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The influence of school staffs

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by

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Abstract

The influence of school staffs on primary PGCE trainee teachers' professional learning

by Robin Michael Yeomans

This thesis is a multi-case study of the placement professional learning of fifteen primary PGCE trainees within the school-based part of teacher training. It is concerned with the influence of individual staff, especially mentors and host class teachers, as well as of whole staffs and sub-groups, on adult and pupil oriented aspects of teachers' jobs (though excluding a detailed study of the development of subject knowledge or of specific classroom skills). A participant observer strategy was used within a grounded theory approach to develop agenda for semi-structured interviews with trainees. The main findings are that trainees learnt through four modes of learning: as observers, participating observers, participants and observing participants. Self-reliance was important for trainees' learning, but relationships with individual staff (especially mentors and host class teachers) were important and constructive influences when such staff adopted a *'learner model'* of intervention. Whole staffs were important influences on trainees' professional development when trainees were accepted as full or quasi-staff members, particularly in terms of the interadult dimensions of teachers' jobs. Trainees were expected to 'fit in' with staffs' ways of working, even when their value systems clashed with those of placement teachers. Then, trainees were often constrained by a power imbalance implicit in their status as learners. Trainees responded by compliance, engagement, strategic compromise or nonconformity, with engagement most likely to gain staff support and enhance trainees' learning. Conclusions are that school-based training underestimates the complexity of workplace learning, and that inequity is possible. Staff cultures influence powerfully both trainees' learning and staffs' treatment of them. PGCE trainees tend not to become acculturated, though sometimes at the cost of restricted capacities to learn. Learning about the interadult dimensions of teachers' jobs is haphazard, and is largely ignored by official teacher training curricula. Finally, specific recommendations are made for trainees, placement schools, university teacher trainees and national teacher training policies.

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Author's declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

This study was partly financed by funding from De Montfort University, U. K.

The study was undertaken as an extension of my work as a lecturer within the School of Education at De Montfort University.

Relevant research seminars were attended regularly at De Montfort University Bedford, as well as educational research conferences at Oxford, York, Bath, Lancaster, Belfast and Sussex. Several papers relevant to this study were presented at these conferences (Appendix I)

Signed ....

Date .... 31 August 2000

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The focus of the study

This study is concerned with the ways in which primary school staffs, individually and collectively, influence the professional learning of primary school trainee teachers.

An exploration of all the complexities of trainees' professional learning would be a study whose output could easily fill a library. The literature on trainees' learning about teaching children is vast on its own. But research into the contributions of school staffs to trainees' learning is predominantly restricted to one of three main areas (Chapter 2). It may be part of a broader examination of trainees' professional development (e.g. Stephenson and Sampson 1994; Calderhead and Shorrocks 1997); focus on support for placement learning (e.g. Edwards and Collison 1996); or be concerned with the relationships between individual trainees and teachers, especially mentors, who have particular responsibility for trainees' learning within placements (e.g. McIntyre et.al. 1993; Furlong and Maynard 1995; Fish 1995; Tomlinson 1995; Edwards and Collison 1996).

Other work, both theoretical and empirical, also impinges on placement staffs' influence on trainees' learning. Of particular relevance is that which focuses on the complexities of teaching and teachers' thinking (e.g. Olson 1992; Brown and McIntyre 1993), learning within professions more widely (e.g. Schon 1983; 1987; Eraut 1994), adult learning (e.g Knowles 1980; Tennant 1988), learning through experience (e.g. Kolb 1984; Mezirow 1991), the impact of school staff cultures on relationships and learning (e.g. Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989; Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992; Hargreaves 1994), and learning in workplaces which are communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). But I am aware of no work that is centrally concerned with a comprehensive study of the ways in which primary school staffs, individually and collectively, influence trainees' learning through the patterns of interaction (formal and informal) in which they and trainees mutually engage.

I hope to bring new insights to an understanding of how trainee primary school teachers' learning is shaped. Implicit in this investigation is a definition of teachers' jobs in terms which extend beyond classroom interaction with children. Interadult skills are important to primary teachers. Primary schools in particular are increasingly perceived as

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places where teachers are engaged in a communal enterprise, in which their individual actions need to be co-ordinated and collaborative actions have a major impact on individual teachers' lives. They normally use a class teacher structure, whose effect often is to isolate teachers in separate classrooms with one group of pupils to whom they tend to teach the whole curriculum. Yet primary school staff members need to interact regularly, so that, though they teach in isolation from one another, they can do so in co-ordinated ways. In particular, they need to ensure that there is continuity and progression in pupil learning within subjects and between classes. Certainly, time spent away from pupils in classrooms constitutes a substantial part of primary school teachers' working days (Campbell and Neill 1992).

