceived by men and women in the school setting as well as raising issues to do with pupils' preconceptions. When researching girls' education Darling and Glendinning (1998) take stock of the gender of teachers in secondary schools. Their historical tracking of teaching as a female dominated profession provides a clear background for my study in the secondary sector:

In schools professional roles are unevenly distributed among men and women, much as in the rest of society ... While men and women teachers are present in roughly equal numbers in secondary schools, women are seriously under-represented among head teachers, and in other more senior positions. To re-inforce this picture further, most men teachers are in fact to be found in secondary schools.

(Darling and Glendinning, 1998: 43)

Their concern, however, is about the unfair treatment of women teachers, building on Darling's (1992) earlier work on the under-representation of women in promoted positions in schools. Their argument builds on previous studies of teachers who work hard and efficiently (Ashton et al., 1983) and is founded on a belief that 'through time women in teaching have been used and exploited' (ibid.: 44). Supported by historical numerical data (Bradley, 1989, 1993; Bergen, 1982; Corr, 1983) teaching has been female dominated since 1851. Miller (1992, 1996) argues that the feminisation of schooling has resulted in women being the target of criticism in educational practice. Apple (1986) blames women teachers who believed that the guarantee of being a professional was to be organised and meticulously compliant.

Sexton (1969) used the concept of the feminised male when discussing the changes to their manliness experienced by male middle class teachers. Since Sexton there has been a paradoxical gap in the literature on men involved in the education of older children. One explanation is that the relative positions of women and men in education have been considered as the norm, therefore unproblematic and unworthy of research. Miller (1992, 1996) has documented the history of women teachers from the nineteenth century. Her analysis of the British education system shows that whilst women have been encouraged into the teaching workforce, their dominance has done

education a disservice. Miller's theory is that the education system is not valued, trusted or respected, because it is feminised. This needs to be seen alongside the legislative, managerial and economic power possessed by white middle-class men who are also privileged because of their gender, class and race (McIntosh, 1995; Messner, 2000). This concept of the feminisation of teaching provides a useful way of analysing male English teachers' entry to the profession. Also of relevance is the notion of being an outsider entering an established community (Tinto, 1993). These men were joining a profession in 2001 where women were in the majority in secondary schools:

Table 5: Qualified Teachers in Maintained Secondary Schools in England, 2001

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Full-time | |
| Men | 79,688 |
| Women | 92,326 |
| Part-time (headcount) | |
| Men | 6,636 |
| Women | 21,933 |

Source: DfES www.dfes.gov.uk/statistics, January 2001

Teachers who come into teaching during a recruitment crisis are seen, at best as heroic, or at worst foolish. This is of relevance for the male entrants. The exhortation to see teachers as heroes (Toynbee, 1999) had underpinned the Teacher Training Agency's recruitment strategy and publicity campaign 'No one forgets a good teacher' (TTA, 1997) and the creation of the annual Teaching Awards in 1999. The TTA and higher education institutions are seeking to attract more men, especially into primary teaching, but are failing. Howson (2000) asks, "Are men just not good enough, and would "men-only" training course encourage recruitment?" Odone (2003) attempts to make the link between the number of men teaching English and the number of boys studying English at A level in 2003 (23,000 boys: 55,451 girls):

The boy who believes that reading the Brontës will get him teased in the playground can only be disabused by a respected male role model waxing lyrical about *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. But this figure is increasingly rare. Just as learning English is branded

girly, teaching English - indeed teaching any subject - is stuck ever more in a pink ghetto of Miss Jean Brodie with only the odd (*very odd*, the rumour mill would have it) Mr Chips.

(Odone, 2003)

Odone quotes the Institute for Public Policy Research (Johnson and Hallgarten, 2002) report on gender in education, showing the decline in the number of male teachers since 1985 from 40.5 per cent to 31.9 per cent. Odone succeeds in yoking together two other elements worthy of attention in a study of male English teachers: English as a feminised subject suitable for girls and the impact of representations of English teachers in literature and popular culture (Weber and Mitchell, 1995).

Occupations have been analysed in terms of the gender of their workforce (Reid and Stratta, 1998). Men's entry into feminised professions and non-traditional occupations is examined by Bradley (1989, 1993) and clear definitions exist about teaching as a feminised career in Miller's work (1992, 1996). In American elementary schools, Allan (1993, 1994) and Sargent (2001) have explored the tensions and challenges for men in working with younger children. Sargent (2001: 44) uses the term 'predominately female' rather than 'female dominated' to reflect the inequalities of power, where most workers are women but the major policymakers are men. During a time of more women in secondary teaching when commenting on the impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act and the National Curriculum (DES, 1989), Mac an Ghail (1994) noted the paradoxical 'remasculinization' of teaching:

High status was being ascribed to the emerging 'hard masculine' functions of the accountant, the Key Stage tester, the curriculum coordinator, and the information technology (IT) expert. At the same time, female teachers were associated with and directed into the 'soft' feminine functions of profiling and counselling. In short, the remasculinization of teaching was taking place within conventional cultural forms of splitting the rational and the emotional.

(Mac an Ghail, 1994: 34)

According to Mac an Ghail, teaching has become professionalised, with its 'functions' seen as 'masculinized' and these functions are mainly performed by women, many of whom have taken on Mac an Ghail's 'hard masculine' roles in middle and senior management positions (Hey, 1996; Coleman, 2001). Mac an Ghail argues that because

teaching has borrowed managerial practices from the world of business and commerce it has become more masculinised. Paradoxically, whilst management and leadership structures have been masculinised, teaching remains low status in comparison to other professions. Teaching is increasingly managed and led by women. Female heads of department see themselves as successful; some male heads of department are disappointed by their career in teaching. My study must take account of new understandings of female colleagues' power (Duncan, 2002) and achievement (Coleman, 2001) in which the maternal and the managerial are merged. In addition, it must pay attention to the layerings of activity and passivity that are associated with masculinity and femininity (Segal, 1990), especially regarding men being trained by women which is an under researched area. I will now look at the discourse of male educators in a numerical minority, drawing on the work carried out into men in early years settings and primary schools.

Men in early years settings

Men who work with children and are in a numerical minority have been the subject of research (Owen et al., 1998; Cameron et al., 1999). Research into men early years education and care could be viewed as having limited application to men training to teach English in secondary schools. My aim is to consider how the need for more men is debated in the former and why it is not in the latter. The issues for men working with young children (King, 1995; Penn, 1998) need to be applied to men working in predominantly female English departments. Mahony (1996) cites a startling example of how a campaign for more male teachers was articulated:

Furthermore there is a call for more man teachers. In Viborg the head of a preschool teachers training college in the media has advertised not only for men or for qualified men, but for 'Real Men'.

(Kruse, 1996: 438-9, in Mahony, 1996)

There are parallels with the consideration of the assumptions underpinning the words 'man', 'men', 'real men' and 'real teachers' in the work of Sargent (2000, 2001) and

Cushman (2005) within the context of elementary and primary schools. My work draws on the issues, debates and theories presented by Owen et al. (1998) from proceedings at an international seminar on the mixed gender workforce within services for young children, for example:

I think it fair to say that there was a fair degree of consensus in the meeting that we wanted more men to be working in the care of young children. However, there was less agreement as to *why* there should be more men. The sorts of reasons put forward were of two kinds: either individual ones or those of social equality.

(Owen, 1998: 4)

My research has been influenced by the work carried out by Skelton (1991, 1994) and Smedley (1998b) on men working with young children and by their studies of men working in primary schools, based on plural and nuanced understandings of masculinities.

Men in primary schools

Studies of male primary school teachers and trainee teachers have congruence with my enquiry. My assumption is that the motivation for research into male student primary school teachers is based on the under-representation of men training on primary initial teacher training courses and working as teachers in primary schools. Some of this work has been carried out by pro-feminist researchers who recognise the poststructuralist masculinities perspective, for example, Sargent (2000.2001), Skelton (2003), Smedley (1997, 1998a). Smedley (1998a) questions the reasons behind the drive to recruit more men into primary teaching. She does not refer to the statistics of the numerical gender imbalance explicitly, assuming her audience knows the context:

... current rhetoric about male marginality in the primary classroom room and boys' underachievement. ... My interest is in the male students I work with and in the prevailing rhetoric about men primary teachers, which forms the context within which we all work.

(Smedley, 1998a: 147)

She warns against naivety when considering the 'feminised culture of primary schools' and equating perceptions of boys' underachievement with the 'common sense' solution to recruit more male primary school teachers:

From my perspective the position of the male student teacher seems complex. It is too simplistic to assume that numbers of men can be recruited, work as teachers of young children and straightforwardly raise standards, in part by offering positive role models for boys in particular, or for girls.

(Ibid.:147)

Smedley's challenge of the rhetoric is founded on her professional knowledge of men training to become primary school teachers in her role as a female tutor on a teacher training course (cf. Nicol, 1997). Her entry into their experiences and perceptions is underpinned by her understanding of how history, society and class have constructed the teaching profession. This construction does not automatically hold the more recent concerns about boys' achievement. Like Miller (1992) and Cohen (1998), Smedley warns against attributing boys' underachievement to the women who are and have been teaching them.

Reed (1998) identifies an additional dimension that is relevant for my research by identifying the specific areas where female teachers dominate the teaching workforce, including English teachers:

It is also of significance that the subject areas and teachers linked most closely with the problems of boys' underachievement are predominantly female: English teachers, primary teachers and special educational needs teachers.

(Reed, 1998: 62)

In this list of teachers who are predominantly female, primary school teachers have been researched most widely, arguably because of their numerical predominance. The simplistic essentialist solution of putting more men in the classroom is not universally supported by role model theory in the masculinities literature (Thornton, 2000). The issue of male role models in primary settings (Sargent, 2000) and in pre-school settings and services for young children has been widely examined (for example, Owen et al.,

1998). The work of Sargent (2001) identifies in lives of male elementary school teachers the following set of contradictions:

Men teachers in a pre-dominately (sic) female occupation

Under scrutiny (touching, being alone with children)

Under suspicion (homosexuality and paedophilia)

Over compensating

A gendered world (division of labour, career paths)

Limited prior experience of children

Being a positive role model (for boys, girls, parents)

Ambivalence and burden of being a role model

First, only, token male

Culture of primary teaching

No one else to talk to, isolation, not fitting in

This provides a useful set of characterisations to apply to the male trainees in my study who share the experience confronting their masculinities upon entering a predominantly female environment.

Men in secondary schools

My study is rooted in secondary English, an area of controversy and debate, which has been a male dominated subject in its construction and legislation (Marshall, 2000b), but has become female dominated in its delivery in the classroom (Reed, 1998; Darling and Glendinning, 1998; Williams, 2005). Women dominate the male-female representation ratio in secondary English departments. Typically, in an English department, there is one man to five or six women; frequently the only man is the head of department. The conflicting perspectives on the gendered nature of secondary schools need to be borne in mind. Mac an Ghail (1994: 1) highlights the paradoxical nature of gender in schooling which he refers to as a 'masculinizing agency' with a teacher workforce dominated by females, where schools are managed by managerial systems that became increasingly masculinized during the eighties and nineties (p. 23). Davies (1992) warns of the dangers of conceptualising dominant forms of secondary

school management with masculinity. However, the paradox for trainee teachers is a crucial one. As men enter schools for their training, they negotiate their masculinities within the paradoxical setting of predominantly female English departments in which female teachers deploy hegemonic behaviours.

Recent writing on masculinities in related fields of social work, welfare and counselling (Pease and Camilleri, 2001) addresses some of these conflicts and challenges for men and their client groups, in this case within the Australian setting. My research has parallels with this work which aims to broaden understanding of men's self-perception and behaviours, their relationships with women and other men in the work place. Of particular resonance are the conclusions of Pease (2001) and Camilleri and Jones (2001) which help steer my analysis away from perceiving the men in my study as victims of perceptions held by their female mentors and heads of department. In social work contexts, Camilleri and Jones remind men of the territory between patriarchy and feminisation,

Those practitioners who work in caring roles do so in the midst of patriarchal discourses. The challenge for men is to question the assumptions and roles of practitioners. It is also to reflect on their practices and develop strategies that circumvent the reproduction of patriarchal processes. It is unfortunately too common in community agencies to see oppressive practice by males in which they reinforce stereotypical assumptions of appropriate conduct and roles for men and women. Male workers need to take responsibility for that conduct and question those processes in which the gender order is constantly reproduced.

(Ibid.: 33)

This is relevant for the male trainee teachers who, by being men bring their sex into the workplace and because of how they are perceived then have to perform and negotiate their masculinities in a predominantly female environment. Bradley (1993) is very helpful in identifying the problems of how men entering female dominated work contexts are perceived, in terms of infiltration, invasion and take over. This is a possible perception of male trainee English teachers about to enter the profession by women who are doing the work well. There is also a possible suspicion, held by the

women, of these men wanting to do their job, underpinned by a feminised vision of how the job of an English teacher should be carried out.

The qualities of caring and communication that women are generally perceived as possessing, can be particularly associated with women teachers, as Miller observes:

A central theme of this new anxiety is also, of course, the feminisation of schooling: all the ways in which the increasing presence of women in teaching may have led to the sense of education itself being somehow an unmasculine business, inimical to a majority of working-class boys.

(Miller, 1996: 135)

Boys who do not achieve in schools do not see their future careers in education settings which they associate with failure. The men in my study who have chosen careers in education find themselves in an education context where they feel ill at ease because of their gender. They are attracted to the notion of being a role model for boys, which may help them feel more comfortable.

Male teachers as role models

There is a growing interest in the issues surrounding the role played by male teachers in empowering boys in school (Mills, 2000). However, little is voiced about the need for men in secondary schools or in particular subject areas. Some of the debates about male role models in schools focuses on male teachers' gender (Thornton, 1999; Kyriacou et al., 2003) whilst others examine the issue from a masculinities perspective (Thornton and Bricheno, 2000; Carrington and Skelton, 2003). Concern continues about boys' performance in schools as reported by Ofsted (1993, 1996, 2003) the QCA (1998), and the DfES (Younger and Warrington, 2005) in particular their under-achievement in English and literacy, perpetuating an essentialist view of boys and a deficit model of boys' achievement identified by Myhill (1999, 2000). Some solutions focussing on the recruitment of men into primary teaching come from parents (TDA, 2005) although the impact of male teachers on boys' attainment has not been proved. Thornton (2000) draws on historical statistics to show

that boys do not need men in order to appreciate and do well at English. There are some comparative international studies involving men in initial teacher education (Kyriacou et al., 2003) and the teaching of boys (Frosh et al., 2002) and of girls and boys (Mahoney, 1996), but this work does not recognise the nuanced and plural notions of masculinities. Even in work that deals with gender and literacy (Rowan et al., 2001) the position of men teaching under-achieving boys in *secondary* schools is largely overlooked. Foster et al. (2001) provide a common perspective on the issue of men providing role models for boys:

... it is proposed by supporters influenced by *recuperative* approaches that more men teachers should be encouraged into teaching to provide boys with male role models.

(Foster et al., 2001: 6)

They are not addressing a secondary or an English context, but a general recuperative plea for more men in schools. I am interested in the ready acceptance in much of the literature (Nobel and Bradford, 2000; Martino, 2001) of the concept of recuperative role models for boys (and girls) in secondary English classrooms. In examining how masculinity is constructed the roles played by school subjects have been explored, but mainly within a traditionally masculine subject such as physical education (Parker, 1996; Wedgwood, 2005). Male trainee English teachers and the idea of role models need to be examined within concepts of masculinities and subject pedagogy.

What about the boys?

Discourses that focus on boys' place in society and in school are encountered by the men in the study who become part of the debate. During the 1980s, girls' achievement was tackled head on under equal opportunities legislation, based on feminist ideology. Statistical data in the late 1990s indicated that girls had caught up and overtaken boys. A question emerged as part of a backlash against feminism: had girls' success been at the expense of boys? During the 1990s the 'what about the boys?' debate treated boys as a homogenous group based on the 'lads' movement'

(Kenway, 1995). In the UK writers such as Hey (1996: 354) noted that these same boys have been treated as an eclectic alliance of disparate groups of men and boys thus ignoring the theories of multiple masculinities (Connell, 1995).

Much literature acknowledges that the fact that boys' needs are not being met is a form of educational sexism (Askew and Ross, 1988). Boys' underachievement is seen as all the more shocking because girls are doing better at school (Mahony, 1998) but still the gender of those who teach boys and girls in secondary schools is overlooked. Cohen's (1996) historical study of masculinity shows that anxiety about boys and men is not a new phenomenon, but as she observes, it is the articulation of that concern within historical and geographical contexts that is worthy of examination. This theme is developed by Mahony (1998) who places the anxiety about boys and men in an international context, emphasising that the current preoccupation with the 'what about the boys' debate is not confined to the United Kingdom. Reed's (1998:63) consideration of boys' underachievement shifts arguments away from simplistically blaming the boys' failure on their women teachers by considering that boys' brains may be different from those of girls.

This study has links with perceptions of boys and men in society, for example, men being role models for pupils, classroom relationships with boys and girls, pupils' attitudes to English (Swann, 1992). Cohen (1998) also highlights some of the language used by teachers in school to describe boys. Also of relevance are modes of masculinities associated with boys, such as 'effortless achievement' (Aggleton, 1987: 73) the 'myth of effortless achievement' (Cohen, 1998: 28; Power et al. 1998) and 'cool masculinity' (Martino 1999) which inform my study of male trainee English teachers. My study looks at the men training to be teachers who are often perceived in stereotypical ways and at the language used to describe them by mentors and colleagues and by the men about themselves. The men in my study need to be examined in the light of Epstein's (1998) observations of boys in school, and adult men in the world of work:

The main demand on boys from within their peer culture (but also, sometimes, from teachers), up to the sixth form at least, is to appear to do little or no work, to be heavily competitive (but at sport and heterosex, not at school work) to be rough, tough and dangerous to know. ... For adult men, especially those of the professional middle classes, the harder a man appears to work within the public sphere of jobs and careers, the more 'masculine' he becomes.

(Ibid.:106)

For my study, the significance of the research about boys' and girls' achievement is that it ignores and fails to question the role of male secondary English teachers, in the education of boys and girls. The men in the study believe they have particular responsibilities and roles in the education of boys. In the directives about English from the DfES there is emphasis on the curriculum, content and assessment. It is as though English teachers should deliver the statutory National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999), using the non-statutory teaching approaches of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy (DfES, 2001), irrespective of *their* gender but mindful of *boys'* gender. Teachers' gender has been overlooked in secondary English and little research has considered the place of men and masculinities in the teaching of English and literacy in secondary schools.

For male English trainee teachers, male sexuality, in ways examined by Hitchcock (1997), has relevance when applied to the hegemonic masculinities in schools. Male honour often focuses on sexual honour, status, language, power, violence, crime, control and is performed vis-à-vis women. Sedgwick (1985) provides an historical analysis of homosexual desire in English literary texts; Bersani's (1995) view is that society focuses on physical acts and signs of homosexuality. Their work needs to be taken into account, alongside Rich's (1980) notion of 'compulsory heterosexuality' and Epstein and Johnson's (1994) 'heterosexual presumption' when considering pupils' 'accusations' of being gay levelled at male teachers whose sexuality is assumed *not* to be heterosexual. The relationship between homosexuality and being a teacher has been explored by Britzman (1995) and provides a way of examining heterosexual male trainees whom pupils see as gay. Harris (1990), as an out

male gay teacher of English, in an inner London boys' state school, developed a way of employing English to tackle lesbian and gay issues in the secondary English classroom. Previously the issue had not been addressed widely. Harris provided all teachers with the rationale and strategies to build aspects of equality, sexuality, identity and the challenging of homophobia into English schemes of work, and this work has been continued by Ellis (2000). Queer theory (for example, Seidman, 1997) has relevance for my study where homosexuality emerges as an issue for heterosexual male trainee teachers because they teach English.

Men, emotion and humour

Emotion and humour are important discourses on men teachers. The findings chapters reveal new understandings of the role of emotion, humour and being a male English teacher. Being a man involves the expression of emotion (Connell, 1995: 132), part of which is humour. Being male has a long history of being associated with manliness and a lack of emotion (for example, Roper and Tosh, 1991). Seidler (1997) explains the link between authority and masculinity which has led to the situation that men's acknowledgement of emotions places their masculinity in question. Building on Hearn's (1992) categorising of personal and political masculinities Mac an Ghail (1994) sees the conflict between the expression of men's private and public masculinities. Coates (2003) examines men's conversations to reveal the intersection of language and masculinities and in so doing challenges understandings of men and *public expressions of emotion and use of humour in all male groups.*

Teaching itself has been described as 'emotional work' (Hochschild, 1983) and this term is frequently applied to women teachers who are, it is assumed, naturally suited to teaching because of their innate emotional natures (see Steedman, 1988; Edwards, 1993). Delgado and Stefancic (1995:211) provide a succinct description of the stereotype of the ideal man who is 'forceful, militaristic, hyper-competitive, risk-taking, not particularly interested in culture and the arts, protective of his women,

heedless of nature'. The extent to which men perform stereotypical male behaviours needs to be seen within the dynamics of a secondary classroom where pupils' conduct needs to be managed and noise levels controlled (MacGrath, 1998) to establish a climate conducive to learning (Woods, 1980, 1990). The role of teachers' emotions when teaching pupils will be gendered. For example, Shields (2002) has written about how gender stereotypes prevail and how binaried understandings of men and women are used in particular when discussing emotion. Concepts such as emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996) are often applied to women (for example, Duncan, 2002), but rarely to men.

The men in the study share a gender with the majority of perpetrators of abuse, violence and crime (Collier, 1998). They consider their own and others' perceptions of their masculinities that are positioned on the continuum from gentle (cf. Hearn 1987) and weak to aggressive and strong. The analysis also considers in what ways men training to be English teachers are more emotional than their stereotype suggests.

The relationship between trainee English teachers' masculinities and what is known about classroom humour (Kehily and Nayak, 1997; Nayak and Kehily, 2001) needs examination as part of classroom management and discipline, and the formulation and maintenance of hegemonic masculinities and power (Connell, 1987, 1995). The relationship between men and fun has a long historical perspective (Armitage, 1977). Jackson (1982) validates the role of humour and fun in English lessons, especially when teaching poetry in the lower school. Legitimation of the role of word play, wit and jokes as part of pupils' study of and response to English needs to be applied to the data. Fun is sought by pupils, especially boys (Frosh et al., 2002) and is linked to 'effortless achievement', and needs to be examined in relation to the male English trainee teachers. Importantly, as part of compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980) when studying English in school, humour can be used by teachers and pupils as a heterosexual announcement (Mac an Ghail, 1999). Having one's masculinity challenged within a school climate of assumed heterosexuality (Epstein, 1994; Epstein

and Johnson, 1994) and homophobia has been investigated by Wolpe (1988), Skeggs (1991) and Nayak and Kehily (1996).

It is significant that the data were collected during the 2002 football World Cup, a period of widespread interest in heterosexual masculinities, exemplified by a national obsession with the England football captain David Beckham (Burchill, 2001). The media coverage of Beckham articulated issues of masculinities in public arenas and popular culture. This resulted in an increased understanding of the debates surrounding what it means to be a man, father, son, husband, role model, either separately or in combinations. Being a man early in the new millennium is complex and this complexity is thrown into relief for men entering teaching.

School culture and micropolitics

My study is of men who enter schools which have their own cultures and micropolitics. Salisbury and Jackson (1996: 7) assert that secondary schools are often heavily gendered institutions with male dominated cultures. They go on to claim that such cultures 'are frequently made up of paternalistic leadership styles, competitive hierarchies, an over emphasis on success, individualism, performance and getting ahead'. Yet the paradox is that teaching is, and always has been, staffed by more women than men, with an increasing number of female head teachers, middle and senior managers. The success of female primary headteachers and the growing number of female secondary headteachers and deputies adds to the perception that teaching is done well by women. Female managers may be the 'new women of power' (Duncan, 2002) who have overcome the patriarchy of schools to become high achievers (Coleman, 2001). Paradoxically, it could be argued that girls are outperforming boys within schools where there is a discernible masculine culture of management and leadership. The gendered micropolitics of schools and teacher ideologies (Mac an Ghail, 1994), departmental sub-cultures (Ball and Lacey, 1980) and conflict within English departments (Ball, 1982) provide a context for examining gender relationships

between English teachers. Salisbury and Jackson (1996: 11) also identify the hidden curriculum of gender that is more important in the making of masculinities and boys than the explicit courses teachers provide or their teachers, per se. This theory has been applied to school pupils, for example in Mac an Ghail's work (1994) on the production of pupil cultures of masculinity and sexuality. By applying Salisbury and Jackson's hidden curriculum of gender to male English trainee teachers the study will reveal private and public understandings and manifestations of masculinities as the men learn to become English teachers. The work of Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (1994) and Mitchell and Weber (1999) with its emphasis on private and public understandings of teachers' gender provides concepts regarding teachers' self image and the ways they are perceived by pupils and other teachers.

Lingard and Douglas (1999) suggest that modern restructuring of the education system could be seen as introducing and valuing new entrepreneurial rather than paternalistic masculinities. Being a caring and pastoral teacher is not as highly valued as being a teacher who delivers results for pupils. Hey (1996) notes how the package of capitalism, market forces, school and masculinity has been used to characterise how school culture has shifted.

At policy and institutional level English teachers are usually treated as being without gender, until commentators notice reports on gendered numerical recruitment patterns. By focusing on the male English trainees' experiences my study foregrounds issues of gender and masculinities involved in the training and working relationships between men and women. Gender and masculinities issues also inform classroom relationships between male and female pupils studying the subject of English that is gendered, both historically and contemporaneously. The extent to which stereotypical and dualistic gender theories, rather than theories of socialisation and constructionism, are known and applied by school mentors to the male trainees needs to be acknowledged.

Much research into masculinities and schooling in the UK is carried out by women. Women have been drawn to researching men in order to disrupt the premises underlying writing on and by men (Cornwall and Lindisfarne, 1994: 2) and to take a lead in research into education where they have had a significant presence (Miller, 1996). My research is different, as I am a man researching the experiences of a small group of men. The nature and quality of the data and the findings are informed by the exclusively male relationship of the researcher and participants.

This chapter has surveyed the territory of writing about sex and gender, masculinity and masculinities, sexuality and related discourses that provide a number of conceptual frameworks for this study of men training to be secondary English teachers. The analysis of the data that were collected in the cultures and micropolitics of pre-dominantly female secondary school English departments draws on interpretations of hegemonic and dominant masculinities. The concept of non-hegemonic masculinities is used to understand the processes of adaptation undergone by the male trainees. Education settings such as early years and primary schools provide the comparable concepts of the feminisation of teaching and teachers as role models used to understand the challenges and dilemmas faced by men entering secondary English teaching. The study acknowledges the impact of much popularist and media coverage of masculinities that focuses on binaried notions of gender and understandings of men and women informed by biological determinism. Some of the qualities that men bring to teaching have parallels in the literature about boys and schooling, for example, humour, fun and effortless achievement. Qualities such as emotion and gentleness within masculinities and concepts such as compulsory heterosexuality will be examined alongside teacher socialisation and the subject of English. The following chapter examines the literature in the areas of initial teacher training and the subject of English.

Chapter 2

Initial teacher training and the subject of English

The links between gender, trainee teacher socialisation and the subject of English have been under-researched. Strikingly, male trainee English teachers have not featured in research and there has been inadequate consideration of male English teachers per se. This chapter focuses on the areas of initial teacher training and the subject of English in secondary schools in England. Firstly, the relevant research into initial teacher development is identified, including an explanation of the initial teacher training legislation in place at the time of the study. Secondly, a history of the school subject of English is presented and issues regarding English and gender are explored.

Trainee teacher development

In order to understand the processes of adaptation undergone by a group of male trainee English teachers, I have considered a number of models that have been created to conceptualise trainees' development during initial teacher training. Edwards and Healy's (1994) model represents trainee teachers' development as classroom practitioners as a series of phases, in which one can see the influence of the structure of their training programme:

Induction

Teaching Collaboratively

Flying Solo

Bringing it all together

Moving on

This sequential model has resonance with the stages of trainees' development, in terms of personal adaptation, created by Furlong and Maynard (1995):

Early idealism

Personal survival

Dealing with difficulties

Hitting a plateau

Moving on

Both models have an underpinning chronological structure suggesting that development is linear and sequential. The model of trainees' adaptation created by Phillips (2002) also uses sequential development stages:

Idealism

Myth making

Reality

Coping mechanisms

Basic competence ('the plateau')

Reflective practice ('post plateau')

In this model, the final stage of the development process occurs when a trainee is engaged in reflective practice, based on the concept of the 'reflective practitioner' (Schön, 1983). This is regarded as the indicator of a trainee's successful transformation from trainee to teacher. In initial teacher training Schön's construct of reflective practice has influenced the language used to recognise and assess trainee teachers' performance, for example in the *Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status* (DfES/TTA, 2002). If learning to teach is predicated on reflecting on professional experiential learning, then Kolb's (1984) work on reflection is relevant. Presenting the concept of the experiential learning process Kolb utilises a cyclical structure: concrete experience → reflective observation → abstract conceptualisation → active experimentation → reflective observation (reprise). In initial teacher training a reflective trainee is often used as a shorthand for an effective teacher.

In summary, several studies of trainee teacher development identify phases (Edwards and Healy, 1994; Capel, Leask and Turner, 2000) and stages (Berliner, 1995; Furlong and Maynard, 1995, Phillips, 2002) of development. All of these models attempt to explain the ways in which trainee teachers change by identifying various moments of adaptation. The adaptations are represented as a series of linear and sequential phases or stages that are observable in the trainees' behaviours and articulated in their reflections. Initially, these models of trainee teacher development

offered underpinning concepts for my study. However, I have since questioned their usefulness when applied to the male trainees' processes of adaptation.

My study is more influenced by Lacey's (1977) concept of trainee teacher socialisation: a process that is dynamic and interactive, in which the trainees select active and passive strategies, involving agency and structure, to deal with situations. It is also informed by the concept of 'coping strategies' identified by Duncan (2000: 469) in her study of mature women student teachers' socialisation.

Initial teacher training legislation

The study took place during a critical moment of education history in terms of initial teacher training and English teaching. Two major political shifts provide the context. Firstly, government legislation for the training and assessment of trainee teachers was re-organised at the end of the period when the study took place. The new *Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)* (DfES/TTA, 2002) were published in February 2002 and implemented in September 2002, replacing the standards for initial teacher training in Circular 4/98 (DfEE, 1998b) which applied to the trainees in my study. Secondly, during the year of my study the subject of English in secondary schools in England as prescribed by the National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999) was reconfigured in terms of content and delivery by the introduction of the influential, but non-statutory, *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9* (DfEE, 2001). I will deal with its impact later in this chapter.

The new standards for QTS jettisoned the prescribed subject content curricula for initial teacher training and placed greater emphasis on training partnerships between schools and initial teacher training providers, which subsequently became the focus of Ofsted inspections. Inspection arrangements for initial teacher training influence the content and delivery of PGCE courses (Ofsted, 1999). Goodwyn (1997: 7-14) provides a history of the government legislation that framed initial teacher training from 1923 to 1997. Since 1997 initial teacher training legislation (DfEE, 1997;

DfEE, 1998b; DfES/TTA, 2002) has required each trainee to be allocated a school-based mentor who is a teacher working in a training partnership with the higher education institution or 'provider' (DfES/TTA, 2002). The provider structures and monitors the training delivered in school by mentors to the trainees on school placement. Much research into the school-based training delivered by mentors has focused on the roles and relationships between mentors and trainees (for example, Anderson and Shannon, 1988; Jacques, 1992; Tomlinson, 1995; Brooks and Sikes, 1997; Fletcher, 2000; Hobson and Malderez, 2005). These researchers treat mentoring as a set of generic skills and practices and do not distinguish between mentoring in primary and secondary schools or between subject areas. Neither do they consider gender as a contributory factor in the mentoring process. However, I draw on some of their understandings of relationships between mentors and trainees

Initial teacher training: secondary English

Before being regulated and shaped by the various incarnations of government legislation, as prescribed by Circulars 10/97 (DfEE, 1997) and 4/98 (DfEE, 1998b) and *Qualifying to Teach* (DfES/TTA, 2002), the training of new English teachers was likely to be based on tutors' and teachers' individual and preferred pedagogies (Goodwyn, 1997). The knowledge, skills and experiences deemed necessary for a newly qualified teacher were initially described in long lists of competences (DfE, 1992) which were replaced by similarly long lists of standards (DfEE, 1997; DfEE, 1998a; DfES/TTA, 2002). The standards in Circular 4/98 (DfEE, 1998a) were supplemented from September 1999 with a prescribed curriculum for initial teacher training in secondary Mathematics, Science and English (DfEE, 1998c). The Initial Teacher Training (ITT) curriculum for secondary English was *Annex F: Initial Teacher Training curriculum for secondary English* (DfEE, 1998c). There was an equivalent curriculum for secondary mathematics (*Annex G*), science (*Annex H*) and one for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (*Annex B*) for all subject

disciplines. Such curriculum prescription was seen by some (for example, Graham, 1999) to have contributed to the growing professionalism of teachers. However, the emphasis on prescribed subject knowledge, skills and understanding for PGCE trainees implied a separation between subject knowledge and other aspects of the standards, such as teaching and assessment. This view is supported by Daw (2000: 5) who challenges the characterisation of subject knowledge as gap filling or the treatment of a previously undiagnosed disease. Indeed, the language of initial teacher education changed under the influence of Circular 4/98 (DfEE, 1998b and 1998c). The benefits of the competence model (Bridges et al., 1995) was replaced by a standards model which atomised the knowledge, skills and experiences that a trainee teacher had to demonstrate they had 'met'. The question 'Does the trainee *meet* the standards?' entered initial teacher training parlance as a tool with which to judge effective teaching, with overtones of technical training rather than pedagogical discourse.

Shulman (1986) identified subject knowledge as the 'missing paradigm' of what is understood to be effective teaching. He subsequently extended this concept and created the notion of 'pedagogical content knowledge', a fusion of subject knowledge and pedagogy. In English most trainees' subject knowledge is understood to mean 'a sound knowledge of English literature and a range of critical approaches' (Daw, 2000: 9). The new standards required trainees' subject knowledge gaps to be identified by a process of 'auditing' begun at interview in order to 'ensure that training takes account of individual training needs' (TTA, 2002; R2.3). Such needs are thrown into relief when the degree content of courses in disciplines covering English literature, language, linguistics, communications and media studies is compared with the content of English in the school curriculum. Drawing on Ofsted inspection evidence (Ofsted, 1999) Daw acknowledges that in terms of 'content domains' and 'conceptual frameworks' (Figure 1, p.7) the picture of trainees' subject knowledge is overwhelmingly positive (p. 9) and that trainees' gaps are identified and start to be addressed during their training year. However, for some time the place of literature knowledge has been marginalised in

secondary English (Stibbs, 1996) and this was critical for the men in my study, many of whom felt they had the 'wrong' subject knowledge.

This prescribed subject knowledge of the National Curriculum for ITT for secondary English, together with the requirement to audit trainees' subject knowledge throughout the PGCE course suggested that English subject knowledge was quantifiable and measurable. I believe that such quantification of English subject knowledge is neither feasible nor desirable. I refused to audit trainees' complex and sophisticated subject knowledge in ways that reduced their experience and expertise to a series of checklist ticks. Many university PGCE courses reluctantly implemented atavistic auditing tools to ensure Ofsted compliance. A new breed of 'how to teach English' texts appeared (for example, Johnson, 1998; Williamson et al., 2001) containing models of compliant audit tools. These are extensive documents, presented as self-audits, for trainee teachers to complete. Williamson et al. ask trainees to tick *Yes* or *No* against a series of statements based on the *ITT curriculum for secondary English Annex F*, prefaced with the tag question, 'Do you feel confident about?' Such a crude and reductive approach, predicated on a deficit model, enshrined *Annex F* as the only body of knowledge and understanding for trainee English teachers. Interestingly, this curriculum disappeared when new standards were published in *Qualifying to Teach* (DfES/TTA, 2002). Its legacy, however, can be seen in the subject knowledge audit tools still used on many PGCE secondary English courses and embedded in the work of school-based mentors.

Researching the initial training of secondary English teachers

Research has been conducted in the initial training of secondary English teachers (Lacey, 1977; Protherough and Atkinson, 1991, 1994; Davies, 1996; Goodwyn, 1997; Turvey, 1997, 2000; Leach, 2000; Marshall et al., 2001). This research focuses on trainee English teachers' ideologies and understandings of the subject of English. It has relevance for higher education and initial teacher training, as

well as for teaching and learning English in school and university. However, most of this research overlooks the gender of mentors and trainees and notions of the feminisation of English (see Miller, 1991, 1996; Thomas, 1990; Daly, 2000). Similarly, gender has been overlooked in research into English teachers' philosophies. Several writers provide useful perspectives on English teachers' relationships with their pupils, colleagues and the subject of English (for example, Peim, 2003; Bousted, 2000, 2002; Marshall, 2000a, 2000b; Marshall et al., 2001) that are relevant for my study. Again, they do not consider the role of gender. Likewise, research into pupils' gender and attainment in English (Millard, 1997; Myhill, 2000) omits the role of teachers' gender.

Related, but of less conceptual relevance, is research that has created categories of English teachers, such as Cox's (DES and WO, 1989) models of English teachers and Marshall's (2000a and 2000b) groups of English teachers' philosophies. These models or categories were devised to codify and analyse English teachers' practices and beliefs. Cox (DES and WO, 1989) created five models of English teachers' beliefs:

- Personal growth
- Cross curricular
- Adult needs
- Cultural heritage
- Cultural analysis

Marshall (2000a and 2000b) created five descriptive categories for English teachers' philosophies:

- Old Grammarians
- Pragmatists
- Liberals
- Technicians
- Critical Dissenters

Cox's models have been the subject of many debates in the formation and understanding of the subject and its teachers (Goodwyn, 1992; Goodwyn and Findlay, 1999). Cox and Marshall use categories to show links between teachers' beliefs and how English is taught in school. They attempt to fit all English teachers into these categories, but pay no attention to teachers' gender. Therefore, although of interest, these categories have limited relevance to my study of male trainee English teachers. Mac an Ghail (1994) does identify categories of male teacher in terms of educational ideology and teacher microculture:

Professionals

Old Collectivists

New Entrepreneurs

However, his categories do not take into account the role of a teacher's subject discipline that is central to my study. Male English teachers in training do not yet possess the objectivity and distance required to see how they might fit into such categories of teacher and English teacher. For these reasons, I make occasional use of these categories in the data analysis, where there is a particular close fit with the data.

Because a PGCE course is one year long, trainees do not have time to acquire a sense of the historical changes to ITT requirements and the English curriculum. Moreover, the standards for QTS do not require them to possess an understanding of the history of the subject of English in terms of its content, philosophies and pedagogies. PGCE secondary English trainees are arguably more concerned about the current state of the subject they are beginning to teach. They are more likely to be aware of contemporaneous stories in the media about trainee teachers (for example, Godfrey, 2000a, 2000b and 2000c), personal accounts of teaching careers by retired teachers (Barnes, 2000; Smith, 2000) or, more recently, sensationalist tales from the classroom written by English teachers (for example, Gilbert, 2004; Beadle, 2005).

Histories of English as a school and university subject

As an English teacher who is drawn to stories, I have noticed how writers use terms such as ‘story’ (for example, Richmond, 1992) and ‘biography’ (for example, Bragg, 2003) when writing about the development of English as a subject and language, to render its vibrant and changing nature. During the past two centuries narratives about English have emerged as language, education and political democracy have evolved (Burgess, 1996: 67). Many stories have been told about English teaching: how English emerged as a subject taught and learnt in school and university; how English in schools has been legislated; how English teachers have interpreted English. These stories interrelate. Drawing on several of these accounts, my intention in this chapter is to create a version of the story of English that is relevant for my study of male trainee English teachers.

Any history of English teaching will suffer because of its brevity and ‘will be too bold an undertaking to be undertaken in a short compass. The issue is one of scale’ (Burgess and Hardcastle, 2000:1). Burgess and Hardcastle grapple with the difficult task of tracing the development of the subject of English within the confines of one chapter. From an enormous terrain, they select several themes to create an overview of English as a school subject. I will draw on some of the themes they identify which are relevant for my study: how the English curriculum has developed; key moments and influential figures in English; the battles for English within a political arena; tensions between curriculum development and changes in legislation; the different components of English; the desire of many English teachers to teach and continue to learn about the subject they love; future developments in English. Finally, I will make links with the previous chapter by considering English teaching in terms of gender, feminisation and representations of English teachers in popular culture and the media.

English as a school and university subject

English as a taught and examined subject has existed in schools for over a hundred and fifty years (Burgess and Hardcastle, 2000: 2) and as a recognisable school subject since the start of the twentieth century (Davison and Dowson, 1998: 18). Burgess and Hardcastle assert that as a subject taught in universities, English was born in the 1890s. Davison and Dawson observe that the creation of the Oxford School of English took place in 1894.

The catalyst for the emergence of the subject of English was the need to educate those whose needs were not being met by the education system at the time (Burgess and Hardcastle, 2000: 2). Arnold (1886/1969) called for the civilising influence of literature, especially poetry and creativity, on the lives of young people in the state education system. As noted by Matthieson (1975) his vision was long lasting, namely a two-tier, class bound system of one curriculum for public schools and another for state schools, where the 'threat' of the uneducated masses could be addressed. The politicisation of English has its roots here. Recognition of the power of English to change people and the state control and legislation of English had begun.

Under the 1902 Education Act (Board of Education, 1902) English in the grammar schools was made distinct from literacy in the elementary schools (Burgess and Hardcastle, 2000). In 1904 (Board of Education, 1904) English Language and English Literature was made a requirement in all elementary and secondary schools. The Board of Education's Circular 753 (Board of Education, 1910) identified the teaching of English as a purifying and edifying agent (para. 2) and proposed a literary canon of classics or great works (para. 36). It also rejected the reading of novels in schools, spurned all forms of popular culture and regarded all literature as a foreign language to children, hence it needed to be taught as such (para.26).

World political events were more influential than Board of Education circulars. Davison and Dowson (1998: 25) highlight how the behaviour of men in the trenches had troubled many politicians. Some soldiers had disobeyed orders and

refused to 'go over the top' and in 1918, there had been mutinies in the British troops. The young men could not be controlled fully by the officers since the masses had not been educated into submission. In addition, the level of illiteracy of the new conscripts drafted into active service at the start of the war in 1914 was discovered to be high. Anxieties about boys and men made English teaching a cause for concern to be addressed.

Some key writers and thinkers in English teaching

Here I identify a number of important writers and thinkers who contributed to the evolution of the pedagogies of English teaching. Significant ideologies now embedded in English teaching approaches can be traced back to the turn of the twentieth century. The need to develop the individual's creativity was expounded by Holmes (1911) who also recognised that any examination system ultimately tests a teacher's efficacy, rather than measuring a child's development (ibid.: 51). He challenged models of education based on the transfer of knowledge rather than the encouragement of self-expression. Dewey (1916), the American educational philosopher, promoted the importance of learning experiences and pupil motivation. He argued that the creation of a society consisting of independent citizens was dependent on a consideration of *how* children learn as well as *what* they learn. Whilst he did not write explicitly about the subject of English, one can find congruence in Dewey with beliefs held about English teaching throughout the twentieth century.

The Newbolt Committee published its findings in *The Teaching of English in England* (Department Committee for the Board of Education, 1921). This is widely regarded as the landmark report that shaped the subject of English and its teaching in schools. In schools, English was regarded as being inferior to other subjects, in terms of time allotted, methods and results (para. 109). Members of the working-classes were said to be 'antagonistic to, and contemptuous of literature ... a subject to be despised by really virile men' (para. 233). So, as far back as 1921 the relation between

the subject of English and being a man was recognised as problematic. Chaired by Sir Henry Newbolt the composition of the Committee was dominated by men from Oxford and Cambridge: John Bailey, F.S. Boas, John Dover Wilson, C.H. Firth, J.H. Fowler, Arthur Quiller-Couch, George Sampson. Caroline Spurgeon was the only woman on the committee of fourteen. Men were beginning to mould English. The Newbolt Report had at its centre a missionary aim to confront the forces of the industrial world and the encroaching influences of the media. The Report's findings regarded English as the basis of a liberal education. It identified the power of English literature, which was to nourish, cleanse and redeem all English people (para. 130). For contemporary English teachers the teaching methodologies promoted in Newbolt are familiar, for example, pupils commenting on each other's written work; class discussions and drama; planning and drafting written work; an emphasis on the value of oral work. However, the report did not succeed in changing the teaching of English in schools, especially grammar schools, but it did transform the status of the subject. English emerged as a new subject that would demand new sorts of teachers. Prior to Newbolt no effort had been made to attract and train teachers. However, Newbolt overlooked the dynamic and changing nature of English as a living language and more fixed concepts such as a 'Standard English' and 'correctness' were established. A direct consequence was the teaching of a prescriptive grammar and style. In the 1970s, Adams and Pearce (1974) believed that English teachers were beginning to escape from this aspect of the Newbolt legacy. However, thirty years later English teachers can find links between Newbolt's emphasis on prescriptive language teaching and the *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9* (DfEE, 2001) at the expense of literature in English classrooms (Goody, 2002).

Sampson (1921), a member of the Newbolt Committee, argued for an education which would be humane and prepare people for life and not just for the workplace, 'not to prepare children for their occupations, but to prepare children against their occupations' (p.11). Education was to be enriching, not utilitarian, and

the study of English literature was a central part of this enlightened vision. Since at that time the workplace was a male domain this was an educational vision with boys and men at its centre. Fleming and Stevens (1998) see this vision as belonging to the tradition established by Matthew Arnold 'with English standing as a bulwark against the dehumanising effects of the industrial revolution' (p.vii). Wishing to avoid an over-emphasis on didactic grammar teaching both Newbolt and Sampson recommended active methods of teaching reading and writing,

The Spens Report, *Report on Secondary Education* (Board of Education, 1938), continued the line from Newbolt and Sampson in that it too promoted the notion that English had a particular role in breaking down the social class structure. It placed the responsibility to save children from working-class backgrounds on the study of high quality literature and the use of spoken Standard English to offset the threat of mass popular culture. In a pre-second world war context much of the message of Spens was targeted at boys and men. The role of women changed during and after the war so that post war consideration of English began to address male and female pupils.

Following Arnold, Newbolt and Sampson, was F.R. Leavis who eschewed the idea that English should prepare children for the workplace. Building on the 'practical criticism' and 'close reading' ideas of Richards (1929) Leavis proposed the analysis of all literary texts against the backdrop of a list of canonical texts. Texts in Leavis's canon would provide a moral and aesthetic framework on which to construct a defence against the dehumanising effects of society and mass popular culture. As seen in *Culture and Environment* (Leavis and Thompson, 1933), Leavis aimed to protect individuals in society against the dangerous influences of the media, advertising and low or popular culture. In addition, Leavis (1930) put forward the idea that English teachers were responsible for the health of the language, for the growth of moral values and, as a logical extension, for the quality of life itself. Mulhern (1979) points out that this indicated a change of emphasis for English. English as a professional

career was to be based on the talent and ability of individuals rather than on their birth status and social position.

During the 1920s and 1930s English became a politicised subject which challenged prior definitions of English and the status quo of the establishment. Indeed, by 1930 the subject of English was established as an important university subject that would continue to grow. English was a subject fit for middle-class men to study. English, as language and literature, was beginning to be seen as a font of power and was therefore taken seriously by men who sought to utilise, control and influence that power.

Several years later, Leavis features again. In 1948 he wrote his most influential book in terms of English teaching in school, *The Great Tradition*. Leavis both influenced and was challenged in universities, teacher education and secondary schools (Poulson, 1998: 29). Meanwhile, Hurd (1948) promoted a humanitarian and progressive approach to English teaching and by placing poetry at its centre had a long-lasting influence on English teachers.

Influential individuals within professional associations for English teaching

When considering English teachers' formative influences Protherough and Atkinson (1991: 26) identify a list of influential individuals in the field of English teaching:

As far as particular authors are concerned, Douglas Barnes and David Holbrook (1961, 1964) were most cited, the latter exclusively by older teachers. Others picked out by five or more teachers are James Britton, Patrick Creber, John Dixon, David Jackson, Margaret Meek, Robert Protherough and Frank Smith.

The list illustrates male domination and leadership in English. The only woman to appear on this list is Meek, whose work (1988, 1991, 1996) on being and behaving as a reader, has been influential and powerful ammunition at a time when reading was becoming redefined (Bryan and Westbrook, 2000) as literacy (Cox, 1998; Lewis and Wray, 1999). Three men on Protherough and Atkinson's list, Douglas Barnes, James,

Britton, Harold Rosen and the one woman, Nancy Martin, had considerable impact on English teaching. Nancy Martin was another lone woman, like Caroline Spurgeon on the Newbolt Committee and Margaret Meek on Protherough and Atkinson's list. However, these three women were not feminists and their contributions were simply as significant individuals.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Barnes, Britton, Rosen and Martin worked through The London Association for the Teaching of English (LATE) established in 1947 and the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) founded in 1964. Together and individually, they conducted systematic research on language practices in schools, in particular the previously unexplored area of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil language in classrooms (Barnes et al., 1969; Barnes, 1984). Britton's *Language and Learning* (1970) placed an emphasis on the importance of the professional and personal relationship between the teacher and the pupil. Through the language of this relationship the pupil could develop and grow. More than thirty years later his analysis of the importance of the work of Vygotsky (1962) and its impact on English teaching, recounted in his chapter in Brindley (1994), reminds English teachers of the centrality of language in the learning process. Building on the Plowden Report (DES and WO, 1967) Barnes (1976) highlighted the importance of exploratory talk in children's cognitive development. *Language, the Learner and the School* (Barnes et al., 1969) produced a study of pupils' language use, which in turn influenced the Bullock Report (DES, 1975) which was followed late in the next decade by the Kingman Report (DES and WO, 1988) and the National Curriculum (DES, 1989).

Contemporary English trainees are likely to have contact with the work of NATE but to be unaware of these influential individuals. It is unlikely that trainee teachers will read Plowden, Bullock or Kingman. They might not even know that by adjusting the light which Leavis and his devotees had previously shone on literature, English teachers in LATE and NATE put the spotlight on pupils' language. Talk was

the vehicle for English work but also the subject of the work as pupils were encouraged to describe, reflect and analyse their own language practices at home, in school, with different audiences, contexts and purpose. Pupils were given ownership of language terminology as teachers drew out and made explicit their hitherto implicit knowledge about language, for example use of Standard English and dialect forms of English. Group work, pair work and whole class discussion allowed pupils to explore, discuss, debate, negotiate, argue, facilitate and so on. The language and the underpinning concepts of speaking and listening were foregrounded in the first and subsequent versions of the National Curriculum for English (DES and WO, 1990) (see Raban et al., 1994) and survived in subsequent versions: the 'flawed but workable' (Hickman, 1995) version (DfEE and WO, 1995) influenced by Pascall (DfE and WO, 1993) and Dearing (1994), and the version for Curriculum 2000 (DfEE, 1999).

Of relevance for my study is the influence of these individuals on the way today's pupils seize talk and writing as opportunities for personal and emotional engagement. English can be a way of exploring problems that is therapeutic (Holbrook, 1967). Dixon (1967) advocated what Cox would later identify as the 'personal growth' model of English (DES and WO, 1989). This pupil-centred approach to English teaching is based on the use of drama, talk and creative writing. Kress (1994) challenged the 'personal growth' curriculum when influencing the didactic aspects of the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1999a). Paffard (1978: 122) summarises these polarised views of English as 'a logical, propositional, transactional language at the expense of personal, expressive and poetic modes'. More recently, Goodwyn (2003) and McGuinn (2005) restate that the deep-rooted position of personal engagement with literature being at the heart of English teaching has been under attack for over a decade.

English is a battleground

Histories of the subject of English often imply that the social construction of what it means to be an English teacher is founded on dissent, campaign, pugnacity, battle or the 'hurly burly' described by Burgess et al. (2002). Trainee teachers discover that teaching is a battleground and that English teaching is especially so (Ball et al., 1990; Davison and Moss, 2000).

At the start of the PGCE course, trainee teachers, anxious about classroom discipline, anticipate that the battles they will fight will be with difficult teenagers. The trainees are soon exposed to the disagreements about English, both in the recommended reading and during the taught parts of the course. In seminars, arguments frequently become heated about the role of schools and how English should, and should not be, taught. Trainees experience a different sort of conflict when on school placement, as school mentors observe and provide feedback on their early attempts at English teaching. At this point trainee English teachers can feel harshly criticised, flounder, feel isolated and out of kilter with their new colleagues. Their initial anxiety and inexperience squeezes out of early lessons the trainees' beliefs that English should be fun and enjoyable. Since working in initial teacher education I have used the term 'Englishy' (Thomas, 2001) to characterise a way of being an English teacher that is recognisable and observable. 'Englishy' is shorthand for a set of progressive ideologies and practices (Cox, 1991; Goodwyn, 1992; Bousted, 2000, 2002; Marshall, 2000a, 2000b) that balance intellectual rigour with creativity and flexibility. The 'Englishy' concept of fun appears in teacher parlance in staff rooms, English department rooms and some research (for example, Bennett et al., 1997) but is less evident in the literature on teacher socialisation and English subject pedagogy and legislation.

English, the New Right and the advent of the National Curriculum

Progressive education has been caricatured by right wing commentators such as Phillips (1997) as being incompetent and responsible for failing pupils. In the late sixties Brian Cox was a founder author of 'The Black Papers' (Cox and Dyson, 1969, 1970a, 1970b) which had a distinctive right-wing agenda. Teaching techniques were criticised for being too progressive and the child-centred approach was vilified because of the perception of a decline in educational standards. However, English teachers' opinions of Cox changed radically during the battle for English in the late eighties and nineties. Indeed, Cox became something of a champion for English teachers as the English National Curriculum (DES and WO, 1990; DfEE and WO, 1995; DfEE, 1999) was drafted, launched, revised and re-launched. Cox himself has described these as turbulent times for English and English teachers (Cox, 1991, 1995). John Marenbon (1987) became the new *bête-noir* as he challenged what he called 'the new orthodoxy' of English teachers which was backed up by HMI's findings. He claimed that the new orthodoxy placed little value on grammatical correctness and had no place for literary heritage. His attack on educational theorists extended to the Bullock Report, examination boards, textbook authors and classroom teachers of English. Everyone, except him, seemed to have got English teaching wrong, and he advocated a prescriptive, didactic and corrective model of English teaching based on the teaching of Standard English and a heritage discourse of literature. In reacting against Marenbon, English teachers were united and galvanised against the onslaughts of some of the more reactionary legislation which were yet to come (see Peim, 2000).

In the area of language and grammar teaching Mittens (1988) coined the phrase 'the naming of parts' to criticise decontextualised approaches to functional language and grammar teaching. His approach validated the work of English teachers who were more in tune with what became the Knowledge About Language (KAL) movement led by the work of LINC (Language in the National Curriculum) Project and gathered together by Ronald Carter (1991). When the government blocked the

publication of the LINC materials Richmond (1992) estimated that 20,000 packs of materials had already been disseminated to schools, LEAs and HEIs., A further blow to the work of LINC occurred when the very term Knowledge About Language was dropped in the 1994 revision of the National Curriculum English Orders, replaced by the term 'Standard English and Language Study'. Trainee teachers are understandably perplexed when they meet in school and in their reading the anachronistic term, Knowledge About Language, and begin to see how the content of the English curriculum is politically charged.

The atomisation of secondary school English: a new form of reductionism

The changing status of secondary English teaching exists in a climate of excessive accountability and centrally driven curricula. The study for this thesis took place during 2001-2002. The *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9* (DfEE, 2001) had been piloted and from September 2001 was being introduced to secondary schools with recommended status. With the introduction of this non-statutory initiative for more explicit teaching of literacy in secondary English lessons, the subject of English was changing. This pivotal point in the history of English teaching occurred at the moment when the male trainees met the subject of English in secondary schools. The men in my study were trained to teach an emerging version of secondary English, different from the one I taught.

The version of English currently taught in schools is a mixture of the National Curriculum and Key Stage 3 National Strategy. It is the cause of much heated, controversial, impassioned debate and dissent amongst English teachers and commentators (see for example, Marshall, 2002; Pullman, 2002; Haworth et al., 2004) as well as evaluative scrutiny (Furlong et al., 2001; Ofsted, 2003). The impact of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy is praised by Ofsted (HMI, 2001) but challenged by many others (for example, Goody, 2002; Marshall, 2003; Pike, 2004) for being atavistic and reductionist. The Key Stage 3 National Strategy atomised the subject of

English and introduced a new grammatical metalanguage to the subject knowledge base required of English teachers. Trainee English teachers are not only confronted with a different version of English literature and unfamiliar literary texts on the English National Curriculum, but they find an unfamiliar emphasis on language teaching that they had not anticipated.

During 2001-02, English departments in England were receiving training from LEA advisers, using the centrally produced DfEE training materials. English departments and schools of Education were issued with a plethora of files, pamphlets, videos and CD-ROMs containing teaching materials for the Key Stage 3 National Strategy. One overwhelming impression of these documents, aimed at trainee and experienced English teachers, is the overuse of a small number of presentational devices, namely, bullet pointed lists, lists of key points and bite-sized extracts. For English teachers these documents can be enticing as they present lists of skills and knowledge and offer teaching strategies. For trainees the Key Stage 3 National Strategy is an atomised and fundamentally different version of the subject of English from the one they studied at school and university. The atomisation of English was to some degree rationalised in the 2000 version of the National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999). However, before the trainees have gained the bigger picture of the subject, this atomisation continues in the Key Stage 3 National Strategy where English is split into ever-smaller components. Trainee English teachers are experienced and confident readers. During their training they have to acquire new reading skills in order to make sense of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy materials which are presented as lists, boxes and charts rather than in sustained and coherent text. Time available for reading about English pedagogy on a PGCE course is limited and much time is consumed with accessing documents and materials. This was the context and historical location in which the study took place.

How English trainees see the subject of English

When writing about becoming a secondary English teacher many authors deem it important for trainee teachers to know something of the history of the subject of English and how the subject has been constructed and taught. Examples found in texts recommended on PGCE English courses, including the one at Soulbridge University, include Protherough and Atkinson (1991), Brindley (1994), Davies (1996), Davison and Dowson (1998), Fleming and Stevens (1998), Williamson et al. (2001), Clarke et al. (2004) and Pike (2004). For these authors it is as though it is not possible to become an English teacher without surveying the past. Goodwyn (1997: 35-39), by using the present tense in the question 'Where English is coming from?' acknowledges that as well as having a past English is still emerging and developing. Fleming and Stevens (1998: vii) advocate some familiarity with the development of English to provide trainees with a perspective on current assumptions and policies. Davison and Dowson (1998: 1) characterise trainees' 'perceptions of what English teaching is about' as being formed by their experience of the subject at school and at university, information from the press, observation visits to school, conversations with teachers, and, for some, related work experience. I would add that trainees who are parents have accessed versions of English in its current form in their children's descriptions of English lessons and teachers, as well as their homework and parents' evenings. For all trainee teachers the plethora of websites on English teaching, many containing downloadable materials, suggests that there are tried and tested ways to teach English.

Importantly, for trainee teachers it is not just the subject that changes; they themselves change. How English should be taught in schools is informed by both what the legislators and the teachers think English is. Marshall et al. (2001: 189) observe that 'student teachers have not only to negotiate between their own idealism and the turbulent realities of the classroom but between competing views of English teaching'.

English teachers are different

Pike (2003) claims that trainees are unaware that English is 'ontological' (p. 92) and that 'Being in English teaching transcends method and explication' (p.98). Being an English teacher involves conscious uses of methods and explications and an awareness of less tangible processes. English teachers perceive themselves to be different from other teachers (Protherough and Atkinson, 1991) because of their personal qualities, attitudes and special relationships with the pupils. The pressure of possessing a particular type of personality and subject knowledge was noted by Mathieson (1975) whose study considered the relationship English teachers have with the subject they teach.

Applicants to PGCE secondary English courses in this study are asked at interview to reflect on their own experiences of education in general and on their relationship with English at school and university. At the start of the course, trainees are asked to write their education story as a reflective, autobiographical account. The importance of reflection (Schön, 1983) in teacher development is modelled through this exercise. In addition, through experiential learning trainees are exposed to key principles of English teaching. These underpinning values include the importance of using one's own history and the links between speaking and writing. Moreover, by carrying out the task trainees are inducted into my 'Englishy' way of teaching and learning, encapsulating a particular set of pedagogical approaches, recognised by writers about English teachers' ideologies (for example, Bousted, 2000; Marshall, 2000a, 2000b; Pike, 2003), as well as by experienced English teachers and teachers of other subjects. English teachers do form a distinctive group and are self-conscious about their distinctiveness (Goodwyn, 1997:29) so that they see themselves, and are seen, as different from other teachers because their socialisation is informed and framed by the subject.

How English teachers perceive themselves is found in Protherough and Atkinson (1991:13), who identify three main aspects: personal qualities, personal

attitudes and relationships with pupils. It is a distinctive way of teaching that is associated with the content and the processes of 'doing' English that is a creative, often organic amalgam of reading, writing and talk that utilises what pupils bring to the English classroom. English lessons can appear to go off at an unplanned tangent. As Creber (1990) observed, good teachers often don't quite know what they are doing but know how to manipulate a lesson to exploit good learning. This pupil-centred approach is founded on pedagogical principles and is particularly 'Englishy'. Clarke et al. (2004: 2-3) characterise English teachers as being concerned with certain core values, ranging from valuing the sentient individual and linguistic heritage to generating responses steeped in individuality but founded on a shared unshakable ideology: 'Certain values central to English teachers' common ideological stock have looked on tempests and have not been shaken' (p.2). Paradoxically, Clarke et al. see the 'permeability' of English and believe it to be a subject that is mutable in a way that mathematics and science are not. The problem and the joy of English is that the subject defies definition and continues to grow and change (cf. Davidson, 2003).

Trainee teachers need to know how they, and their colleagues, fit into the stories of English teaching. Writers such as Mathieson (1975), Ball (1985), Poulson (1998), Burgess and Hardcastle (2000) provide clear chronological accounts but there is not yet a definitive or seminal history of English teaching. Perhaps, because of its complex and personally constructed nature, there will never be. The version of the history of English I have created is a review of the literature relevant to my study, chosen to show how English teachers are seen, see themselves, see others and see the subject they teach. My intention now is to ensure that issues of gender and masculinities in English are seen and not overlooked.

English teaching and gender

As well as being reflected in workforce statistics the significance of the gender of teachers (Miller, 1991, 1996) and English teachers (Thomas, 1990, 1991; Daly,

2000; Williams, 2005) has been shown to exist in pupils' and teachers' perceptions of the subject (cf. Dalton, 2001). In secondary schools there are the layers of 'masculine' and 'feminine' subjects (Thomas, 1990) and sub-cultures (Ball and Lacey, 1980). In Protherough's (1989: 41-4) study women accounted for 57 per cent of English teachersⁱⁱⁱ. Protherough and Atkinson's (1991: 24) study of teachers' perceptions of English teaching confirmed that woman constituted the majority of English teachers but insisted that they found few ways in which men's and women's perceptions were significantly different. The researchers slide over the discovery that women were found to be more likely to identify characteristic attitudes, such as a desire for autonomy, the welcoming of change and 'progressiveness'. The research found no other cases where gender differences were significantly different. I believe that the examples of gender difference they *did* note, however, merit greater consideration.

Currently, more women than men teach and train to teach secondary English^{iv}; since Protherough and Atkinson's survey, the landscape of English teaching has changed. The National Curriculum (DES, 1989) has been revised (1995 and 2000). The non-statutory Key Stage 3 National Strategy has homogenised teaching approaches. Assessment arrangements at Key Stages 3, 4 and post-16 have been changed several times. The TTA identified a teacher recruitment crisis (TTA/Smithers and Robinson, 2001; TTA, 2001) and introduced a £6,000 training salary to all PGCE trainees (Smith, S., 2000). Strategies to address the perceived low status of teaching have privileged management and leadership, with the establishment in 1997 of the National College for School Leadership and the national training programme for current and aspiring Headteachers, accredited by the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). Teachers' salaries and career prospects have improved and their roles have been transformed under the remodelling of the teaching workforce. Becoming a secondary school teacher early in the new millennium is to become a teacher in a shifting and rapidly changing profession (Graham, 1999), with gender implications for teachers and their pupils.

Feminisation of English teaching

The concepts of the feminisation of schooling and English as documented by Miller (1992, 1996) and the feminisation of English (Thomas, 1990, 1991) are central to my study and the key issues are outlined here. As far back as 1893, English was described in derogatory terms by Professor Sanday as ‘a subject suitable for women and the second- and third-rate men who are to become schoolmasters’ (Palmer, 1965: 104-107). Over time notions of masculine and feminine subjects have shifted:

As Macdonald points out, some subjects change from being viewed as “masculine” to being viewed as “feminine”, and vice versa: she argues that this is partly the result of ‘pressure exerted on the school and universities by the changing pattern of employment of men and women in the labour force (1980: 37).

(Thomas, 1990: 19)

My study has similarities with Thomas’s (1990) study of subjects at higher education level, which shows how English has become a feminised subject:

Most importantly Martin does not experience the sense of *being in a minority* in the way that Lesley feels it; he feels neither conspicuous nor ill at ease because of his belonging to a statistical minority. ... Like Martin, most men regarded the fact that they were in a numerical minority as unproblematic. ... There was some awareness, then, of arts degrees being considered ‘effeminate’. However, within higher education itself, this was not the case; it was simply the view of outsiders. In this context, being in a minority sex is an advantage not a disadvantage; men, by virtue of their conspicuousness, are more worthy of attention than women ... some of the male English students had come from single-sex schools. This did not appear to be a problem. ... To Andy, English was not a gendered subject, and neither was science; the effect of finding out that English *was* gendered, however, a ‘feminine’ rather than a ‘masculine’ subject, did nothing to disturb his sense of ease or confidence in himself - and he was a supremely confident person.

(Thomas, 1990: 146 - 47)

English is regarded as more feminised than masculinised in terms of the curriculum (Thomas, 1991; Miller, 1992, 1996; Daly, 2000) and assessment methods (Barrs, 1990; Punter and Burchell, 1996; Thomas, 1997). The concept of feminisation has been examined in other subjects, for example, Dalton (2001) traces the way the subject of art and art education are gendered.

My study reveals the significance of male trainee teachers' gender within the debates surrounding the feminisation of English. Because of the predominance of female English teachers, pupils' experience of male English teachers is limited to men who are perceived as lacking economic power or being generally irrelevant and therefore are viewed as unmasculine. A related issue is the paradoxical relationship between femininity and teachers as disciplinarians (Connell, 1985; Mac an Ghail, 1994).

Another paradox for English is that the National Curriculum for English (DfEE, 1999) is still dominated by a male English literary canon (Maybin, 2000) and writing about men's experience of the world, yet girls and women are drawn to English:

In psychology, English, history, even biology, it is not too difficult to demonstrate a bias towards male experience. Yet girls, and women, apparently choose these subjects in preference to the seemingly more objective physical science, while for boys the reverse is true. The issue of male and female subject choice, then, may be more complex than we generally allow.

(Thomas, 1990: 19)

This paradox is clearly articulated by Miller (1996):

The evolution of English as a "gendered" subject is fraught with paradoxes. These reflect "ways in which the history of English as a subject ... embodies the tensions and contradictions inherent in a national education system designed to promote ideals of maleness, but dependant on women for its delivery.

(Miller, 1996:190)

The idea that studying English literature is an inherently female process is articulated by Frith (1991:72, cited in Miller, 1996):

I am suggesting, then, that the idea that the 'normal' position of the reader is male is a very odd one. The required position of the reading subject, the reading *process*, conforms much more closely to the conventional prescriptions of femininity than those of masculinity. It is hardly surprising that most students of English Literature are women.

(Miller, 1996: 214)

Miller (1996:193) traces this 'femaleness' of English to the large numbers of female students wanting to study English, the subject's 'civilising influence' and a suspicion about 'academicising' the teaching of reading, writing and literature. These pursuits

were historically female because they were undertaken by women in domestic settings. Miller also locates the 'femaleness' of English in its challenging relationship with the traditional male curriculum area of Classics in Oxford and Cambridge.

In terms of access to writers pupils' experience of English may be dominated by male writers and male characters (Swann, 1992) but is likely to be brokered by female teachers. Thomas (1990) has considered the ways that curriculum subjects have been constructed and presented with the result that they are perceived as being boy and girl subjects. Miller (1992, 1996) has also considered the gendered construction of English alongside the wider feminisation of the teaching profession. She explains why English is not regarded as a rigorous course of study (ibid.: 193) because of its potential 'civilising influence' and perceptions of its female characteristics as 'domestic, parochial, consolatory and unthreatening'. When considering the feminisation of English in relation to pupils' gender differences in English, Daly (2000: 230) notes how boys' attitudes to English can be seen within the binary opposition of 'girls' English' and 'boys' English'. Mac an Ghail (1994: 61) identifies the gendered ways that boys see the subject of English, which is seen by his 'Academic Achievers' as a place of safety created by the teacher. Paechter (1998) notes that anxieties about boys and schooling reposition males as the 'subject' and female as the 'other'. The fact that male English teachers have been overlooked is part of Paechter's concerns about the collusion with the status quo of male dominance. By considering and problematising male English teachers my study examines men within education discourse which, if left unexamined, would contribute to the continued privileging of male power. However, the situation is further complicated by the history of English within an education system which has been dominated by male legislators and thinkers who have constructed a subject which, as Miller observes (1996: 190) promotes male hegemony but is staffed mainly by women.

Within the history of English what I observe is the dominance of men in terms of legislation and key influential figures. In that sense English has been a

predominantly male or masculinised subject. Within the predominance of women English teachers a number of significant women have shaped my understandings of English teaching, for example, Margaret Meek, Nancy Martin, Jane Miller, Bethan Marshall, Anne Turvey, Caroline Daly, Gabrielle Cliff Hodges, Elaine Millard. I list these because as a London teacher I have met them, read their work and talked with them about English. As a secondary English teacher I *was* influenced by particular men I encountered through courses and conferences organised by LATE and NATE, for example, Peter Traves, John Johnson, John Wilks, John Hickman, John Hardcastle, Tony Burgess, Rex Gibson and Richard Bain. Through working with my female English teacher colleagues in a girls' school I negotiated a way of being a male teacher in a predominantly female environment with outstanding female English teachers. I bring to the study my own experience of working in a predominantly female English teaching context.

Representations of male English teachers in literature and popular culture

My preference for using autobiography to help analyse and make sense of the actual, concurs with the point made by Mac an Ghaill (1994: 25): 'Biographical details, including memories of significant others and events, were important in shaping male teachers' subjectivities'. When studying the lives of teachers one can take note of the influence of what Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (1994) refer to as 'the cumulative cultural text' of the teacher of which we are all a part and which we help to create. This is a text, rich in biographical material, interspersed with images of 'the teacher', which may be informed by stereotype, archetype, icon and character. Weber and Mitchell (1995) use drawings of teachers, by pupils and training teachers, portrayals of teachers in films, television programmes, children's comics and children's toys as the source material for their analysis. Building on the work of Protherough (1981) I gathered representations of male English teachers in literature and popular culture that were prevalent during the timescale of my study. Turvey's (1997) research reveals

how female trainee teachers are irritated by the disproportionate over-representation of male English teachers in the media.

Consideration of a number of these portrayals of male secondary English teachers found in the media and popular culture reveals themes that are relevant in the study. I am highlighting the sources of the stereotypical image of a male English teacher. In film and television, there are many iconic representations of male English teachers. In film, the character of John Keating, played by Robin Williams, in *Dead Poets Society* encapsulates the maverick and charismatic male English teacher. On British television, the Channel Four drama series *Teachers* contains protagonists who are male English teachers, including the chaotic, 'laddish' and egocentric English teacher played by Andrew Lincoln. *Teachers* shows an atypical number of male English teachers, but there are recognisable stereotypes: the Head of English is stressed, overworked and floundering in his managerial and curriculum leader roles; the young and good-looking new teacher is romantic, cool and casually dressed. This representation may account for the sort of male trainee requested by female mentors when they said, 'Please can we have a man?'

I have been intrigued by the representations of male English teachers in literature. Perhaps Mr Chips (Hilton, 1939) is the most recognised cultural icon for a male secondary teacher. Although not only an English teacher, Mr Chips embodies devotion to his pupils and his vocation. Kit Milcourt, in Libby Purves's (1998) novel *More Lives than One*, is roundly and accurately drawn as an energetic and charismatic trainee English teacher in a challenging school. He is portrayed as a maverick, with an unconventional route into the teaching profession, having previously been a climber, diver and city banker. Academically brilliant, individualistic and impetuous he is encouraged to become a teacher by Anna, his girlfriend and then wife, who tells him:

'I think good teachers should be very like you.'

(Ibid.:18)

Kit reflects on the experience of his training course during his interview for his first job at the age of thirty-five at Sandmarsh High School:

‘ The training was largely meretricious crap and half digested pop psychology, with a few rather desperate last-minute modules on how to “ deliver” the National Curriculum as if it were a bottle of semi-skimmed milk.’

Dramatically, he turns out to be a gay man who molests a teenage girl. The novel fictionalises two fears held by male teachers of being seen as a paedophile or a gay man (cf. Sargent, 2000). Ironically, Purves (1999) has written about why there are so few male teachers, citing fear of being accused of molestation as a contributing factor. However, using anecdotal evidence she observes that some parents choose the private sector in order to ensure their male children have grown up men in their lives.

Published and performed after my study, Alan Bennett’s (2004) acclaimed play *The History Boys* juxtaposes two contrasting male English teachers. Hector is older, maverick and gay; Irwin is young and shrewd. The play explores several relevant themes: maverick approaches, use of humour, anecdote, and male English teachers’ sexuality. Odone (2003) explores the popular perception that some subjects, such as science, are macho and she identifies the risk attached to men teaching other subjects of being branded ‘a big girl’s blouse or a kiddy-fiddler’. Her sensationalist choice of language perpetuates the myth that being a ‘wimp’, weak, effeminate, gay or a paedophile are on the same continuum. This fear of accusations experienced by men working in early years, and primary or elementary settings is revealed by several relevant studies (Allan, 1993, 1994; Skelton, 1994; Smedley, 1998a; Sargent, 2001).

During my study, there was press interest in one particular male English teacher. Matthew Godfrey, a PGCE secondary English trainee, was featured in the Daily Telegraph (Godfrey, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c) during his training year (16/2/00; 7/6/00) and was followed into his first year of teaching (4/10/00). The focus of the reporting on his career change from working in IT and business to training to work with pupils in London schools was on the challenges of city schools in terms of pupils’

behaviour and socio-economic background. Although the latter was not the case in his second placement school, an independent boys' school with a prestigious reputation. The photographs accompanying the articles merit analysis, using the approaches of Weber and Mitchell (1995) and Mitchell and Weber (1999). The photographs showing groups of lively, smiling boys surrounding their teacher, suggest he is a hero because of his career choice. This image of the teacher as hero is reminiscent of Miller's (1996: 122) 'male romance' of teaching in a challenging school, that is both radical and transfiguring. Miller experienced an androgyny that is either not available to male teachers or is not put on because the men do not realise this is an option. The concept of enacting behaviours that are in accordance with expectations of one's gender will need to be applied to the analysis of the men in my study.

The future of English

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA, 2005) is conducting a major consultation to guide the direction of the subject of English, entitled *English 21*. The current and future versions of English are being reconsidered and I believe that the future of the subject should take account of the territories I have surveyed in this and the previous chapter.

The experiences of the male trainees in the study are analysed within the changing contours of initial teacher training and the subject of English. As will be shown the men in the study have strong reactions to and shifting relationships with the intensely problematic and politically evolving nature of 'changing English'. Their own experiences of English at schools and university are more literature focused and Arnoldian. Therefore, they clash with the current version of English they are learning to teach and with the mentors who are training them. The atomisation and reductionism of the English curriculum is characterised by the messianic adoption of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy by some English departments and mentors. Chapter

4 considers the male trainees' experience of entering and being trained to teach in the predominantly female environment of the English department. The following chapter outlines how in this case study ethnographic methods were used for the data collection and analysis in the pilot and main studies that form the focus of the thesis.

Chapter 3

Methods used to research male trainee English teachers

In this chapter I explain my approaches to qualitative research methodology and consider, specifically, how in a case study ethnographic methods were used to yield insights into the experiences of a group of male trainee English teachers. This is followed by an account of the data collection, from the pilot studies to the main study. I argue that in a case study of this nature, ethnographic approaches are especially valuable when researching the complexities of the relations among the areas of masculinities, initial teacher education and English. Ethical and relational considerations inherent in a case study, including tensions and opportunities, are uncovered. The role of grounded theory in the data analysis and in the creation of theoretical constructs is explored, followed by a consideration of the role of metaphor in the research methodology. The chapter concludes by pointing towards the organisational structure used in subsequent chapters.

The research approach

Working as a university tutor on a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course offered an opportunity to investigate a group of men becoming English teachers by conducting a study in naturally occurring settings (Brewer, 2000: 6). To collect, analyse and theorise the data sources generated on the course which I taught was appealing, as it enabled me to investigate an existing social totality (Ball, 1991: 189). By capturing the 'social authenticity' (Duncan, 2000: 460) of a group men who were examples of the phenomenon under scrutiny, the under-representation of men training to be English teachers, it is anticipated that the findings will benefit the host university education department and have wider relevance within the areas of initial teacher training, masculinities and the subject of English. At the time of the study, the academic year 2001-02, the recruitment and retention of under-represented groups, in terms of ethnicity and gender, was under investigation in order to address a national

teacher shortage in England. At the turn of the millennium, debates about masculinities in the media (for example, Purves, 1999) expounded male role models for boys' academic achievement and the place of men in a post-industrial society (Hey, 1996; Cohen, 1998; Connell, 2000; Delamont, 2001).

My multifaceted role, comprising university tutor, English teacher, doctoral student, and gay man, offered ways to gain new perspectives on aspects of masculinities. As a male researcher who was teaching male trainee English teachers, I had an intimate relationship with the study's subject (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998: 8). Professionally and personally, I wished to treat the male research participants as a special group, not a problem. My attitude was underpinned by writing about men that forms the field of masculinities (Kimmel; 1987a, 1987b, 1987c; Mac an Ghail, 1994, 1996; Connell, 1995) and was influenced by theories on teaching boys (Jackson and Salisbury, 1996; Epstein et al., 1998; Martino, 1999; Martino and Mayenn, 2001; Skelton, 2001b).

My preference for qualitative research is founded on my interest in people's lived experience (Van Manen, 1990) which is part of my biography and my work as an English teacher, matching Strauss and Corbin's (1998:11) belief that 'Some persons are more orientated and temperamentally suited to doing this type of work'. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) characterise this instinctive relationship with a research methodology by highlighting the researcher's *modus operandi*:

Qualitative researchers self-consciously draw upon their own experiences as a resource in their inquiries. They always think reflexively, historically and biographically.

(p. xi)

Strauss and Corbin (1998: 33) also believe that 'a researcher's own preference, familiarity, and ease with a research mode inevitably will influence choices'. Thus, as case study emerged as my chosen methodology, it was influenced by research previously conducted into pupils using ethnography to investigate their own language practices (Open University, 1990; Thomas and Maybin, 1997).

The research methods used developed during the study, as Strauss and Corbin (1998: 33) note, 'the design, like the concepts, must be allowed to emerge during the research process'. Decisions regarding the study's location were made based on opportunity and pragmatism, identified by Rock (1978) as a feature of symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934/1967), whose work also informed the methodology. The catalyst for the study was 'a professional or collegial remark' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 37) made by a female mentor in school: 'Kit, please can we have a man?' Versions of this remark were articulated by other female mentors working in the field where the study was located, secondary school English departments working in a training partnership with the Soughbridge University education department. I was researching roles I had previously carried out: secondary English teacher and mentor. Burgess (1984) describes how he and other education researchers, Lacey and Hargreaves, utilised their former teacher status as a base from which to conduct their research. As a participant observer I was in Burgess's terms an outsider to schools where the trainees were on placement, but an insider working in the university education department where I worked with trainees and mentors. My outsider/insider position was similar to that of Lacey (1977) in his study of teacher socialisation, which provides insights into using the roles inherent in participant observation in order to generate new meanings about the trainees' perceptions of their school experience.

This is a case study of men training to be secondary English teachers in three areas of dynamic change: initial teacher training, masculinities and the subject of English. The single or 'intrinsic' case (Stake, 1998: 88-89) is a group of seven male trainee English teachers studying on a university PGCE course. To some extent this group is an 'instrumental' case, as the case provides insights into the men's experiences from which theoretical concepts are built. However, the study matches the widely held definitions of a case study (Merriam, 1988; Hammersley, 1992; Ragin and Becker, 1992) in terms of its limits and boundaries. In line with Pole and Morrison

(2003: 3) I chose to focus on an intrinsic case in a discrete setting where I was concerned with the full range of social behaviours of seven men during their experience of training. Following Connell's (1995: 90) use of a strategic rather than a representative sample, I kept the number small, in anticipation of high theoretical yield. This is rigorous and thorough research, where the complexities of the single case, inherent in the men's minority status, are more important than overarching trends or generalisations. This individualised interpretation of a case study, by identifying concepts and theorised constructs grounded in the data, moves the study away from the common concerns and heavy introspection that Woods (1985: 54-5) associated with ethnography.

Studying the familiar by making it strange (Burgess, 1984: 26) offers new insights but also demands integrity. Attention has been paid to the maintenance of an objective stance and verification of the data. This was achieved by thinking comparatively and comparing incident to incident in the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 43), by comparing male trainees with one another at key moments in their training and with trainees on a similar PGCE course. In line with Burgess (1984: 13), I used a variety of data by gathering multifarious available written and interview data from the participants in the main study and setting up additional interview data collection from a comparable cohort. The tape-recorded interviews were semi-structured (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) and were conducted as conversations in line with Burgess (1982, 1984).

When accessing social meanings 'triangulation' (Denzin 1970) is built into and is 'routinely a feature' (Brewer, 2000: 59) of research involving ethnographic approaches. Triangulation, as defined by Denzin and Lincoln (1998: 64-66), is particularly necessary when the researcher has a variety of relationships with the participants and is interpreting the intersubjective meanings of the actors in the study. Such triangulation satisfies the attempt to meet the requirements of the 'interpretative paradigm' as identified by Burgess (1984: 38). My view of methodological

triangulation as a series of different perspectives concurs with definitions in the literature (Denzin, 1970; Burgess, 1984; Patton, 1990; Morse, 1998) which also draw on the metaphor of different lenses (Morse, 1998: 64). In this study, the rich and varied data generated by the intrinsic case provide important and multiple sources of research validation and verification.

Allowing theory to emerge from data is fundamental to what Strauss and Corbin (1998) mean by grounded theory: 'In this method, data collection, analysis, and eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another' (p. 12). Whilst the main feature of this method is grounding concepts in the data the 'creativity of researchers also is an essential ingredient' (p.12). Midway through the data collection, I wrote an early draft of this chapter investigating why grounded theory was relevant to the research and recognised what Strauss and Corbin suggest:

if analysts understand the logic lying behind our procedures and if they develop self-confidence in their use, then they should be able to apply them flexibly and creatively to their own materials. Doing research is hard work. It is also fun and exciting. In fact nothing can compare to the joy that comes from making discovery.

(p.14)

The writing confirmed that grounded theory was the appropriate logic and research method for the study. I also experienced elation and self-confidence when I started to see the concepts emerging. As Strauss and Corbin (1998: 33) note I did not want to start the study with a set of pre-established concepts or a well-structured research design and was cognisant of the inter-relatedness of data collection, analysis and emerging theory.

The study

I describe the main study in detail in line with Shipman's (1985) position:

The methods used are not only kept open-ended and opportunistic, but are often reported autobiographically. The one distinguishing feature that researchers of all persuasions should have is being frank and full about the methods that were used to collect the data. (p. 277)

Creating a case study of a male trainees on a PGCE course as a participant observer necessitated careful planning to ensure that key data were captured. As the course is thirty-six weeks long there was little room for error and it was important that data collection did not burden the participants. Careful and sensitive collection augmented the quality of the data and minimised disruption. Firstly, the pilot studies are outlined briefly followed by a detailed account of the main study.

Pilot Studies

During 1998-99 I conducted a small pre-pilot study at Capital University, a large and prestigious 'old' university in the south east of England. This small-scale study involved two male PGCE secondary English trainees, using an open questionnaire and tape-recorded semi-structured individual interviews (Burgess, 1984). The data on the questionnaires were brief and cursory, suggesting the participants regarded them as a chore during a busy course. In contrast, the rich data in the interviews indicated that the participants found the interviews useful and enjoyable. The tapes allowed me to listen carefully and repeatedly for possible areas of interest. I conducted a pilot study during 1999-2000 at Queen's University, an old university and at Soulbridge University, a new university, both in the south east of England. This study involved twelve male participants at Queen's and four male participants at Soulbridge. Again, I used tape-recorded semi-structured individual interviews. In addition, at Soulbridge I asked participants to keep diaries. Evaluation of these data suggested abandoning onerous diaries in favour of a case study where I had access to a variety of 'naturally occurring' (Brewer, 2000: 6) written data complemented with semi-structured interviews (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Initial findings during the pilot studies indicated that studying too small a group risked highlighting the differences of a group of men who were already aware of their minority status. Some of the key findings from the pre-pilot and pilot studies were grouped into four areas:

influences and reasons for becoming a teacher;

people's responses to the decision to train as an English teacher;
hopes and expectations about the training year;
anxieties and concerns about the training year.