Communal activity has an intended impact on the effectiveness of schools (Nias Southworth and Campbell 1992), but can also have an unplanned affective one on the well-being of the teachers who staff them (Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989). Because primary schools tend to be of relatively small size, staff are likely to have regular, if fleeting, informal contact with all their school colleagues, so that informal relationships tend to influence their professional ones too. Interdependent personal and professional relationships are further stimulated by primary schools' relatively flat formal hierarchies, in which head teachers are in frequent informal contact with colleagues, and the majority of staff act as curriculum leaders for some curriculum subject (Yeomans 1987).

Previous studies of primary school staffs have suggested that they may tend to develop dominant cultures (and sub-cultures), which influence the behaviour of staff within them, and affect the experience of working within such schools. Cultures can influence both interpersonal climates and professional processes within schools (e.g. Hartley 1985; Pollard 1987; Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989; Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992; Hargreaves 1994; Hayes 1994).

Although sophisticated interpersonal skills are needed to enable the complex interpersonal structures of primary staffs to work smoothly, it is not clear how teachers acquire them. Trainees receive little or no formal preparation for, or practice in, the collaborative skills they will need. They do spend a major part of their training working in primary schools where these processes are at work, and common sense suggests that trainees are exposed to their influences. But it is not clear whether, to what extent, or how interaction with staff (mentors and host teachers apart), either influences trainees' learning about classroom teaching processes, or their learning about and acquisition of interadult teacher skills. The purpose of this study is to address those issues.

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Trainees' interactions with adults in their school placements may both contribute to the processes by which their learning about the job is supported, and be a legitimate part of the content of their learning. However, there is no comprehensive understanding of how these influences operate. A gap in the explicit curriculum of teacher training is indicated. DfEE Standards for beginning teachers expect that trainees *'have established, during work in schools, effective working relationships with professional colleagues including, where applicable, associate staff'* (DfEE 4/98 D.b p.16). But this is only one item amongst several hundred. Few teacher training courses explicitly develop a curriculum which explores interadult skills as a dimension of the teacher's job (for exceptions see Yeomans 1992; Biott and Easen 1994).

Though not as yet self-regulating, teaching is by tradition included within forms of employment deemed professional (Eraut 1994). In this study, I use the term *'professional'* in relation to teaching to convey an inclusive view of the nature of the job, and do not intend to engage in debates about what constitutes a profession. In the context of teaching, professional learning is taken to include understandings about the responsibilities of the job, the development of values, beliefs, and attitudes, pedagogic and classroom skills, and an understanding of staff-wide issues, such as the implications and obligations of staff membership, together with the skills which support the latter.

My concern with the influence of placement staff on trainees' learning has implications for the boundaries of the research. The impact of adults on the processes by which trainees learn about all aspects of the job is within that boundary, as is an examination of the content of their learning about interadult dimensions of the job. But a detailed analysis of the content of learning about classrooms and pupils is neither appropriate nor achievable. The key questions I try to address are:

- How do trainees learn from staff about all aspects of the job?
- What do trainees learn from staff about the content of the job?
- What do trainees learn from staff about the experiences of being a teacher?
- What are the influences on trainees' learning of individual staff, such as mentors and class teachers, sub-groups, and the staff as a whole, and how far are these influences interdependent?
- What do trainees themselves bring to placements which contributes to their capacities to develop professionally within them?

- What is the influence of placement staff on those conditions most likely to promote trainees' professional learning?

- How do trainees respond to and cope with the impact of placement staff on their professional learning?

In Chapter 3 I discuss the influences which shaped my initial thinking about these questions. It is sufficient here to say that, although I had no specific hypotheses I wanted to explore, my data collection was unavoidably shaped by my past research interests and professional activities - particularly the influence of staff groups on individuals, of mentors on primary school trainee teachers and encounters within my work as a link tutor liaising between primary trainees and schools.

Data have been collected predominantly through two sets of interviews with a group of fifteen primary PGCE trainee teachers over the period of their one year course. These were supported by participant observation of trainees' work in both of the two primary schools where each was placed. Participant observation became possible by extending the existing framework of my professional relationships as link tutor, which gave legitimate access to both trainees and schools (see Section 3.3).