The main study

Although a small number is a feature of case studies (Hammersley, 1990; Cortazzi, 1993) admitting unsuitable trainees for the sake of creating a viable research group would have been unethical. I operated within the rigorous monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance procedures documented in the university regulations, as well as within external public accountability procedures. Admission and progression rates are part of Ofsted inspections of initial teacher training providers and TTA Performance Profiles record data on trainees' ethnicity, gender and age. A further example of the careful consideration given to fairness and equality was that I discussed potential conflict of interest with my colleagues before the interviews and during the post-interview discussions. The application and selection process for the secondary PGCE at Soulbridge matches the procedures for selecting candidates for initial teacher training described by Fletcher (2000: 198). The process of selecting and inviting applicants for interview was not within my remit and the university admissions tutor screened all applicants' Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) forms. Applicants who met the minimum admissions criteria as prescribed by the TTA (DfEE, 1998a), GCSE A*-C or equivalent in Mathematics and English Language and a degree with 50 per cent English or equivalent^v, were invited for interview. Fletcher (2000) provides an illustrative account of how higher education institutions interpret qualifications criteria.

The fieldwork for the main study was carried out during 2001-02 with two cohorts of trainee secondary English teachers, studying for a PGCE in two higher education institutions in the south east of England: Soulbridge University and Queen's University. On PGCE courses two thirds of the time is spent on school placement,

comprising one short and one long placement, totalling 120 days, leaving 60 days for university teaching. At Soulbridge University, the seven male trainees, out of twenty-six men and women, form the major data set where I was a participant observer. Most data were collected within the PGCE year, from September 2001 to July 2002. Data from the application and selection process, which took place during the previous academic year, were collected between December 2000 and August 2001. The decision to conduct interviews at Queen's University follows the position on objectivity held by Burgess (1984), of finding a more distanced group that was significantly unfamiliar. I knew of the Queen's PGCE course but did not teach on it, so my relationship with the Queen's participants was as a researcher who met them twice during the year. The Queen's group was chosen for its location, comparable size and gender balance: seven men, out of a cohort of twenty-nine.

The data collected from the two cohorts were different in relation to the research process. The Queen's trainees were interviewed in a group at the start and end of the course. The Soulbridge trainees were part of a case study, rich in naturally occurring documentary data, supplemented by a series of group interviews and three individual interviews. For clarity the thirty-four interviews are shown below:

Table 6: Overview of interviews conducted:

| Soulbridge University | | Queen's University | |
|--|-----------|----------------------------------|----------|
| Initial mixed group interviews | 4 | Group interview at start of PGCE | 1 |
| Individual interviews with female trainees at start of school placement 1 | 7 | Group interview at end of PGCE | 1 |
| Individual interviews with male trainees at start of school placement 1 | 7 | | |
| Individual interviews with male trainees at start of school placement 2 | 7 | | |
| Individual interviews with male trainees towards end of school placement 2 | 7 | | |
| Total | 32 | Total | 2 |

A further difference was the access I had to a wide range of written data from the Soulbridge trainees. Table 7 below presents an overview of the male Soulbridge participants: fictitious name, age, school attended, degree qualifications, relevant biographical information, interview grade, male and female English teachers in placement, PGCE award and details of the type of school and the gender of the teachers in the English department where they took their first teaching post.

Owing to the thirty-six week long structure of the PGCE course that was the location of the study the decision to conduct the four initial mixed group interviews and the individual interviews at the start of school placement one was based by a desire to capture the experiences and perceptions of the small group of trainees right at the start of their training. This allowed me to compare their initial experiences with subsequent adaptations that occurred during the remainder of their training and to uncover meanings. According to Delamont (1999: 7) 'the central method of ethnography is observation' and whilst I observed the participants as members of the university taught sessions and on campus, it was not logistically feasible to observe them during the twenty four weeks when they were in a number of school on placement. Hence, my opportunities for observation of the men were necessarily more limited than Delamont's 'central method'. Throughout the study I regularly kept a journal where I recorded my fieldnotes and noted my observations of the men on campus. These occurred in taught sessions, in conversations on campus, for example in my office and on the telephone. My case study of the men training to be secondary English teachers was influenced by the PGCE course on which they were studying and being trained. Hence, this is a case study which makes use of the ethnographic approaches offered by the rich data sources of the PGCE course.

Table 7: Overview of seven participants at Soulbidge University

| Name | Age | School attended | Degree/s | Other information | Inter view grade | Placement schools: male (M) female (F) English teachers; [M/F mentor] | PGCE Pass or Fail | NQT first teaching post: type of school; gender of teachers in English department |
|-------|-----|----------------------|--|--|------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Adam | 23 | Boys state | 2:2 Jt. Hons English Studies & History | Ex prof footballer | A/B3 | One M 0: F 6 [F mentor] Two M 1: F 5 [F mentor] | Pass | Boys 11-18 state school in affluent area Equal gender balance [M Head of Department] |
| Andy | 24 | Boys independent | 2:1 English Literature | Experience with children in UK and abroad; sporty | C | One M 2: F 3 [F mentor] Two M 5: F 3 [M mentor] | Pass | Boys 11-18 grammar school Equal gender balance [F Head of Department] |
| Barry | 23 | Mixed state Catholic | 2:1 Literature M.A. Postmodernism | Wants to do a PhD in post-modernism | C | One M 1: F 4 [M mentor]* Two M 1: F 7 [F mentor] | Fail | N/A |
| Brian | 28 | Boys state Catholic | 1 st English Literature D.Phil English Literature | Undergraduate teaching in Poland. D.Phil modernist poetry. | B/A | One M 3: F 4 [F mentor] Two M 1: F 8 [F mentor] | Pass | Boys 11-18 grammar school Equal gender balance [M Head of Department] |
| Henry | 37 | Boys independent | 1 st English M.A. Victorian Studies | Rejected by rival PGCE course. Married, children. Career change from engineer. M.A. Dissertation on George Eliot | B | One M 1: F 7 [F mentor] Two M 1: F 6 [M mentor] * | Pass | Mixed 11-18 state school in affluent area; placement school 1 M 1: F 5 [F Head of Department] |
| Matt | 33 | Mixed state | 2:1 English Literary Studies | Mature returner to education. Married, children. Career change. | A/B | One M 1: F 6 [F mentor] Two M 1: F 5 [F mentor] | Pass | Mixed 11-18 state school in affluent rural area M 4: F 2 [F Head of Department] |
| Ted | 21 | Boys independent | 2:1 Psychology and English | Needs PGCE to train as Ed Psych. | A | One M 0: F 5 [F mentor] Two M 1: F 6 [F mentor] | Pass | Mixed 11-16 state school in affluent area Equal gender balance [M Head of Department] |

* Indicates the same male mentor in the same placement school

Rich data sources

For the seven participants at Soulbridge I had access to a wide range of written data that form the basis for the case study of the male trainees' adaptations as they trained to become English teachers: GTTR application forms; Soulbridge University interview forms and initial written literacy tests; 'My Own Experience of Education' (Appendix 1) assignment written in week one; the first assignment 'Classroom Teaching Skills' (Appendix 3); the second and third assignments, 'Meeting Individual Learning Needs' (Appendix 4) and 'The Curriculum Pack' (Appendix 5); 'My Reading History' (Appendix 2). These data were all naturally occurring, as part of the PGCE course. Further data collected included: records of face to face and telephone conversations with the trainees and their mentors and emails. These were not included in the data analysed for the main case study which focused on the men's own views and perceptions of their experiences.

Triangulation is in a variety of forms. The initial small group interviews in week one were with male and female trainees. The first individual interviews with the seven men were paralleled with interviews with seven women. As a backdrop to the entire data set is the professional knowledge I held of the trainees on the course, which influenced the questions I asked them and informed my reactions to their responses, as well as the analysis. I used questions drawn from the Soulbridge interviews in a group interview at the start of the Queen's University course (29 men and women) and one at the end (7 men). Finally, in 2003 I presented the themes emerging from the initial analysis to a new cohort of eight male English trainees at Queen's University in a semi-structured interview (1/12/03).

By the end of the main study I was satisfied that I had captured the anticipated data sources. The main study had been successfully carried out as part of the ongoing PGCE course with minimum disruption owing to meticulous planning and the knowledge I had of the rhythm of the year. The data collection process

revealed a range of opportunities for the trainees to articulate their education experiences of which they were proud.

Interviews with Soulbridge University trainee English teachers

I followed the guidance of Maykut and Morehouse (1994) who define an interview guide as ‘a series of topics or broad interview questions, which the interviewer is free to explore and probe with the interviewee ... in order to have a deeper understanding of experience from the perspective of the participants’ (p. 44). During the first week of the Soulbridge course interviews were conducted with the cohort of twenty-seven male and female trainees divided into four mixed gender groups. These were followed by individual interviews with the seven male trainees on three occasions during the year: the beginning of school placement one, the start of placement two and towards the end of placement two. In addition, I began to conduct individual interviews with seven female trainees, chosen for their similar profiles to the seven men, in terms of age, qualifications, and career path. I decided to abandon the collection of this parallel set of data as my initial analysis started to focus on binaried differences between male and female trainees’ experiences and perceptions. A comparative study was forming, in danger of perpetuating an essentialist view of gender by polarising male and female sex roles, in ways widely rejected in gender theory (Butler, 1990; Segal, 1990; Connell, 1995).

The structure and conduct of the rounds of interviews were different. Questions in the four semi-structured group interviews were framed around the areas drawn from the pre-pilot and pilot studies:

influences and reasons for becoming a teacher;
people’s responses to the decision to train as an English teacher;
hopes and expectations about the training year;
anxieties and concerns about the training year.

I listened to the trainees in group interviews articulating their experiences and exploring their decisions, whilst working through hopes and anxieties. This led me to believe that individual interviews would provide the trainees with a place in which to reflect on the process of becoming a classroom practitioner and their teacher socialisation (Lacey, 1977). The data revealed that there was a pedagogical benefit in being involved in the interviews as the men acquired deeper understandings of themselves that they needed to teach English.

The first individual interviews were the most open-ended and began with a lead question: How are things going? To elicit further responses I asked questions about their use of narrative and metaphors in the classroom drawn from their own lives and what Woods calls their 'personal resources' (Woods, 1986: 4).

I listened to the tapes for the first individual interviews, revisited interview notes, noted emerging themes and created the areas of questions for the next interview. Hence, my initial analysis of the first interviews influenced the second semi-structured individual interviews. I wove questions into the conversation with the trainees, for example:

How are things going?

How do things compare with your first school?

How have you changed or developed?

You used metaphors (for example, mountains; hell; clouds; flying) to describe early experiences - are there any new ones?

Have there been any critical incidents?

How has your behaviour changed?

How are you learning to become a teacher?

What about relationships with pupils and colleagues?

Is there anything else I am missing with respect to your experience of training?

During and towards the end of each interview, I checked with the trainee that what I had heard was correct and allowed them to clarify and refine what I fed back to them.

Between the second and third interviews, I listened repeatedly to the tapes, often in the car on visits to schools and journeys to work. Again, I revisited interview notes, noted more emerging themes and created the areas of questions for the final interview. In preparation for the final round of interviews I listened to the tapes with an ear for possible emergent masculinity themes, signposted by phrases such as: male teacher, man in the classroom, how I am treated by male and female staff, how I am perceived by male and female pupils, role model, non-traditional work, female dominated profession. A concern for the male trainees in the group and first individual interviews was survival as a teacher; this was seen as separate from issues of masculinity. Some seemed perplexed when I noticed issues they raised about being a male trainee. Their responses in the second individual interviews generated noteworthy anecdotes and metaphors that drew on gender issues as they described and made sense of their adaptations as trainee English teachers. During the final interviews the men talked voluntarily about gender and masculinity issues, which I questioned more vigorously using threads drawn from the words and phrase they had used in previous interviews as a legitimate way into this territory. At the start of each third interview, I explained that I *did* have an agenda that was constructed from their previous concerns. I probed the participants to ascertain whether these concerns would form the basis of potential themes, weaving the language they used (shown below in italics) to express these concerns in previous interviews, into the interview conversations:

What has your experience been like *as a man* training to be a secondary English teacher?

In what ways have you *changed* during the year?

How have the pupils *perceived* you?

Do you think of yourself as a *role model*?

What *expectations* have *female teachers* had of you?

What *expectations* have *other male teachers* had of you?

How would you describe the *culture* of the schools and English departments where you have been training?

Does the subject of English feel *feminised*?

Tell me about your *career* plans for next year.

This loading of the questions with the participants' own emphases was used only in the third interviews to probe areas of shared concern. This more structured approach is similar to the description of the interview 'agenda' provided by Burgess (1984: 107). By the end of the interviews, I noted a particular fit between the subject of English and case study, which the next section examines.

Case study of male trainee English teachers

The aim of the case study was to explore the experiences of men training to be secondary English teachers. The study is bound by the prescriptions of the academic year 2001-02 when it took place and is set against a particular contextual backdrop, most clearly represented by the numerical data regarding the number of men in initial teacher training. Though predominantly interpretative, the study takes place against the contexts outlined in the introduction, namely the numerical dominance of women on PGCE courses and in secondary English departments.

The male trainee English teachers were studied in the settings of a university education department and secondary schools where they were on placement. The construction and conduct of the research enabled the participants' behaviour to be studied in everyday contexts, rather than under unnatural or experimental circumstances, and data were collected by various techniques. The data collection was flexible to avoid pre-fixed arrangements that impose categories on what the trainees said or did. The focus was on a single setting or group and was intentionally small scale, acknowledged by Cortazzi (1993:1) as an inevitable feature of similar studies. A case study using ethnographic approaches and multiple data sources was preferable in order to hear the trainees' written and oral voices, rather than conducting a study solely of oral accounts of personal experience. The analysis of the data involves attribution of the meanings of human actions described and explained.

The only 'unnatural' circumstances are the interviews, although these 'interviews as conversations' (Burgess, 1984) created a space where the data obtained through participant observation was followed up and triangulated.

The pilot study had suggested avoiding additional or artificially generated data, such as questionnaires and diaries which demanded too much of the participants' time. The variety of written data, including written stories, such as the 'My own experience of education' piece, allowed for the analysis of several written pieces generated by the course which offered interesting insights into their experiences. Cortazzi's (1993: 138) thinking about the relationship between what trainee teachers write and say about their experience fits with my analysis. However, the enquiry is situated within the conventions of grounded theory and not narrative analysis theory. I share the view held by Dewey (1938) that narratives allow the trainees to demonstrate that they are 'scholars of their own consciousness' (p.123). To gain perspectives on how they become male English teachers the male trainees are explored through a case study which is informed by the subject of English and its historical and political position and the growing theories of masculinities.

This study of men is positioned within the field of knowledge and politics of masculinities, in particular the work of Connell (1987, 1995) and Mac an Ghail (1994, 1996), and is concerned with the debates of men researching men (Kimmel, 1987a). The resulting knowledge about masculinity is placed within an anti-essentialist position, in line with Peterson's definitions (2003:57) about the need to avoid data collection and analysis that leads towards dualistic distinctions of men and women. My aim here is to reveal the richness of the study's understandings of men and masculinities. Part of this is the significance of the researcher's and participants' gender and sexuality in relation to the research approaches.

A study of men

The challenge for the researcher is to locate theory in the stories, opinions and perspectives expressed in the participants' own voices, identified by Coates (2003) as 'men talk'. This case study places a lens (cf. Bem, 1993; Morse, 1998; Sabbe, 2003; Myhill, 2000) on the overlap of the three interrelated areas: becoming a teacher, masculinities and the subject of English. My study aims to capture how each of these areas alters during the process of overlapping, creates new perspectives on the changes and generates new questions to consider. Space is provided for the men to tell their own accounts of the changes they undergo, and the study gradually sharpens the focus on the intricacies of being a man in a feminised work environment, relationships with young people and the subject of English.

Considerations of teacher socialisation and gender issues are more frequently focused on feminism and gender relations that privilege men over women (Stanley and Wise, 2002). From a feminist standpoint, because men have held power they have not been a priority subject for research. The 'new man' movement, which validates caring, empathetic and emotionally committed ways of being a man in society, together with the establishment of the academic disciplines of men's studies and masculinities identified in Chapter 1, shifted the focus onto men, using feminist methodology (Cohen, 1991). Men may still hold power and benefit from hegemonic masculinities but this obscures men's right to consider these masculinities for themselves. Part of this study was to allow the men to recount events in their own voices (Coates, 2003). Wolcott (1987: 41) explains how their stories are to be used by the researcher using ethnographic approaches, with a focus 'not on recounting events but on rendering a theory of cultural behaviour'. I engaged in a process of transformation, by gathering then presenting the stories, but this alone was not sufficient. To avoid the data remaining a series of interesting anecdotes I took control of the next part of the analysis process by coding the data to allow patterns to emerge as themes. Further interrogation of the data and manipulation of the themes allowed

theoretical constructs to crystallise. These constructs will be the new knowledge that emerged from a detailed study of a small group of men.

A man researching men

This case study of men carried out by a male researcher has highlighted a special relationship between the researcher and the participants in terms of masculinities. By attending to a plea in the masculinities literature to study men's experiences in their own right (Hearn, 1992; Sargent, 2001) I have exploited the opportunities provided by a case study to reveal new insights into the experiences of a group of men training to be English teachers. All studies are gendered and I am mindful of the implications of being a man researching men. Studies using ethnographic approaches involving masculinities are considered by Warren and Hackney (2000) who focus on the significance of the gendered relationship between researcher and participants. During the data collection I paused frequently and wrote in my journal about the ethical and professional conflicts inherent in the research methodology. Kimmel (1987a) provides a clear framework for research that contributes to the creation of a sociology of men, identifying "four important and interrelated research and teaching tasks", namely:

1. the content of the subdiscipline of the sociology of men needs to be carefully defined;
2. research into the sociology of men should go beyond the confines of sex-role research and should bring a wide set of methodological concerns;
3. a combination of the personal and the analytic should remain a central feature of the research and the teaching about the sociology of masculinity;
4. the sociology of men must remain politically sensitive to, and supportive of, the sociology of women;

(pp. 290-91)

This four-part set of guidelines is a useful template for my research when overlaid on Kimmel's framework as follows:

1. My study is focused on an attempt to discover the experiences of a group of men training to be secondary English teachers, specifically in relation to their gender, masculinities, other teachers and the subject of English.
2. I decided not to create a comparative study of the experiences of men and women.
3. The data collected are a combination of different data sets: experience of education stories, written assignments, semi-structured interviews. I used personal experiences and narratives before and during the data collection in order to make sense of my own motives and history as an English teacher and researcher.
4. By deciding not to pursue the collection of a comparative set of data from the female participants I have not used their experience in a cynical way, merely collecting their data to shed light on the experiences of the men. The experiences of the women deserve equal treatment in another study.

As a man researching men, and particularly as a gay man researching heterosexual men, I wanted to adopt a research persona that would represent my integrity during the research process. Identifying a persona was part of the creative process and a means to achieve high quality research. I had noted that during the interviews the participants' trust and valuing of their time with me released in me a fatherly, brotherly or avuncular concern. This concern for the participants was mirrored by the way the male trainees responded to pupils in the classroom. The roles of father, brother or uncle they adopted with pupils became a useful metaphor for my research relationship with the participants.

Another dimension of this male-male research relationship is the extent to which the sexuality of the researcher is shared with the participants and impacts on the data. In queer theory Seidman (1997) champions the foregrounding of difference in social theory and sexual politics in order to generate better understandings. The participants knew they were working with an 'out' gay tutor/researcher. In addition, my manner, professional appearance and use of language were all signifiers of my gender and my sexuality (Butler, 1993). The father, brother, uncle role provided the

participants and me with a protective sanctuary. The role established and maintained boundaries between the participants and me, guarding against any potential flirtation or proximity when conducting the interviews in school offices and empty classrooms. Being an openly gay man who is the researcher and participant observer with a group of self-declared heterosexual participants presented opportunities to be explored in the analysis. These, together with the particular tensions presented by the particular location of this case study are now investigated.

Ethical considerations: tensions and opportunities

At the start of the study I had anticipated that the men would think about themselves as men. However, I realised this was my agenda and not theirs. Initially, they were concerned with finding a key to teacher survival that they saw as devoid of identity and personal issues. My influence on the men, as their researcher, tutor and another man, must be acknowledged. Had the research not taken place the men may not have been as sensitised to their socialisation and their masculinities. They may not have been so aware of the changes that were taking place in their thinking and behaviour as they learned to become English teachers

Here, I foreground the mutually beneficial nature of this study. An examination of the conflicting and complementary roles I held during the study leads into ways of viewing the advantages for the participants. The section ends with the search for truth as the ethical tensions and opportunities collide and which set out to provide new empirical meanings.

A mutually beneficial project

Keen not to disadvantage the men in the study, Munro's question was central to my enquiry:

“How do we carry out a collaborative, mutually beneficial project whilst working through issues of knowledge, power, control and privacy; how as a researcher can I contribute as much as the subject of my work is giving?”
(Paul Munro, cited in Hatch, 1995)

I wanted the men to feel the benefit of their involvement and not to harm them. Reinharz (1979) uses the violent phrase: 'the rape of the respondent' to warn against the exploitation and violation if participants are subjected to cynical and unethical research. As a participant-observer familiar with the field I was able to pre-empt many potential ethical issues. As predicted, these were manifested as the trainees encountered difficulties on school placement. For clarity of perspective I kept field notes based on face to face and telephone conversations with trainees and their mentors. These notes provided alternative perspectives and created a further opportunity for data triangulation and verification.

As the focus of the study, the men contributed to the research by their involvement, as they themselves became interested in links between their experiences and emerging concepts. I agree with Woods' (1985: 52) claim that ethnographic research is 'particularly well suited to helping to close the gap between researcher and teacher, educational research and educational practice'. Trainees were more concerned about their success on the PGCE than their contribution to research. I was mindful that potential ethical tensions existed if, by taking part in the research, the trainees were to become resentful about helping me to gain a doctorate. Integrity and transparency needed to be exercised with skill and diplomacy to ensure the men were valued and treated with consideration. The time they gave to be interviewed was always topped and tailed with conversations reminiscent of tutorials. Part of the reward for being involved in the study was access to more tutorial time.

A variety of roles

A particular ethical dimension anticipated was the relationship I had with the trainees as their tutor and researcher. Potentially, this was fraught with ethical challenges and called for objectivity, sensitivity and integrity. Duncan (2000) provides a clear description of what this integrity involves:

Of equal importance is the integrity of the researcher in relation to what or who is being investigated. This integrity necessarily involves the observance of ethical principles in the conduct of the power relationships between the researcher and the researched as well as an ability to suspend personal and ideological agendas in a quest to render the familiar strange.

(pp. 460-61).

During the pilot study and the main study I was cognisant that ethical issues were even more complex because of the multiple relationships I had with the trainees as PGCE secondary Programme Tutor, visiting Link Tutor, English Subject Studies course leader, General Professional Studies lecturer and research student. In my university role of PGCE Secondary Programme Tutor I was responsible for the academic administration and organisation of all PGCE secondary courses, and the trainees saw me as head of secondary initial teacher education at Soulbridge. Moreover, I was responsible for the assessment and moderation of the trainees' performance throughout the course under the DfEE Circular 4/98, the standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (1998b). Concerned to avoid conflicts inherent in this type of research (Burgess, 1984) I made the decision not to observe the men teaching during the assessed teaching practice, thus shrinking my tutor and assessor roles, and avoiding damage to the research relationship. In research terms, this reduced the number of opportunities for participant observation. However, by choosing not to judge the participants as teachers in the classroom I believed that the trust and openness of my research relationship with the men throughout the case study was more likely to remain in tact. Similarly, as a participant observer I opted to conduct the individual interviews in the placement schools to reduce my power base by becoming a visitor in their professional space. I was heeding advice given by Lee (2000: 57) that research should not harm the subjects involved. These decisions regarding the research design were founded on a vigilance to avoid any potential harmful effects on the participants, especially those generated by clashes because of conflicting roles. In summary, to the male trainees I remained their tutor who was researching their experiences as they trained.

Naturally occurring knowledge and rich data

Because of my roles I amassed a large amount of knowledge about the participants. Much of this knowledge was acquired firsthand on the university taught course. Further knowledge was acquired by visiting other trainees on school placement. Conversations about individual trainees with mentors provided other perspectives. In addition, mentors and tutors contacted me by telephone and email to discuss trainees. Other tutors shared opinions about trainees during conversations on campus. My knowledge was augmented by the contact the trainees made during the course: visits to my office, chats after taught sessions, telephone calls, voicemail messages and emails. Occasionally, I met trainees on campus or when visiting a school.

This in-depth knowledge provided the background to my enquiry as well as some of the data. I have not attempted to hide behind a veneer of neutrality aware that the particular knowledge I held would inform the collection and interpretation. However, by the end of the data analysis I possessed a deep knowledge of the seven men during their training.

Unearthing truths

The discourse for the analysis is interpretative understanding, part of which is symbolic interactionism. I was aware when listening to the taped interviews and reading the trainees' written pieces that my roles could influence what the trainees said and wrote. I needed to ask whether they were changing what they said because of these different roles. Was my role of university tutor/researcher compromised or my credibility improved? When writing about unobtrusive research methods, Lee (2000: 136) notes that 'Participants often change their behaviour once they become aware they are being studied.' To overcome this problem he recommends building the bonds of trust with those being studied. It was my perception, aided by my

reputation with mentors, that trainees trusted me as a tutor. I used field notes to confirm this and test whether I was trusted as a researcher. It was important to signal that I could not negate the fact that the research was rooted in my relationship with the trainees as their tutor. This context of the study was explained on the initial consent forms. However, I accept that as trainees they were in a subordinate position (cf. Davies, 1985) and unlikely to refuse to take part. Whilst requesting and securing their involvement avoided violating some important ethical principles, the process created other possible conflicts, for example, putting demands on the male trainees, who were vulnerable as members of a minority group, during an already pressurised course.

The work of Nicol (1997) addresses some of the tensions inherent in research into student teachers carried out by their teacher educators. In my study there is evidence that contrasts with Nicol's feeling that conducting research reduced her credibility as a teacher. I offer some explanations here. The male trainees were the focus of my enquiry, indicating a research interest in *them*. The study was not about my practice as their tutor, but about their experience and adaptations. The participants in my study have degrees in English, some have higher degrees, and were interested in narrative and critical interpretation. My thinking here concurs with a tension identified by Woods (1986) when talking about how subjects develop and how teachers' socialisation is 'inadequately and ineffectively incorporated into pedagogy':

Consequently the old mystique about teachers being 'born not made' continues to carry considerable point, for they are thrown back on their personal resources of, for example, the power of story-telling, the ability to speak and relate to people, dramatic skills, caring and other vocational feelings, the ability to explain and organize, enthusiasm, drive and industry.
(p. 4)

Woods helps me tune into what can be heard during the data collection and analysis. The excitement in discovering how male English teachers evolve during training characterises the synergy in the exploration of ethical tensions.

Analysing and theorising

The multifarious data were rich; the men wrote in a range of formats and styles for different purposes and took part in lengthy and thoughtful semi-structured interviews. Analysis became intertwined with the data gathering at the start of the study and this continued during subsequent collection. The voices of the participants remained vibrant during what became a close, analytical and literary reading of the data. The practice of trainees describing their development, to make sense of what was happening to them, and to create their own developmental processes, is supported by Cortazzi (1993: 13): 'Describing one's own developmental process is also a way of generating it.' My view of this dual function of description is close to the role of description in grounded theory. Geertz (1975), who places emphasis on the 'thick description' of sets of data in order to discover social categories, supports the value of description. This view of the process of describing sufficiently rich data is that it allows concepts and theoretical frameworks to be created after the data have been coded (Duncan, 2000: 460). My approach was in line with Denzin and Lincoln (1998), who see an interrelatedness between data collection and analysis that occurs '*throughout the course* of a research project' (p. 161). Verification and theory development took place during the data collection as well as during the post-collection analysis. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln I believe that this richness of concept development or 'conceptual density' depends on great familiarity with the data, as the concepts are 'checked out systematically with these data' (p.161).

Coding the data

The route from data collection to theorising seemed long and unwieldy because I could not view the process in a memorable format. I constructed in my journal a chronology of the data analysis process and followed this meticulously.

During the transcription of the interviews, I began the process of open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 101-121) by highlighting participant concerns expressed

by men and women, noting thoughts and links to follow up. The criteria for identifying these potential situated ideas were no more specific than open questions (ibid.: 89-92), for example: What do the participants focus on? What do they want to talk about? What do they say is going well? What are their concerns? What is interesting and surprising? What language and images are used? What are they not saying? This approach is advocated by Woods (1977: cited in Burgess, 1984). The questions alerted me to their general trainee 'journey' and specific development as English teachers. Strauss and Corbin (1998) define this particular approach to generating initial categories as 'microanalysis'. As I engaged in this 'line by line' analysis, words indicative of the participants' perspective, acted as triggers for the microanalysis, for example: English, teacher, pupils, enjoy, well, happy, confident, surprised, worried, mentor, management.

I rejected using available software packages, NUD*IST Vivo and Atlas.ti, after experimentation during the early stages of working on the transcriptions, feeling a reluctance to identify themes too early, preferring to treat all the data with the same method and pace. To use computer software would have merely created the appearance of objectivity. In this case study, the challenges in terms of ethics and the analysis deserved exploration rather than circumvention. As I was working with a large but manageable amount of data produced by the seven men in the main study, a manual analysis was possible, although with a larger number of participants software might have been necessary.

The next stage involved copying situated ideas into columns on transcriptions using participants' words as potential 'in vivo codes' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), occasionally adding aides-memoires or 'memos' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 110) and 'waving the red flag' (ibid.: 97), telling myself: Be on the look out for this. Check this. Do other participants say this? Does this continue to be important? How does this develop? Why is this? What is being said? What is not being said? The result was a large number of situated ideas, which were over time grouped to form

emerging themes. This progressive focussing (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was an important part of the analysis process, along with questioning of the other data (for example, application forms and written assignments) and comparison across the other interviews.

To assist verification of this procedure I used a second grouping method involving a series of cards labelled with situated ideas which were regrouped into larger sets, where there were broad similarities, to form the emerging themes. In both methods the names of these emerging themes changed, and continued to change, as the situated ideas were collapsed into themes, or as Glaser & Strauss (1967: 61-62) put it, 'until each category is saturated'. This progressive focussing process moved towards the stage of conceptualising a set of six emerging themes:

1. The trainees' developmental process involves staged concerns about becoming a teacher, an English teacher, a male English teacher
2. The relationship between masculinities, sexualities and being an English teacher
3. Female mentors and how they are experienced by male English trainees
4. Male English trainees relating and communicating with pupils
5. Male English trainees' perceptions of the subject of English
6. Male English trainees as benefactors of the research

These were used as a set of concepts and applied to the entire data set, including all the transcribed interviews at Soulbridge and Queen's and the Soulbridge written data. These concepts were then reconceptualised and classified. To assist this procedure a number of possible models were created. At this stage these formed the basis for a workshop at the Higher Education Academy Conference (1/7/04) at which the workshop participants engaged with the models, offering alternative classifications and topographies. This allowed me to see the findings afresh before engaging in a second microanalysis of the data, during which further potential meanings materialised. I call this procedure, a more aggressive and distanced approach, the

'interrogation' of the data. New categories were discovered and sub-categories identified, using some new language to describe their properties and dimensions.

The penultimate stage was to engage in axial coding between the categories and the sub-categories, for example between masculinities and the teaching of poetry. The theoretical constructs for the participants were now in place as a set of conditions, actions, interactions and consequences, for example relationships with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English. Finally, the constructs were subjected to selective coding as the final categories were refined and integrated. The coding revealed sequences of actions and interactions over the period of the research, for example: adoption of a gentler teaching persona; preference for teaching the literary elements of the English curriculum; use of humour in the classroom and the impact of gender on their choice of first job. The theoretical constructs were ultimately represented visually through the use of a Venn diagram (see Chapter 7).

The role of metaphor

In this final section the role of metaphor in this case study of men is expounded along with the stages of coding and interrogating the data. A number of metaphors are presented to illuminate connections between the underpinning ideology, methodology and the researcher's role.

When describing the characteristics of qualitative researchers Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that researchers using qualitative methods 'are unafraid to draw on their own experiences when analysing materials because they realize that these become foundations for making comparisons and discovering properties and dimensions' (p. 5). I drew on my own experiences as a further check and balance as part of the data collection and analysis. The deployment of metaphor to understand teacher socialisation became central to the data collection and analysis. As a teacher educator I encouraged the use of metaphors to help trainees visualise their development, and encourage them to be creative, critical thinkers. The metaphors

provide a creative element and by exploring the metaphors trainees are steered into deeper critical thinking. During the research, especially the interviews, the participants used metaphors to describe their experience of the training. These are often gendered, for example, talking to pupils like a 'big brother'. Whilst interesting as figurative and visual descriptions, these metaphors began to frame the emerging concepts. I used the early metaphors with the participants during the subsequent interviews and analysis of the written data.

Metaphors have been useful tools to see the research process, which can appear intangible and ephemeral at times and have acted as hooks for explaining emerging concepts to an audience. Throughout the study I experienced what Janesick (1998) noticed: 'Metaphor creeps up on you and surprises' (p. 36) and hence agree with Eisner's (1991) position on the centrality of metaphor for educational researchers:

What is ironic is that in the professional socialization of educational researchers, the use of metaphor is regarded as a sign of imprecision; yet, for making public the ineffable, nothing is more precise than the artistic use of language. Metaphoric precision is the central vehicle for revealing the qualitative aspects of life.

(Eisner, 1991: 227)

In addition to the role of metaphorical language in the research process was Cortazzi's (1993) idea of describing one's developmental process, in order to understand and generate it. Patton (1990: 464-470) provides a list of behaviours that promote creative thinking and which provide valuable signposts for my research journey:

Being open to multiple possibilities

Generating a list of options

Exploring various possibilities before choosing any one

Making use of multiple avenues of expression such as art, music, and metaphors to stimulate thinking

Using nonlinear forms of thinking such as going back and forth and circumventing a subject to get a fresh perspective

Diverging from one's usual ways of thinking and working, again to get a fresh perspective

Trusting the process and not holding back

Not taking short cuts but rather putting energy and effort into the work

Having fun while doing it

Patton's list of behaviours, when applied to the creative possibilities of my study made me feel comfortable and stimulated.

Metaphor and the research design

Strauss and Corbin (1998) encourage qualitative researchers to step back periodically and ask, "Do I see what I am thinking in the data?" (p. 45). During the data collection I frequently applied their advice, to pause and take stock to allow 'the design, like the concepts to emerge during the research process' (p. 33). They signal that changes to the research design or additional data collection may be necessary to evolve further the theory. I considered what other data I might collect, as my knowledge of the trainees deepened. The more I got to know them, the more I wanted to probe and check. I perceived this as an opportunity to give the participants a clearer voice and involve them in interpreting 'what is observed, heard or read' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998: 160). At this juncture, the research needed to move towards what Denzin and Lincoln (1998) describe as being 'embedded in a thick context of descriptive and conceptual writing' (p. 169), in line with Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss (1987).

I had collected a range of data and felt overwhelmed by the volume of tapes and writing. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) describe the qualitative 'researcher-as-bricoleur':

The bricoleur produces a bricolage, that is a pieced together, close knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation... The multiple methodologies of qualitative research may be viewed as bricolage, and the researcher as *bricoleur*. (p. 3)

The plethora of data or the 'bricolage' I had gathered needed rationalisation to be pieced together to become close-knit. Burgess (1984) suggests the term 'multiple strategies' for this type of research where the researcher is using a range of methods, data, investigators and theories within the research design. He believes that the multiple strategies approach is valuable in order to overcome bias. The range of ethnographic documentary data provided an opportunity to overcome any bias inherent in this type of research. The collection of parallel data from the men and women risked the formulation of binaried gender comparisons. By revisiting the central question of the enquiry I decided to refocus the remaining individual interviews and the data collection and analysis on the men.

Denzin and Lincoln's description (1998) captures my research behaviours as a '*bricoleur*', adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks, ranging from interviewing to observing, to interpreting personal and historical documents, to intensive self-reflection and introspection' (p. 4). The resulting concepts are not about individual participants in the study, but are what Denzin and Lincoln refer to as '*patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social units (i.e., "actors")*' (p.169). For my study the actors are the men training to become secondary English teachers. This matches Strauss and Corbin's (1998) recommendation that to maintain an objective stance researchers should think comparatively, for example by comparing incident to incident in the data (p.43). I chose not to adopt Lacey's (1977: 15) technique of viewing the same incident from different perspectives, by not using interview and documentary data from mentors.

The changes to the research process were vital at that point in the enquiry and decisions made about what to eschew gave the research its best chance to lead to a sound, trustworthy report (Tooley and Darby, 1998). I created theorised constructs in ways consistent with Strauss and Corbin (1998): 'So although description of those experiences clearly is *not* theory, it *is* basic to theorizing' (p.19) and avoids what Duncan characterises as 'an articulate form of common sense' (2000: 459). My way

of structuring the findings and analysis of the case study which uses ethnographic approaches has much in common with Strauss and Corbin's (1998) definition of ethnographies:

They reflect attempts to **depict** the perspectives and actions of the portrayed actors, **combined** with an explicit ordering of those into plausible nonfictional accounts. The final presentation is organized around well-developed and ordered themes, but the themes are not connected to form an integrated theoretical scheme.

(pp. 20-1)

The theorised constructs *are* connected and pieced together to formulate a logical, explanatory and theoretical scheme. Applying definitions offered by Glaser and Strauss (1967: 32-34) the resulting theories are 'substantive' in that they are applicable to the group but are also 'formal' as the theories are more widely applicable.

Metaphor and the findings

Throughout the study, I have been vigilant, hoping to find in the data an appropriate metaphor in which to frame for the findings, analysis and discussion chapters. Autobiography has been central to my work as a teacher and researcher. For example when teaching pupils and adults demanding and unfamiliar literary texts, such as Chaucer's *The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, I have used autobiographical writing to unlock Chaucer's subject matter and language. When analysing the written and interview data I noticed how the participants frequently described their autobiography in terms of a journey which took them to being an English teacher. This attention paid to metaphor during the data collection and analysis concurs with the intellectual flavour of the minority perspective (Smith, 1998: 215). I have allowed an under-represented group, male trainee English teachers, to use metaphors in order to make sense of their experiences. Some metaphors were used by all participants and were important signals of key concepts. For example, the male trainees described themselves as a father, an elder brother or

uncle when developing relationships with pupils, and wanted to be seen as a 'good boy' by their mentors. Some used metaphors of popular comedians, such as Ben Elton, Jack Dee and Eddie Izzard, to explain their classroom personae. When describing how they resolved their masculinity with the feminised subject of English they invented new words, such as 'mannish' and 'manny', to illustrate their understandings of how they were behaving as male teachers. During the interviews I checked with the men that I had heard and interpreted correctly the metaphors used. The significance attributed to metaphor in the methodology adds clarity and validity to the analysis and the findings. The metaphors in the data reveal new meanings and through the analysis the constructs grounded in the data will be used to solve problems in initial teacher training and the subject of English. The creation of a set of interrelating theoretical constructs has probed deeper understandings of the experiences of seven men training to become English teachers. The study does not reveal universal truths about all trainee English teachers, nor about all male trainee English teachers. Neither does it provide a set of infallible theories about the seven men. However, Like Denzin and Lincoln (1998) I believe that:

Theories are interpretations made from given perspectives as adopted or researched by researchers. To say that a given theory is an interpretation – and therefore fallible – is not at all to deny that judgments can be made about the soundness or probable usefulness of it.

(p. 171)

New meanings are revealed, showing the relationships between being a man, a teacher and the subject of English.

I have accepted the caveats and seized the opportunities presented by the research by grounding concepts in the data in order to make sound judgements. The theoretical constructs generated by this case study are middle range (Merton, 1968) in that they are relevant to those involved in the practices and policies, in this case, concerning initial teacher training. Throughout the research I endeavoured to listen

attentively to the participants and look afresh at the data in order to challenge accepted ways of thinking and generate new perspectives on men training to become English teachers. The following three empirical chapters reveal the three areas of overlapping adaptation experienced by the male trainee English teachers: training in predominantly female English departments; relating and communicating with pupils and relating with the subject of English.

Chapter 4

‘Please, can we have a man?’: training to teach in predominantly female English departments

This chapter focuses on the male trainees’ experiences of learning to teach in predominantly female English departments. I use the term ‘predominantly female’ with its nuance of more abundant and frequent, to reflect the numerical dominance of female teachers in English departments. My position is neither theoretically nor emotionally linked with an anti-feminist backlash (Faludi, 1991) as, like Miller (1996: 59), I believe that ‘most women in teaching have wanted equality with men rather than supremacy’. Neither do I take an anti-female-teacher stance that defends the interests of male teachers (Littlewood, 1989; Oram, 1989). I acknowledge that by researching men being trained by mainly women I risk perceptions of misogyny and anti-feminism. I know the risks having previously carried out roles discussed in this chapter of English teacher, mentor and head of department, in the predominantly female environment of a girls’ secondary school. This history informs the pro-feminist responsibilities I now have as a man teaching and researching in a predominantly female university education department. Through these autobiographical gender lenses (Bem, 1993, Sabbe, 2003) I analyse the experiences of male English trainees and show the interrelationship between masculinities, training and English. The analysis and discussion focus on the adaptations undergone by the men, and their articulation of their changing masculinities, are positioned within teacher socialisation theory (Lacey, 1977) and masculinities constructionist theory (Connell, 1995).

Men entering a predominantly female profession

On the Soulbridge University PGCE secondary English course the male trainees were in a numerical minority: seven out of a group of twenty-five, in line with Howson (2000) and mirroring the male/female ratio in placement English

departments. Most mentors responsible for 'coaching, counselling and assessment' (Fletcher, 2000:1) were female as were the other English teachers. Therefore, the feminisation of schooling and English was central to the experiences of the male trainees.

Concepts of men entering occupations regarded as 'women's jobs' (Apple, 1985; Bradley, 1989; Allan, 1993; Williams, 1993, 1995; Miller, 1996; Owen et al., 1998; Cameron et al., 1999) are relevant to the experiences of men entering the predominantly female workplace of the English department. By looking closely at the experiences of seven male trainees I have a detailed insight into their relations with the course of training, mentors, placement schools and the production of their masculinities in the classroom. Their masculinities are produced in the two areas identified by Haywood and Mac an Ghail (1996: 52-3):

The first concerns teacher ideologies and their relationship to the labour process. The second concerns the use of discipline in teaching styles. Although research in this area has predominantly concentrated on students, there is evidence to suggest that relations between teachers are also part of a process of making the spaces for particular styles of gender to predominate.

However, earlier on the course the men did not articulate the significance of their gender in their teacher development and socialisation (Sikes, 1991). In line with Bell and Yalom (1990), they did not perceive gender as an organising force in their lives. However, I noticed manifestations of their minority status, reflected in their 'pack' like behaviours:

Day 1, Week 1 At the start of each seminar six out of the seven men sat around a cluster of tables in a men only group.

(Fieldnotes, 18/9/01)

Andy recalled how this male subject sub-culture (cf. Lacey, 1977: 62-3) continued during the year:

'You notice with the groups, when we sit down, it is always a table with men. Obviously Adam sits with the girls. But basically there is always a table full of guys.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Adam interacted only with female colleagues and never joined the group of 'guys'.

During the year, six of the seven men functioned as a group in seminars and lectures and socialised on campus and after school:

End of Week 4. Aware of group of men in the bar when looking for Sindy on Friday at 4 p.m. Six men drinking and very keen to engage me in chat and banter. They asked questions about my career, previous schools, being the PGCE tutor. Lots of laughter.

(Fieldnotes, 12/10/01)

The 'male bonding' (Tiger, 1969) of the Soulbridge group posed a challenge. I was fascinated to observe the men's behaviour, but wanted to intervene and model how to deal with gendered groupings in school. The Soulbridge trainees had me as their male English tutor; the Queen's trainees' English tutors were female, reinforcing their minority status:

'You can't escape from the fact that you are a significant minority. And all our tutors are female as well.'

(Trainee, Queen's University, Group Interview 2)

On both courses, the men were a small but powerful 'significant minority' who dominated disproportionately interactions in university sessions. This dominance could be explained by the men's feelings of centrality to the institution (Tinto, 1993: 122) where they were studying. Being part of a gendered minority replicated the experience of being a male English undergraduate on predominantly female degree courses. Some male trainees noticed how much they were contributing and made comparisons with boys in school:

'I'll stick with the English group and even though there is proportionally a smaller number of male PGCE students I have noticed in the classes male students, they are just like boys in school, they participate and contribute disproportionately.'

(Brian, Interview 3)

This fits with Williams (1995) and especially Penn (1998) who noted that 'men do not necessarily modify their masculinity on coming into a woman's profession; they bring their masculinity and male assumptions with them' (Penn, 1998: 246). At this stage the male trainees brought their embodied masculinity into the PGCE course and performed hegemonic masculinities.

Andy had initially reacted positively to being in an evenly balanced English department: 'It's about 50:50 men to women. It's nice.' (Andy, Interview 2). Even in this department the ethos was feminised; the English department office was 'a female dominated room' with male colleagues 'who you don't see very often' (Andy, Interview 3). Towards the end of the course, Andy liked being in the minority but was aware of how he had changed the way in which he constructed his male identity in relation to the women he found himself working with every day.

'The departments have been female based I suppose. I've enjoyed it. I quite like being in the minority in some ways. I think I have become more 'manny'. (Laughs) I have been pushed over a bit. Just my behaviour and my general behaviour. My sense is I have become a bit more mannish, a bit more - not louty - but the type of sense of humour might have changed, a bit more male ... Perhaps again because we are outnumbered ... I like being outnumbered, but you want to be heard.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Andy was consciously changing the way he behaved as a man in order to cope. In part, this was a type of resistance strategy. Resisting the dominance of and criticisms from his female colleagues, one of Andy's 'coping strategies' (Duncan, 1999) was consciously to be more masculine or, in his words, 'manny', 'mannish' (cf. Newsome, 1961) and to use 'male' humour. The strategy he was adopting is one of hypermasculinity (Whitehead, 2002) and a reversion to hegemonic behaviours. This explains in part why male trainees were attributed male stereotypes. They asserted their masculinity in order to address their feelings of marginality, (Tinto, 1993), attempting to reclaim the male status which had been under threat. Andy confessed that he liked being a token male drawing on a Chaucerian metaphor for illustration: 'It is a bit like being Chauntecleer'. He was not consciously reproducing the hierarchical and oppressive masculinity of school as described by Mac an Ghail (1994) and Lesko (2000). Andy's use of 'male' humour accords with his heterosexual masculinity (cf. Kehily and Nayak, 1997). When outnumbered the trainees' strategies concur with Whitehead's (2002: 120) identification of

hypermasculinity in comic books, where superheroes are asexual and in an unresolved relationship with a woman. In Whitehead's terms, the male trainees adopt an unthreatening hypermasculine role vis-à-vis their female mentors. In Bly's (1990) terms, the male English trainees behave like 'soft men' and they are criticised for it. When accused of being too gentle Adam's feelings of isolation match Tinto's (1993) concept of marginality. Adam's explanation as to why there were no other male teachers in the department highlights his marginality and increased isolation:

'There was one. He left. He couldn't stand it.'

(Adam, Interview 3)

The need for male professional company explains why the men, when at the university, grouped together, often meeting for a drink in the student bar, to talk about traditionally male topics such as football. Using text messaging and emails the male trainees created exclusively male networks of support.

Taking over classes from female English teachers

On school placement, before taking over the teaching of classes from several English teachers, trainees carried out observations. Henry's experience was typical:

'Inevitably, most of the observations I have made of other teachers have been of female teachers because it has been in English departments. So much of it has come from watching female English teachers.'

(Henry, Interview 3)

Brian noticed how initially the female teachers' teaching style influenced him. Andy noticed the pupils' reaction to his gender. When taking a female teacher's Year 7 class he described how his louder, deeper voice startled the pupils:

'When I talk loudly, I shout: Right! They jump up and get a bit of a shock.'

This confirms that most pupils' experience of English in primary school is with female teachers (Gilbert and Gilbert, 1998). Ted explained how pupils positioned him as a man (Askew and Ross, 1988) expecting him to use his build and male authority by silencing them with force. When he failed at this, he believed he failed as a man:

‘Last week they drove me over the hill, they just drove me mad – I thought that was it. I thought if my year 7s can’t be good then I’m done for as a man.’

(Ted, Interview 1)

Being unable to control children, he did not conform to ideologies of dominant masculinity. He reported a further challenge to his hegemonic masculinity when his mentor told him to apply for a vacancy, in spite of his classroom control problems:

‘she wanted a man in the department, even if he is not very good, at least he’s a man.’

(Ted’s telephone call, Fieldnotes, 14/11/01).

Barry attributed his inability to manage a class of challenging pupils to his gender, acknowledging he lacked the hegemonic authority expected of him. He resorted to sexual language to explain how it felt to be failing in front of pupils and peers: ‘like a cock’, ‘like a dick’.

When allocated disruptive classes the men felt they were being challenged to show how they could handle boys’ robust behaviour. Mentors did not help them to adopt teaching styles appropriate to boys (Lingard and Douglas, 1999: 146). As Henry explained: ‘one of the reasons that I got some of the lads was that it was thought that it would be a good challenge for me to have to deal with them’. Such tests of their male strength and aggression contributed to the myth that women are unable to control pupils owing to their inferior physical power, matching Weber and Mitchell’s analysis of the gendered enactment of power:

the implication that men, because of their size, strength, and their very maleness, are not afraid, and have less difficulty controlling and maintaining order in a classroom than women do (an implication that those of us who have experienced the forceful power exerted by a female teacher know to be false).

(Weber and Mitchell, 1995)

In my study the mentors’ expectations of the male trainees revealed the misconception that they would be able to exert forceful power simply because of their gender. The men did not want to deploy forceful power as a teaching strategy. The other paradox here is that some of the men resisted the sharp, aggressive management

strategies of the women, preferring to be 'jokey' and 'laid back' in their approach. The men developed teaching styles that fitted their changing masculinities.

Gendered teaching styles

The seven men regularly said they wanted to feel 'comfortable' in the classroom and be more 'relaxed' than the mainly female teachers they saw. They could not replicate the more aggressive discipline strategies used by some female colleagues, as reported in Sargent's (2001: 70) study. Ted described the female teachers shouting at disruptive pupils who then became marginalised and discouraged (Lingard and Douglas, 1999). When asked about the shouting culture he admitted:

'There is a lot of shouting. That is not a reflection on the way these teachers work. It is just that some of these kids will not shut up.'

(Ted, Interview 1)

Like the teachers he saw, he resorted to ineffective shouting. Ted modulated his shouting because of his physical size and potential voice production. Nonetheless shouting damaged his confidence and left him exasperated.

When discussing gendered classroom management strategies, Brian noticed how female teachers had a predisposition for administering rewards and sanctions:

'I think it is the praising and the verbal punishing - maybe it is just my perception - but it seems to me like it comes more naturally to the female teachers.'

(Brian, Interview 1)

He saw the practices of administering rewards and sanctions as being influenced by gender, and this distanced him from what he marginalised as 'women's work'. Brian's initial preference for the lecture style was explained by his previous experience of higher education teaching:

'I am team teaching A level and certainly with year 10, I found that if I wanted to I could stand at the front of the class and give almost a lecture for half of the class and that obviously suits me'

(Brian, Interview 2)

He associates didactic lecturing with masculine practices which is why it 'suits' him. Perhaps his opinion matches Miller's (1996) belief that 'it is easier for women to

listen to children than it is for men, who ... have been inclined to retain the posture and monologic speech style of the lecturer' (p. 201). In contrast, his identification of the female teachers' maternal way of interacting with pupils is explained by the links between mothering and teaching made by Walkerdine and Lucey (1989):

'The female teachers I am taking over from are very – they are very chatty, almost touchy-feely and quite motherly as well in the way that they talk to the pupils.'

(Brian, Interview 1)

Andy also believed female teachers were 'more motherly' (Andy, Interview 3). However, Brian, believed that in addition to English 'being seen as a feminised subject ... teaching in general seems more natural for females' (Brian, Interview 2), women were more successful when handling groups of children. Brian's view matches the stereotypes of one of Reichert's (2001: 41) participants who saw the female teachers as maternal figures and male role models as the 'intellectual giants of the community'. Brian thought women were 'better' teachers because the job lends itself to being maternal (see Grumet, 1988; Duncan, 1995, 1999). When identifying the spectrum of professionalism Miller (1996: 107) places 'the 'scholar' at one end and 'the mother/teacher ... doing what comes naturally' at the other. Brian positioned himself at the scholar end of Miller's spectrum 'because his calling is based on his own gifts and passion for his subject' (ibid.: 107).

The female teachers' maternal style seen by the male trainees was not simply about caring and nurturing. Frequently women teachers were described using forceful ways and were stricter than the male trainees felt they could be:

'I am not as strict as the female teachers I have taken over from, put it that way. They are very strict some of them.'

(Andy, Interview 1)

Female strictness involved a confusing mixture of shouting and physical proximity, 'like their mum', as Ted described:

'I don't know whether she should ... she goes right up to them close and kneels down next to their desk and just shouts at them, right up, really close, like their mum, and really tells them how annoyed she is with them. She starts off slowly and builds up louder and louder – the kids do

sit there looking rather terrified.'

(Ted, Interview 1)

The terrified pupils confirm Wolpe's (1988) research into pupils' perceptions of teachers where 'good teachers' were 'real men' and 'bad teachers' had 'problems'. Ted was disturbed by the 'tough love' approach, which he could not replicate because of his size and his gender. Like the other male trainees Ted resisted deploying his 'real man' masculinity (cf. Sargent, 2000, 2001) as a teaching device and risked being perceived as an ineffective and weak teacher. The men fall foul of what Haywood and Mac an Ghail (1996: 54) describe as the 'legitimation' of teaching styles associated with the power, authority and competence of masculinity and the incompetence, failure and weakness of femininity. The men were also involved in activities that pupils perceived as gendered, especially reading poetry and novels, that are associated with feminine subjects (Deem, 1980; Thomas, 1990) and English (Thomas, 1991; Gilbert and Gilbert, 1998), especially in relation to other more 'masculine' subjects, such as mathematics and science (Thomas, 1990).

I had expected participants to use male orientated teaching styles (Arnot, 2002:155) reliant on patriarchal authority and power. I learnt that as experienced feminist and post-modernist readers of literary texts these men were gentler, *because* they were skilled readers of texts *and* of men and women (cf. Frith, 1991). They subscribed to ideas of the 'new man' summarised by Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003) and were pro-feminist in ways described by Lingard and Douglas (1999). They combined their knowledge to read female teachers using styles ranging from maternal:

'When she talks to them it is like they are being talked to by their mother'

(Brian, Interview 1)

to disciplinarian:

'I felt that some of the classes were a bit too subdued because the teachers were too keen to be in charge all the time.'

(Henry, Interview 1)

Often they read that the advice offered was based on the impossible task of replicating women's styles:

'She said, "Make your presence known. Just be there. Hit them like a whirlwind." I'd love to be able to do that but I can't try and ape her.'
(Matt, Interview 3)

They realised that adopting the practices of masculine hegemony in a school (Lesko, 2000) was difficult:

'I think it is extremely difficult to be a masculine teacher and to take what might be considered a masculine approach.'
(Brian, Interview 3)

Some approaches observed did not initially appear to be gendered. However, the men noticed how the female teachers' approaches became strange and inappropriate when performed by a man. Adam cited a female teacher rebuking a pupil:

'with a sharp but non-aggressive "David - what have you forgotten?" ... or the use of a stern look whilst placing her fingers to her lips, in a request for silence.'

Such exaggerated routines were seen as pantomimic and produced stock responses from pupils. However, when performed by a male trainee they appeared comical or camp, adding a layer of 'secondary discipline' (Rogers, 1997), as trainees dealt with the initial misdemeanour that challenged their masculinity.

Other male teachers as role models?

Henry contrasts female and male teachers' skills in his first assignment. He describes a female teacher reinforcing her discipline at the start of lessons and then directing the lesson by following planned outcomes. Henry was attracted to the male teacher's more fluid start to lessons that made use of dialogue with pupils. He imitated the approaches used by this minority male teacher he saw as they felt appropriate, safe and comfortable. Other trainees who were able to see men teaching English reported significant differences in their teaching styles:

'The female teachers are completely different. They tend to have more things like the literacy strategy - starter activities, lots of short activities. They don't just go in and talk. There is a real big difference between their

styles and just their attitudes towards teaching. I think the male teachers are very traditional.'

(Male trainee, Queen's University, Group Interview 2)

The male trainees were unable to replicate the female teachers' motherly or 'personalised' (Arnot, 2002: 31) authority which was markedly different from the formal or 'traditional' style used by the men they observed. Foster et al. (2001) drawing together research into male teachers' teaching styles conclude that:

There is ample evidence in studies of schooling of men teachers who adopt particular 'macho' styles of interaction often associated with the "lads" (see Willis, 1977; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Connolly, 1998).

(Ibid.: 6)

I had expected the few available male colleagues and male department heads to be valuable role models, as noted by Allan (1994), but this did not happen. The participants perceived that other male English teachers had been promoted more easily, in accordance with Williams (1992) but did not receive what Williams identified as closer guidance from the male superiors. Paradoxically, the number of male English department heads was disproportionately high (cf. Darling, 1992) but their contact with the male trainees was limited. Male department heads were seen as having benefited from the patriarchy of male privilege, or the 'glass escalator' (Williams, 1992), and matched the 'laziness and caprice' noted by Hills (1995: 54) and were considered undeserving:

'The only male English teacher is the Head of Department. He is particularly - I have to say it - lazy, but he does come across as being lazy and the rest of the English department do perceive him as being lazy ... So I think their initial perception is that I was going to be lazy from the start.'

(Ted, Individual Interview 3)

When judging the male head of department as 'lazy', Ted used the same language used of him by his mentor. The laziness resulted in abnegation of responsibility and arrogance: 'More than that he was very smug.' The experience of those trainees with male heads of department was consistently negative, as they were distant figures who did not provide emotional or professional support (cf. Hills, 1995: 53). Seidler

(1997:8) uses the term 'cultural homophobia' for the notion that men need not support other men, as the necessary emotion is culturally positioned as feminine (Shields, 2002). Other experienced male teachers did not support novice male teachers and repeatedly missed opportunities to offer guidance. The male heads of department did not regard the pastoral and nurturing roles of training to be their concern. Matt spoke to his head of department 'a few times' and Barry noted that his male head of department 'made a point of keeping as far away from the rest of the department as possible.' He identified a lack of professional contact and felt aggrieved that he did not receive the nurturing he wanted:

'No, certainly he didn't take me under his wing or anything like that.'
(Barry, Interview 1)

Male heads of department were frequently reported to manifest status and power:

'The head of department - I've only seen him (teaching) once but he carries a lot of weight, you can tell.'
(Matt, Interview 1)

Taking over classes from a male head of department, presented challenges as the pupils associated power and status with male teachers (cf. Skeggs, 1991). Andy contrasted the discipline styles used by the male head of department, Calum, and female colleagues:

'I find Calum is more - he is not aggressive in his teaching but when he wants to make a point when he is telling someone off it is BANG! Right like that. And the women are slightly more: "Will you stop doing that?"
(Andy, Interview 1)

Andy uses gender stereotypes by suggesting that the male colleague in possession of power can use explosive and dramatic techniques, whilst the female teachers adopt strategies based on communicating their irritation and nagging.

Several men used sexist language when describing how their training was carried out by female colleagues, as expressed by Andy:

'My professional development has been handled by the girls.'
(Andy, Interview 3)

Andy's choice of the term 'girls' undermines and is dismissive of the efficacy and authority of his female trainers. Other men in the study referred to female trainees and colleagues as 'girls' (cf. Henry), but Andy's unreconstructed language indicates his perception of women lacking professional authority because they were in the caring and nurturing role of being a mentor. Perhaps as shocking as his sexist language was his male colleagues' detachment. Andy had a male head of department on placement one and a male mentor on placement two. His male mentor was negligent in his mentoring:

'He is my mentor, but actually I don't see him very often at all. ... I don't see him during the day. It is the girls I talk to if I have a problem.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Andy's lack of male support led him to position talk about problems as a feminine practice. Ted had limited contact with his male head of department who allocated the mentoring to female colleagues:

'Jock is way out of the department. He is the one I see the least and the one that has nothing to do with my development.'

(Ted, Interview 2)

Often the trainees looked to other subjects to find male teachers. Matt described a male history teacher:

'The teacher I'd like to be - Alec Muffin, History - I don't know that he's eccentric but he's just got this incredibly energetic kind of Ben Eltonesque almost approach.'

(Matt, Interview 1)

Seeing a male teacher entertaining but also teaching and enthusing young people stayed with Matt. Andy drew on memories of a similarly charismatic history teacher when he was a pupil:

'Then the thing that really made me want to do it [teach] was when I saw a young male teacher - brilliant! History teacher at school - he was young, funny, really funny, had total control of the classroom, never shouted, just used humour. Brilliant teacher. I looked up to him and thought - that's just what I want to be. Just like him. Young, cool, funny, confident teacher.'

(Andy, Individual Interview 3)

This description provided Andy with a language to describe himself as a developing teacher. Ironically, the male trainees seldom receive this kind of modelling from

males or females. Drawing on football metaphors, Henry described in the other male teachers he saw some qualities he admired:

‘The male teachers that I have observed ... are more relaxed and are prepared to let a bit of initial disturbance go without making an issue of it. They are saying: “Come on lads.” Being more ‘on side’ in terms of how to deal with, say a group of disruptive boys than perhaps a female teacher would.’

(Henry, Interview 3)

Having seen a young male drama teacher’s ‘magic air’ Adam sought out other younger male teachers to observe. Matt believed that watching other men enhanced his learning:

‘I think it is difficult in a way when you watch women teach because I don’t learn as much as when I have watched men teach and I have watched an awful lot more women teach than I have men.’

(Matt, Interview 3)

He found it was useful to meet and talk with another man who had also recently changed career:

‘[He said the stress in teaching is like] housewife stress. It’s not high level stress, he said, but it is always there, you’ll always have that stress. If it’s a bad lesson, no company goes bankrupt. It’s not high level stress but it’s a constant stress, like it is an everyday thing.’

(Matt, Interview 1)

The language, based on a female stereotype, separated the men from their female colleagues, but united the men as the ‘only male on campus’ (Sargent, 2001: 22).

A female Soulbridge trainee explained the impact of meeting an identifiable role model after meeting a female teacher tutor¹:

‘The fact that the Head of English and the headmistress was a female – two really good role models. She was a doctor the headmistress. I don’t need strong female role models but it was really nice to see them there ... it is all very male dominated in careers I’ve had – you were very much a duty frock and not really appreciated for what was in your head so it is nice to be in a field where you’re obviously appreciated for that kind of thing. ... even down (god, I know it’s so superficial) to the way she dressed. I turned up thinking, would I look like a teacher? I thought, well actually, I’d rather look like that teacher than this teacher, thanks very much. She struck me as really independent and bright and I should imagine her classes were really interesting and that’s what I’d rather be like, thank you.’

So Carol saw a teacher who she wanted to be like. Whilst denying her need for ‘strong female role models’ she acknowledged the significance of the women,

compared with the male dominated careers where she was the token woman or 'duty frock'. Based on the female teachers she saw in school, Carol was influenced by the image of the female English teacher against which she juxtaposes her own imagined teacher image. Her vocabulary depicts a lively and independent female teacher: 'innovative', 'refreshing', 'different', 'not constrained', 'independent', 'bright' and 'interesting'.

The men did not have the opportunities to 'read' (Frith, 1991; Miller, 1996) a range of male English teachers. For most the only male English teacher they met during the first weeks was myself. However, I held multiple roles and was not perceived primarily as an English teacher or even a tutor. For example, Andy (Interview 2) perceived me as somewhere between 'a boss and a friend'.

It was important for men to observe and talk to other male teachers, often outside the English department, in order to receive a range of ways of being a man in the classroom:

'It's helping me, just from a purely observational point of view seeing men, more men, different men teach English. ... I have got different models now I can refer to. ... Ianto is very quiet, controlled and calm and he's an excellent teacher. Gareth is not an angry teacher, he has just got a very powerful voice. Just seeing the different techniques. I don't know why it is different to a woman. It just is. Women are different.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

When talking about another male teacher and himself Matt used 'we', suggesting a unit with shared characteristics:

'We are not the kind of dominant, disciplinarian type - we'd rather do it in another way if it's at all possible. I suppose sometimes, male in a female department - we talk about it. We have got fairly similar attitudes to how we would like to be as a teacher.'

(Matt, Interview 3)

Matt realised he had different conversations with the only other male English teacher and that some of these conversations were about being a male in a predominantly female department and dealing with some stereotypical perceptions.

Female mentors, male stereotypes

Men brought to their training constructions of female teachers made up from their own experience of education and also from representations of female teachers from television and film (Weber and Mitchell, 1995) which are, according to Miller (1996: 77) 'almost invariably of bad-tempered and irrationally unpleasant women who have no sense of humour and a built-in distrust of children.' In turn, the female mentors held stereotypes of male trainees. The conflict in the English departments (Ball, 1982) involved a clash between preconceptions and expectations of male trainees. Woods et al. (1997) argues that 'conflict' for teachers is the result of coping with the constraints of being a teacher and accommodating these constraints.

Patemen (1994) and Capel et al. (2000) have indicated a mentor's assessment role conflicts with the trainee's need for friendship, counselling and tutoring and causes stress for trainees. The variety of roles identified by Anderson and Shannon (1988) shift as the placement progresses (Furlong and Maynard, 1995). Relationships can break down (Brooks and Sikes, 1997: 34), especially near the summative assessment point (Bridges et al., 1995 and Jacques, 1992). Throughout the year mentors tried to support, manage and assess the trainees. These relationships were gendered, subjective and based on more than teacher competences and QTS standards. Mentors' opinions of the male trainees indicated negativity about the men, far removed from the satisfying personal and professional relationships of mentoring identified by Brooks and Sikes (1997: 33). Analysis of the male trainees' data prior to the third individual interviews had revealed that the female mentors held stereotypes of the male trainees. I reduced these stereotypes to five categories: lazy, laid back, arrogant, maverick and disorganised (the latter with respect to paperwork and planning). I offered the list of stereotypes to the trainees during the third individual interviews and interrogated the data using these categories.

Laid back and lazy?

Studies confirm what teachers say they know about boys in school, that they engage in the cultivation of 'effortless achievement' (Aggleton, 1987; Mac an Ghail, 1994: 67; Cohen, 1998: 28). During the year the male trainees received epithets of laziness and idleness. Andy, when accused of being lazy by his female colleagues, attributed it to his gender:

'And I think it is a man thing. I think they assume - I am a young man, I enjoy myself too much, without even knowing me that well. I think they assume that I'm a lad who enjoys life too much and should do more work.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

He felt his female colleagues were surprised when he was teaching well:

'I think they think that I am better than they thought I would be.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Being pre-judged because of gender was felt by other participants. Ted sensed that whilst his female colleagues wanted a male trainee they were worried about his laziness:

'I think that the initial worry was that I was [going to have] a sort of laziness'

(Ted, Interview 3)

In a telephone conversation near the end of the course Ted revealed how the worry had turned to reality:

'I am pissed off with the department thinking I am not doing what I should do.'

(Fieldnotes, 22/5/02)

Ted admitted taking shortcuts with lesson preparation. He admitted replicating panicky study habits from his own schooling, such as using *York Notes* chapter summaries rather than re-reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There was a difference between Ted's desperate approach and the resourcefulness shown by Andy who brought in his own university essays to use as models with A level students. Accused of laziness Ted believed lazy teachers stood out in 'such a hard working profession that is predominantly female'. He felt that English departments cultivated an

especially hard-working culture. Ted's lack of thoroughness affected his well-being: 'Waking up, my first thought at 6 [am] is that year 8 group.' Brian also experienced change as the course affected his lifestyle and his self-image:

'I certainly feel older. Yeah, the fact that I have to go to bed by 11 at the latest ... We were talking about how early we have to go to bed and how it is taking over our lives. We start to feel really grown up because we go to bed so early. The persona I have to take on is a lot more adult.'

(Brian, Interview 1)

The demands of the PGCE course are widely reported (Youds, 2002) but for the men in the study some of their tiredness was attributable to the routines of work as identified by Williams (1993, 1995) and confirmed expectations of teaching voiced by friends and family.

Often the only man in the English department, the male trainees carried the additional burden of being an anomaly, as pointed out by Allan (1994), and having few role models to exemplify work patterns. Some developed coping strategies (Duncan, 1999) for the work/life balance: completing work in school (Andy); working at weekends (Ted); working after the children have gone to bed (Matt). A frequent strategy was to reduce the length and detail of written lesson plans. This pragmatic strategy was interpreted by mentors as a sign of laziness and a lack of professionalism, rather than an indicator of growing confidence. Lesson plans became sources of conflict (see Apple, 1985). When 'lazy', 'busking it' and 'not working hard enough' (Fieldnotes) were used by mentors it was in relation to their gender. Andy reported being viewed with suspicion because he appeared up to date with his work whilst maintaining his social life. When speaking about getting drunk at the weekend his female colleagues replied they had worked all weekend (Interview 3). By working efficiently in school Andy achieved a good work-life balance; he was happy and relaxed, but perceived as lazy.

Two phrases from the pilot study indicated that male trainees were recipients of stereotypes of not working hard: 'naughty boy' and 'lad in a suit'. In the main

study this was amplified by male trainees wanting to be a 'good boy' with deadlines and assignments (Andy, Interview 2). Ted wanted to get things right:

'I don't want to get things wrong which is why I do the work.'

(Ted, Interview 3)

As was the case with the other men in the group, Adam spoke of wanting 'to get things right' and how things played on his mind if they were going badly (Adam, Interview 2). Ironically, the mentors rarely saw the good boy (cf. Turvey's 'good girl', 1996) in the male trainees and their judgements were influenced by negative stereotypes of male teachers and men in general.

Cohen (1998) has written about how male underachievement and 'typical boy' laziness has an historical perspective. Andy felt that he was treated like a boy as he had no status, felt outnumbered and felt like a junior (cf. Brian, Interview 3). The sense of feeling younger than female colleagues of the same age was attributed to the emasculating atmosphere of school and a lack of the 'normal' position of male power and centrality (Tinto, 1993):

'Basically, it is the school world. I felt boyish quite a lot here and at Twistbridge.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

When Ted (Fieldnotes, 28/5/02) became disenchanted about his failure to secure a job, his mother filled in application forms and gave them to him to sign. I asked him to explain and he replied by stating that he believed his mother wanted him to get a job more than he did and he was fed up 'doing constant forms'. Ted's boyish dependence on a maternal figure was replicated in school. Shockingly, his female mentor completed some of his planning when he was experiencing time management difficulties.

The men wanted to be seen by pupils and colleagues as calm and quietly confident as markers of their success. However, being 'laid back' in a stressful profession was interpreted as 'too laid back'. Henry was accused of having a laid back style on first school placement, but as he explained:

‘This was precisely what I was looking for - to give the impression of being fairly laid back *but* at the same time being clear about the standards being set.’

(Henry, Interview 3)

Henry believed that men wish to be seen as ‘laid back’ as that is how they are socially constructed. In his previous work in the City, the same epithet was used for Henry as a masculine compliment, suggesting effortless achievement. He attributed it being used of him in teaching to his calm demeanour and evenly paced language, which he contrasted against female teachers’ talk which he caricatured as: ‘very emotional and charged’ (Henry, Interview 1). Henry was also described as ‘*potentially* laid back’ and felt this gendered preconception was eventually revised, but only because he was a mature trainee.

Adam perceived the ‘laid back’ epithet as positive when given by a male tutor, who was praising his attempt to show effortless achievement. He aimed to be laid back with the pupils believing it ‘promoted a positive environment’ (Adam, Interview 3). However, he revealed how being laid back confused the pupils who interpreted his manner as ‘cocky’ and this was responsible for Adam’s regretted decision to change his manner:

‘From being someone who has a professional kind of happy-go-lucky attitude, quite light-hearted and jokey to very professional and official, which I haven’t enjoyed at all.’

(Adam, Interview 3)

Often the men wanted to be ‘relaxed’ and ‘comfortable’ in the classroom and disliked didactic styles:

‘Being at the front of the class feels ‘stiff’.’

(Matt, Interview 1)

Even Brian, the ex-lecturer, abandoned his initial preferred lecture style in favour of group work and a more fluid classroom. The men aimed to be more relaxed than the organised and anxious female teachers:

‘It’s difficult not to get involved in sexist dissections of these things but I have found ... that the most planned and to some extent uptight English teachers I have met have been women. Most of the relaxed have been men.’

(Trainee, Queen’s University, Group Interview 2)

Henry felt that from the few male English teachers observed he emulated those who were most relaxed. Perhaps because the men did not see many male English teachers, relaxed or otherwise, they had a mental picture of an idealised way of being in the classroom, constructed by television, film and literary representations. They saw female teachers teaching English in ways they found unhelpful because they could not adopt their feminine teacher personae. This is supported by Brooks and Sikes (1997: 116) who use a case study of Alan, a trainee teacher who tried to imitate strategies, which were successful for others, at the expense of developing his own style. Male trainees tried to develop their teaching styles by imitating and adopting approaches used by other teachers. Problems set in when the teachers they observed used gendered approaches that could not be imitated successfully.

Brian (Interview 3) resorted to imitating a male English teacher from his own schooling who sat and read 'All That Jazz' by Philip Larkin as the class sat working. What his English teacher did could be described as 'lazy' but for Brian the impact of modelling reading outweighed any criticism. Brian copied that male teacher, by taking a newspaper article on Seamus Heaney into a sixth form lesson. He sat at the back of the class reading the newspaper. When he had their attention, 'I noticed that some students were turning around and looking at me', he read out loud. That 'pretty powerful moment' appeared to his mentor as the showmanship of a maverick, arrogant trainee.

Arrogant mavericks?

Perceptions of male trainees as arrogant and maverick first emerged in the pre-pilot study: 'I was told off for being a maverick.' (Capital University, Interview with Carl, 9/6/99). Male trainees who were unable to become like the English teachers they saw were accused of being arrogant. Unable to put the advice they received into use, they were seen as rejecting it, arrogantly. The men were interpreted by mentors as prematurely mastering English teaching, unaware of

Scholes's (1998: 70) widely held view that being an English teacher is an apprenticeship to a discipline we can never master. Several men were criticised for not conforming and wanting things their way in the English classroom. In Marshall's (2000b) terms they were 'Critical Dissenters' being squeezed by 'Pragmatists'. For trainee English teachers there is a gap between what they aspire to do and what they want from their training (Marshall et al., 2001). This gap becomes an engulfing chasm for male trainees when their identity is challenged or 'bruised' (Foster and Newman, 2005). For many trainees there is a 'plateau' (Furlong and Maynard, 1995) period when taking risks stops. Mentors play a crucial role here to raise the bar of expectation and find ways to encourage trainees to teach creatively. Brian (Interview 3) became experimental when teaching First World War poetry, planning for pupils to use collage, drama, music for their responses. It is recognised that such approaches are being squeezed out of poetry teaching (Pike, 2000: 41). Brian was allowing boys to find appropriate masculinities in English (Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003: 246):

'[The boys were]expressing their interpretation through something they are comfortable with, but at the same time I think that I consider to have been successful ... the fact that the boys engaged with the poetry in a way that didn't challenge their own perceptions of themselves.'

(Brian, Interview 3)

He masculinised the content and the delivery of English in an attempt to stem the cultural tide that informs boys' (and girls') attitude towards poetry. Adam (Interview 1) noted how the teacher played by Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society* had influenced him and believed that all male English teachers 'deep down want to be charismatic mavericks'.

Covert planners?

The men in the study had attitudes to lesson planning that were formed before they began the course. Analysis of the data reveals how their approaches to planning were based on their beliefs about how English should be taught. Barry (Assignment

1) felt that planning sequences of activities should not reduce literature to mere texts. He uses the term 'according respect' when reading literature to ensure that the drama of a piece of literature is not squandered. His suggestion is to rearrange the furniture and seating plan to match the activity.

At the start of the first school placement, having observed only female teachers, Matt believed that lessons should be 'quite tightly structured where the teacher is continuously leading the class from activity to activity' (Matt, Assignment 1). 'Planning is obviously very important but a lesson plan should never be slavishly adhered to if there is a force in the classroom leading us to a more interesting and relevant debate' (Matt, Individual interview 3). The assumption here is that debate is a more interesting and worthwhile activity where learning will take place. Matt realised that lesson plans need to be flexible because 'learning is always "a job in progress" always evolving'. Barry (Interview 2) began to see planning as a way of reducing the dominant role of the teacher and involving the pupil in the flow of the lesson:

'I have been putting a lot of effort into the actual planning side, this time. And I am trying to really give the lessons a sense of movement. I know our starters need to be connected straight ahead or whatever, but actually not just the point where you write the objectives on the board where the child at any point can understand where the lesson is going, 'cos otherwise all that happens is they build up an idea of the teacher as this subject of knowledge, this person who is standing there, who is directing everything in his own enigmatic, arcane and essentially powerful, degrading and derogatory way and then they're there under duress rather than participating in an actual flowing system.'

(Barry, Interview 2)

Barry can be seen rejecting the teacher led, dogmatic approaches of the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Some trainees wanted to plan for having a 'Socratic dialogue' with pupils, a phrase used in the pre-pilot interview at Capital University (Interview with Mark, 9/6/99). Male trainees enjoyed talking with pupils and allowing lessons to be organic. Their vision of English has more in common with Weber and Mitchell's (1995: 132) 'heady freedom' offered by the male teacher, Mark Thackeray:

Rather than continuing to plod through the boring exercises of the prescribed school curriculum, Sir suggested that they use class time to talk seriously about life.

(Braithwaite, 1959)

Considering whether he matched any of the stereotypes held by mentors, Matt felt that his willingness to conform was a female trait:

‘I think I must be well in touch with my female side, because I pretty much ... will toe [the line]. That’s what I have done.’

(Matt, Interview 3)

Matt acknowledged he had adopted the behaviours of female colleagues, toeing the line in order to be successful within a feminised frame of reference.

When at the university, the Soulbridge men noticed how men and women organised their paperwork differently. The female trainees, according to the men, used different files and diaries. The men functioned on separate pieces of paper but presented assessed work meticulously. This meticulousness did not apply to lesson plans until they were submitted in portfolios for assessment. Adam and Andy unlocked this paradox when they confessed to being privately untidy but their professional presentation was exemplary, as they wanted to be seen as ‘organised’ and ‘good students’. This desire to be seen as ‘a good boy’ was often part of overcompensation (Sargent, 2001) given that ‘Women have the perception that men are disorganised’ (Adam, Interview 3) and ‘I don’t want them to say something bad’ (Andy, Interview 3). Andy and Adam wanted to be perceived as organised in order to reduce the pressure on them.

Several male trainees admitted cutting corners with the lesson planning required on the PGCE. The dangers of poor lesson planning showed when Brian and Henry were ill. They struggled into school, having not planned lessons sufficiently, and taught badly. However, the data consistently show that the men were no worse at paperwork and planning than their female counterparts. Conflict arose as female mentors cited a lack of paperwork to illustrate concerns about the male trainees’ poor performance. Yet the male trainees produced good quality written assignments and

portfolios. Analysis of this mismatch between reality and perception suggests that the female mentors based their judgements on prejudices held of male teachers and of men in general. Their understanding of male English teachers was often based on stereotypes and past experiences of men, exemplified by their desire to have a male trainee and the acknowledgement that he would be a challenge. A number of the female mentors thought themselves highly organised and insisted that the male trainees follow their example, as Matt explained when reflecting on his mentor who was 'scary' and 'so driven':

'I learnt ... with her that I have to be absolutely organised, one hundred per cent. She said in the first couple of weeks - I thought I was OK - but she said, "You need to organise yourself a little bit more in terms of preparation and so I have done that.'

(Matt, Interview 3)

The male trainees' organisation skills developed during the year as they learned what paperwork was public and what private. A regular phenomenon, for example, was the extent to which the male trainees' planning was covert and not shared with mentors. The men's teaching files were organised and up to date when presented to visiting tutors. The men did not voluntarily show their planning to teachers in school, for fear of being reprimanded for it being wrong. This resulted in mentors treating the trainees like pupils who leave homework at home. However, in all instances when challenged by sceptical and angry mentors, the men produced planning instantly, as explained by Adam and Ted:

'There may be a few times my mentor has asked me for some planning, expecting I won't have it and I will.'

(Adam, Interview 3)

'And I could just sort of see that expectation of, "Oh, he is not going to have them. And as I was producing them, sort of: "Oh, right, OK."'

(Ted, Interview 3)

All male trainees preferred to signal effortless achievement. Henry said he disliked using a fully scripted lesson, but scripted his teacher language to sound 'off the cuff'. Matt shared this desire to seem informal, writing a ballad stanza in advance, pretending it was "Off the top of my head" (Interview 1). Adam was a dedicated

trainee who planned lessons in detail and attributed any failures to poor planning and successes to good planning:

‘I think that the key to it is planning and structure of the lesson, whereas the bad lesson I had with them - we were following a revision pack given to the school by the government, from the pilot literacy scheme.’

(Adam, Interview 2)

Adam realised that using ‘off the shelf’ plans and materials from the Key Stage 3 Strategy meant he was not planning for his pupils. He augmented his lesson planning skills by joint planning with his mentor. Not all of the mentors and teachers found time to do this and most had a cursory glance at lesson plans. Some mentors expected trainees to be able to plan lessons with minimal help for classes they did not know well. Lesson planning for early survival lessons required a different level of skill from planning lessons taught towards the end of the course. Experienced mentors knew this; other teachers often did not. Teachers’ demands for lesson plans were inconsistent; however, the men were consistently interpreted as lazy and poor planners.

The men preferred to plan covertly and keep their plans hidden. This was a conscious strategy that was part of a creative resistance to the obsessive burden of paperwork. Also, the male trainees associated detailed and meticulous lesson planning with the apprenticeship of learning to teach on the PGCE. They wanted to show their mentors that they were beyond the developmental stage of needing to plan and script lessons in detail. However, they carried out detailed planning in private and felt embarrassed to share this with experienced teachers, as it became a symbol of their inexperience and a source of criticism that was best avoided.

Male trainee teachers as problems

When writing about teaching boys in school Neall (2002: 239) declares the need to value the ‘male attributes of energy, boldness, humour, competition, risk-taking and creativity.’ Such characteristics displayed by male trainees on school

placement were not recognised as positive attributes. The men generated a disproportionate number of problems. During the year *all* the telephone calls I received from mentors were about male trainees' progress. Concerns often developed into frustration and anger, typified by phrases recorded in my fieldnotes: 'He gives a sneering impression' (24/4/02); 'He is loathed in the department' (20/5/02); 'I gave him a real bollocking' (23/5/02). Adam, Andy, Barry, and Ted created problems early on school placement; for Brian, Henry and Matt, problems surfaced later in the year. A difference between the 'early problems' and 'late problems' was their age. The more problematic group were younger, in their early to mid twenties. The less problematic group were older, late twenties to late thirties. The two oldest trainees, Matt and Henry, were married with children and had significant experience of work in other jobs. In line with Butler (1990) and Sabbe (2003) they wore and articulated the features of their gender: 'a bit older', 'balding', 'laid back manner', 'sense of humour', that, when put together, make up an archetypal 'dad'. These two men found it easier to be accepted as a male teacher by colleagues and pupils because they were older. Being seen as an older man provided them with a protective layer and provided colleagues and pupils with a way of understanding them.

As the men in the study learnt to become English teachers, their gender was perceived as a problem, perhaps for the first time in their education careers. They experienced a loss of power upon entering a predominantly female context and had to find new ways of being men. Some changes were brought about by the impact of meeting mentors, other teachers and pupils. They experienced stereotyping and pre-judgement because of their gender. They developed creative and covert strategies with respect to planning. They resisted the anxious and driven style of their female mentors and consciously adopted a more relaxed and laid back approach. Their change from students of English to teachers of English, involved acquiring a more vivid sense of their masculinity. They repositioned their masculinities by

experimenting firstly with hypermasculine and then softer ways of being a man. They saw their work as teachers as different from that of female colleagues. The next chapter examines how changes to their masculinities were manifested when communicating and developing relationships with pupils in school.

Chapter 5

‘Feeling comfortable’: relating and communicating with pupils

This chapter deals with the male trainees’ process of change as they related and communicated with pupils. I identify how the establishment of relationships with pupils threw their gender and sexuality into relief. The links between masculinities and being an English teacher are uncovered as the men became aware of the implications of being a *teacher* and also a *male* English teacher.

Influence of own schooling

The participants brought to their training autobiographical memories of childhood and schooling, which informed their emerging attitudes to school (cf. Woods, 1995) and relationships with pupils. In the assignment, ‘My Own Experience of Education’ (Appendix 1) the participants reflect on relationships with their schoolteachers. Henry’s assignment typically deals with vivid memories of male teachers. He recalls the male English teacher who taught him and the historian, Simon Schama:

My experience was different to Professor Schama’s; indeed it would be reasonably accurate to say that I was confirmed in my belief that I did not really belong in an English class. Rather than being in a stimulating environment for learning, the classroom was a place where a boy (it was a single-sex school) could easily be ridiculed for a mispronunciation, or the whole class blasted for grammatical inadequacies bequeathed on us by the state education policies of the 1970’s. The tone of these classes can be gauged from one incident ... at the end of a drama class, in which we had sat in a circle and had to declaim to the next boy ‘I love you darling’ followed by ‘You’re a bloody fool’. We were twelve or thirteen years old at the time. The exercise finally being completed, Mr Stewart then coyly announced that he had cheated, because he had got the lesson out of a book: this acted as a cue for someone to say, ‘Oh yes, but it was *your own book*, Sir’.