1.2 The national policy framework for teacher training

The impact of primary school placements and their staff on the learning of trainee teachers has been highlighted by DFE Circular 14/93. This made partnership between primary schools and higher education institutions the guiding principle for primary initial teacher training. Partnership is underpinned by the requirement that trainees spend an increased amount of time in school placements. In the case of PGCE courses, trainees spend at least 18 weeks of a 38 week course in their placements. Unequivocally *schools should play a much larger and more influential role in course design and delivery* (DFE 14/93 p.5). The increased contributions of schools were to be reflected in the transfer of greater resources to partner schools.

Although there was no specific reference to mentors within the circular, it did note the existing contribution of primary school subject co-ordinators to the training of other staff. Further, the use of school mentors in alternative school-centred routes into teaching (such as the Licensed and Articled Teacher schemes) had already established mentors' roles within training arrangements in schools. In short, it was deemed a matter of national policy

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that school staff should have an active and influential role in promoting trainees' learning during school placements.

1.3 The framework of placement arrangements

The course to which the trainees belonged operated within the national framework outlined above. Building on several years' experience within B Ed. and Licensed Teacher courses (Stephenson 1994), the primary PGCE course had already established partnership arrangements in which school mentors had a pivotal role. One mentor in each school was responsible for oversight of the liaison arrangements with the higher education institution, for the overall organisation of the placement programmes of trainees, and for observation, feedback and assessment of them. Teachers who hosted trainees in their classes gave detailed support for trainees' classroom work, including advice on detailed planning, formative observation, support for trainees' teaching and informal feedback to them. They also contributed to the evidence base for assessment judgements. Each trainee was attached predominantly to one class and its teacher for each placement. For some trainees, mentor and host class teacher was the same person. Where this was so, arrangements were frequently made for another teacher within the school to give a second perspective on a trainee's work, so that, normally, two placement staff supported trainees. Trainees' informal participation in the life of the school, including its staffroom in particular, might also give them access to the unplanned support of other staff.

Each higher education link tutor liaised with a *'cluster'* of schools (in the region of six) and had oversight of the personal and professional development of a group of trainees placed within each cluster. The fifteen trainees who are the subject of this study, and the schools where they were placed constitute a cluster group (see Appendices A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and Section 3.4). The research and ethical implications of being both link tutor and researcher are discussed in Section 3.3.1 and 3.6.

With the exception of a week at the beginning of the course and a week's gap in the middle of it, trainees spent part of each course week in their placement. There were two phases in the structure of placements. The first phase consisted of a weekly sequence of two days in school, followed by a placement block of four weeks in the same school. Trainees then transferred to new placements, usually within the same cluster. The second phase was similar, though with an extended block placement of six weeks in the summer term. Placements were within trainees' chosen Key Stage.

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The serial days were intended to develop trainees' insights into each placement and host classroom, before they took extended responsibility for a class of pupils during the block placement. During serial phases, trainees' time was spent on a mixture of classroom observation, directed subject curriculum tasks and limited teaching episodes with groups and whole class under the guidance of their host class teacher. During the blocks their whole class responsibility was then extended (sixty six per cent in block one and seventy five per cent in block two).

1.4 Terminology and definitions

In an enquiry linked with several fields of study, I want to avoid two dangers. I do not take for granted terms that convey specific and complex meanings in the fields from which they originate. Nor do I wish to engage in complex analyses of terms, and so impair the clarity and direction of the study. But there are several terms I use regularly whose meanings for the purposes of this study I identify here, without inferring that their meanings are unproblematic.

The thrust and terminology of government policy during the period of the study has caused me to adopt the term *'trainees'* to describe college students who take a course leading to a teaching qualification. But I do not imply a view of the nature of the preparation for teaching as training rather than education.

When I want to discuss the particular viewpoint of an individual trainee (or group) on any part of their course experiences (e.g. in Chapter 8), I refer to their *'perspectives'* without exploring the more complex psychological meanings attached to an examination of the nature of perception. I shall use *'personality' to* refer to those personal qualities which appear to permeate trainees' behaviour, irrespective of the stimuli to which they respond.

In my discussions of the sets of influences that shape trainees' perspectives I shall refer to their *'value systems'* and to the *'values, beliefs and attitudes'* from which these are constructed. Value system refers to the set of values which underpins individuals' beliefs (sometimes articulated) about the nature of worthy and/or desirable actions. The consistent value-laden perspectives that individuals bring to bear on events and situations they encounter constitute their attitudes. I take attitudes to be consistent assumptions about desirable and appropriate behaviour, articulated by individuals, or inferable from their behaviour. A value system links values, beliefs, attitudes and actions. I acknowledge that the demarcation between the influences of personality and of value systems can be unclear; first, because behaviour is the means through which both are revealed; second, because

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values, beliefs and attitudes may themselves be influenced by innate personal qualities deemed personality.