A number of Henry’s memories fit with other participant concerns in the data that became emergent themes, for example, relationships with pupils, issues of sexuality, the deployment of jokes and humour, a male English teacher’s impact, single sex schools, the role of literature and grammar in English teaching.

I apply Mitchell and Weber's (1999) concept of the 'pedagogy of reinvention' to the male trainees' re-interrogation of their school experiences to find ways of seeing themselves as teachers. The analysis compares their memories of their experience of being primary school pupils with their embryonic teaching personae. Mitchell and Weber (1999: 48) describe both novice and experienced teachers as 'seasoned travellers' because their work is informed by the journeys of their own schooling and teaching. As the men began their journey into secondary school teaching, they remembered primary schools fondly. Andy recalled being able to 'breeze' through primary school with no pressure; his expectations of training to teach were similar. Like Henry, for many men, primary school was 'fun and footballⁱⁱ'. The phrase characterises the sort of classroom relationships the participants wanted as teachers.

In contrast, their memories of secondary schools were mainly negative, characterised by feelings of unhappiness, isolation and ineffective teachers. Teachers are described as unable to manage pupils' behaviour and as the subject of ridicule (Adam, Andy, Ted). Although remembered as erudite, such teachers were usually male. When explaining their atypical decision to study English at A level and at university (Thomas, 1990) the participants were critical of other subject teachers' approaches. Mathematics and science were 'teacher led' (Adam) and the humanities focused on 'how to pass exams and write essays' (Ted) at the expense of fostering 'a love of learning'. Henry, who returned to English as a mature student, remembers lower school English lessons failing to capture his interest. By comparing English with science lessons he identifies a yearning for context and action that would influence his own pedagogy:

'The importance of context here is significant. Physics and Chemistry can be fun when you have your hands on the kit and are making things happen, but reading a text in isolation can be very unrewarding. Looking back, that is what I wanted from English: fewer texts but more context and more action: that is how the lessons I enjoyed worked.'

(Henry, 'My Own Experience of Education')

Henry was typical of the men in the study whose decisions to teach English are informed by a recuperative motive to provide a better version of secondary education than they received in their secondary schools, shown in Table 8:

Table 8 : Type of secondary school attended by the Soulbridge participants

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| Adam | Boys state |
| Ted | Boys independent |
| Andy | Boys independent |
| Barry | Mixed state Catholic |
| Brian | Boys state Catholic |
| Henry | Boys independent |
| Matt | Mixed state |

Five of the men were taught in single sex schools; three attended independent schools; four attended state schools; two attended Catholic schools. From these contexts their experiences of English were tied up with ‘the experience of power relations in the gendered and classed world of English experiences outside of school’ (Daly, 2000: 228).

For the seven men perceptions of male teachers and the subject of English altered in the sixth form as they were understood to be part of a ‘muscular intellectualness’ (Redman and Mac an Ghail, 1996: 169). Goodwyn (1997) points out that

student teachers often recall inspiring and enthusiastic teachers of A level literature whose influence they still feel; in fact who are quite often a principal cause for their deciding to become an English teacher
(p. 31).

For the participants these were often men:

‘All my teachers were female up until A level when I had two men teachers. ... That’s when I really got interested in the subject.’
(Andy, Interview 3)

Influential male A level teachers feature in the interviews and the written assignments when the men identify the possibilities offered by English and the sort of teachers they want to become:

My A level English teacher was very relaxed in his approach to classes, but was able to communicate his belief in the subject as not just a means

to an end, (i.e. an exam pass) but something that could indeed expand our imaginations. ... As a student it wasn't always easy to tell where they ended and the subject began: slowly their better qualities came to be elided with (or rather, realised in) the subject itself, turning the lesson into the focal point of the class rather than the teacher's own presence or absence.

(Barry, 'My Own Experience of Education')

Barry's picture, redolent of the charismatic teachers in Bennett's play *The History Boys* (2004), uses the word 'blending' to describe the process of how good teachers position themselves with English in the classroom:

'the good ones being charismatic, yet almost imperceptibly blending into their subject'.

Brian also admired the male teachers who showed they were 'relaxed' by being immersed in English but was wary of teachers being 'cool and hip and trendy which never works'. Ted (Interview 3) regarded being seen as 'cool' by pupils as an indicator of his success, which led to his being criticised for being 'too nice' and having problems with classroom management.

Managing classrooms

All the men in the study brought knowledge of their own secondary education to their expectations about managing pupils. Their pre-course observations had highlighted how schools have changed in respect of pupil behaviour since they were at school. Thoughts about controlling a classroom featured in the men's early concerns about being a teacher, fitting with Furlong and Maynard's (1995) 'survival stage'. In his first assignment, Matt notices that 'There is a vast array of literature on the subject of classroom management, much of it specifically targeted at those new to the profession.' These early concerns became heightened when the trainees discovered a mismatch between their subject ideology and classroom management. Initially, they saw a clash between managing pupils' behaviour and a relaxed English pedagogy. Ted's articulation (Group interview, 21/9/01) was typical:

'I hope we are going to be able to find that happy medium between being able to get the classroom management there but at the same time still keeping a level of approachability and a friendly atmosphere.'

They became confused by seeing female teachers operating a balance, which as men, they were unable to replicate. Matt noticed a contradiction between his mentor's declarations that classroom management was aided by communicating with pupils 'in a polite and respectful manner' (Matt, Assignment 1) and observing her 'overly heavy handed approach to discipline.' Matt (Interview 1) spoke about not wanting 'to go in too heavy handed' as he did not think it could work for him as a male teacher. Believing English to be a subject 'with the potential to effect social change' (Thomas, 1991: 121) the men were surprised that teaching it involved so much shouting and authoritarian discipline. Most male trainees expected pupils to be familiar with shouting in their home lives (Adam, Brian, Henry, Matt) but were shocked to see so many English teachers shouting:

'There are some screamers - there are screamers in every school I am sure. I think these kids get shouted at at home a lot. It is that kind of environment around here and I don't think they respond to that.'

(Matt, Interview 1).

All the participants expressed dislike of the silent classroom, preferring pupils to express their own opinions and challenge interpretations. Their desire for pupils to be engaged in critical analysis was informed by their experience of English at A level and university. They did not settle for a didactic style and preferred to facilitate group work that involved a lower teacher profile. Like others in the study Matt enjoyed teaching speaking and listening because of the opportunities for performance for the pupils in the younger years (Matt, Interview 2). Some understood how group work could create the liberal humanist or Leavisite English classroom they desired, as articulated by Barry:

'The validity of employing group work here is obvious; firstly it offers the pupils an eidetic understanding of the principal characters in the novel they are studying, secondly it allows them a chance to interact together on a creative piece, and finally to experience performing their work with others.'

(Barry, Assignment 1)

However, some mentors and English teachers viewed the trainees' use of group work with suspicion. When carrying out observations for his first assignment Matt

observed over twenty lessons and did not ‘witness a single organised or group activity in a class’. The male trainees saw that when the content of the National Curriculum was delivered using the Key Stage 3 Strategy teaching methods, whole class teaching was the preferred *modus operandi*. Matt starts to equate group work with functional and vocational English, which promotes ‘the skills of debate, problem solving and compromise, and useful skills for the workplace, while allowing children to practise and then improve their language skills.’ He overlooks the collaborative and social potential of group work, unlike Adam who recognises the effect of active learning on classroom relationships:

‘As a result the teacher’s role changes through the use of active learning, becoming “predominantly collaborative rather than didactic” (Bennett et al., 1997: 53). This enhances the teacher/pupil relationship.’

(Adam, Assignment 1)

He identifies the relationships he wanted to create with his pupils. Adam’s personal pedagogy formed in reaction against the didactic teaching he saw used with Simon Armitage’s poetry at GCSE:

‘didactic teaching, some writing and a little student feedback. ... The blank looks on the faces of many of these pupils told me a great deal about how little they were learning. The predominant comments were, “God, I hate poetry”, “This is boring” and “what’s the point?”.’

(Adam, Assignment 1)

He contrasts this dull lesson with one where pupils acted out poems to work out the themes. Adam believes that where pupils were driving the learning, the lesson objective is fulfilled ‘in a relaxed and stress free atmosphere’. Adam’s aim was to appear calm and to ‘cultivate calm’ (MacGrath, 1998), not to dominate the classroom. Using group work freed male trainees from adopting a dominant and didactic classroom persona and released them from having to use hegemonic control of the lesson. Group work allowed the men to hand over the learning to pupils and to feel comfortable with them.

Comfortable with pupils

In the 'early idealism' stage identified by Furlong and Maynard (1995: 76) relationships with pupils are seen as the crucial factor of trainees' effectiveness. Throughout the year all the men used the word 'comfortable', sometimes adding 'relaxed' and 'at ease', to characterise their classroom relationships with pupils. Andy attributed his automatic feeling of comfort in the classroom to his previous experience of teaching English in Japan. He prided himself on his relaxed style, what he termed his 'chatty-smiley' style, when communicating with pupils (Andy, Interview 3). This contrasts with Adam's definition of comfortable in the third interview which is more aligned to the unconscious competence modelⁱⁱⁱ:

'Comfortable. Ummm. An environment in which I am not on edge, worried about the classroom management, worried about my teaching, my agenda, where I keep having to stop or constantly having to make sure that the pupils are on task. An environment in which I am relaxed enough to let the pupils get on with their work.'

(Adam, Interview 3)

Adam shifted from talking about classroom management to define what he meant by feeling 'comfortable':

'And one in which they are comfortable with me, they trust me and want to work for me.'

The mutual feeling of comfort comes from being accepted and trusted by pupils who want to please the teacher. For Henry (Interview 1) feeling comfortable involved allowing some classroom noise, letting pupils talk and permitting a drift into class discussions. He wanted to give them more freedom to express themselves in a group but also when talking to him individually. Feeling comfortable with pupils was repeatedly negatively characterised by female mentors as a 'laid back' style of teaching, associated with male trainees and viewed with disdain.

Barry described the 'comfortable off-hand time' associated with private reading and registration. Drawing on his M.A. in post-modernism he used Lacan's (1977) theories of language, communication and performativity to explain the

difference between talking with an individual pupil (for example, John in the data extract below), and in front of thirty pupils when he struggled with class control:

‘Lacan says when two people meet each other their only desire is to be the other person’s desire, is to prove themselves absolutely necessary and vital to that person - that’s bolstering themselves. And so, when they meet each other they both try and draw out, in a round about way, what the other person wants, they try and gauge from their attitudes, their stance, what they say, what they are wearing et cetera. What they want from them and then try and perform it to that person, to take on that role. And of course the person will simultaneously be this as well, so you enter into a dialectic process. You get the two moving closer and closer together but because we have no perfect form of communication between us because language slides, because everything is open to communication, we can’t ever hope to find out what a person wants so we just have this rolling process of always coming closer to each other. And then Lacan goes out from that. He says as well as this he talks about - if we think of that as just the other - small o - meeting the other - Lacan then talks about the Other with a large O which is we take in an idea of what our particular set in society wants of us - set of expectations. And one way or another. And we try to perform to that so even when, even if we are in a room on our own we are still performing to our perceived audience of what we are supposed to be and I think that plays a massive part within teaching. ... I mean that is what John cannot deal with. John can’t deal with me not making his decisions for him about how he should act.

(Barry, Interview 2)

Barry’s reference to Lacan is reminiscent of George Mead’s (1934/1967) primitive and egotistical ‘I’ and the socially constructed ‘me’. Pupils projected on to him and expected him to perform a dominant masculinity. He attempted to produce this expected dominant presence of a teacher, abandoning his emerging softer teacher persona. He could not change himself to construct what he felt the pupils wanted him to be. Barry failed the PGCE because of his unresolved teacher identity and related classroom management problems.

Softer approach

The rejection of a super-egoic classroom persona and the adoption of gentler, quieter approaches went against the expectations of some mentors, but became for the men an indicator of emerging confidence and success in classroom management. Matt’s preference for the ‘quiet word’ (Interview 1) was typical. The data show that visiting tutors were more likely than mentors to value quieter approaches. Adam’s

male visiting tutor had commented on how his calm manner helped settle the class (Interview 3). The men rejected harsh approaches to classroom management, especially when it involved public displays of reprimanding pupils. Matt was typical of the group when he observed what Rogers (1997) calls 'secondary behaviour', that is the behaviour that occurs when a teacher is correcting the primary misdemeanour:

'In this instance, the initial misbehaviour was mild and the secondary behaviour would have perhaps been best dealt with privately after the lesson.'

(Matt, Assignment 1)

Similarly, Barry observed a number of female teachers whose strict classroom management of oral activities was in his view counter-productive to pupils' learning and reduced the teacher to 'a malign presence in the eyes of the pupils, whose interactions become confined to stern words and discipline' (Barry, Assignment 1). Adam, who had started a career as a professional footballer, might have been expected to wear the badges of hegemonic masculinity. He was a particularly quietly spoken, gentle teacher who avoided using aggression with pupils and felt uneasy around shouting teachers.

Female mentors when advising female trainees on classroom management and teacher persona told them to "Go in there and be an absolute bitch" (Fieldnotes, 12/11/01). This advice conflicted with the Bill Rogers (1997) approach to positive management of pupil behaviour which the Soulbridge University PGCE course recommended. For the trainees the sub-text was that in the 'real world' of school, being a 'bitch' was one strategy in a female teacher's repertoire of pupil management strategies. The men in the study understood that their female colleagues used gendered manifestations of their authority, but some manifestations were inappropriate for men to exercise. For example, they could not locate a masculine version of being an 'absolute bitch'. Matt attempts to distinguish between power and authority:

Authority is achieved through respect, while power is reliant on fear for its right to lead. An environment of mutual respect is essential in a class-

room and must be constantly reasserted by the teacher.

(Matt, Assignment 1)

By taking responsibility for maintaining the balance the male trainees sought this mutual respect by asserting their masculinity in alternative and non-hegemonic ways.

Adam knew the importance of developing a softer and positive pedagogy:

‘One of my targets from yesterday was to re-approach my teacher language so that I’m doing a bit more than just being positive. Using positive language to get them back on track and not just concentrating on the bad behaviour.’

(Adam, Interview 2)

Barry believed that shouting at pupils was counterproductive and an indicator of unsuccessful teaching but pupils expected it in the school cultures where he was on placement. As we talked this was illustrated by a female teacher yelling at pupils in the corridor (Barry, Interview 2). For the male participants a key method for the assertion of authority was the use of humour and anecdote, referred to by Henry as ‘masculine dialogue, the dressing room humour’ (Henry, Interview 2).

The role of humour

The role of humour in establishing authority and creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere was seen by Adam during his pre-course classroom observation (Adam, Interview 1). In a lower set year 9 class he sat with a group of what the English teacher called ‘trouble makers’. He found himself joining in with the pupils’ humour, allowing their ‘laugh and a joke’ to happen and then bringing the pupils back to the work. As he talked, I was reminded of Mr Farthing in *Kes*:

There was a massive ‘Wooo!’ from the rest of the class. Mr Farthing grinned and rode it; then he raised his hands to control it.

‘Quietly now. Quietly.’

The class quietened, still grinning.

(Hines, 1969: 59)

This is reminiscent of Andy’s description of how he handled the pupils’ chorusing their moment of discovery when comparing Blake’s poetry and David Almond’s novel *Skellig* (1998):

‘And there was a bit where he was sitting in a tree and saw an angel. That

was Mina. Mina used to sit in a tree. And I asked them, “What does this remind us of?” and everyone was putting their hand up “OOOOH!” So, “Alright then, after 3, 1,2,3, everyone, “Mina!””

(Andy, Interview 1)

Again we see the male teacher legitimating humour who, rather like an entertainer or comedian, generates a noisy response, confident that it will ebb away and be followed by an amenable mood. The cheerful familiarity established with *Skellig* allowed pupils to tackle Blake with confidence and good humour.

In the interviews the men’s descriptions of experimenting with comedic roles offer insights into their relationships with pupils. Matt (Interview 2) described his developing teacher style by comparing himself with male comedians he had seen: Ben Elton, Jack Dee, Eddie Izzard. Whilst he was not ‘doing a comedy routine’ he felt comfortable using humour with pupils. Matt’s observations suggested that the adoption of a comedic style was common amongst male teachers:

‘Men rely more on gags. Men field a lot more gags. That’s blokes anyway. Blokes like telling jokes and if, you see, I think most male teachers generally introduce more humour into their lessons than female teachers.’

(Matt, Interview 2)

He admired their use of humour because he recognised and understood it. Moreover, he could imitate them: ‘They are copiable.’ Whilst explaining that men were not better than women because of this comedic style he articulated his respect for, but lack of understanding of, female teachers’ pedagogy: ‘I don’t know how women do it but they do it really well’. He did not understand their techniques because they were unrecognisable when performed by women.

Laughing with pupils was an indicator of enjoying teaching and feeling comfortable in the classroom. When watching another male English teacher, Andy appreciated the role that allowing laughter played in the lesson. He illustrated this with an incident in his War Poetry lesson. When reading Owen’s ‘Dulce et Decorum Est’ boys giggled helplessly about the words ‘Gas, gas’. The laughter about farting gave Andy ‘common ground with the pupils’ (Interview 2). Ted (Interview 1) also told a story about boys’ laughter coming from a farting incident that would have

caused discipline problems had he not allowed laughter. Participants described seeing male teachers using humour as exemplification of what they wanted to achieve in the classroom. Barry observed a male teacher using exchanges that 'were characterised by a sense of humour and familiarity coupled with a clear focus on the task at hand and his expectations of his pupils' (Barry, Assignment 1). Henry, when watching a male teacher's drama lesson, had noticed how banter established teacher-pupil relationships, with the teacher in control:

'The register is taken with a degree of banter involved: use of nicknames, a joke about a boy who was on crutches as a result of a cycling accident being useful if a Long John Silver character was needed.'

(Henry, Assignment 1)

Again one can see a male teacher using humour to encourage pupils to respond with enthusiasm and spontaneity.

It is important to distinguish this from the different type of humour used by the men to protect themselves when feeling vulnerable. Adam and Matt told similar stories of how they found themselves resorting to humour when making mistakes on the whiteboard, as Matt recalled:

'I think it is quite good if a teacher makes a mistake 'cos the kids love it. They say, "I did a spell check on that Sir and it's wrong."

(Matt, Interview 1)

They both viewed 'having a bit of a laugh and a joke' at their own expense (Adam, Interview 3) as an indicator of growing confidence, but I agree with Woods (1990) who sees such incidents in terms of establishing masculinity and status:

... humour is a powerful device for celebrating one's own identity and for enhancing one's status, and for whipping others into shape.

(Woods, 1990: 195)

In both cases the use of humour was part of the pupils' acknowledgement of the teacher's authority and gender. It was used to establish warmth but also reaffirmed distance between pupils and teacher by recreating the teacher-pupil hegemony. So not everything in teachers' use of humour with pupils is benign, as Nayak and Kehily (2001) discovered:

Our research indicates that it is important for teachers to develop an understanding of the powerful role that humour and sexuality play in how boys learn to fashion and negotiate their masculinities within the informal peer group situation in school.

(Nayak and Kehily, 2001: 120)

Humour can be used to establish power and hierarchies. Humour is powerful and it is frightening to be on the wrong side of it. At times, some of the participants broke down teacher-pupil barriers for comic effect, which reinforced their teacher status. Ted deliberately tried to shock his pupils by briefly stepping out of teacher role and using their teenage language:

‘I like throwing them, when you come in with something that they see as their own and their own bit of knowledge and a teacher comes out and says it. They get a bit shocked by it.’

(Ted, Interview 3)

This is different from Henry who adapted his teacher language in a well-meaning attempt to improve his communication with teenagers:

‘I think I am getting a better feel for adapting my language, to pitching it at the level of the sets I am teaching. To pick up on the language that the students use and not to dumb down but to try and be reflective to them, to try and make them feel more comfortable.’

(Henry, Interview 2)

For the male trainees, making pupils comfortable involved providing bridges into new texts and authors. Henry wanted to broaden the pupils’ cultural reference points, including the work of George Eliot, and achieved this by humorous reference to teenagers’ popular culture. He told pupils that he went to school with Ali G’s elder brother which they found entertaining (Henry, Interview 3) and this provided a bridge into definitions of character and caricature.

Sometimes the humour backfired and threatened the participants’ understanding of how to be a teacher. Adam was shocked when pupils perceived him as ‘cocky’ because his humour was too sarcastic. When he realised that, beneath the banter, pupils were more sensitive he determined to change:

‘[I changed] from being someone who has a kind of happy go lucky attitude, quite light-hearted and jokey to very professional, very official, which I haven’t enjoyed at all. I have really struggled with that plus I think that has been the only thing I have failed on.’ (Adam, Interview 3)

His struggle to acquire a professional demeanour involved losing his natural good humour and a lack of humour was an indicator of failure in his view. Similarly, Ted used the metaphor of switching on his teacher mode and turning off his own light-hearted personality in an attempt to find his teacher persona. When used effectively, humour creates the male teacher persona but it is also a way of asserting masculinity and sexuality with male pupils:

... humour can be an unofficial resource through which boys learn about the culture of manhood and test out these values among one another. Thus we argue that humour is a technique that can be seen to produce differential positions of domination and subordination within the peer group
(Nayak and Kehily, 2001:110)

Humour was one way the male trainees performed their masculinity and heterosexuality.

Masculinities: cool, fun and football

When encouraging teachers to communicate to pupils, especially boys, that English is fun and cool, writers frequently suggest using male teachers as role models (Noble and Bradford, 2000: 116):

There is no greater potential than in English for the creative and effective use of role models.
(Ibid.: 114)

This is typical of the assumption that all boys will respond to masculine images of 'cool' (Martino, 1999) and 'fun' (Frosh et al., 2002). As cool and fun are conflated with masculinity, there is a risk that they become the responsibility of male teachers.

All the men talked about using popular culture as a way to develop relationships with pupils, and as fun ways into the content of English lessons. Examples included television programmes (*The Simpsons*, *Big Brother*, *The Weakest Link*) and magazines (*HFM*, *Loaded*, *Marie Claire*). Matt, however, warned against trying to share pupils' out of school interests and consumption of popular culture as he believed that pupils need to enjoy their pursuits independently of adults. He compared this with 'these trendy parents you get who want to be their kids' best

friend' and decided to show exaggerated disapproval of pupils' interests which in turn 'gives them a sort of pleasure' (Interview 3). In contrast Ted referred to pupils' interests in an attempt to be regarded as 'cool' and was delighted when he overheard a pupil say he was the 'second coolest teacher in the school' (Interview 3).

In his first Assignment Andy describes fun in English as a 'two-way experience' in which pupils have some control over their learning. Learning and teaching were 'fun' when teachers did not 'dominate and squash the energy and ideas of the pupils' (Andy, Assignment 1). A definition of fun can be seen in Henry's comment that he and his pupils 'started having fun because we were doing something that I was interested in.' (Henry, Interview 1). All of the men were interested in football and this became synonymous with fun. The use of football (see Frosh et al., 2002) references and analogies was exacerbated during the time of the study because of the World Cup:

'And obviously the one thing that everyone wants to talk about at the moment is football ... I think it is good when you have shared interests with your pupils, definitely, it kind of makes it easier to have a bit more human (sic).'

(Matt, Interview 3)

Henry commented that male pupils expected male teachers to be interested in football as it fitted their image of masculinity whereas reading poetry and pre-twentieth century literature, especially poetry, challenged their image of masculinity (Henry, Interview 3). Because 'football plays an important role in ritually celebrating and constructing hegemonic masculinity' (Wedgwood, 2005: 190) the men employed their own interest in football to construct their versions of masculinity in the classroom. They continued doing so as they were delighted with the ease with which the football analogies flowed and how well they were received in English lessons. When explaining the simile 'as sick as a parrot' Brian asked the pupils to imagine how David Beckham would have felt had England lost to Nigeria. When teaching Bhatt's poem 'Search for my tongue' and the concept of multilingualism Henry described 'a Brazilian footballer in Korea, who plays in Italy, talking to a German

referee, speaking in English.’ Ted consciously used football examples to illustrate concepts and vocabulary in unfamiliar literature texts:

‘With year 8 today we were doing *Paper Tigers* and it’s about being a traitor. And it was like, you know, this traitor was a genius. The link I then made was then Sol Campbell [moving] from Tottenham to Arsenal.’

By using football analogies his masculinity was re-established and put him back in control. Henry claimed that the winning combination of age, football and literature that gave him the advantage over a younger female colleague:

‘a young female student would never have been able to manage in the way that I have been able to. I can come in and talk about football, and academic subjects as well, overlapping literary interests.’

He saw football as a male preserve, ignoring the reality that many female teachers are devotees of football and use football analogies in their teaching. Wedgwood (2005: 190) has since observed that football ‘is being colonized by young women’. Paradoxically, Adam, the ex-professional footballer used the fewest references to football, perhaps because his masculinity credentials were sufficiently in place. However, it is clear that the male English trainees in the study used football as a quick and socially recognisable way to assert their masculinity and establish relationships with pupils.

Physicality and size

During the pilot studies some male trainees had expressed increased awareness of their physicality and size when working with pupils. Throughout the main study the participants echoed these concerns; their physical consciousness influenced their interactions with pupils who often commented on the male teachers’ size which they associated with dominance:

‘They thought straight away, here’s someone who can crush the pupils.’
(Ted, Interview 3)

Pupils assumed Ted would use his physical size to stamp his authority on the pupils. This came as a shock to Ted who didn’t see himself in terms of his height:

‘I think the only problem is, is because I have always been a very gentle giant, I still don’t think of myself as tall. I don’t think of myself as big, but actually quite small.’

(Ted, Interview 3)

Ted, a very tall and heavily built young man, did not see his masculinity being defined by his size. His masculinity and physicality were thrown into relief when he struggled with classroom control on his first placement and started using aggressive pupil management strategies. These were drawn from observations of female colleagues and his own experience of school: shouting and copying lines from the board. He used violent imagery to describe the pupils’ behaviour: ‘need a good kicking’, ‘day of hell’, ‘absolutely horrible’, ‘ran riot’ (Interview1). This aggressive discourse continued into the second placement, for example ‘My year 9s, who I am going to kill tomorrow’ (Ted, Interview 2) but gradually petered out as he realised such approaches were inappropriate for a man of his size. For the mentors and pupils a paradox emerged: in spite of their bulk the male trainees were not particularly strict.

All the male trainees adjusted their physicality and size in the classroom. For example, Ted and Henry who are very tall, began to squat or kneel on the floor at pupils’ eye level so that they did not have to look up at them. Henry believed that being a man gave him the physical confidence not to feel ‘too threatened’ in a disruptive classroom (Interview 2). Being male and older gave some trainees the benefit of appearing like experienced teachers, as typified by Henry:

‘It is an advantage being 6ft 3in and a mature student as I am not perceived by the pupils as a student.’

(Henry, Interview 1)

Nevertheless, being male made the trainees physically self-conscious. For example, having been given the advice that he should not sit behind the teacher’s desk Andy (Interview 2) experimented with being a very physical and energetic teacher and moved around the classroom constantly, to the consternation of the pupils. This illustrates that much of the advice the male trainees received, because it did not take

into consideration their physicality and size, was often not suitable and complicated their relationships with pupils.

Being 'Sir': fraternal and paternal

The experience of being addressed as 'Sir' was often a pleasant shock for the male trainees. The anachronistic form of address of 'Sir' has overtones of affection and respect, perhaps evoking a bygone age. Surprisingly, the men were not concerned about residues of power and control. Certainly, the men were easier with 'Sir' than the female teachers were with 'Miss' and 'Ma'm'. The regular appearances of 'Sir' as 'referential markers of gender' (McElhinny, 1994: 167) can be seen as the pupils establishing and confirming the male trainees' masculinity. The men enjoyed pupils using the term of address, especially as part of positive feedback:

'There are some who say as they are walking out of class, "Thanks, Sir."
That sort of thing and that's nice. I enjoy it.'

(Adam, Interview 2)

All the men commented on the validating effect of being called 'Sir' around the school and in the classroom. Brian had a doctorate but decided against using 'Dr' with his pupils for fear of creating a barrier. Like the other trainees Brian realised that when he could not replicate the relationships established by female colleagues he found that the pupils' use of 'Sir' helped as it was a tangible sign of the developing relationships with pupils. Brian discovered why he could not imitate the relationships used by his mentor:

'When she talks to them it is like they are being talked to by their mother.
When I talk to them it is like they are being talked to by their big brother.'

(Brian, Interview 1)

Early in the first school placement Brian cultivated the elder brother role because he could not use the maternal role adopted by his female colleagues. The elder brother role was familiar to pupils and suited him as an inexperienced and new adult. Being the youngest in the group Ted was only a few years older than the sixth form students. This increased his sense of feeling like an older brother (Ted, Interview 3).

Adam distinguished between feeling more like a 'big brother' with older pupils in year 10 and a parent with those in year 7.

Being perceived by pupils as older and as male placed the male trainees in the role of either older brother or father. Adam summed up the belief that some pupils 'want more than a teacher.' Henry became interested in and very aware of the role he played in the lives of his pupils, many of whom came from single parent families with an absence of male role models. He was cognisant, however, that being a substitute paternal figure could be problematic as it could involve a dialogue about emotions and feelings with pupils who were not used to having such discussions with a man (Henry, Interview 2). How the trainees saw themselves as substitute father figures (for example, Adam) was reflected in their view of pupils' home lives, especially with younger pupils. Matt also identified the lack of a male figure in the pupils' home lives as providing him with a particular role to play:

'It is a big leap but you have got a lot of kids these days who don't have a male figure in their lives anyway. If they come from single parents and perhaps having a male teacher will be good for them and they will respond well to that.'

(Matt, Interview 3)

In advance of Jamie Oliver, rather like a parent, Brian became concerned about the pupils' additive-laden diet and lack of access to drinking water (Brian, Interview 2).

The two men in the group who were fathers used their knowledge of their parental role to relate with teenagers. Matt described a boy, who was excluded for possessing drugs, as being 'good as gold' (Matt, Interview 1). He used paternalistic language to describe the pupils: 'they're good kids'. When dealing with a distraught year 8 boy Matt explained how 'the parental side comes out'. Henry in the third interview worked out the father role differently. Being a dad in the English classroom was about modelling uses of English:

'That is one of the dad things about it. I am not being a dad in a social or emotional context, but yeah it goes alongside using standard English, formal registers of speaking and good behaviour.'

(Henry, Interview 3)

This modelling did not work with all pupils, one of whom called Henry ‘one of those funny people who goes home and reads books’.

The roles of ‘Sir’, father and brother were often conflated with the concept of a role model who would have a positive influence on pupils in terms of behaviour but they also served to create a safety barrier between the men and the pupils.

‘Are you gay, Sir?’

McElhinny (1994) and Williams (1992) have explored how men’s fears about being labelled ‘gay’ have kept them in traditional male occupations. The issue of the male trainees being ‘accused’ of being gay by pupils first emerged in the study during the pilot study at Capital University. Male trainees found themselves defending their love of literature and deflecting pupils’ assumptions:

‘Just because we like poetry doesn’t mean we’re gay.’
(Trainee, Capital University)

Martino explains how male teachers are monitored for signs indicative of being gay:

Immediately, what is highlighted here is how students police male teachers through heterosexist and homophobic practices of surveillance.
(Martino, 2001: 86)

The data reveal that this surveillance takes place in English lessons. For boys in grammar or public schools homosexuality was to do with the subject of English and not about sex, according to Miller (1970). The overlap of the subject of English and homosexuality (Ellis, 2000: 212) is present in the data of the main study and there is a link between these ‘accusations’ and the subject of English where they take place. Harris (1990: 27) believes that the subject of English is amenable to dealing with aspects of sexuality. However, the data reveal that male English teachers who challenge heterosexism and homophobia become the focus of pupils’ curiosity as Martino (2001) observes:

So those who encourage their students to question dominant masculinity, risk having their own sexuality brought into question.
(Martino, 2001: 86)

The male trainees received questions about their sexuality and pupils voiced assumptions that a gay teacher was teaching them English, because they were in a predominantly female world that robbed them of their assumed heterosexuality. The English classroom was felt by the male trainees to be a place where teenage sexualities were explored through humour based on homophobia. Accusing the English teacher of being gay re-established compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980) as the norm in a context where hegemonic masculinity could be under threat:

In keeping with the folklore of student humour a series of myths ran concerning students and teachers alleged to be gay (see Nayak and Kehily, 1996 for further discussion) ... calling other young men gay is seen as a 'laugh'. It is used as a cultural axis for charting dominant and subordinate heterosexualities within male peer group culture.

(Nayak and Kehily, 2001: 119-20)

Henry was disturbed to be insulted by a group of boys who called him an 'old faggot' (Henry, Interview 2) but he was not threatened because his heterosexual credentials were already in place. Pupils had asked him questions about his age and his marital status and he told them he was married with children. Henry believed their interest in his atypical choice of career was based on the predominance of female English teachers:

'I did not elaborate any further but they want to know what this man is doing teaching English.'

(Henry, Interview 2).

Ted also mentioned being 'accused' of being gay by pupils:

'Year 8 have accused me of being gay - so that's come up. And my normal response is, "Like I care!" ... And that stops them in their tracks.'

(Ted, Interview 3)

He was keen to show me, as his gay tutor, how well he dealt with sexuality issues in his classroom:

'I never defend it and I never say no or yes to it. Apart from that I keep them guessing anyway. I think it is showing that there is no problem. I don't have a problem, pupils alluding to my sexuality. I don't care. It doesn't matter to me.'

(Ted, Interview 3)

Ted followed this with an explanation of how he dealt with further questions about his sexuality by appearing to be very liberal and relaxed. In effect, he declared his heterosexuality by sharing an interest in football, a badge of being straight:

‘They say, “Are you gay?” and I say, “You decide.” Left it with them. But in general the boys responded well. I think I do tend to talk football and so on.’

(Ted, Interview 3)

Before training as a teacher Adam, when he was a professional footballer, had to hide his reading practices for fear of being mocked by his footballer colleagues (Interview 1). Reading and getting absorbed in a book runs the risk of being perceived as a ‘sissy’, rather than a ‘masculine’ pursuit’ (Bleach, 1998: 7). Brian (Assignment 2) felt this perception of reading was contributing to boys’ antipathy to the subject.

Andy spoke for many of the group when he said he enjoyed reading analytically and critically. He identified a type of heterosexual refuge in this analytical and critical way of reading in English. Andy perceived this gender difference when marking pupils’ written GCSE coursework identifying that the boys were:

‘Much more analytical. Very ‘this is in it, this is what it means.’ They can write an essay. And the girls are much more, for example, doing Hardy’s ‘The Going’ about his wife dying, and the girls are much more about ‘showing his emotion here, his wife has just died and he is not feeling very happy’. And the boys are going, ‘His wife’s dead, this is shown here; she died suddenly because it says here.’

(Andy, Interview 3)

Whilst he recognised and admired the boys’ writing Andy believed that as an English teacher he should also model to boys how to have and display emotions. He noted how the boys were confused and ‘found it difficult’ when he presented English literature, such as poetry, with emotion:

‘I think they find it difficult. When I read something I read it how it should be read. I put emotion in it, expression in the Hardy thing. But I can feel the weirdness from them. You know, it’s like ‘What!’ I am a different person suddenly and then I am back.’

(Andy, Interview 3)

Andy did not feel that he was adopting feminine ways of reading texts but to the pupils he was not behaving in ways that they associated with a male teacher. He went on to explain the paradoxes and contradictions within the teaching of English and masculinities:

‘They just want me to be Sir, come sort of bounding in and getting on with the lesson, duh, duh, duh, duh. And suddenly I do this reading and read it how it is supposed to be read. I am not doing it in a feminine way, I am not. I am reading it how it should be read and they don’t like it. A lot of them don’t like it. They feel awkward, definitely. I noticed it with the boys especially. And then I am a back and it is all right.’

(Andy, Interview 3)

It is as though Andy, their teacher, has been abroad in a different country but then comes back to them as the ‘Sir’ they know and understand. Any challenge to the content of the subject of English, for example reading and poetry could be interpreted as a challenge to their masculinity and heterosexuality. A man who enjoys these activities is not a ‘real’ man or is a ‘sissy’ with the attributes of a homosexual:

‘It was assumed I was gay because I am trendy, reasonably good looking and into reading books. In fact I like football, never read women authors and feel comfortable going out for a drink with my mates.’

(Trainee, Queen’s University)

Having been perceived as homosexual the trainee aligns himself with some of the badges of what he regards as gay culture (good looking, trendy) and reading but reasserts his heterosexuality (football, male authors, drink, mates) which was under scrutiny. As a graduate the perception of poetry as something written by ‘effete eccentrics’ (Bleach, 1998:7) had influenced Brian’s choice of modernism for his doctoral thesis in modernist poetry. The process of training to teach teenagers rekindled this anxiety and affected the way he wanted to present poetry to pupils, especially boys.

Declaring heterosexuality in the public domain of the school and the classroom, became part of training to become a male English teacher. The issue of heterosexuality featured in the men’s relationships with mentors. However, the

boundaries between heterosexuality and homosexuality were tested out and featured more explicitly in their relationships with pupils and the subject of English.

The men in the study were particularly concerned about which masculinities they could perform as an English teacher. For example, as a heterosexual man Henry felt confident about challenging the use of homophobic terms in his lesson when studying Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Part of the confidence came from his deep knowledge of the literature itself but also the discourse and criticism underpinning Shakespeare's work. Harris (1990) exposed the range of homophobia that can manifest itself in the English classroom, often triggered by the subject content. Henry chose not to challenge pupils from a sexual politics or equality standpoint but from a historical position which he thought was less likely to result in a backlash. He corrected the pupils by informing them of the dress and manners codes involved in an Elizabethan education (cf. Whithead, 2002: 5), rather than from a school anti-bullying position. The identity of English in popular culture associates homosexuality with English. Like Adam, Henry was used to being accused of engaging in the 'homosexual' practice of studying English. He told the story of how his football playing friends teased him for being interested in literature by conflating studying English with homosexuality. In spite of the historical dominance of English in universities and the institutions of literature, such as publishing and reviewing, for heterosexual men being interested in English requires announcements of their heterosexuality (cf. Redman, and Mac an Ghail, 1996). Henry felt comfortable to share an anecdote from his own experience but it was also a chance to broadcast his heterosexuality. This was well-intentioned heterosexism, based on an assumption of heterosexual normality and a tacit avoidance of being thought of as feminised or gay (Epstein, 2001: 96). When their sexuality was questioned by pupils, some of the men found themselves declaring their heterosexuality to pupils by referring to their partners, wives and children. Such declarations helped establish the comfortable atmosphere, sought by the male trainees, based on trust. Matt encouraged his year 7

pupils to write a story about a monster with his five-year-old son as their intended audience:

‘I said, “I will read them all to my son because I am bored with reading the same stuff to him and I’ll let him pick what he thinks are the best three and I’ll read them out to you the next lesson.” ’

(Matt, Interview 2)

By constructing his married heterosexual status he developed further his paternal role with the pupils. He also modelled his own reading practices by referring to himself reading bedtime stories to his young son. Matt created a cameo of himself as a caring and sensitive ‘new’ father.

Being publicly accused of being gay was new and difficult for the men. The experience forced the men to reposition and redefine their masculinity privately and publicly. The men in the study reposition and announce their sexuality and masculinity as a result of being ‘accused’ of being gay by pupils and having their masculinity challenged by their mentors.

Special role with boys

The male trainees realised that boys and girls, especially younger pupils, related differently to male teachers:

‘I think the younger girls, like the seventh and eighth year, don’t respond as well to a male teacher. Perhaps the older years do.’

(Barry, Interview 3)

Adam was the first man in the study to notice how his gender was having an effect on the male pupils in the classes, who became more involved in oral work such as whole class discussion:

‘They feel more at ease talking about certain things when it’s a guy chairing rather than a female.’

(Adam, Interview 1)

His experienced female mentor also pointed this out to him. The choice of language, the word ‘guy’ for a male teacher conveys this reciprocal desire for the males (the male teachers and the boy pupils) to form a group and to be relaxed with one another.

Towards the end of the second placement Adam felt comfortable teaching boys and enjoyed seeing their enthusiasm:

‘The year 8 group - there’s only four girls in that group and so it is nice to see the boys getting enthusiastic about the work. ... and then they’ll be, “Did that really happen, Sir?”’

(Adam, Interview 3)

Adam, Barry and Brian chose to write about gender in their second assignment ‘Meeting Individual Learning Needs’ (see Appendix 4). Adam became concerned about boys’ academic achievement and also the disproportionate number of boys identified as having special educational needs (SEN) and permanently excluded. His assignment considers the construction of male identities and the impact of schooling on that process, in particular the instillation in children of patriarchal heterosexual values. The lack of male teachers in the English departments he had witnessed since the start of the PGCE course led Adam to consider boys’ experience of primary schooling with ‘little or no male influence in their school life’ (Assignment 2). Adam believes that in addition to this lack of male influence secondary schools are less boy-friendly:

At secondary school the consequences of their gender ideas are challenged as to succeed they must embark on a curriculum that requires skills that many boys do not have or choose to reject as feminine pursuits.

(Adam, Assignment 2)

Barry used his knowledge of Lacan (1977) when considering misbehaviour and pupils who ‘need to perform deviant behaviours to the expectant gazes of school and staff’. He used this theory to explain why the boys he had seen misbehaving with female teachers were better behaved when he was teaching them, citing their ‘desperate need to identify with something’ (Interview 3).

Brian became very interested in the ‘laddish’ culture (Willis, 1977) that he blamed for turning boys against academic work and causing the underachievement of boys:

‘Laddism feeds into and strengthens certain gender stereotypes, which affects the attitudes that boys bring into the class and tend to have an adverse effect on concentration levels, reading abilities and behaviour.’

The work of Skeggs (1991) and Mac an Ghail (1994) remind us that boys' behaviour is to do with resistance but also with the establishment of power:

Feminist scholarship in critiquing male ethnographic work on schooling and masculinity has argued that anti-school male student behaviour cannot reductively be read as simply a product of resistance, but also acts as a 'legitimation' and articulation of power and subordination. (Skeggs 1991)
(Mac an Ghail, 1994: 128)

In my study the male English teachers do not view boys as resistant, but neither do they see them as powerful in a subject in which they are less likely to succeed than girls. Like most of the men, Brian identifies the feminisation of English as a central factor influencing boys' underachievement in the subject, quoting Daly (2000):

The relative performance of boys and girls has been attributed to the 'feminisation' of English as a subject, which is populated by women teachers offering a curriculum which validates emotional and subjective response, where girls feel at home.
(Daly, 2000: 230)

The men in the study were keen to present the subject of English as a worthy masculine pursuit. In part this was to protect their own heterosexuality but also to present alternative versions of masculinity to boys. The men saw themselves as vital role models with a major role to play in redressing the subject of English for male pupils. They presented themselves as readers and writers of masculine texts. They experimented with presenting English as a subject that represents heroes in fiction, such as science fiction and horror, that they thought boys would enjoy. Brian expresses this by drawing on Daly's (2000) concept of interrogating conformity:

The compensatory power of heroes can also be drawn upon as role models and to interrogate conformity, especially when that conformity lies within a 'masculinised society'.
(Daly, 2000: 238-8)

(Brian, Assignment 2)

The men in the study realised they had developed an interest and responsibility to work with boys in particular ways, as articulated by Nayak and Kehily (2001: 122):

We believe that teachers can play an important role in helping boys to reflect on and understand these practices of masculinity. ... What can be achieved at the local level of schooling, therefore, is an attempt to help boys to problematize their social practices of masculinity.

This awareness of their important role changed the way the male trainees dealt with boys and girls on school placement and also affected and informed their career choice of school for the NQT year.

The realisation that gender played a significant role in their teaching life resulted in the men having a dialogue with their masculinity and at times with their sexuality. Significant critical incidents occurred in the classroom, which had a tangible impact on the men. Andy believed that many pupils like having a male teacher, 'the guys especially' and 'loved it' when he did something masculine in English (Andy, Interview 3). He gave the example of this more masculine teaching in how he reacted to being told that the year 7 boys were much weaker than the girls:

'I deliberately did stuff on war, fighting and so on. I am not saying the girls don't like it but it's more a guy thing.'

(Andy, Interview 2)

Other changes were not immediately visible, but came into focus after a period of time, such as their emotional relationship with young people and their relationship with the subject they say they 'love'.

Not all of their interactions with boys were successful and the reasons given for this need to be considered. Matt noticed that he has more 'cross words' with boys than with girls because he dealt with them differently, as he admitted, 'I don't always get it right' (Matt, Interview 3). He also noticed that his relationship with the boys deteriorated when they found out he was leaving the school at the end of the school placement, as they felt a sense of rejection.

In this study the men deployed masculinised communication and relationships when teaching English. They used humour, anecdotes and football metaphors in addition to modelling the practices of English. As consumers and doers of English their masculinity and heterosexuality were under pressure and scrutiny. They were drawn to other ways of constructing their masculinities and adopted the roles of father, brother and uncle. The men recognised their responsibilities when

helping boys to understand the social practices of being male and studying English. The next chapter examines the type of English curriculum preferred by the men and the sort of English teacher they wanted to become.

Chapter 6

'The leaflet bits': perceptions of the changing subject of English

This chapter focuses on how the male trainees renegotiated their relationship with the subject of English. The men brought to the PGCE course positive relationships with English that underpinned their reasons for wanting to teach, and to teach secondary English in particular. Training on the PGCE course caused the men to *re-examine their relationship with the subject of English*. Working with teachers and pupils on the school placements forced them to reposition their relationship with English in the secondary curriculum. English has changed since the men were pupils, in part because of the introduction and prescriptive nature (Cox, 1995) of the National Curriculum for English (DfEE, 1999) and especially because of the impact of the insidiously powerful (Pullman, 2002) non-statutory Key Stage 3 National Strategy. At times the experience of teaching English in its current guise was uncomfortable and became the source of dispute and conflict. This released the participants' determination to maximise their effect on boys' experience of English. The process of repositioning their relationship with English involved an acknowledgement of how to operate within a subject they now saw as feminised. A key paradox for the men was to discover how they were touched by the emotional aspects of English, which have been associated with the feminine functions of teaching (Mac an Ghail, 1994: 34).

The participants brought to their training perceptions of teaching as a career informed by their knowledge of the world of work (Reid and Caudwell, 1997; Smedley, 1998a; Reid and Thornton, 2000, 2001) and their experience of English at higher education level (Thomas, 1990, 1991). For the men the decision to teach was founded on a desire to teach *English*, not just to teach. During the PGCE they realised how the subject of English they had studied at school and university had changed substantially. Not only was their experience of being trained predominantly female but the subject of English they were teaching was feminised. Therefore, the

men had to reposition themselves with English and this involved changes in how they saw themselves as teachers but also as men.

Relationship with English at application stage

All the male trainees satisfied the normal university entrance requirement for at least fifty percent of their first degree to be in English (see Table 7). Two men have first class honours degrees (Henry, Brian), four have a 2:1 and one has a 2:2. Three of them have higher degrees; D.Phil (Brian) and M.A. (Henry, Barry). Matt was a mature entrant to higher education having left school and college with 'O' levels, returning to study for 'A' levels in his twenties and gaining a degree aged 32. Henry was the most dramatic career change trainee having been an engineer and deciding to study for a part-time English degree while working. Brian had taught English at two universities after gaining his doctorate. The remaining four had moved from university into teaching, after completing a first degree (Adam, Andy, Ted) or a masters degree (Barry). This was a group with a strong academic profile with positive images of their abilities in English. They brought to their training a philosophy of English as a literary subject (Ball and Lacey, 1980) that fits Marshall's (2000b) 'Old Grammarians' and shares Cox's (DES and WO, 1989) 'cultural heritage view'.

At Soulbridge University a grading system for internal moderation of interviews and offers of places is used, ranging from A (Excellent) to E (Poor), with C being the minimum grade for an offer of a place:

Table 9: Grades for Soulbridge University participants used during PGCE interview internal moderation

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Adam | A/B |
| Andy | C |
| Barry | C |
| Brian | B/A |
| Henry | B |
| Matt | A/B |
| Ted | A |

It is interesting to compare these pre-course grades with how the male trainees developed by the end of the PGCE. Adam became an excellent teacher after two placements in challenging schools. Andy became a very good classroom practitioner who became fully involved in the extra-curricular aspects of teaching, especially rugby. Brian was an inventive teacher who preferred the older age groups and who found collegiality in a female department a challenge. Henry became a much-liked, respected teacher who succeeded in teaching his passion, George Eliot. Matt became a good teacher who struggled to secure his first teaching post at several interviews. Ted was an adequate teacher who skimmed on the paperwork and avoided teaching poetry. Barry was the trainee who failed the course. There is limited correlation between the grades and their performance on the course. One explanation is the way that the men's relationship with English shifted during the year.

When interviewed for a place on the PGCE the male trainees articulated their relationship with English. The reasons they gave for wanting to teach English are similar to those noticed by Goodwyn (1997: 1). The main reason was their enthusiasm for reading (ibid.: 32), sometimes expressed as a love of literature (ibid.: 29) or passion for English. These motives fit with the 'personal growth view' and 'cultural heritage view' models of views of the subject of English in the Cox Report (DES and WO, 1989). There is similarity with one of Ball's (1987) four main orientations of English teacher that is concerned with literature, morals and values and is liberal humanist. The love of reading and literature is also in line with the Newbolt Report (1921) recommendation that literature, if it is to be enjoyed by children, must be entrusted to teachers with a love of literature, love of reading and the civilising effects of language and literature. Within the 'personal growth view' is the desire expressed by the men in the study to make a difference to pupils' lives, and they reject one of Ball's (1987) orientations of English that is concerned with skills, and is vocational and utilitarian. Autobiographical illustrations and anecdotes in the data support this view of English. Clear in the interviews was the men's avoidance of

a soulless career where they could not use their English passion. Working in the City was often given as the example of such a worthless career, in line with what a male trainee described during the pilot study as a 'Sisyphean sense of purposelessness' (Carl, 9/6/99). Henry also reveals in his 'Reading History' (see Appendix 2) how his dissatisfaction with working in the City led him to return to studying English on a part-time degree course. Other reasons are based on English as an agent for social change and fit with Cox's 'cultural analysis view' and Ball's orientation towards critical literacy, the oppositional and the radical, as expressed by Adam:

'I think with English you are constantly evaluating what people have done - novels, poems - so I think by doing that it helps kids to stop, stand back and evaluate what *they* are doing.'

(Adam, Soulbridge University, group interview, 21/9/01)

At interview, the male applicants articulated their reasons for wanting to teach and for wanting to teach English.

Analysis confirmed the above phenomenon identified by Goodwyn (1997:1) that most English PGCE interviewees cite enthusiastically their love of reading as a reason for wanting to teach. Love of literature was at the root of their reasons for becoming English teachers. The men wanted 'to make a difference' (Andy, Adam, Henry) and treat 'pupils as individuals', in line with Ball and Lacey (1980: 174) and to have a special knowledge of pupils as individuals (Bousted, 2000: 24). The male trainees' tendency towards Cox's 'personal growth' (DES and WO, 1989) model and Dixon's growth model (1967) emerges from the interviews, in accordance with the majority of English teachers' philosophies (Goodwyn and Findlay 1999; Pike 2000). Andy articulated at interview the impact of a male English teacher on his decision to teach which remained a guiding principle in the 'personal growth' paradigm. However, for the other men an influential male English teacher emerged in later data as a significant factor in their subject choices at 'A' level (cf. Goodwyn, 1997: 31) and university and on their decision to train as a teacher. These influential male teachers had offered these men when studying English ways in which to transform

from adolescence into serious lovers of literature. The role of influential others in their biographies matches what Mac an Ghail (1994: 25) identifies as ‘Biographical detail, including memories of significant others ... [which] were important in shaping male teachers’ subjectivities.’ The process of remembering their own male English teachers provided the male trainees with a masculine way to *do* English in the absence of other male English teachers in schools. This was the version of English that they wanted to teach.

Promoting the subject of English

A further insight into the participants’ relationships with English was obtained through the written component of the PGCE interview procedure. Although the assessment of applicants’ written literacy already formed part of the selection procedure at Soulbridge University it became a requirement in 2002 (DfES/TTA, 2002). The written task I designed requires applicants to present their beliefs in the subject of English and how it should be taught in schools. A stimulus article is given to candidates to read before writing an open letter to year 9 pupils, promoting the subject of English. The article, ‘Revenge of the beardy-weirdies’ (Cunningham, 1998), celebrates the flair and charisma for which English teachers are remembered and attacks ‘the twin straitjackets of “syllabus” and “scheme of work” [which] have strapped down even the freest English-teaching spirit’. Using humour, literary puns and the juxtaposition of a cruelly stereotyped physics teacher, Cunningham romanticises the English teachers of the past. However, Cunningham argues that English teachers today, far from being the ‘special kinds of people’ (Protherough and Atkinson, 1991: 11) first hinted at by Newbolt’s ‘specialist’ teachers (1921, para.82), have become clones of the physics teacher because English syllabuses and schemes ‘screw down the imagination’. This contentious article polarised the arguments in their letters which promote English as ‘fun’ and ‘not boring’. Using ‘Fact versus Fancy’ in *Hard Times*, Pike (2004: 7) shares their novice enthusiasm for ‘not more

“fact” but more “fancy”, more imagination and less prescription’. Whilst the male applicants describe ‘fancy’ or exciting ways to study literature, paradoxically, there is an Arnoldian feel, traditional and canonical, in their choice of authors: Shakespeare, Dickens, the Brontës, Owen, Sassoon. Specific texts are mentioned: *Romeo and Juliet* (mentioned in the Cunningham article), *Henry V*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Wuthering Heights*, *‘Dulce et Decorum Est’* and more generally, Victorian novels. The only contemporary writer mentioned is J.K. Rowling. The applicants appear to share a similar position regarding the teaching of ‘Great Literature’ advocated in Circular 753 (Board of Education, 1910). However, what they say about how to read such texts reveals that they do not see the canon as an opportunity to civilise pupils ‘in order to appreciate their ‘divine nature’ (Davison and Dowson, 1998: 22). Their positions on English concur with two of Ball’s orientations of English teachers (Ball, 1987: 31). Their fundamental beliefs about English are rooted in the ‘literature, morals and values, liberal humanist’ orientation but when presenting their beliefs to a teenage audience, albeit imaginary and in written form, they shift in the direction of the ‘creativity, progressive, cultural alternatives’ orientation. Their view of literature has much to do with what Stibbs (1998: 210) refers to as ‘art’s ability to shock and inspire, to change vision, ideas and feelings’. Their understanding of English in secondary schools was defined by the authors and the texts they expected they would teach, and based on their experience of English at school and university, which, as Goodwyn (1997: 34) identifies, contains a mismatch between their personal experiences and their literary training.

Reasons for teaching, early on the course

The men’s reasons for becoming a teacher dominated the group interviews conducted during the first week of the course. The temporal context is significant as in 2001-trainees on PGCE courses were paid a £6,000 Training Salary. This was a factor in some male trainees’ decision to teach. Only Andy reported that the

introduction of the Training Salary had not influenced his decision. For most, however, the £6,000 had precipitated their decision by a year or two. Henry had been executing a career move from engineering to teaching for several years. The Training Salary had the effect of making the men much more aware of entering teaching as a generic profession rather than the subject specific profession of English teaching. They felt they were being paid by the TTA to train as a teacher, rather than specifically an English teacher.

During the first few days of the course the participants' concerns were not English specific, but were focused on coping with pupils' behaviour and the PGCE workload. This process of moving from becoming a teacher to becoming an *English* teacher began at the university but trainees regressed into more generic concerns when they moved into their placement schools. Real teaching in the classroom caused generic teacher concerns to surface, especially those regarding classroom management. At the start of their first school placements the men lost sight of the 'picture' of English teaching (Pike, 2004: 3) and wanted more of the technology, the method or the 'diagram' of teaching. They wanted the recipe for how to teach English. This initial concern was not sustained throughout the PGCE year. At points during the year the trainees rejected the functionalism of technical English teaching and re-embraced the aesthetic opportunities of English that were tied up with their passion for literary English and their self-image as a teacher of English literature.

Changing relationships with English expressed in written data

The written data captured the men's changing relationship with English. For example, in the written assignment, 'My Own Experience of Education' (Appendix 1), which is similar to Meek's (1988:4) 'autobiography in reading' and Goodwyn's (1997:26) PGCE English students' 'position papers', the male trainees were given space to reflect in writing on the influence of their own education on the process of becoming an English teacher. The course provided guidance on possible content and

an underpinning rationale: 'The beliefs and convictions which you have about education will have been shaped significantly by what you experienced at school. It is important that you are aware of these autobiographical influences.' The assignment modelled to the trainees the use of autobiography as a pedagogical tool (Meek, 1988: 4; Fleming and Stevens, 1998: 22). It also suggested to trainees that formative influences (Goodwyn, 1997: 28) and significant individuals (Protherough and Atkinson, 1991: 15) might play a role in their formulation as teachers and their professional practice (Pike, 2004: 44). For the seven men in the study this involved school, including sixth form college, and university. In the initial PGCE interviews and the semi-structured group interviews participants told narratives, made reference to and drew analogies with their own experiences of education, including specific teachers and texts. In the subsequent individual interviews these references were reprised and refined. The written data, however, allowed for more self-conscious, polished accounts of their educational histories that are literary in style.

The final written assignment on the Soulbridge course was a subject knowledge 'audit', where trainees demonstrated their ability to teach the range of literature required at A level by writing a reflective account of their 'Reading History' (Appendix 2), again influenced by Meek (1988: 4). Here, the men revealed their childhood and adolescent transformations as readers. Andy and Brian had been reluctant readers as children and teenagers; Ted, Henry and Adam admitted to being voracious consumers of books from a young age. By reflecting on their reading histories the men in the study saw themselves as men and teachers, as well as consumers and doers of English. This process involved renegotiating their relationship with English and in part involved 'recognizing where their literary training interferes with their developing pedagogical knowledge' Goodwyn (1997: 34), so that they saw being an English teacher differently.

An English teacher identity

These renegotiations of English involved their identity and how they related with English, particularly when working with colleagues and pupils. In addition to their English student and English postgraduate identities, both of which have antecedents, each of the men was in the process of acquiring a new identity as an English teacher and representing the subject of English. Their biography or history was that they were all English graduates who, albeit at very different moments in their lives and for various reasons, had chosen to be English teachers. Goodwyn (1997: 36) notices that the teacher identity acquired is not always 'new', explaining that 'deep in the British psyche, in my opinion, is a powerful notion that teaching is principally about control and wearing a mortar board and a gown.' If Goodwyn is correct then part of this deeply rooted image is based on the male trainees' own lived experiences of male teachers and of masculinity. As I watched them acquire their emerging English teacher identities they discovered other identities on the way; for example, elder brother, father and uncle, whilst holding on to the more subject-based identities they had anticipated, such as reader and writer.

By applying Marshall's (2000b) categories of English teachers' philosophies Marshall et al. (2001: 196-7) analyse the changes that occur in the beliefs of trainees during the PGCE and point out that renegotiated roles are tied up with identity. They do not use a continuum or stage model but show how trainees shift across Marshall's five detailed descriptions. My study reveals how the men's negotiations did not take place in isolation but within and between relationships with colleagues, pupils and English. The men moved into new relationships in these individual territories and where they overlap. Their relationship with the subject of English underwent transformations, as trainees had to demonstrate the private acquisition of the English subject knowledge for Qualified Teacher Status whilst acquiring private and public English teacher identities, reminiscent of the 'private troubles' and 'public issues' described by Mills (1959). Some of the subject knowledge they needed to acquire

and teach was new and unfamiliar and this came as a surprise for a group of men who regarded themselves as 'good at English'. This discovery did not come as a 'traumatic shock' (Goodwyn, 1997: 29) and was initially viewed as an exciting new chapter in their English journey. However, the content of the secondary English curriculum (DfEE, 1999) seemed very far removed from their university English degrees and large gaps appeared, as noted by Daw (2000). Matt summed up the mismatch:

'I hadn't been at school for a long time and I didn't do English A level. I just did an English degree and my English degree was very heavy on theory. I went down a French philosophy road quite a bit. I had forgotten what goes on in the classroom.'

(Matt, Interview 1)

The men very much enjoyed discovering the world of teenage fiction. They mentioned the pleasure they gained from discovering new titles (*Goodnight Mister Tom, The Demon Headmaster*), teenage series (*Goosebumps, Point Horror*) and teenage authors who have become popular with adult readers (Philip Pullman, J.K. Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson). They did not mention the prescribed authors in the National Curriculum with such enthusiasm.

Expectations of English which has changed since they were at school and university

The struggle to come to terms with the subject of English in its secondary school format has been charted in much of the English initial teacher education literature in order to establish the subject's history and current construction (for example, Protherough and Atkinson, 1991; Davies, 1996; Goodwyn, 1999; Davison and Dowson, 1998; Fleming and Stevens, 1998; Pike, 2004; Andrews, 2001; Clarke et al., 2004). Trainees did not know about the history and politics of English, in all its incarnations and interpretations, but they possessed preconceptions about secondary English. Barry believed that English 'depends little on rote memory and may be seen

to reside almost entirely in the manipulation of abstract concepts' (Assignment 2). Henry had expected to be teaching Shakespeare to top set classes (Interview 1). Brian had not anticipated teaching phonics to year 7 pupils (Interview 1).

The men brought their complex histories and relationships with the subject of English into the process of training to teach English. These histories cannot be separated from their gender and have constructed the participants as teachers and as men. They have occupied the position of being atypical and in the minority as boys good at English at school (Millard, 1997) and as students studying English at university (Thomas, 1990). As they trained to become a teacher of English, their favourite subject at school and university, they realised that their practices of reading and writing are parts of their private and public masculinities. They were private consumers and doers of English but these practices took on different meanings that threatened their masculinity when observed publicly by others. The men were confronted with the complex and public process of acquiring a new identity as a teacher and a new understanding of the subject. For example, Barry (Interview 1) wanted the PGCE to furnish him with fresh ways of approaching a subject that he enjoyed. The participants' preconceptions were that they would learn how to act out the practices of doing a job, by learning something of its techniques. The reality was that they had to put on the guise of an English teacher, which had more to do with being a father and a brother than being a deliverer of the curriculum. The men were successful at English at school where in some cases (Andy, Ted) they were in a more masculinised context and at university, where they studied English in a predominantly female context. Indeed, the seven men had enjoyed the privileges of being a heterosexual man in a predominantly female subject area, which included being perceived as caring and sensitive men: 'I am quite proud of the fact that I do like English and have got a sensitive side, reading literature.' (Andy, Interview 3). Their softer masculinity helped them get by.

At the start of the course all of the participants drew on the robust aspects of their masculinity. In order to cope with the workload they thought their strong subject knowledge would be useful. Henry and Brian did not anticipate being caught by gaps (Daw, 2000) in their subject knowledge. Andy's view of English in which 'the majority of questions used by teachers are open questions, as they leave much more scope for discussion and development of ideas' (Assignment 1) was shared by Ted in his first assignment: 'English often requires an empathetic response to a text and thus questions asked are rarely purely factual'. The men turn to the emotional, creative and aesthetic potential of English in order to offset any subject knowledge fears. Andy and Ted were thinking along the lines of the 'Socratic dialogue' style of English lessons mentioned in the Capital pilot. However, the participants realised that the demands of the National Curriculum and the Key Stage 3 Strategy required many closed responses that suggest that English is not as open to interpretation as it had been when they were at school. English and its new guise of literacy seemed to be more functional than they had anticipated.

English in the National Curriculum

The younger men in the group Andy, Adam, Ted and Barry were at secondary school during the time of the National Curriculum, although none of them realised this. All the men perceived the National Curriculum as a recent innovation because of the widely reported implementation of the Curriculum 2000 version (DfEE, 1999). During the individual interviews, the men expressed regularly their lack of affinity with the current version of English, as prescribed by the National Curriculum. Having to acquire new subject knowledge drained some men of their confidence with English; for example, Adam felt he was learning to speak English in its secondary school format. All the men believed that the National Curriculum for English was prescriptive in terms of content and expected levels of attainment, line with Pullman (2002). A frequent concern, as articulated by Brian, was to what extent

they would be able to experiment, innovate and 'engage in the politics of transformation' (Peim, 2003) within the constraints of the curriculum as interpreted by English teachers in placement schools. This concern was confirmed in schools where male trainees had to operate within tightly structured and well-documented schemes of work. When Matt queried the need for such prescriptive schemes of work containing detailed lesson plans, the head of curriculum explained that this was 'the best way to improve the results of pupils and to cater for "mixed ability staff" (Assignment 1), echoing the government agendas of raising standards of teaching and learning. Such prescription was witnessed by Matt in an English classroom where pupils were enthusiastically reading a play but were prevented from reading the next scene by the teacher explaining 'the lesson plan clearly states that we are only reading the first scene today'. This written anecdotal evidence indicated a compliance and conformity in the culture of English departments, similar to Luke's (2001) 'pre-packaged curricular commodities' (cited in Ellis, 2002: 3), that the men found disappointing.

Matt (Interview 1) believed that classroom management was dependent on pupils being interested in what they were doing. He considered whether the prescriptions of the National Curriculum made classroom management more difficult because he had not yet become 'Englishy' (my term appropriated by Matt). By this, he meant that he had not yet gained control over delivering the National Curriculum in ways that engaged pupils. When writing about meeting pupils' individual learning needs (see Appendix 4), Brian explored Traves's (1994, 1996) debates about relevance and entitlement:

I have felt some degree of absurdity of teaching Sherlock Holmes to a group of Year 10s made up of 14 children from Pakistani backgrounds, four from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, and four white students.

(Brian, Assignment 2)

He is critical of his English colleagues in two placement schools where he saw 'no real attempt in either school to question curriculum content, apart from one or two

sighs when certain texts are mentioned' (Brian, Assignment 2). Brian is irritated by such compliance and frustrated by the link he sees between pupils' boredom and poor behaviour:

There is little willingness to accept that the boredom produced by much conventional and technical subject matter might heighten the problem of discipline.

(Brian, Assignment 2)

One can see Brian blaming pupils' boredom and resultant poor behaviour on the content and constraints of the National Curriculum and his desire for greater autonomy. Teaching lower ability pupils would mean greater attention to functional literacy as well as compliance and adherence to orthodoxy. The idea of school as a leveller of class differences had been important early in the course to Brian. He identifies the way the National Curriculum had 'diverted the focus away from equality and on to academic success for the more able' (Assignment 2). He blames the culture of league tables and the use of attainment levels for putting increased pressure on schools. As an academic and a teacher from a working-class background Brian was hostile to an education system that created inequality and reinforces the past by privileging the upper classes. He is wary of canonical texts which are derived from and perpetuate hegemonic masculinities. He quotes from Connell (1994: 137) who describes the subject matter taught in many English classes as:

a dominant, or hegemonic, curriculum, derived historically from the educational practices of European upper class men

(Brian, Assignment 2)

Brian is wary of the traditional and canonical texts and the way they are derived from and perpetuate hegemonic masculinities. The men voiced their objections to the prescribed content and lists of recommended authors in the National Curriculum for English. Matt believed in Fontana's (1985:102) cognitive approach to classroom management in which teachers make lessons relevant to pupils to reduce disruptive behaviour, but thought that this was not deliverable because of 'an extremely prescriptive National Curriculum' (Matt, Assignment 1). Referring to the pre-

dominance of female teachers and the way English is taught, he called the English curriculum 'a system that is female dominated', yet noted that the curriculum is male dominated, weighted in favour of male authors, especially poets. When considering the dominance of male authors in the English National Curriculum Andy was convinced that he had only taught male authors, to the extent that he thought Michelle Magorian, the author of *Goodnight, Mister Tom*, was a male writer. He was shocked to find that the author was not male:

'It is such a man book. I assumed it was.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

The men's criticism of the Key Stage 3 assessment, the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATS), was vociferous where functional teaching was used to prepare pupils for the SATS. One example was the way teachers prepared for the Shakespeare paper by only studying one scene rather than reading the whole play (Matt, Interview 3) thus denying the pupils their literary entitlement (Traves, 1994, 1996; McClelland, 1997).

Andy (Assignment 1) notes that the presentation of English as a set of Key Skills in the National Curriculum (1999) fits the view that English is a service subject and fits the Cox (DES and WO, 1989) 'adult needs' model of English and has more to do with the Key Stage 3 National Strategy (DfEE, 2001) than the subject of literary English in which these men have been comfortable and successful as pupils and university students.

The Key Stage 3 National Strategy

Male English trainees' dislike of pedagogical prescription had been articulated during a pilot study interview when Mark (9/6/99) said he wanted to inspire and disliked what he called 'artificial techniques'. Dislike of prescribed pedagogy was voiced more vociferously by Soulbridge University participants who shared an antipathy towards and suspicion of what they call 'the Strategy'. The *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English* (DfEE, 2001) was

implemented during the year of the study. Hostility towards the prescriptive pedagogy of English was not a reaction to the National Curriculum alone but to the further 'rigid planning and tight organisation demanded by the Framework' (Goody, 2002: 16). This led to conflict with mentors who perceived the ideological questioning of the Key Stage 3 Strategy as arrogance or laziness. English versus literacy was becoming a battle ground in English teaching (Marshall, R., 2002) with echoes of Cox (1995) and the battle for English in the National Curriculum and the later clash with literacy (Cox, 1998). Although the language used by the men is not the discourse of conflict, the men are cynical. The Key Stage 3 Strategy, referred to disparagingly by Adam as 'the leafletly bits' (Interview 2 and 3) typified their perceptions. His opinion echoes Goodwyn's (2003) view that literacy has been responsible for putting English and its place in growth pedagogy under siege. Adam wanted to teach poetry but disliked the deconstruction of language into the naming of parts as he felt the Key Stage 3 Strategy advocated. He rejected these approaches based on deconstruction approaches used with non-fiction texts, calling them 'the leafletly bits':

'I like teaching poetry. I haven't had a chance to do that so much here. I am going to do some media next term. And that is sort of interesting. I am not so keen on the leafletly bits. I don't - it sounds really bad, seeing that the course I did at university - but I don't see that as being English. And I know I am teaching English. I'm not so keen on the language side, the analysis of language, so much. I am keen on the literature side but, yeah, the leaflet thing is not for me.'

(Adam, Individual Interview 2)

Matt expressed the contradiction about the 'feel' of the Key Stage 3 Strategy with its emphasis on using a grammatical metalanguage for reading, writing, speaking and listening. He perceived this aspect of the Strategy as 'masculine':

'I think possibly the things like the Key Stage 3 Strategy feels masculine quite often - the attention to language I suppose.'

(Matt, Interview 3)

He equates the mechanistic and functional aspects of the Strategy with a masculine utilitarianism. He was surprised that his own English preferences had such a literary

orientation which he still associated with feminine practices. He had expected to be attracted to the technical and functional versions of English. He reminisces: 'English isn't as touchy-feely a subject as when I was taught it. It seemed to me fairly unstructured.' He is remembering a paradoxically feminised subject whose content was created by a majority of men and is predominantly taught by women. This is the view of the state of English teaching in schools held by Williams (2005) who blames 'emasculated English' on a feminised society which has changed the way literature is being taught. The men in the study have to reposition themselves and renegotiate their relationships with a subject that has changed since they studied it.

Men reposition and renegotiate their relationships with English

Whilst the men expressed no explicit criticism of teaching in primary schools a number of the men (Matt, Henry, Matt, Barry, Ted) were dismayed by some pupils' ability levels in literacy. Brian had not envisaged having to teach the basics of reading and writing to pupils. He therefore found familiarity and comfort in teaching older students, especially literature at A level. Adam, in spite of his secure subject knowledge of grammar and linguistics, disliked the emphasis on the analysis of language in non-literary texts and despaired at the amount of non-literary material he was required to teach. What he really enjoyed teaching was poetry, which requires close textual analysis but as a tool for the exploration of emotion. Andy, like many of the male trainees, was irritated by the assumption held by some teachers that poetry was not enjoyed by boys or even worse that boys are not very good at poetry (Andy, Interview 2). Andy's defence of individual boys studying poetry is supported by Myhill (1999:238) and Pike (2004: 131). The male trainees repeatedly reported that many teachers claimed that boys did not like poetry. Because of such myths, teaching poetry became Matt's greatest fear but he enjoyed success teaching poetry, especially to the boys: 'Even the lads, they seem to get quite into it' (Matt, Interview 3).

Often the men shared their relationships with poetry with their pupils. Brian chose to reveal his expertise in modernist poetry with a group of challenging boys in year 10, 'It is what I specialise in' (Brian, Interview 2). He did not declare his 'love' or 'passion' for poetry but emphasised his skill and knowledge. He did not re-feminise the subject of English for the boys, rather he was attempting to render it more sinewy and masculine.

Henry (Interview 1) identified 'new' aspects of the English curriculum, such as media studies, as potentially problematic because he had not studied them when at school. He found himself on new and challenging territory. He was unfamiliar with the discourse of media education and was critical of the materials he accessed. Having bought a men's magazine for the Year 10 media unit activity he distanced himself from being a consumer of magazines, reminiscent of the way men are reluctant to admit they read men's magazines (Galilee, 2002: 49). Henry was happy to present himself as a reader of Shakespeare but not of a men's magazine:

'I got a bit of sniggering when I said, "Here is a red, sporty GTi. That one came from *FHM*. And there was a bit of sniggering.'

(Henry, Interview 1)

He was more aware of being a 'Sensitive New Man' (Connell, 1995: 136) although he was unfamiliar with being an anti-sexist male teacher. He knew that he did not want to collude with the pupils' perceptions of his masculinity that risked being linked to the sexualisation and gender bias shown in the magazine. This is an illustration of what happens at the interrelation between training, masculinities and the subject of English.

Peim (2003: 6) writes about the 'constitutional' differences between versions of English at degree level and how it is 'recontextualised' in schools delivering the National Curriculum. The relationship that the men have with English changed during the PGCE and the men perceived the identity of the subject and their own identity differently as they entered their first teaching post. Ted gave the example of persuasive writing as something he knew about but had never studied at university

(Ted, Interview 2). He found such aspects of English ‘laborious’ to teach and preferred teaching the more familiar literature from the canon. The mentors who were steeped in the secondary school version of English often saw this lack of knowledge and interest in aspects of English in the National Curriculum as a subject knowledge gap.

The men’s ‘wrong’ subject knowledge

During the pilot studies I was alerted to the paradox of well-qualified men being judged as having inappropriate or the ‘wrong’ subject knowledge. In one of the pilot interviews Mark explained how on his second placement he was accused of having ‘too much subject knowledge’ (Capital University, Interview with Mark, 9/6/99). This comment was amplified by Carl who said, ‘I had the feeling that too much confidence in the area of subject knowledge went against me’ (Capital University, Interview with Carl, 9/6/99). Their answers to my follow-up questions about what meanings they put on to ‘confidence’ and ‘subject knowledge’ revealed that both trainees were talking about over-prescriptive and reductive lesson plans that atomised rather than utilised their subject knowledge.

The men in the study have very good subject knowledge in terms of degree qualifications (see Table 7) and they felt that their own subject knowledge was a strength, even when they had to work on a new area. Ted’s unfamiliarity with the school play *Black Harvest* resulted in him criticising the play and prevented him devising engaging activities:

‘You can’t turn around and say we are going to be exploring the themes of famine and stuff, because it gives away the plot. It is really difficult explaining to them without ruining their suspense.’

(Ted, Interview 1)

Ted believed that he did not have a body of knowledge for this ‘pedestrian’ and ‘unliterary’ school text, in spite of his own interest in drama. This contrasted with another group where the pupils’ response to the class novel, *Skellig* by David

Almond, was very positive and influenced their behaviour: 'It is my friend - it keeps them in control'. Ted's response to new texts was not based on their literary merit but on how well they were received by pupils. Other examples of unfamiliar texts taught in school because of the National Curriculum included myths and legends and *An Inspector Calls*, referred to by Adam as 'the stock cupboard canon' (Interview 2). Brian and Barry were of the opinion that they had subject knowledge at such a high level that it was helpful for teaching A level but it bore little resemblance or relevance to the version of English they were required to teach at Key Stages 3 and 4. When talking about feeling comfortable with his sixth form teaching Barry said:

'Obviously this is my sphere entirely, being [sic] that I have just done an M.A. in post-modernism. So I am happy to go on and run with that for ages. But what I am teaching otherwise with my year 8 and my year 10. I am doing media modules and they are not terribly exciting but they are fantastically simple. There is nothing in there I felt I needed to run off and read about.

(Barry, Interview 1)

Barry did not appreciate the need to read about the pedagogy of media studies with pupils in mind, as well as reading about media studies for his own instruction. All other previous relationships with English had been concerned with *his* interests and learning. Being an English teacher involved seeing subject knowledge from the pupils' point of view. Barry experienced classroom management problems with a simplified version of *Doctor Faustus*, a play he knew well in the original Marlowe version. He blamed the poor quality of the rendition of the play on the class's lack of interest but then resorted to punishing the year 9 class with the play itself:

'I am using the text as something to beat them with really, in the last lesson, which is not something I wanted to be doing at all.'

(Barry, Interview 1)

As he was not expected to teach the pupils anything about Marlowe's play Barry felt that teaching was anti-intellectual and that his subject knowledge was mistrusted:

'I think that there is a huge cult of anti-intellectualism in teaching. I think that the more that you show that you know about something, the more people will mistrust you and assume that, you know, first in school, last in life or whatever.'

(Barry, Interview 3)

His conclusion was that being a teacher was like being an 'artisan', especially when teaching texts of inferior literary quality. Barry's words reveal the gulf that emerged between his view of English and the reality of what he saw being legislated in school:

'English is more saturated and holistic. English is qualitative. I think that your knowledge of English and the way you approach English changes from one form to another as you add to it. You qualitatively change what you have when you add to it. ... What they're trying to do is nail a quantitative map onto a qualitative system and you are losing out on both sides. It is part - that is the interesting side of English that I've talked about. Those books that kids experience aren't the same books that the teachers are experiencing, aren't the same as the books as they were written, won't be the same as the books as they go on to the next group. What survives isn't the information, isn't the ability to count the characters in Dickens or to follow the narrative structure in Chaucer ... I really believe that you can't quantify it - because the materials you are using change from moment to moment. And its in the act of building and taking apart, of searching, finding, constructing and so on that English begins to make sense as a subject because so much of living our life in society is about building.'

(Barry, Interview 3)

Barry was drawn to the critical literacy elements of English in which textual analysis and deconstruction develops pupils as part of a liberal humanism. He rejects the quantitative approach to English preferring its holistic and qualitative potential.

Masculine English

The male participants' relationship with the subject of English as defined by Ball (1985, 1987) was affected by its current transformation into literacy and was not embraced positively. The Key Stage 3 Strategy encourages more teaching from the front (Goody, 2002: 16) but this sort of didactic teaching was not favoured by the men in the study as it frequently led to more classroom management and power struggles. The men did not feel attracted to the more formal aspects of English language and grammar. At the time of the study their female mentors were seen by the men as embracing the structures and strategies offered by the Strategy because they were involved in implementing them. The male trainees encountered problems because they challenged the orthodoxy of the Strategy. Perhaps the men were unlike their female colleagues who, by implementing the Strategy had started to reclaim the

'solid ground of their own expertise' (Miller, 1996: 109). The men's resistance to planning slavishly using the Strategy became interpreted by their female mentors as a macho and arrogant resistance to planning per se. At this point the male trainees' gender was seen as the source of their resistance. The result was a conflict between mentor and trainee that is partly explained by Apple's (1985) analysis of women teachers who were more willing to implement innovations, with the accompanying paperwork as a symbol of their professionalism.

The dominance of a male theoretical discourse (Miller, 1996: 228) fits the men's experience of the subject they have studied at school and especially at university. In their academic journeys several of the men have at times opted deliberately for a masculine version of English. They have a shared understanding that aspects of literature such as poetry, especially Victorian and Romantic poetry are feminine (Brian, Interview 3). These are, however, particular types of poetry. Brian chose the hypermasculine modernist poets for his doctorate, as he explained:

'Because you say masculine or written by male poets, I think a lot of poetry written by male poets is considered feminine and especially Romantic poetry, Victorian poetry. It is actually one of the reasons why I chose Modernism to specialise in. For me it was such an unusual era, an unusual collection of writers, because for that very reason, because they were very masculine writers, going against the current in that sense. People were glad when the war came along because they could go and legally use violence against other people ... what was interesting for me was the fact that they are poets, they are artists, people who are involved in a pastime that is considered feminine and yet there is this other side to them, that there was this balance that I found fascinating.'

(Brian, Interview 3)

Brian pointed out that Modernist poets are not on the National Curriculum and are not often taught in schools.

Other men also opted for what they saw as the more masculine aspects of English. On his degree Andy avoided then rejected feminist texts and ways of reading. Henry chose the work of George Eliot for his MA dissertation because of her 'masculine and intellectual style of writing'. He managed to teach some Eliot to his year 10 and year 12 classes:

‘It is great. It is really interesting because it makes you think - what really matters, rather than the minutiae.’

(Henry, Interview 2)

Most of the men had an affinity with First World War poetry and taught it on teaching placement. Unable to envisage Millard’s (1997: 166-7) ‘boy-friendly’ curriculum Brian did not know how to ‘masculinise’ English but he did have clear ideas about why First World War poetry did not switch off boys. He did not support the view of seeing learners as individuals (Myhill, 1999; Pike 2000, 2004) but subscribed to the stereotype that boys are interested in ‘war, battles, soldiers, bombs’ (Brian, Interview 3). He was very aware of the cultural baggage that pupils bring in to the English classroom that tells them ‘that for boys it is not cool to read poetry. It is not cool for boys to engage with poetry on a deep and emotional level’ and the men became conscious of Miller’s (1996) paradox of teaching a subject which has been legislated and created by men, in terms of the National Curriculum, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and examination boards, but whose ‘deliverers’ are mostly female. Brian saw the powers of the cultural tide as putting more of a gender definition onto English:

‘So perhaps it is not a question of poetry being inherently feminine, maybe even it is not a case of the teaching feminising the literature, it is a case of trying to hold back a cultural tide, which I certainly don’t have an answer to that.’

(Brian, Interview 3)

However, in his second assignment Brian did have a number of ideas about how to present poetry to boys. He recommends the use of positive role models:

‘such as musicians who are taken seriously as writers, and poets who do not conform to the effete or neurotic stereotypes’

(Brian, Assignment 2)

To some extent Brian is policing the subject of English, checking it is not promoting negative images of writers. This policing contributes to the maintenance of the binaried notions of subjects and gender as it denies the complexities of gender identity that could be engaging for teenagers. It is interesting that Brian believes that English has to be packaged as ‘masculine’ to be attractive to boys and that it must not

be effeminate. Ted was unequivocal that poetry was very feminised and 'quite girly' (Ted, Interview 3). When I asked what he meant by this he said that poetry was 'pretty words'. His avoidance of teaching poetry can be attributed to his view of poetry as a possible place of threat to his masculinity and the cause of more questions from pupils about his sexuality. Ted's attitude to poetry conforms to Thomas's view of the subject embodying qualities of masculinity and femininity:

Not only are certain subjects (physics, maths, engineering) considered more suitable for men than for women, but also these subjects in themselves seem to embody qualities which are closely linked to our ideas about masculinity and femininity.

(Thomas, 1990: 19)

In his second assignment Adam believes that the predominance of female teachers could contribute to boys becoming 'concretised to the notion that school and academic achievement are feminine in nature, rejecting it for themselves, thus becoming 'less attentive in class' (Assignment 2). He is very drawn to the Mac an Ghail (1994) idea of 'macho' boys rejecting academic attainment and undermining it for others, and the role played by male teachers dealing with boys' behaviour:

Male teachers, in neutralizing young men's behaviour, failed to acknowledge the institutional power invested in masculinity with the accompanying social positioning of femininity.

(Mac an Ghail, 1994: 129)

Adam also considers the discourse of peer pressure, with accusations of being academically successful being rooted in the language of homophobia (Epstein and Johnson, 1994: 204). He is aware that boys lose interest in schooling in order to reaffirm their masculinity. From his reading and lesson observations, Adam believes that there are certain classroom practices that should be used with boys and is aware that teacher attitude, classroom interactions and environments might contribute to male under-achievement. Adam begins to see clear lesson objectives shared with pupils as a powerful tool to allow boy pupils to visualise the end result. Other male trainees were keen to identify strategies that would be effective when teaching boys. Brian identifies the need to keep reading lively and kinaesthetic (Assignment 2) and

he suggests that strategies could include DARTS (Directed Activities Related to Texts) (Lunzer et al. 1984) and 'active interrogation' (Daly, 2000:238) and using drama versions of more demanding texts such as *Oliver Twist*. Brian does not challenge the notion that boys tend not to read fictional narrative (Millard, 1997: 166), and sees the popularity of *Harry Potter* simply as an anomaly.