My understanding and use of *'culture'* is strongly influenced by analyses of school staff and organisational cultures to which I have contributed (Nias Southworth and Yeomans 1989). That work builds from Deal and Kennedy's *'the way we do things around here'* (1983 p.14) to suggest that *'culture'* has the elements of *'beliefs and values, understandings, attitudes, meanings and norms (arrived at by interaction), symbols, rituals and ceremonies'* (Nias et.al. op.cit. p.11). In Chapter 10 I return to a discussion of this important idea.

1.5 Structure of the study

The study is structured as follows: In Chapter 2 I discuss the literature which shaped the central ideas which drive the study and influenced my thinking about the data. I then describe the methodological framework for data collection and give details of how that was conducted (Chapter 3). There is then a sequence of seven chapters which analyse separately the processes by which trainee learning develops (Chapters 4, 5 and 6), the content of their learning (Chapter 7), who influences it (Chapter 8), and the contributions of individual learners' personal characteristics, past experiences and wider relationships to their own development (Chapter 9). Then I examine how interaction and staff cultures influence their learning (Chapter 10). The separation of themes is intended to help illuminate rather than to ignore complexity. I recognise that all these aspects are interdependent. But by considering each separately, I hope to build a cumulative analysis that reflects the complexity of student learning. Then in Chapter 11 I discuss how trainees respond to the expectations of placement staff. Chapters 12 and 13 provide the final discussion, conclusions and implications from the study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

An initial problem for this research study is the content that is appropriate for a literature review. An investigation of the influence of primary school staffs on the content and process of trainee teachers' learning overlaps with several fields of enquiry, rather than being located clearly within a single one. The study deals with <u>learning</u> and specifically ·with that of <u>adults.</u> Its focus is learning to do a <u>job</u> and with doing so in the <u>workplace</u>, where <u>experience</u> is an important influence. The job is located within the professions and may legitimately be analysed in terms of <u>professional learning</u>. The specific professional focus is those aspects of training to be a teacher which are located in <u>primary schools</u>. In this study, the <u>job</u> is conceptualised as all those activities in which teachers engage in primary school, rather than solely those located in classrooms. I am concerned with the influence on learners' development of professional *'others'* in schools, including those members, such as <u>mentors</u>, who may have a disproportionate impact on trainees' learning because they have formal responsibility for its development. Within this study, these 'others' are themselves part of primary school <u>cultures</u>, within which, and about which, trainees learn.

I have tried to resolve the content problem by a chapter structure that expresses these multiple perspectives. I conceptualise this study as being concerned with <u>adult learning</u>, where <u>experience</u> of the job, in a <u>workplace</u>, contributes to the process of learning (2.2). That workplace learning has a <u>professional</u> context (2.3), and is located in <u>primary schools</u> with their associated <u>cultures</u> (2.4). There, it is concerned specifically with <u>initial teacher training</u> and the influence on trainees' learning of school staffs and *'significant others'* (particularly <u>mentors</u>) within them (2.5). Finally I outline the development of my own research journey over a decade and consider how that has influenced this current enquiry (2.6).

A comprehensive review of the literature on each of these themes would be unwieldy and probably unhelpful in fulfilling the purposes of this chapter. These are to indicate why this research focus is worth pursuing and to show how its direction is informed by key literature. Consequently the review is selective, represents the influences

that have shaped this particular study, but does not list the multiplicity of references which have some tangential bearing on some aspect of it.

There are two further points to be made. First, the literature cited both predates and is concurrent with data collection and writing. Positivist research traditions, insofar as they are concerned with testing initial hypotheses, tend to emphasise the role of research literature in locating and defining a research problem. Reading tends to happen before data collection. But this research belongs within an interpretative paradigm. The development of theory predominantly grounded in data (Glaser and Strauss 1967) happens before, during and after data collection (as I discuss in the next chapter). Consequently, reading has influenced analysis at all stages of the research process, including writing. The second point is that the emphasis I place on some texts rather than others inevitably shapes the process of sifting and expressing ideas. I ascribe significance to some events rather than others and interpret their meanings in terms of their relationship to ideas within the literature. The writing process itself then involves a further selection from possible ways of expressing those meanings. Finally, conceptualising the study in terms of particular fields of literature tends to shape conclusions I reach and implications I draw from them. In short, the selections within this literature review are part of, rather than a prelude to, the research process.