Adam emphasises his belief that a teacher can influence the behaviour of boys and sees this as more powerful than Millard's (1997) position that boys are differently literate and reject English because it threatens their identification of themselves as male and heterosexual. By considering the place of masculinity in boys' attitudes to English Adam also works out his own sense of identity that has been less than rigid and static because of the challenges he has experienced during the PGCE course; his position has changed. Henry also used the term 'positioned' for pupils:

'I think there is a cultural gender bias, that in some circumstances affects the way that English is positioned in the minds of the students.'

(Henry, Interview 3)

He explained that boys who were not able in English have to negotiate the subject being taught by mainly female teachers who expect them to do things in English with which they do not feel comfortable. Put simply, boys are turned off English because of its reputation for being about girls' things and being taught by women.

English as an emotional subject

For the men in the study, their masculine version of English *is* to do with emotion. This discovery came as a surprise to them. English played an important part in the men's cathexis (Connell, 1995: 90; Sargent, 2001: 10) as studying and teaching the subject helped the men fulfil their emotional needs. The need to empathise in English was cited by the men in the study as one of the reason why boys are less attracted to the subject. Recuperative masculinists see the role of teaching English in single sex groups as a key tool in tackling boys' underachievement:

‘by specifically tackling English, it tackles the key life skills of self-expression, self-awareness and communication - the very things men traditionally lack. These are the skills that make boys into better fathers, partners and workmates - which most girls and women long for.’
(Biddulph, 1997: 3)

Pike (2003, 2004) has written about the spirituality of English teaching and the special place English plays in aesthetic and moral education. Dixon (1991) points out that the special feature of the subject of English is not the content or the texts studied but the pedagogical opportunities that exist for teacher and pupils. It is what can be done in English that characterises the subject. This can seem very different from more rigidly constructed subjects that are open to less interpretation and uncertainty:

In subjects such as English, therefore, there is a constant struggle between many modes of thoughts, but in particular, between masculinity and femininity: between an emphasis on those negatively valued qualities such as emotion, a concern with people, uncertainty, intuition, and those positively valued qualities such as objectivity, certainty, scientific truth.
(Thomas, 1990: 180)

The men in the study discovered that teaching the subject brought about a set of emotions in them that they had not anticipated. There are two areas of emotion that are seen as relevant to teaching English that need explanation. The first is the assumption that the subject of English requires a degree of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996) and that women are in possession of this in greater quantities. If emotion is needed when studying English, this assumption can be seen as privileging women, who are stereotypically regarded as possessing more emotional intelligence than men, and which would explain why English is studied by more women than men. Andy saw the requirement to respond with emotion as an aspect of studying English that was especially challenging for boys and men as the demands of the subject increase further up the school. Andy saw the relationship between emotional response and literature as central to English, as he explained: ‘the literature and that sort of thing require you to use your emotion and soul to get into something.’ He did not subscribe to the stereotype that men do not ‘do’ emotion as well as women, but explained they do it differently and with more difficulty:

‘Either they do not want to, men, because they are scared of it or they can’t, some men. It is easier for women.’

(Andy, Interview 3)

Andy felt that many pupils wanted to be emotional but:

‘Men aren't trained up not to feel it. Boys at school want to. They want really over the top stuff sometimes and be really emotional about something. You can see it.’

(Andy, Interview 3)

Like the other men, Andy tried to provide for the boys’ desire for the emotional.

The second area of emotion is the amount of emotion or emotional work that is required in the classroom in order to relate with and teach children. The men in the study frequently mentioned the affective of English as one of the major surprises about learning to be a teacher. The men had not expected to be so moved by the business of being in a classroom with teenagers studying literature. They felt emotional in the classroom and outside it when thinking about it. As successful students of English the men knew that to be good at English is to be able to write and speak about what one has read, seen or heard. The assumption that girls are good at emotion and therefore good at English was a tenet of Ofsted’s (1993) report into boys and English. The men did not expect boys to have problems with dealing with the subject’s emphasis on personal feelings because that is not how they view English. For them English is to do with emotion and personal feelings but the discourse used to respond and investigate is not emotional, but is based on argument and order. Henry was very surprised by the extent to which he engaged with ‘the emotional aspects of English teaching’ (Henry, Interview 1). Andy sees a link between the emotional aspects of English literature, ‘the thoughts, feelings and opinions’ that are reached by teachers’ questions, answers, discussion and argument’ (Andy, Assignment 1). The men are presented with the pupils’ experience and expectations of English that are to do with personal feelings and expression. This, however, is not mirrored in the content and emphases of the National Curriculum and Key Stage 3 Strategy, as expressed by Barry:

‘And that kind of guilt and that fear of having an intellectual or emotional relationship with English directly relates to this need to quantify it and find that it doesn’t actually add up to much in a quantifiable sense.’

(Barry, Interview 3)

Being in the classroom was an emotional experience for the men. The roles of father, elder brother and uncle were useful refuges when coping with emotion. For example, Matt (Interview 1) slipped into talking about pupils’ progress in the lesson as ‘we’ as he saw himself working with the pupils on their work, rather like a father helping children with homework. This fits with the image he painted of himself reading to his son in bed. By the second interview Matt was surprised by how emotional teaching was:

‘I think it is quite a - it’s a human job, teaching. It is quite a touchy-feely job, for want of a better phrase and feeling comfortable and feeling yourself is best.’

(Matt, Interview 2)

So there is a link between this discovery and the need to feel comfortable in the classroom. The men begin to feel comfortable when they realise and work out ways of dealing with the emotional business of teaching English. Hoschild (1983 cited in McElhinny, 1994: 163) notes that there are jobs involving ‘emotional labour’. The men were surprised that teaching was such an emotional job; McElhinny’s term is ‘economy of affect’ (p. 165). Henry’s reflections illustrate how his emotional experiences affect his behaviour as a teacher and confirm his career decision:

‘I felt - yes - this is what I wanted to do. This is what my ambition was to do - to come into teaching - was to get engagement and response and to have a class that was interested in a text and working with it. We were getting some positive activity with them. I felt good about it. I was thinking about this last night. You get an emotional response in doing, when you are teaching and I probably hadn’t anticipated the extent to which I got an emotional response from doing that ... What I am referring to is what I feel afterwards. It is my own personal response.’

(Henry, Interview 1)

Matt acknowledged that he felt ‘quite exhilarated’ after a lesson that had gone well. He added that this emotional reaction was based on a sense of ‘developing relationships’ with the pupils (Matt, Interview 2). Some of the emotion he felt was

generated by what he referred to as 'taking on the whole persona and everything that entails and that is probably the biggest leap'. The 'leap' is his metaphor for the way he had to change to become a teacher.

Becoming an English teacher involved changes of self-identity, especially about how the men saw themselves as consumers and doers of English. Their private passion for English literature became public and open to scrutiny. Their rejection of the functional literacy exemplified in the Key Stage 3 National Strategy became a source of personal and professional conflict. The relationship between English and their identity was exposed and each of the men needed to clarify their private relationship with English whilst engaged in teaching the subject publicly to a classroom of pupils. This experience of change and renegotiation with English was an emotional business and the subject of English they wanted to teach in the classroom was found to be more emotional than they had anticipated. This chapter has highlighted the role of English in the shaping of teachers' masculinities. Chapter 7 examines the interrelationship between masculinities, being a teacher and the subject of English.

Chapter 7

'Menglish': the English the men taught

This chapter presents a summary of the study's contribution to knowledge in three established areas: masculinities, initial teacher training and the subject of English in secondary schools. I present an analysis and discussion of the findings and interpret a new area of knowledge, located where the three areas overlap. The identification of this area allows for a deeper understanding of the processes of adaptation across the three areas experienced by a group of male trainee English teachers. This study conceptualises what occurred in the male trainees' socialisation as they trained to teach the current version of secondary English in predominantly female departments. Analysis of the experience of training to become an English teacher in a feminised context unearthed a paradox between the hegemonic masculinities expected of the male trainees and the discovery of their softer masculinities. The adaptations undergone by the male trainees are shown to have been influenced by three sets of changing relationships, all of which involve shifting understandings of their masculinities. These are relationships with teaching colleagues, relationships with pupils in the classroom and their relationships with the subject of English. Combinations of these experiences and adaptations are shown to have influenced the way the men teach English as well as their decisions about their first jobs as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs).

Finally, this chapter provides new perspectives on the methodology used to research the lived experiences of a group of men. The study adds to current knowledge on our understanding of the roles played by the gender and sexuality of the researcher and the participants. The establishment of trust and the emergence of humour between a gay male researcher and male heterosexual participants allowed for comfortable and honest discussion of masculinities. Hence, this case study contributes to the field of masculinities by probing the surface understandings of the changing masculinities that occur when learning to teach English in secondary

schools. Research involving a group of male English trainees has discovered their ways of being an English teacher that are particularly informed by their changing masculinities.

A new set of theorised constructs

The data analysis reveals a new area of knowledge that has hitherto remained unidentified and unexplored. This knowledge is the identification and understanding of how, during the process of teacher socialisation, the three areas of masculinities, initial teacher training and the subject of English overlap and are mutually influential. Their interdependence and interrelationship are presented as a new set of theorised constructs. At the centre of the three areas is the study's contribution to new knowledge: the identification of a way of being a secondary English teacher that suits men. The male English trainees' new identities comprise three components: being a man, being a teacher and being a consumer and doer of English. The process of learning to become an English teacher changed the men in the study as men, and this required them to renegotiate their relationship with English. Here, Scholes's (1998) definition of academic research and its contribution to knowledge is apposite:

The idea of academic research as a "contribution to knowledge", the idea of "original research", requires an assumption of progress toward more adequate descriptions of reality.

(Scholes, 1998: 172)

By locating and analysing the social realities of male trainee English teachers new perspectives are gained. This new set of constructs provides better understandings of their socialisation, adaptation and development.

Initial teacher training: the development of trainees

In Chapter 1 several models representing the development of trainees as a series of stages or phases were considered. Sequential and chronological models of trainee teachers' development overlook the adaptations that arise from a number of

relationships identified in my study: relationships with teachers in English and other departments; relationships with pupils in the classroom and school; relationships with the subject of English being taught. In stage and phase models trainees are treated as a homogenous group and consideration of their development does not take account of the sociological factors of gender, masculinities and sexuality identities. I have applied a number of understandings of gender, masculinities and sexuality to male trainee teachers' socialisation. During their socialisation consideration of the significance of sexuality within the subject of English builds on the work of Sedgwick (1985), Harris (1990) and Ellis (2000).

My study provided a group of men training to be secondary English teachers with opportunities to articulate their socialisation and adaptation. Analysis of the written and spoken data of a group of male English trainees revealed new insights. I offer a new set of interrelated constructs, represented by Figures 1 and 2, which shows the development of seven male trainee English teachers as located in a series of overlapping adaptations. Their socialisation process involved changes in their masculinities alongside their personal and professional identities. Firstly, I present these relational adaptations in a list (Figure 1) to show where the three areas are located:

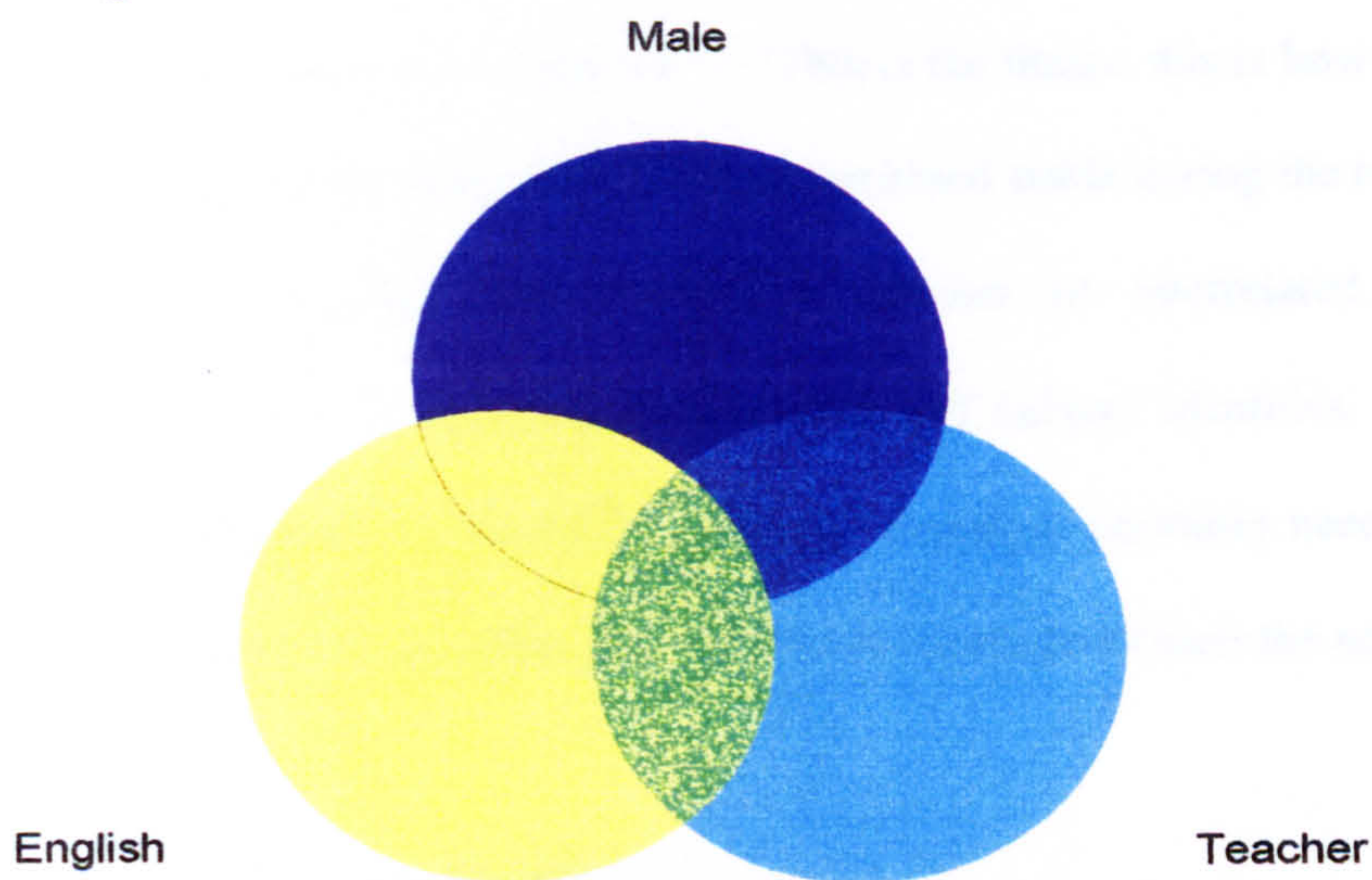
Figure 1: Locations of the adaptations involved in the development of male English trainees:

| |
|---|
| Adaptations involved in relating to colleagues in a predominantly female profession (Male) |
| Adaptations involved in relating to pupils in the classroom (Teacher) |
| Adaptations involved in relating to the subject of English (English) |

This list does not imply a temporal chronology or hierarchy, but shows the three areas where adaptations in relationships occur. This is an extension of Lacey's (1977)

socialisation theory and has some relationship to Duncan's (1999) 'coping strategies' as the men developed and changed during the study. It is also a development of theories of constructed masculinities (Connell, 1995) of men in predominantly female occupations (Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993, 1995), especially education (Sargent, 2000). For the men, changes occurred in individual areas: being a man, being a teacher and being part of the subject of English, and in combinations, as they overlapped and influenced one another. Secondly, in a Venn diagram (Figure 2), I show the inter-relatedness of the areas where changes occur:

Figure 2: Interrelationship of the adaptations involved in the development of male English trainees:



This is a non-sequential but interrelating set of constructs, which provide a way to probe our surface understandings of the three areas of adaptation. One area was the male English trainees' adaptations that occurred upon entering the predominantly female profession of English teaching. A second area of change was the gradual awareness of the significance of being a man when working with young people in a school and an English classroom. A third area of change was the trainees' repositioning within the subject of English. All three areas of change involved the male English trainees' identity, gender and sexuality vis-à-vis being a male teacher in

a feminised profession (Miller, 1992, 1996) and in the predominantly female subject of English (Thomas, 1990, 1991; Daly, 2000).

The shape of these interrelating constructs emerged towards the end of writing the first drafts of the data findings chapters. The construction of the overlapping areas occurred during a conversation with a colleague, who was nearing completion of her own thesis. As I strove to articulate the developing thesis I reached for a pencil and a Post-It note and wrote the letters M, E and T (Male, English and Teacher) in a rough triangle and drew a circle for each, using visualisation to assist the theory building, as advocated by Porter (2001). When drawn, the three circles overlapped rather like a Venn diagram. At the place where the three areas overlapped I drew an arrow and wrote MET. 'This is the thesis; this is how the men are,' I said. This visual and conceptual construct remained stable during the revision of the thesis.

The study has revealed a number of interrelated identities that are constructions of personal, professional and subject identities. These identities are inter-dependent and mutually informed. Teachers' identities need to be acknowledged and supported during the training in order to begin to meet the needs of the pupils.

An Englishy framework

Having constructed Figures 1 and 2, I sought to articulate the change and development process employing a number of metaphors that had emerged from analysis of the data. I was keen to find an 'Englishy' way of discussing the findings. Others have used metaphors for the conceptualisation of English teachers' professional development and the process of change. Davidson (2003: 345-46) uses the metaphor of a journey and feels that whilst this describes the landscape it does not explain changes in the traveller. Davidson (2003: 345) is cautious about the use of the term 'Everyman':

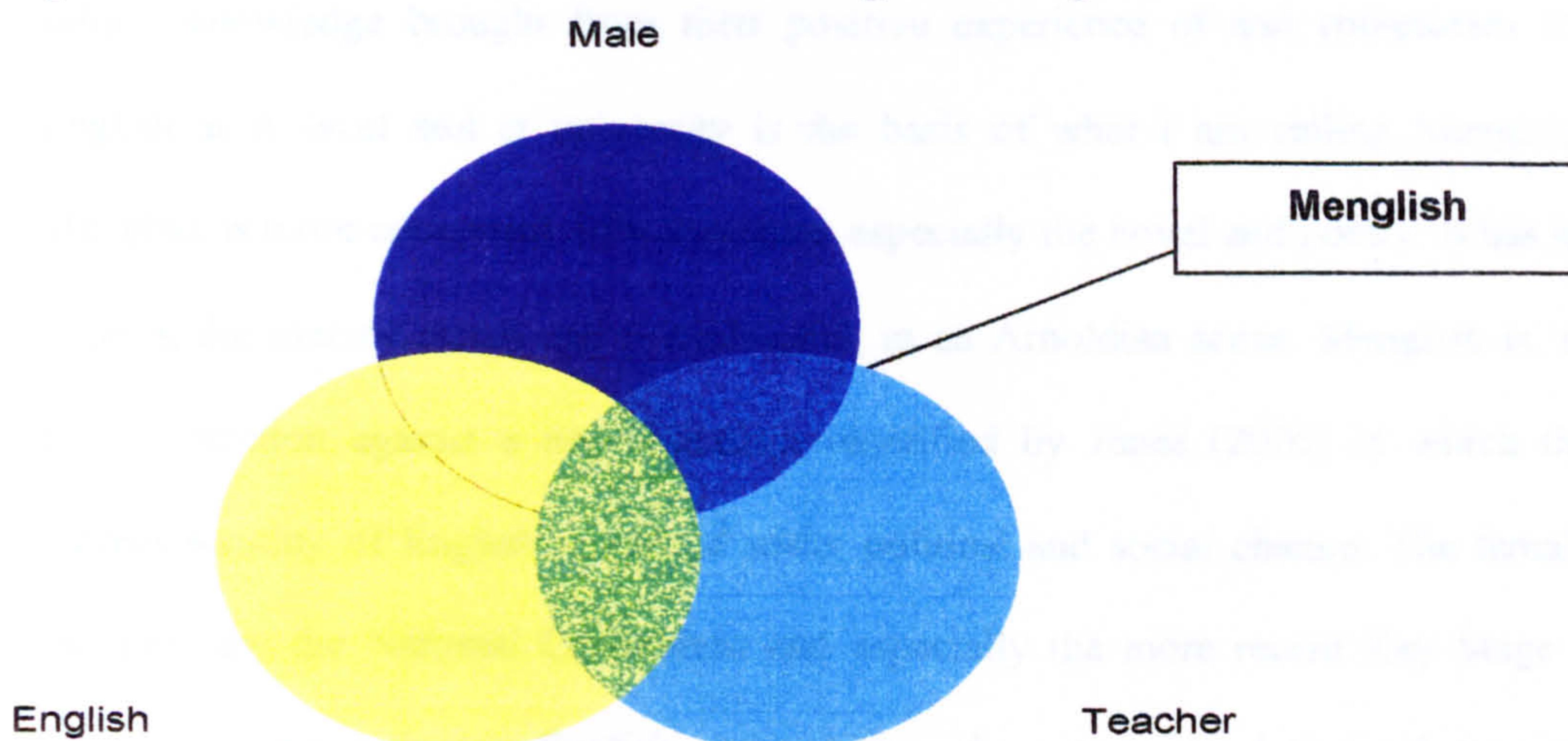
(if that sounds gendered) some Universal Person who needs to make personal changes but remains trapped in a dreamlike world of sameness.

The metaphor of male English teacher as a type of 'Everyman' features in the data in my study. In the male trainees' Reading Histories (see Appendix 2) they deploy bildungsroman imagery and refer to books about a journey to a strange land, for example, Joyce's *Ulysses*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Kerouac's *On the Road*, as well as multifarious references to adventure books. They see poetry as a quest for truth and understanding. Initially, I also used a journey or travel metaphor based on some of the trainees' own words, for example they described their professional development as 'travellers' in the 'strange' 'land' of the English teaching profession. To the men in the study I modelled my stranger status of a Welshman living in England. As a Welsh speaker and Welshman I had entered and been successful in the predominantly female territory of English teaching in England. The male English trainees entered three lands: the predominantly female profession of English teaching, the English classroom and the subject of English, where their masculinity was exposed and no longer unproblematic (cf. Mac an Ghail, 1994: 1). As the men sought the places where they could be comfortable as English teachers they moved across the borders of three areas until they reached the centre - a place where the three areas met.

The journey metaphor worked as it took account of movement across the three areas. The metaphor was useful in so far as it revealed that on the surface the men appeared to share the same cultural and educational experiences of English with other English teachers who already occupied the land of English teaching. The metaphor of journeying in a new land highlighted the men's realisation that there were gendered differences affecting their ability to live successfully in the new land of English teaching. They discovered gendered practices that they found disorientating and alienating. They found very few men to whom they could turn for guidance and direction. They judge the few other male English teachers they did find as not having assimilated with colleagues and having little to offer them. The travelling male trainees tried to imitate some of the men they saw; they also tried to

copy the women they saw. In the land of English the young people, especially the boys, although initially wary of the unfamiliar men, began to enjoy their different ways of being in the classroom and the stories they told. As the men's sojourn ended, they planned to leave in order to settle in another land, their first teaching post. They decided to plan a journey that would lead to a place where the culture would be more familiar and less strange. Some of the men decided to live in a predominantly male land; others sought to settle in lands where there would be a more male-friendly culture. The men discovered that they wanted to travel and settle in an English land where they could at last feel comfortable and at ease. I have identified in the seven men a male or masculine version of English. Building on words from the data used by the men to describe how they were teaching English, 'manny' and 'mannish', I have called this male or masculine version of English 'Menglish'^{iv}:

Figure 3: A male or masculine version of English: Menglish



Through the subject of English, the male trainees experienced changing relationships with colleagues, pupils and themselves. Consequently, they saw that their relationship with the subject of English was changing along with their own identity. 'Menglish' was the version of English adopted by the male trainees during their training year and taken into their first teaching job. This was the version of English they wanted to

teach, informed by their own experiences as men of learning, studying, consuming, making and doing English.

Menglish is not the same as the English in the National Curriculum and the Key Stage 3 National Strategy. Thus, Menglish is different from the version of English currently taught in schools. The differences between Menglish and current constructions of English and literacy became sources of dissent and disagreement. Menglish is a version of English in terms of subject content and pedagogy; it is the 'what' and the 'how' and 'why'. Menglish also describes the type of English that men consume and do. It is the type of English curriculum they like and the way they want to teach it. The mentors, who were mainly female, did not value Menglish as it was predicated on a different type of subject knowledge. An ideological clash occurred when the female mentors did not revere the version of English that the men brought to their training from their English first and higher degrees. The men's subject knowledge brought from their positive experience of and enthusiasm for English at A level and at university is the basis of what I am calling Menglish. Menglish is more concerned with literature, especially the novel and poetry. It has its roots in the literary canon and is traditional, in an Arnoldian sense. Menglish is, in part, a reaction against a neo-liberalism identified by Jones (2005) in which the current scrutiny of English is part of wider political and social change. The female mentors saw the National Curriculum and especially the more recent Key Stage 3 Strategy as the orthodox English curriculum and were resigned to implementing government directives.

In the same way that there is no single version of the subject called English, rather there are Englishes, Menglish is not a fixed or homogenous concept. Each of the men had his own version of what I call Menglish, so it I am arguing that there are Menglishes owned by each of the men in his own way. However, there are common features of each male trainee's Menglish. During their training the men's tendency to return to versions of English that are rooted in the canon was in part a reaction

against the introduction of the Key Stage 3 Strategy resulting in realignment with the Englishes they studied at school and university. At this early stage of their careers the men located their concerns about the social and political agendas in the more literary aspects of English. In so doing, their understandings of new and wider views of English became polarised against reductive and narrower understandings of literacy, which they believed the Key Stage 3 Strategy advocated. For each of the men in the study Menglish describes understandings of English which are situated in their training year.

However, the male trainees' awareness of their masculinity during their developmental process, began to involve a number of concerns. Initially, their concerns focused on a deceptively clear aim of the PGCE course: to become an English teacher. The analysis revealed that these concerns shifted and overlapped. At times their concerns were more focused on their relationships with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English. At others the concerns were focused on an awareness and understanding of their physicality, gender and sexuality. Hence, the analysis threw into relief the differences between the men and their individual masculinities but also identified some commonality. The male trainees identified differences and similarities between how they saw themselves and their female colleagues as English teachers. Towards the end of their training, the men redefined their contribution to teaching as *different* from, *rather* than better than, that of their female mentors (cf. Skelton, 2003: 206).

What happened to the men relates to what has happened to the subject of English. The subject of English now taught in secondary schools and the teachers who deliver the English curriculum have changed since the men were at school. Their experience of the training does not match their expectations, which are based on their own experience rather than on time spent in schools prior to the start of the course. The men were training to be a teacher at a time when there are societal deterrents against becoming a teacher, such as employment status, salary and

expectations of family and friends. As a backdrop to the study a powerful national media campaign from the TTA (1997), designed to attract new entrants, projected the image of a secondary teacher as a memorable icon and cultural hero. There is a gap between the cultural hero view of teaching and the reality of being a teacher experienced during their course of training.

Male trainees' awareness of their gender

The men in the study brought some awareness of the significance of their gender as they started to learn to become teachers. They had experience of studying English in numerical minority, in some cases at school and, in all cases at university, but had not countenanced any issues that were problematic. Most of the research group had had the experience of being pupils in a male dominated environment in their school experience. All had the experience of studying English at university in a female dominated environment. For example, Andy remembered from his undergraduate experience that 'English is a female dominated subject' but admitted actually enjoying being in the minority:

'It is a bit like being Chauntecleer. You are the man in a female environment. I do like it - (whispering) - I feel all special.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

However, all were unaware of the extent to which their gender would be of significance during their initial teacher training, as they worked through what Doecke and McKnight (2003: 302) identify as personal relationships with colleagues and pastoral relationships with pupils. I agree with Doecke and McKnight as the men in my study were oblivious to how their gender would affect the pedagogy of English. When making their GTTR applications and at the start of the PGCE course the men's constructions of becoming teachers focused on being in the classroom with pupils, perhaps alone. Such teacher-pupil dynamics were widely represented in images of teaching included in the TTA recruitment advertisement campaigns. For example, the advertisement showing a bald male science teacher demonstrating the Van der Graff

generator, having a joke with pupils at his expense has the quality of a feel-good film. Further into the study and their school experience their relationships with colleagues, pupils and the English curriculum and its pedagogies changed to become more complex and challenging.

What emerged from the early data was that the men did not initiate the articulation of their thoughts about their gender. This may be attributed to their lacking the language of self-consciousness or the realisation that reflective practice (Schön, 1983) would be personally challenging and exposing. The individual interviews showed how they found their way into talking about masculinity, given the dearth of men in English departments, by observing, analysing and reflecting on their work with female English teachers. Part of their understanding of what it means to be a male teacher concurs with Apple's (1986) work on men blaming 'fussy' female teachers for drawing attention to their shortcomings. However, more is explained by the admiration they had for their female colleagues' capacity for work and their ability to comply with current DfES legislation and recommended practice, which they did not wish to replicate. Apple's work needs to be seen in the light of my research, which is critical of the absent male heads of English departments and English teachers for opting out of training new male entrants. This discovery about male colleagues' lack of involvement is a riposte to Apple. The difficulties of training in predominantly female English departments are not the fault of the female teachers and mentors. They provided quality training, but were unaware of how being a man would influence the business of being an English teacher. By becoming an English teacher, in a predominantly female work environment and a subject perceived as feminine, the men were confronted by fears of losing their masculinity and their heterosexuality. Their masculinity and heterosexuality were revealed, challenged and sometimes undermined. By examining how they negotiated the school placement components of the PGCE training course I ascertained how these experiences shaped them as English teachers and men.

Vulnerable masculinity: gentle men^v, gentle teachers

In initial teacher training, where men are in the minority, my study reveals that the men's sense of their masculinities seems to be especially vulnerable. The men are men and cannot be women; neither can they be *like* women in the classroom. When required to make changes to their practices as teachers the advice and guidance offered did not take into account the ways in which the men could be that were appropriate to their masculinities. Roles in school are gendered and are currently less stereotyped because of the increasing number of female heads of department and head teachers. Having a role does not equate with having authority; having the role of a mentor is not the same as having the authority of a head of department. As seen in Chapter 4, within the culture of secondary schools' behaviour and discipline policies and practices, the male trainees were perceived by female colleagues as not enacting appropriate behaviours for their sex (Butler, 1993; Stanley and Wise, 2002). During the study, the men's sense of their masculinities was exposed in the classroom and consequently the male trainees experimented with being different types of men. By becoming aware of their own fragile masculinities, they discovered an avuncular, fraternal or paternal way of being with pupils, especially the boys. They were gentler in the classroom than was expected of them and did not conform to hegemonic constructs of masculinity (Connell, 1987, 1995). Hearn explains what has happened to men's gentler side in society:

The nurturing and gentler side of men has been obscured through the socialisation process.

(Hearn, 1987: 11)

The process of becoming a teacher brings the male trainees' gentleness out from obscurity. At times the male trainees' gentle, nurturing and non-hegemonic practices were criticised by female mentors, and this resulted in perceived criticisms of their masculinity. The female mentors based their expectations of the male trainees on their knowledge of men and women and gendered teacher behaviours. Sabbe's (2003)

opinion that gender is behaving in ways that others judge and perceive as gender appropriate is relevant here.

The male trainees' development conformed to socialisation models (Stanley and Wise, 2002) and constructionist models of gender theory. The men were active agents involved in 'doing' gender or gender performativity (Butler, 1990). As they changed and became English teachers the male trainees were seen 'putting on' their gender, using signifiers such as dress, speech, humour and anecdote. Throughout the year, different types of English teacher and masculinity emerged. At times, the male trainees presented themselves as quiet and sensitive individuals, similar to Lacey's (1977) 'tender minded' English student. These men wanted to make a difference to pupils and instil in them a love of life-changing literature. All of the men saw themselves as adopting a more pastoral role and were at times more interested in this than the subject teacher role, in line with Doecke and McKnight (2003).

In attempts to deflect criticism from mentors and perceptions by pupils of being 'too soft', some of the men adopted hypermasculine behaviours when engaged in stereotypically non-masculine practices. For example, when teaching poetry their demeanour became louder, more physical and assertive. The male trainees were cognisant of presenting to pupils an alternative way of looking at English based on hypermasculinity (Nandy, 1991; Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003) to offset challenges to their masculinity and heterosexuality. This conforming to the construct of hypermasculinity was manifested in physical loudness and spatial dominance performed within the unmasculine subject of English. The men needed to find ways of being an English teacher and to reassert their masculinity and heterosexuality, which were under threat. I saw this concept emerging during the third interview and tested it out, for example, with Andy:

Kit: 'I am going to push that even further. Are you signalling to them, 'Look, this English subject isn't soft, touchy-feely, girlie, namby-pamby stuff, because, look at me, I am a rugby playing, fully fledged heterosexual man.'

His response was representative of how the male trainees acquired an understanding of the concept of the adoption of a male or masculine version of English that I call 'Menglish':

'Yeah, a bit, there is a bit of that in it. Like I said because in the classroom I am very male and quite dominant, quite loud. I think it could be. I think you might have something, because I do sometimes with the boys. Probably. It would be sub-conscious. I wouldn't have thought about it in that way.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Importantly, all of the men, having recognised such hypermasculine behaviours, rejected them and strove to find alternative ways of being a male English teacher. Matt illustrated this conscious adaptation when talking about himself and another male English teacher. He conveyed their preference for being gentler and less stereotypically masculine:

'We are not the kind of dominant, disciplinarian type - we'd rather do it in another way if it's at all possible.'

(Matt, Interview 3)

None of the men wanted to utilise their physicality and strength to assert their authority. What the male trainees found especially helpful was to see other male teachers' ways of negotiating 'the peaks and troughs' of teaching by finding an alternative way of dealing with being in the classroom. Matt was typical of the group when he said he believed in 'appealing to pupils' sense of right and wrong or of getting them to take responsibility for themselves' and 'being liked and respected rather as opposed to kind of feared'. This balance between friendly relationships and use of discipline, also identified by Doecke and McKnight (2003: 302), was achieved by the men in the study by the adoption of male roles that pupils would recognise, such as a father and elder brother. These were contemporary masculine roles based on 'softened' (Hooper, 2000) masculinity and involved care. These are disrupted traditional gender mores and new forms of patriarchy as identified by Connell (2000). These male roles involved gentleness and emotion rather than negative and outmoded connotations of fathers and elders identified by Seidler (1988) and Burgess (1997).

Several of the men were recipients of the status of 'honorary woman' (cf. Sexton, 1969; Warren and Hackney, 2000) when regarded as becoming successful English teachers. During the further interview designed to test emerging theories carried out on 1/12/03 at Queen's University another male trainee in the group interview used the term 'honorary woman'. He had interpreted the phrase as an indication that he was a very good English teacher in the making who therefore merited the title of 'honorary woman'. Another way of interpreting this is that the female colleagues accepted him and allowed him into their female only 'club' for reasons other than good teaching, for example, to enjoy the frisson of male company. However, the women disliked the men being softer and gentler; the men were comfortable with being more feminine than they had ever been, but felt confused because they were criticised for being too weak. The men needed to reconcile the softer side of their masculinity, deployed when being a teacher, with their usual social masculinities. The men took opportunities in school staffrooms to enact some traditional male behaviours, for example talking about sport and drinking. Where these opportunities were not available the men felt isolated and found it hard to settle. Brian (Interview 3) illustrated how he found it hard to settle with a cameo of how he wanted to walk into the English department and ask his colleagues about last night's football, but did not. He was not necessarily assuming that his female colleagues would not be interested in football but observed that they didn't talk about football at work as much as men. On occasions the male trainees in the study were faced with the contradiction of being unable to be 'proper men' because of their unwillingness to adopt the power and authority used by female colleagues. As the men learned to become teachers I identified gendered advice from female and male mentors and university tutors, as well as gendered differences in the quality, content and presentation of written work. The men repositioned themselves in relation to pupils and colleagues, but also to their partners, families and friends. The changes they

underwent and the way they developed as men and as teachers are closely interrelated.

Mac an Ghail (1994: 38) observed that interviews with men at times took on a confessional mode. The men in my study did take the opportunity of the individual interviews to explore their concerns in an unthreatening and confidential arena. In Mac an Ghail's study the men showed a resistance to talk about emotional issues, whereas in my study emotional issues emerged early on as the participants identified feeling emotional in the classroom with pupils. At the start of the PGCE course, the male trainees resisted talking about the emotional issues of gender and masculinity as they did not think these would be relevant. Their masculinities were thrown into relief when teachers and pupils made them aware of the gender differences between male and female English teachers and assumptions about the gendered nature of English as a subject. This was emotionally challenging and the men saw the value of talk, especially during the interviews, to help them make sense of what was happening.

Having an English background explains why the men tuned into the role played by language in their social construction as teachers. In the classroom, the male trainees realised that could not imitate the teacher language of the teachers they saw, who were predominantly female. They looked for alternatives in the male teachers they saw in other subject areas: softer, gentler and more similar emotionally to them. To negotiate the emotional business of being in a pastoral and caring English classroom required the men to have a language in which to express things from a male and English perspective. Andy (Interview 1) discovered a masculine English teacher language. He identified a 'house style' of teacher language in his placement English department where I had taught most of the teachers who came from the Soulbridge PGCE course. He recognised words and phrases that had been passed from tutor to trainee who in turn became the mentor, so there was a seamless continuity of training-to-teach English discourse. Andy felt comfortable as he

recognised the stock phrases used in the English department as coming from his male tutor.

Masculinities and choice of first job

As the men applied for their first teaching job, they were aware of gender issues influencing their decisions about applications. Importantly, they wanted to teach in ways that *they* would want to be taught. They were surprisingly traditional in their attitudes to the English curriculum and its pedagogy.

In accordance with Miller (1996) and (Clarke et al., 2004) I also noted the role and relevance of social class in the men's decisions about how to deal with children and which schools to work in. The class system is often played out in secondary schools in England where middle-class parents have the socio-economic power to be able send their children to a school high in the league tables. The men spoke of the working life they might have in a 'tougher' school and therefore the sort of professional they would become. This included the type of colleague, social life and involvement in extra-curricular activities, all of which were important to the men. Early in the course the men talked about wanting to work in tougher schools with inner city features. The men reverted and ended up teaching in schools that are very similar to the ones that they themselves attended. Analysis of the type of school where six male trainees who passed the PGCE course took their first post as newly qualified teachers reveals that there was a discernible masculine quality to each school. By the end of the course (see Table 7) the six successful trainees had chosen and secured jobs in schools that were single sex, selective or near the top of the league tables. The men perceived these schools as having kudos. In addition, they presented opportunities for the men to pursue school activities with more traditionally masculine associations, such as extra-curricular rugby, football and debating societies.

The following accounts from the data illustrate how the men changed their views of their future careers and the contribution made by gender to their decisions. In the second week of the course, the trainees visited Ruth, the teacher tutor, in her school and spent the day observing her English department in action. Ruth asked the trainees to introduce themselves and say why they wanted to be a teacher. Matt was the last of twenty-six and said that whilst he echoed the sentiments of everyone else in the room, the main reason for teaching was that it would provide him with a qualification for a mobile job. Matt was very aware of his family responsibilities and of how a career in teaching could provide some practical solutions. With the PGCE, he would be able to move to another area where he could afford to buy a house. Of the entire group, perhaps Matt needed a job the most. He found it hardest to secure a post and was unsuccessful at several interviews. When offered a post it was in an English department with more men than women. The female head of department expressed some of the stereotypes of her numerous male colleagues:

‘The head of department said to me, she said, “I don’t want another disorganised man.” She made a point of saying it. She also made a point of saying, “I am very pleased you got it..”

Proud of his organisational skills, he was aware of being a non-stereotypical man. Matt described the gender balance of his new English department from a position of strength:

‘There will be four blokes, including me, and two or three women. Something like that, not sure. The head of department is a lady. I think it’s me and three other blokes.’

(Matt, Interview 3)

It was this gender imbalance in favour of men that allowed Matt to say that the department he would work in felt ‘genderless’ because he was going to work in a department that was ‘seventy per cent men anyway.’ Matt used the word ‘genderless’ to mean that the English department was not feminised or pre-dominantly female.

Andy discovered that he enjoyed teaching boys but also enjoyed the atmosphere of a predominantly male English department and school.

'I just want to get on with my job. I'd love to start it now. I am really excited ... It is the perfect school. I picked it - all boys. ... It is very like my old school.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Again, he used the word 'comfortable' to explain how he felt entering a new school for interview that was like the one he attended as a pupil. Part of this he put down to pupils' expectations when they are used to men teaching them English. He felt as if he was 'helping out' in his first placement school and was not allowed to be a teacher (Andy, Interview 2). The impact of securing a job had a significant effect on the male trainees' self image:

'I feel more of a 'professional' in a way. I have a *job*.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

They felt valued for their enthusiasm rather than criticised for their arrogance. Miller (1996: 9) concludes that it is women who provide most state education in the UK and that parents who opt for the private sector are, amongst other things, paying for an absence of women. The men's original reasons for becoming a teacher were based on altruism and a desire to change society in some small way. They did not declare a desire to teach in a particular type of school and expected schools to be good or bad depending on the pupils' behaviour. Brian chose his new school because the staff and the English department had an equal gender balance and because the Head of Department was male: 'For me that is a positive' (Brian, Interview 3)

Their gender and a growing awareness of their masculinity influenced the men's choices of first teaching jobs. Several related issues influenced their deliberations around the type of school where the men would start their careers. Arguments among the male and female trainees took place throughout the year about choosing a first teaching job in a middle-class school, which was seen as a 'soft' option, lacking in social responsibility. There were heated discussions in university taught sessions, in the refectory and around the campus. Adam reflected on what had gone on:

'We have had quite a few conversations at university, 'cos some, a few of

my colleagues are not resentful but question the fact that a lot of people who have got jobs already have got jobs in good schools and they question the fact that our decision to come into the profession was to make a difference. And they question whether we're really making a difference if we go to work in a middle-class comprehensive rather than a school that struggles.'

(Adam, Interview 2)

At the start of the course, the trainees had discussed publicly their reasons for teaching and they monitored one another's choice of first school. When some trainees' perceptions of English teaching as a career changed and their initial intentions for first jobs shifted towards less demanding schools other trainees became confused and threatened. On one occasion 14 out of the 25 English trainees missed a General Professional Studies seminar and went to the student bar to discuss the issue (Fieldnotes, 30/10/01). The catalyst was that one of the men (Brian) had voiced his opinion that all newly qualified teachers should start their careers in challenging schools. The group interviews contain criticisms of the school they all visited where the Teacher Tutor, Ruth, worked, for being too middle-class, comfortable and cosy. This is a comprehensive school in an affluent town with exemplary pedagogical practice and pupil behaviour. Brian's personal experience of having been educated himself in a school in a socio-economically and disadvantaged area explained his political stance at the start of the course. His own experience of schooling was set against a predominance of selective and independent schools in the education histories of the other men in the research group. Yet, in spite of what he believed about trainee teachers having a responsibility to work in challenging schools, Brian chose to work in a boys' grammar school, where he hoped the teaching would be more similar to his experience of university lecturing.

He was not alone in this decision to teach boys. Several of the men chose to return to work in boys' schools. Andy was delighted at the prospect of teaching only boys:

'Very deliberately as well. After I had that interview in the girls' school - awful.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

I asked what had attracted Andy to a boys' school. His response shows a cocktail of reasons, all of which have gender at their core:

'On a practical side, I play rugby and do refereeing and coaching. And I like the idea of that side of it. I just want to be teaching boys to be honest with you. I think also I want to be an example in English, because there are so few men now who seem to do it. So I thought I'd get in there and share my enthusiasm and I love the subject. Maybe they will. It happened to me at A level and, I don't know, perhaps I can do the same thing.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

As well as being a positive role model, combining English with sport, Andy seemed to fit in with members of the English department. Much of this he put down to having played the school in rugby when a pupil himself. He recounted how on the interview day the English teachers joked with him:

'And literally within ten minutes we were laughing and joking and I was making jokes. And I remember thinking, got to remember you are on interview and I thought, actually, no, bugger it, I don't care.'

(Andy, Interview 3)

Adam also saw working with more men and teaching boys as a familiar and comfortable haven. In the first interview he had described how prescriptive classroom management approaches 'clouded' the subject of English. He ended his third interview by comparing his career with that of his female mentor who often shouted at the year 7 pupils and this confirmed that teaching boys would be the right job for him:

'I am really enjoying it. I am in this really nice calm atmosphere doing GCSE coursework and it is fantastic - really enjoying it.'

(Adam, Interview 3)

Adam had also been on the receiving end of what he felt was harassment from female pupils who 'fancied' him and from other pupils who teased him verbally because of his resemblance to a television character from a soap opera. He came to see me and used some of the interview time to talk about these incidents. In spite of my advice to him, he did not talk about these incidents with his mentors, fearing this would make matters worse. His initial reason for teaching was to make a difference to individual pupils and he believed he would teach in the more challenging context of a state

comprehensive school. The experience of two school placements in such schools and the hassle he received from the 'giggly girls' resulted in his decision to work in a boys' school (Trulam Boys^{vi}) which is rated highly in the school league tables:

'I am not saying that at Trulam Boys the behaviour will be better, it will just be different in the way that I can deal with there - happy to deal with. Having been to Trulam - very nice school, children are bright, respectful and I think that when you have got that you can work.

(Adam, Interview 2)

It was clear that Adam has chosen to begin his teaching career in a school serving an affluent, middle-class catchment area.

In *To Sir, With Love* (Braithwaite, 1959) the protagonist picks up on the message that the only reason that teaching in an inner city 'tough area' school is open to him is because 'most teachers prefer to seek jobs elsewhere', (p.49). He suspects that being a member of a visible ethnic minority would be ignored in this instance because of the job's unattractiveness. On his first day as a teacher at Greenslade School he expresses 'The joy and excitement I felt at my good fortune'. This is the first sign that Braithwaite will become the crusader against cynicism among his teaching colleagues and a quiet campaigner in the face of ignorance and prejudice. He discovers a role for himself and a purpose in society founded in a love of teaching and the desire to release the latent potential of his pupils.

I want to compare the experience of this fictional character with what happened to the men in the study. At the start of their PGCE, they wanted to teach in demanding schools but by the end they wanted a less challenging start to their careers. They wanted to be able to teach the subject of English rather than be constantly concerned with discipline problems. Whilst this shift is familiar as exhausted trainees fantasise about teaching being easier in less demanding schools the data reveal that much of this change of heart is to do with low self esteem. At the start of the course the men had high, often messianic, aspirations that were to do with making a difference in challenging schools. However, the men started to believe that they were actually not very good as English teachers in such schools and were

certainly not as good as they ought to be (cf. Lacey, 1977) according to their female mentors. They wanted to avoid criticism, cynicism and getting into trouble for being too gentle with pupils:

‘I am often too lenient. I think my particular way of teaching hasn’t perhaps got as cynical as teachers which have been in it for a long time.’
(Ted, Interview 3)

The trainees entered the profession of English teaching having trained in predominantly female English departments. The training in school was a feminised experience. I do not suggest that it was a bad experience because it was feminised, but it should be acknowledged as feminised. Some men welcomed the feminised experience as an antidote to the hegemonic masculinities of other careers. The award of the title of ‘honorary woman’ by female mentors and English teachers signalled success for the men. The men were also trained to teach a feminised subject. Barry, the trainee who failed, had the greatest awareness of these gender issues and wanted the opportunity to articulate his new understandings of masculinities in the English teaching career that he did not join. The men denied themselves support by not admitting or articulating they were experiencing problems. Initially, they could not identify the potential problems they might have as male English teachers. They did not have the language or the conceptual tools to articulate the issues and problems for male English teachers. Much of what happened in the classroom they regarded as par for the course and accepted it.

Analysis of the trainees’ experience of schooling shows communality within this group. Most of the men attended single sex schools. The majority of the men were educated in the independent sector. Of those three who attended state schools, two schools were Catholic denominational schools, with elements of pupil selection. Whilst the sample is too small to offer statistically reliable conclusions, the fact remains that the formative experiences of this group of men were located in particular types of schools. These schools were predominantly male in terms of staff and pupils, and less challenging in terms of the socio-economic background of the pupils.

It was to this type of school that the male trainees returned to begin their careers as newly qualified English teachers.

Gay man/tutor researching straight men/trainees

Early in the twenty-first century, I noted the increase in the number of female researchers investigating English teachers (for example, *inter alia*, Daly, Leach, Marshall, Turvey). This should continue given the numerical dominance and improved career prospects of female teachers in schools and higher education institutions. Women as influential educators are claiming this field of study. The knowledge gained through my study provides an understanding of the opportunities and the challenges of researching one's own trainees. The findings contribute to an understanding of the tensions and opportunities presented when engaged in a multi-textured analysis of masculinities and teacher development.

I am now in a position of greater expertise when teaching the male and female trainees, especially when considering issues of gender within English and the related territories of attainment, assessment, classroom management, groupings, single sex and mixed schools. In addition, as their university tutor I have a set of insights into typical patterns of development and changes that inform the way I deliver lectures, seminars and tutorials. In addition, this expertise affects how I train and support school and university colleagues when working with male trainees in groups at the university and on a one-to-one on school placement. Previously, such approaches in secondary initial teacher education lacked a probing beneath the surface assumptions of gender and sexuality in initial teacher training.

Throughout the study, the men announced their heterosexuality to me in their writing and in the interviews, by referring to their girlfriends, wives and children. Football was another shorthand way of announcing heterosexuality. They also announced their comfort with or acceptance of homosexuality. Bersani (1995) points out that even the most openly sympathetic 'straights' do not want to be mistaken for

one of those whose rights they defend (Bersani, 1995:1). During the PGCE course, I taught the workshop on sexuality and homophobia. This was when I chose to announce my gay identity to the trainees/participants, explaining that this was because I felt comfortable with them (Fieldnotes, 25/1/02). As an out gay man in an academic setting I am aware of my need for approbation, which matches Bersani's observation 'that we are only some malevolent invention and that we can be, like you, good soldiers, good parents, and good citizens' (p. 42) and that this position has feelings of discomfort and resentment. Warren and Hackney (2000: 32) discuss the sexualisation of research relationships and the sexual harassment of female researchers by respondents. However, within the context of my study it was important for me to gain and maintain the men's trust in the various roles that I held. The men in turn were equally keen to gain my approbation. I wanted acceptance as a gay man; they wanted acceptance as English teachers. For both researcher and participant part of the process of gaining trust was located in coded or subliminal declarations: my declaration of homosexuality and their declarations of heterosexuality. When being advised by me about how to present himself as a professional English teacher Matt admitted to having felt coerced by me, a gay man, into buying a suit, the traditional uniform of a heterosexual man:

'I had to go and buy a bloody suit!'

(Matt, Interview 2)

Matt felt able to tease me during the second interview when reflecting on our respective professional attire, as a gay and a heterosexual man:

'You probably own more ties than any man alive.'

(Matt, Interview 2)

During the interviews, he articulated a developing awareness of his professional self-image, often with humour. He became especially animated and exaggerated in his mannerisms (Matt, Interview 2) when explaining his classroom comedic style. He felt relaxed with me and was able to explore part of his extrovert or camp style. There were instances where the men adopt a more 'camp' style in their talk and discourse

during the interviews. Andy got his words mixed up when telling a story about pupils on a non-uniform day:

‘I was going to say “in drag” then (laughs)’

(Andy, Interview 2)

It seemed as though by adopting a more ‘camp’ style of discourse in the second interviews the men were able to articulate emerging concerns about their masculinities. They adopted a ‘camp’ discourse as a tentative and light-hearted way to talk through their shifting masculinities with a gay man who found such adaptations interesting and worthy of consideration. The ‘camp’ style protected them by using a buffer of humour. It provided them with ways into the unfamiliar territory of talking about softer and more vulnerable masculinities in a professional context. Although such moments of humour were unanticipated, they illustrate how the participants and I benefited from the research.

Male trainees as beneficiaries of humanistic research

During the study I modelled to the trainees someone who combined research, teaching and management careers. Particularly in the second and third individual interviews, the participants found the interviews useful and enjoyable as they were working through issues that were becoming important to them. They saw themselves less as research participants and more as male colleagues discussing shared interests. These men saw talking about their own experiences and adaptations as part of what being an English teacher involves. They saw that future research could tell them about some of the issues with which they struggled, such as pupils’ perceptions of them, as expressed by Henry:

‘I think they probably think that I am some sort of proper teacher but can’t quite work out why I am different. I hope so. I will be quite happy if you did a questionnaire and that’s what came out.’

(Henry, Interview 1)

At this stage in their development, they did not recognise that they themselves could be the drivers of future research.

During the individual interviews, the men reasserted their masculinity, that had been under attack in school, through engaging in an intellectual conversation about ideas and issues to do with education, subject of English and male identity. There are a number of reasons for this. They felt valued by my interest in them as men, teachers and consumers and doers of English. There was time, usually about an hour, for a wide-ranging conversation to develop. This was especially the case in the first two interviews where I allowed the men to set the agenda within a fluid set of areas of interest, as shown in Chapter 3. Although the conversations were tape-recorded, the men knew that the conversations were private and not to be used outside the research parameters. In that sense, the environment was safe and unthreatening.

All the participants enjoyed the chance to discuss what they perceived as intellectual or academic ideas related to the business of learning to teach English. On the one hand, they were very interested in the research and the related theories of identity, gender and the subject of English. On the other hand, they were keen not to be patronised by me and signalled their own expertise, in three cases at postgraduate level. My humility as a researcher prevented a locking of horns when some of their language was testing my academic credentials. For example, Barry and Brian talked at length about Lacan and Modernist poetry respectively to demonstrate their expertise to me. They perceived my position as a gay researcher to be less threatening and it served to counterbalance my more powerful role as course tutor. These power relations were more fluid because of the multiple roles I held.

Talking through difficult professional issues that impinged on the personal was beneficial. For example, Adam (Interview 2) acknowledged how our talk about handling 'giggly girls' and dealing with pupils teasing him gave him a professional viewpoint:

'I suppose after the chat I had with you ... I think just to have that conversation, I came in with a different mindset anyway.'

(Adam, Interview 2)

Talking through his feelings of embarrassment and harassment allowed him to handle the incidents by changing his perception or mindset. There was no one else available in the school with whom he felt able to talk. The other feature of the interview conversations was the way the men compared their work life balance with mine. Again, Adam (Interview 1) provided a clear illustration of this, when talking about lesson planning:

‘I normally tend to do work at about 11 o’clock at night so I always find - you must know this - you get in from work and want to collapse for an hour or so, and watch a bit of telly so I tend to do that and then start.’

(Adam, Interview 1)

The male English trainees stated regularly how they enjoyed and benefited from being involved in a research project, and looked forward to the ‘chat’. Most of the men (Adam, Matt, Andy, Brian, Henry) used the word ‘chat’ when they referred to the conversational interviews (cf. Burgess, 1982). This is supported by Sargent (2000: 172), when acknowledging the influence of Cohen, (1991) and Messner (1993) whose male research participants reported how they enjoyed recounting the events in their lives once trust and rapport had been established. Sargent (2000: 172) admits as he prepared to interview male elementary school teachers that his intention was to challenge the stereotype of ‘men’s lack of emotionality and expressiveness in the interviews’. All of the participants expressed how much they looked forward to the interviews because of the opportunity to talk at length. Henry was surprised to discover how loquacious he was:

‘I rattled on. I don’t think of myself as being a compulsive talker but apparently, I am.’

Henry (Interview 1)

By being in an interview, Henry was able to experience the talkative side of his professional personality and identity. By the end of the interview, he discovered that he could be garrulous and the intimacy of the one-to-one contact released his ability to be informal and conversational. The format of the interviews, although conducted in an empty classroom or office, felt cosy and informal. Perhaps for the men this

semi-structured interview conversation was a non-traditional masculine discourse, particularly in a work context. The intimacy of the interview conversation (Burgess, 1982) was unusual for the men. They did not have a wide choice of men with whom to have a dialogue in school. Being involved in the interviews furnished the male participants with ways to move beyond the stereotypical views held of them by male and female peers, colleagues, pupils, family and friends. The interviews become conversations where they discussed complex arguments and engaged in a discussion about ideas. For all trainees, busy classrooms and staffrooms do not allow such discourse and the time spent back at the university following days in school, where there is the opportunity, has always been popular with trainees.

Barry, the one trainee who failed the PGCE course, offered himself, in his own words, as the 'aberrant case' on several occasions. He opted to continue his involvement in the study after it became clear he was not going to meet the standards for QTS. He spoke disparagingly about these standards:

'Because if suddenly you're handed a load of standards that you have nothing to do with, you have to live by a grid.'

The reductive content and atomised structure for training and assessing teachers did not match his holistic model of English. Involvement in the research provided him with the chance to feel valued during a period when he could have felt a failure. When I asked him whether talking to me throughout the year had been useful his response was a validation of my research methodology but critical of the cerebral life of the teaching profession:

'It's nice, as I said to go from the anti-intellectual atmosphere to go into something where opinion and idea actually account for something. That's nice. It's nice to feel a human side of the course where I am not just a failing teacher. So, yeah, I have enjoyed it. I have looked forward to it.'

(Barry, Interview 3)

Involvement in the research, especially the interviews, made them aware that their entry to the English teaching profession was more subtle and complex than they had anticipated. Their entry gradually became smoother and more successful when the

men were aware of and able to articulate issues relating to their masculinity and their sexuality. Being taught by me helped the men in the study to be reflexive; being involved in the research provided them with ways in which to think about themselves as men, both personally and professionally.

This chapter has identified this thesis's contribution to knowledge in the areas of masculinities, initial teacher training and the subject of English in secondary schools. The identification of the concept of 'Menglish' offers a new theoretical construct for consideration of each of these areas. This construct allows new perspectives on the feminisation of teaching and the subject of English. In terms of masculinities, the male trainee English teachers' adoption of softer, non-hegemonic ways of teaching has been a key discovery. In terms of the English curriculum, the study has shown a stronger relationship between male trainees and the literary components of the subject. In part, this is a backlash against the new reductionism approaches to English, epitomised by the atomisation of English into functional literacy. The men champion the way they were taught English and many begin their own teaching careers in schools that are similar to the ones they attended. Overall, the men opt to begin their teaching careers in more affluent schools where they hope they will have greater autonomy in the classroom as teachers of literature. The use of ethnographic approaches in this case study offers both an enhanced understanding of masculinities and a way forward for conducting future research in this new area of knowledge. Through the lenses of masculinities the concluding chapter will identify implications in respect of changes to practice, suggestions for further research and future policy.

Chapter 8

Conclusions: the first chapter

In *A History of Reading* (1996), Alberto Manguel calls his first chapter 'The Last Page'. In concluding this thesis, I borrow his conceit of reversing the first and last, in the hope that my study will be the first chapter in research about male trainee English teachers. It has been important to study a group of seven men training to become secondary English teachers because the findings make an important contribution to new knowledge about the adaptations they underwent as men and as teachers of English. Based on their experiences I have uncovered a way of being an English teacher adopted by male trainees, which is found in their understandings of the interrelationship between being a man, a teacher and the subject of English.

In this chapter, the implications of the study's findings and conclusions are outlined and translated into a number of recommendations for changes to practice that have been applied in my institution. These are developed to show how the study would benefit from further research, which would in turn be of interest and relevance for a wider audience, including, inter alia: male and female trainee and practising teachers of English; teacher trainers in schools and higher education; policy makers in initial teacher training, recruitment and retention; policy makers in the curriculum subject of English and the teaching of literacy; those interested in gender, men and masculinities.

Findings and conclusions

When writing about the use of findings and conclusions of Masters and Doctoral work Andrews (2001: xxi) suggests that there needs to be 'an understanding that dissemination is not always most effective "after the event"', in other words soon after the data have been gathered and analysed. Andrews also draws attention to the need for 'an appreciation of the stages of a research project, and of the value of work that is not immediately convertible into practice'. In line with Andrews's recommendations, during the research I decided not to disseminate the findings until

they had been written and theorised more thoroughly. I did lead a workshop at a conference in 2004, using a model of male trainee teacher adaptation that I was constructing for the thesis. The workshop was positively received and delegates engaged with the material. However, a few months later when writing up the data analysis chapters I had the uncomfortable realisation that the model created was not working, as it suggested that male trainees' socialisation was a chronological and staged process. The desire to present the findings to a live audience had created a model that was flawed. A return to the data and more rigorous axial coding allowed the data to speak in the writing. The desire to write a coherent thesis revealed a clearer and more robust representation of the findings.

The study has created the first chapter about a deeper understanding of men training to be secondary English teachers and has identified a masculine way of teaching English, adopted by a small group of male trainees, that I have called 'Menglish'. During their training, the men did not live up to the stereotypes and expectations held by their female mentors. The male trainees found ways of teaching English which took account of their masculinity, which were more gentle and emotional than they had anticipated, and which brought their heterosexuality into question. Humour and anecdotes were signifiers of the relaxed teaching personae these heterosexual male teachers adopted. They preferred to teach the literary components of the English curriculum rather than the literacy elements being implemented in schools. They found training in predominantly female contexts challenging and would have benefited from contact with other male teachers. The six men who passed the PGCE realised that their choices of first teaching post were influenced by a desire to work in a more masculine environment than they had experienced during their training. Three men opted to work in boys' schools; three chose to work in mixed schools in affluent areas where there were other male English colleagues. Noticeably, the schools they chose to work in were more similar to the schools they themselves attended as pupils than those in which they were trained. The men could be seen as rejecting the

predominantly female experiences of their training whilst seeking out the more familiar male experience of their own schooling and socialisation.

Implications for changes to practice in my institution

During the study, the emerging themes inevitably influenced my work with trainee teachers and school-based mentors. I have gained special knowledge about men's training needs and their complex relationships with colleagues and pupils. The precision of the language I used to render the findings sharpened during the various stages of the enquiry, especially during the data collection and analysis stages. My growing awareness of the male trainees' experiences, adaptations and perceptions affected the conversations I had with colleagues and mentors at my institution. I shared this new knowledge informally with other university teacher trainers through professional networks, as well as in meetings with Ofsted, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Throughout the study, other informal audiences including students, colleagues, friends and family, on hearing me describe the study grasped quickly the issues of masculinity and English teaching, often drawing on their own knowledge and experience of school, teachers and English. They have been keen to know more and enter a discussion about the findings. Whilst cognisant of the feminisation of teaching in primary schools and the arguments surrounding male role models in schools, they have not seen these issues from teachers' or trainees' points of view, but from the viewpoint of pupils' needs. There are widely held beliefs about the need for more men to be teaching in sectors that are beyond the limits of my study, including early years, primary, further and higher education. My findings and implications for changes to practice are not concerned with a general cry about encouraging more men into teaching. However, I am suggesting that male English trainees would benefit from more professional contact with men and ideally from some training by a male mentor.

In order to train successfully and meet the needs of male trainees on initial teacher training courses there are a number of specific practices that I have been working on in my own institution. The study indicated that female mentors found it hard to recognise the male trainees' strengths and focussed on their weaknesses. An important change to practice has been to place gender relations between mentors and trainees at the centre of mentor training programmes delivered by the university education department. Hitherto, mentors have not received training about the gender issues involved in initial teacher training. For mentors and trainees, gender issues have previously been limited to the issues of teaching male and female pupils. Mentor training has been adapted to include materials and activities that acknowledge gender issues, for example providing strategies that allow mentors to identify areas of potential success for male trainees as well as possible difficulties. Developments have taken the form of written scenarios and case studies. A development planned for the future is to view and analyse videos of meetings between male and female trainees and mentors.

I have also been working with colleagues to provide male trainees on school placement with strategies to help them avoid being stereotyped by mentors and host teachers. There are a number of possible approaches suggested in the data. Henry recommended becoming fully involved in the life of the school early in the placement to counteract any perceptions based on the male trainee stereotypes, especially being lazy and laid back. Several male trainees suggested going into school placements paired up with another man. This allows discussion of lessons observed, joint planning and shared or team teaching. The pairing offers security about being a man working with young people and the chance to see another man relating and communicating with teachers and pupils. It also offsets the sense of being anomalous in the eyes of the teachers and pupils.

Based on my study's findings I have been discussing with my colleagues a number of possible changes to future practice. Male English trainees need access to women and other men as part of learning to become successful English teachers. They

need to see women and men teaching English skilfully and successfully. However, they need to observe a range of teaching and learning styles, especially those deployed by other men. Existing male English teachers must become involved and take responsibility for the training of the English teachers of the future. They can no longer rely on their female colleagues to carry out the training and mentoring of new teachers. Mentoring, supporting and guiding novice teachers must not be seen as the preserve of female colleagues. Male teachers must become more conscious of how they interact with colleagues, pupils and the subject of English in order to support new entrants. To ensure that male trainees have access to a male tutor a range of staff should carry out visits to male trainees on school placement. The focus of the early school visits could be on issues to do with settling into the English department and coping with the social aspects of becoming a teacher, especially where the male trainee is in a predominantly female department or does not have regular contact with other male teachers. A conversation with a tutor early on the course is probably better than a lesson observation to assist the trainee to settle into the placement before beginning the assessment process. Foregrounding the way male teachers establish relationships with pupils, utilising their experience of being a father, brother or uncle has been one approach colleagues and I have been piloting with individual and small groups of male trainees and mentors. Job applications, interviews and choice of the school for the NQT year should be discussed early in the course with university tutors and mentors. The gender implications of these processes for male trainees should be made explicit. There are specific implications for men, in terms of professional presentation and interview technique, which should be discussed with the male trainees when applying for their first posts to ensure they are well prepared.

Implications for changes to practice in other institutions

It may be possible for others to consider and adapt the above recommendations to fit their own contexts. Possible audiences of my study are those who have interests

in related areas of research, practice and policy, such as initial teacher training, gender relations in the work place, the feminisation of schooling, the teaching of boys and girls, English and literacy, teaching and learning in higher education. These audiences will be able to extrapolate what is interesting and relevant from my findings and implications, based on the experiences of male English trainee teachers, to cast light on their own practices and policies.

The insights about male trainees revealed in my study are more likely to be of interest to teacher trainers in other schools and higher education institutions, including school-based mentors and host teachers in English departments in secondary schools. In short, my study's findings and conclusions suggest that in the teaching of English attention must be paid to the gender of teachers and teacher trainers.

At institutional level, teacher training providers should look carefully at their programmes and the training experiences offered to ensure that equal opportunities policies are being successfully and appropriately delivered. This will involve explicit monitoring of the gender features of advertising, recruitment, selection, progression and attrition. Programme monitoring and evaluation systems should capture the experiences of those in minority groups, including men. The range of providers includes higher education institutions such as university departments, schools and faculties of education, offering PGCE Programmes, and also institutions delivering School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITTs). These institutions offer a range of training routes such as Fast Track Teaching, Teach First, Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), Registered Teacher Programme (RTP) and Overseas Teachers Training (OTT) programme. The school English curriculum, undergraduate English courses and initial teacher training courses are all likely to change in the future. However, it is probable that there will always be *some* men training to be secondary English teachers. The training of these men should be underpinned by practices that are informed by the insights and knowledge revealed in this research.

Reflections on the study: suggestions for further research

My study has created the first chapter of research into men in secondary English teaching. Suggestions for future research are located in the three separate areas of initial teacher training, masculinities and the subject of English and, where these three overlap, in a fourth area of 'Menglish'.

The findings in my study are based on what happened to a small group of men during their PGCE secondary English training. The study's strength is that the research methodology, a case study using ethnographic research methods, enabled me to find out about the male trainees in depth using a wide range of written and spoken data. The relationships established with the seven participants developed over time, and became founded on trust, integrity and a shared interest in discovering the social realities of being a male English teacher. Based on my small study, further research in the form of a larger sample over several institutions would be worth conducting to see whether the findings are replicated. I wanted my study to capture the experiences of a small group of male trainees during their PGCE course. Whilst this has been achieved, the study did not follow the male trainees into their first teaching posts and track them further into their careers. This would have provided some small scale longitudinal data that would have been of value. My research has been based on the perceptions of a small number of male trainees. It did not utilise the perceptions of the female mentors in the placement schools. Neither did it seek to understand why the male English teachers, especially the heads of department, seemed to absent themselves from training responsibilities. In depth interviews with female mentors and male English teachers could be an area worthy of further investigation to provide a more rounded picture of the male trainees' experience.

On initial teacher training courses, the gender implications of how applicants are interviewed and decisions are made regarding the offer of places have hitherto been overlooked. The gender implications for training revealed by my study suggest that those involved in the application process should pay attention to gender issues. In

particular, interviewers should view positively the male trainees' previous experiences and knowledge that they bring to their training. Decisions regarding application and selection need to acknowledge that male and female trainees' experience of the training will be different and gendered. Currently, there are no figures available for the gender of those who interview applicants for initial teacher training courses. I would suggest that further research should investigate the nature of the correlation between the gender of interviewers and those offered places, building on the work of Howson (2000).

My study focused on the experiences and changes to the masculinities of a group of men who presented themselves as heterosexual. As 'straight' men, their heterosexuality was challenged and their masculinity questioned. To the best of my knowledge, none of the men in my small study was gay. In further research, I believe there is a need to capture and analyse the experiences and adaptations of those male English teachers who are gay. My study's findings about heterosexual male trainee teachers suggest that those trainees who are gay may have to go through additional negotiations with colleagues, pupils and English, aware of societal attitudes to homosexuality and the problem of homophobia in schools. In such research, ethical issues of access to personal data and the confidentiality of participants would need to be considered carefully. One solution would be to invite gay participants who are qualified English teachers to take part in future research via subject associations such as LATE and NATE.

To understand more fully the role of masculinities in secondary teaching, further research is needed to capture the experiences of male trainees and teachers in other secondary subject disciplines. To investigate masculinities in terms of self image and identity, male teachers could use Mitchell and Weber's (1999) approaches of creating and analysing drawing, photographs and videos to generate new understandings of what it means to be a male secondary teacher. Research into the representations of male teachers in film and popular culture would be an extension of Protherough's (1981) and Weber and Mitchell's (1995) work into the field of

masculinities and the relationship with subject disciplines and the job of being a teacher. Research is also needed to capture the voices of pupils in secondary schools about their experience of being taught by male and female teachers in various subject areas compared with their experience of being taught in early years settings and primary school. The role played by teachers' gender in pupils' attitudes to subject disciplines would develop the work of Thomas (1990, 1991) and Miller (1992, 1996).

The findings of future larger scale research in the areas of initial teacher training, masculinities and English would be of use for policy writers, who have expressed informal interest in my case study. For example, the gendered choices that trainees make regarding their first teaching post and the impact of gender on teacher recruitment and retention would be of interest to the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA). During Ofsted inspections of initial teacher training the ways that higher education institutions and training partnerships with schools meet the hitherto hidden needs of male and female trainees needs to be investigated. The DfES needs to be aware that the content and the delivery of English teaching initiatives are gendered. Male and female trainees bring a plethora of versions of the subject of English to their training. Their subject knowledge and expertise gained from studying English in school and at university need to be harnessed and utilised. The bureaucratisation of centralised initiatives must de-skill new teachers.

All English teachers have read and studied English literary and non-literary texts drawn from an enormous body of work that spans Old English and Anglo-Saxon through to the early twenty-first century. Their knowledge and expertise of periods, authors and texts vary enormously, but one common factor is that the creators of the literature and its teachers, inside and outside school, are men and women. Similarly, all students of English are boys and girls, men and women. An awareness of the importance of gender in English literature and its relationship to society needs to be ignited. I am thinking about stories about: boy actors playing female roles in Shakespeare's theatre; female writers adopting male noms de plume (like the Brontës

and Ellis, Acton and Currer Bell); realisations that a favourite author is male or female (Noel Streatfield, Richmal Crompton, Harper Lee); how a protagonist's gender is undisclosed (Tyke Tyler); characters whose androgyny is foregrounded (George in Enid Blyton's *The Famous Five*). Gender, and therefore masculinity, in literature begins to matter; the subject of English is gendered and includes concerns with masculinity. For young readers of English, gender is constructed in terms of biology (what a boy/girl/man/woman is) and informed by sociology (what a boy/girl/man/woman does). Literature portrays gender, stereotypes and therefore masculinity and contributes to their constructions and enactment. In English, the relationship between words and ideas cannot be studied in a genderless manner, given that pupils and teachers bring their gender to the subject. Some of the deeper understandings of the relationship between masculinity and the teaching and learning of English have been revealed in my study. These understandings need to be appreciated by all male and female English teachers who teach boys and girls, and especially those involved in the training of new teachers, both male and female.

If the boys of today are to join with their female counterparts to become the English teachers of tomorrow then male pupils and trainee English teachers need to be more exposed to issues of gender and masculinities in the study of English and its pedagogy. They also deserve a sense of their past, which includes knowledge of the men and women who went before them. The future of English is, at least in part, in the hands of the PGCE students and new entrants to the English teaching profession. Existing and new teachers ought to feel that they can influence the English curriculum and English pedagogy. The outcomes of the QCA consultation *English 21* (QCA, 2005) should consider the gender of pupils, authors and teachers. Greater attention needs to be paid to the gender implications of those who legislate and teach English, as well as to the gender of those who are responsible for training the English teachers of the future.

Good boy

Miller (1996: 213) cites Frith's (1991) use of advice offered by Fordyce: 'Your business chiefly is to read Men' and he goes on 'in order to make yourselves agreeable and useful'. As a gay man keen for acceptance, in line with Bersani (1995), perhaps through this case study of men in which I have been reading men, I have also been rendering myself 'agreeable and useful'. Studying for a PhD in the education department where I work has been a very public process. In addition, I have consented to be the subject of research into the supervision processes of a PhD (Duncan, 2003). I have wanted to show colleagues that studying for a PhD, which allows me to contribute more to higher degree teaching and research activity, alongside a number of demanding teaching, administrative and management roles in higher education, is possible. The process of carrying out this qualitative doctoral study has exposed my personal and professional concerns alongside those of the participants. The male trainee English teachers and I have challenged a number of perceptions of what it means to be a male English teacher. At the same time, as articulated by Andy, each of us has sought acceptance by wanting to be seen as a 'good boy' (cf. Turvey, 1996). This thesis is offered in the hope that what we have created together will be agreeable and useful to those interested in training, teaching, masculinities and the subject of English.

Notes

- i. Throughout the thesis I use the term 'trainee', rather than 'student' or 'student teacher', which are used interchangeably in the data and in initial teacher training contexts, in order to conform with the terminology of the Qualifying to Teach standards (DfES/TTA, 2002) and recent literature on initial teacher training (e.g. Fletcher, 2000).
- ii. There is no single term for a practitioner of English who is an English student or teacher of English (cf. historian, chemist, geographer, lawyer). Possibilities could include: Englishian, Englishist or Englisher 'one who translates into English' (OED).
- iii. DES (1989) statistics showed 60 per cent.
- iv. 78.3 per cent women; 21.7 per cent men in the East of England region in 2001/02, Teacher Training Agency Performance Profiles 2001-02, Regional Report, East of England, 05/2004.
- v. In February 2002 the Teacher Training Agency issued new *Standards for Award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)* (DfES/TTA, 2002) which were implemented from September 2002, with this entry requirement.
- vi. On the Soulbridge PGCE secondary English course the teacher tutor was an Advanced Skills Teacher for Initial Teacher Training and Head of English from a local partnership school.
- vii. The football world cup took place in 2002 and its influence on pupils and the men in the study can be seen.
- viii. The model to which I am referring is without a definitive original source. It is a model that represents learning as four stages: unconscious incompetence; conscious incompetence; conscious competence; unconscious competence; cf. Protherough and Atkinson's (1997: 28) usage.
- ix. The construction 'Menglish' was influenced by the term 'Wenglish' (Edwards, 1985) which exists to describe a colloquial mixture of Welsh and English words and phrases that appear in the quotidian language of predominantly English speaking families in South Wales, whose grandparents and great-grandparents were first language Welsh speakers. See also Branigan (2004) and the construction 'Chinglish' to show a hybrid version of English and Chinese. I was unable to use 'Manglish' as this exists in Malaysia to show a hybrid version of English and the Malay language (Bahasa Malayu).
- x. The National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS) the large, international pro-feminist men' organisation from 1979 published the magazine *Changing Men: Issues in Gender, Sex and Politics*, initially called *Gentle Men for Gender Justice*.
- xi. Trulam Boys is a fictitious name. All school names in the thesis have been changed for anonymity purposes.

Appendices

Appendix 1

'My Own Experience of Education'

You are asked to write an essay of about 1,000 words (3 to 4 sides of A4) to the title of 'My Own Experience of Education'.

Some of the questions you may consider are:

- What characterised your successful learning experiences?
- What were the qualities of the best teachers who taught you?
- Some of your teachers will have failed to control or involve their classes. What did they do wrong?
- How did you learn things at school? What style of learning worked for you? To what style of teaching did you respond best?

Where possible include in your answer any significant events in your education or anecdotes to illustrate your answer. The beliefs and convictions which you have about education will have been shaped significantly by what you experienced at school. It is important that you are aware of these autobiographical influences.

Please bring your essay to Friday Feedback & Reflection on Friday 28 September. You will be expected to speak to it for 5/10 minutes in a small group discussion, and to hand it in to your tutor for marking. This is not formally assessed, but will give you an early opportunity to sharpen your writing skills in anticipation of the three formal written assignments.

Appendix 2

Soulbridge University PGCE Secondary English Post-16 English Subject Knowledge Audit Assessment Tool

This is the last stage of the auditing of your subject knowledge. This task has been designed to allow you demonstrate the subject knowledge you have which will allow you to teach English effectively at 'A' (AS/A2) level. For the purpose of this auditing tool the emphasis is placed on your English Literature subject knowledge. However, you may wish to incorporate aspects of your English Language and Media subject knowledge if you wish. This task is a highly useful activity to use with your pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4, as well as at post-16 level. I have lots of examples for you to read, should you require some models.

The Task

You have been provided with a photocopied extract from the opening chapter entitled 'The Last Page' from a book called: 'The History of Reading' by Alberto Manguel. In it he offers the reader a glimpse into his own reading history or reading autobiography. Using the Manguel piece as a model, you should write your own reading history or reading autobiography, in which you share with your reader some of the following:

- key moments in your reading history from your teenage years to the present day
- the range of texts you have read, enjoyed, rejected, loathed
- how, when and where you used to read and how, when and where you read now
- how you see yourself as a reader and how you are perceived by others
- your experience of reading: in other languages; different genres; texts from a variety of cultural and historical backgrounds
- experiences of inter-textuality between texts from literature, the media, the arts and the new technologies
- how you make comparisons, decisions and interpretations of what you read
- texts which you revisit or would wish to re-read
- the way that texts have had an impact on your personal or professional life
- your desert island book/s

It is important to make your piece of writing function on two levels :

1. as a panoramic sweep across your reading, with some quick moments of focus on individual texts
2. as an enjoyable, entertaining and fascinating written account of you as a reader

Length? About 1000 words - 3 to 4 sides of A4 - or longer if you wish. This piece of writing will not be marked or assessed separately. It will form a part of your ITEP addressing the Subject Knowledge section of the standards. I would like to have these in the last week of the course, as the final stage in auditing your subject knowledge. However, you may give them to me at any time before that. I hope that you will enjoy writing your own reading history/autobiography. You will produce a most valuable resource to use with your pupils in your future English lessons.

Appendix 3

ASSIGNMENT 1 - CLASSROOM TEACHING SKILLS

Title

"Consider three areas of classroom teaching skill. Drawing on your reading and observational evidence conduct a critical analysis of practice in each area. For each area identify what you consider to be best practice." (You must use this as your title.)

Notes for guidance

1. The basis of this assignment is three fold:

- Your reading. Bibliographies in the Teaching and Learning booklet are designed to direct you to good reading for this assignment but you will also need to seek out additional texts.
- Observational evidence. It is envisaged that your Teachers' Day observations will provide a rich source of illustrative material.
- Your opinions. We want to know at the end of a balanced argument what you think best practice to be.

All three aspects are essential and should be interwoven together rather than presented separately.

2. Give each of the three classroom skill areas roughly equal weighting in your assignment. At least two of the skill areas selected should centre on subject specific concerns.

3. Examples of some of the classroom skills trainee teachers may focus on are:

- approaches to discipline and class control.
- rewards and sanctions.
- classroom organisation.
- presentation skills.
- questioning technique.
- explaining.
- giving instructions.
- techniques for involving pupils.
- a teacher's use of language.
- the use of group work.
- the use of experiential/active learning techniques.
- in-class assessment techniques.
- flexibility in adapting the lesson plan.
- resource use.

4. The length of this assignment is 2,500-3,000 words.

5. Your attention is drawn to the criteria for marking written assignments.

6. The deadline for handing in this assignment is 9 am on Monday 29 October 2001.

Appendix 4

ASSIGNMENT 2 - MEETING INDIVIDUAL LEARNING NEEDS

Title

“Consider two distinct factors which result in pupils having individual learning needs. Drawing on your reading and observational evidence conduct a critical analysis of practice designed to meet each of these needs. For each area of need identify what you consider to be best practice.” (You must use this as your title.)

Notes for guidance

1. The basis of this assignment is threefold:

- Your reading. Bibliographies in the Teaching and Learning booklet are designed to direct you to good reading for this assignment but you will also need to seek out additional texts.
- Observational evidence. It is envisaged that your Pupils' Day observations will provide a rich source of illustrative material.
- Your opinions. We want to know at the end of a balanced argument what you think best practice to be.

All three aspects are essential and should be interwoven together rather than presented separately

2. Give each of the two factors contributing to learning needs roughly equal weighting in your assignment

3. Examples of some of the factors which may result in individual learning needs are:

- gifted and talented
- slow learning capability
- AD(H)D
- problems with literacy
- English as an additional language
- physical disability e.g. hearing impairment
- emotional or behavioural problems
- specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia
- a quiet, withdrawn nature
- weak social and personal skills
- gender
- race or ethnicity
- family problems

4. The length of this assignment is 2,500 to 3,000 words.

5. Your attention is drawn to the criteria for marking written assignments in the scheme handbook.

6. The deadline for handing in this assignment is 9 am on Friday 22 February 2002.

Appendix 5

ASSIGNMENT 3 - THE CURRICULUM PACK

This assignment is the third and final of the formal written assignments. This same task is set to trainee teachers in all subject areas and subject studies tutors assess it. By the beginning of the second school placement trainee teachers should have developed an awareness of a range of teaching approaches and strategies and of a variety of resources and teaching materials. The aim of this assignment is to further this awareness and the professional skill to which it gives rise. Trainee teachers will need to undertake further subject specific background reading as part of their preparation. Past experience has shown that the Curriculum Pack is best taught during the weeks on the second block placement **before** the Easter vacation or just after. However, a word of caution for latter is required. Many schools' timetables change after Easter and the normal pattern of lessons and classes becomes affected. Also, many trainee teachers begin to be involved in interviews for jobs at this time so there is the potential for much upheaval. We would urge mentors and trainee teachers to plan for the Curriculum Pack to be delivered during weeks 23, 24 or weeks 25, 26 and 27 for example. Do not leave it any later.

During school placement trainee teachers will prepare a pack of teaching materials focused on a single topic, theme or area of work. The pack must be implemented with one teaching group covering at least six hours of teaching. A report covering design, implementation and evaluation should be submitted with the pack.

Initial Curriculum Pack Outline

You should agree an initial outline of your pack with both your mentor and the normal class teacher at the earliest possible date. An A4 outline of the assignment should be sent to your subject tutor by Friday 7th March at the latest at the following address: The University of Hertfordshire, Watford Campus, Wall Hall, Aldenham, Watford, Herts WD25 8AT.

The outline should include:

- the parts of the curriculum which are to be taught.
- key learning objectives.
- the teaching group - year, ability grouping etc.
- dates between which it is to be taught.
- possible readings from the literature which may be relevant.
- a list of resources currently available for teaching this topic.
- initial thoughts on structuring the learning / innovative teaching resources/strategies.

Tutors will return outlines to trainee teachers as soon as possible before the session at the University on Tuesday 26th March when individual Curriculum Pack problems can be addressed.

Notes for guidance

1. **The pack** should include:

- a statement of the intended learning objectives of the pack and the means by which pupil attainment can be assessed.
- a detailed programme of work/teacher-guide to using the pack.
- copies of teaching materials such as worksheets and audio-visual aids of which at least 50 per cent should be your original creation.

2. **The report** should include a detailed analysis of the processes of design, implementation and evaluation of the pack.

Issues in design will include:

- the nature of the school context and pupils at which you are aiming the pack.
- reasons for selecting the particular topic, theme or area of work.
- the National Curriculum NCATs and PoS.
- evaluation of existing teaching programmes and materials. This includes resources which may not be available in your school.

- justification of the ways in which you have structured the learning. To do this you will need to refer to the literature on children's learning - their errors, misconceptions and strategies.
- justification of the different of resources and teaching strategies incorporated in the pack.
- assessment.

Issues in implementation and evaluation will include:

- an overview of the success of the pack in achieving the intended learning outcomes.
- a detailed evaluation of the way in which the structuring of the learning and the chosen resources and strategies have promoted pupil learning.
- changes that you will make in future use of the pack as a result of your evaluation.
- supporting evidence from the literature on children's learning.

Your evaluation should draw on the following evidence submitted as appendices:

- some samples of pupils' work assessed.
- pupil evaluation of the pack.
- evaluation of the pack by one or more teachers.

3. When awarding the grade of excellent tutors will be looking for packs that are inventive and ambitious both in terms of materials and teaching strategies, and for reports which demonstrate careful and reflective classroom practice focused on the quality of children's learning. Your attention is drawn to the Criteria for Marking Written Assignments in this handbook.

4. Your report should be 2,500 to 3,000 words in length.

5. **The deadline for submission is 9 am on Tuesday 4th June**, at the start of your subject studies session.

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