2.2 Adult experiential learning in the workplace

The appeal of an examination of school-based primary school, initial teacher training from the perspective of adult learning is heightened because it happens in schools that focus on the learning of children between the ages of 4 and 11. School staffs in such workplaces spend most of their time trying to promote young children's learning. They have normally been trained in and have developed skills that take particular account of the ways young children learn. The presence of adult trainees implies that such teachers need alternative ways of thinking about working with learners. Yet, at best, primary teachers have only limited training for work with adult trainees and mainly acquire skills through experience.

The proposition that appropriate conditions for adult learning may be different from those that facilitate children's learning draws inevitably on the work of Knowles (1978, 1980). He developed the term 'androgogy' to describe *'the art and science of helping adults to learn'* (1980 p. 43). He suggests that where adult learners are concerned, *'any experience that they perceive as putting them in the position of being treated as children is*

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bound to interface (sic) *with their learning'* (ibid.). His androgogic model of learning proposes an alternative set of assumptions to those of 'pedagogy', from which the practices of teaching children are built. Knowles' assertion that learning *'is an internal process controlled by the learners and engaging their whole being - including intellectual, emotional and physiological functions'* (op.cit. pp. 55-56) emphasises the importance of engaging with the needs and interests of adult learners. They are motivated to learn in ways that differ from those which motivate children. Adults are self-directing rather than dependent. Their past experiences become *'an increasingly rich source for learning'*. They are concerned with learning which focuses on *'the developmental tasks of their social roles'*, including employment. Their motivation to learn is enhanced by a perception that knowledge is relevant to immediate needs, rather than acquired for its worth in some unspecified future context (Knowles 1980).

In response to critics of his earliest ideas, Knowles emphasises that an androgogic model is an alternative to, rather than a replacement for, the pedagogic one, *'thereby providing two alternative models for testing out the assumptions as to their "fit" with particular situations'*. He suggests that *'whenever a pedagogic assumption is the realistic one, then pedagogic strategies are appropriate, regardless of the age of the learner'* (p. 43).

Even though Knowles' modified his original position, his claims for androgogy have been criticised as lacking in theoretical and practical efficacy (Davenport 1987). Tennant (1988) supports Davenport in questioning the psychological basis from which Knowles differentiates child and adult models of learning. Tennant questions the view that children are always dependent learners, suggests that they too can be self-directed, can learn through experience and perform social roles. He asserts that adults are better able than children to postpone the application of the knowledge they acquire. Further, there is no evidence that internal motivators become more important as maturity develops.

Notwithstanding his critics, the problems of seeking to promote child and adult learning within the same workplace make Knowles' theories an intriguing framework for considering the training of primary teachers. There is some evidence that primary teachers may view their pupil-oriented skills as relevant to work with trainee teachers. But there is little evidence that analyses of teacher learning are informed by androgogic learning theory. An exception is English's discussion of mentor-mentee relationships (1999). She is primarily concerned with the preparation of mentors and argues for an approach to their development that embraces the core principles of androgogy proposed by Knowles. In

particular, she argues for valuing the experience of mentors and mentees alike, so that *the mentee cannot be viewed as the learner in deficit, the hapless recipient of the genius of the mentor'* (p. 197).

Knowles' concern with teachers' attitudes towards and relationships with learners is relevant to the present study. It prompts an examination of the match between attitudes of school staff and the learning needs of adult trainee teachers. Section 5.7 gives particular attention to the attitudes of staff, including mentors and host teachers. Their interactions with trainees may reflect a dominance-dependence view of teacher - learner relationships, or shifting phases of dependence/independence within the learning trajectory of a one year course. But, since PGCE trainees are always aged over 21 and often have a broad life and work experience, adult trainees teachers' past experiences may also contribute to their learning (see Chapter 9) and influence the nature of relationships with placement staff. Bourdieu's (1973; 1976) ideas of 'cultural capital' are relevant here. They offer an analysis that may help explain how and why different trainees sometimes have different experiences with the same placement staff (see Chapters 9 and 10).

One of Bourdieu's key concerns is the impact of cultural differences within society. These affect the capacities of members of some cultures within it to learn in and from contexts which are dominated by the assumptions and language of an unfamiliar culture. A particular theme is the disadvantages for working class children, who learn within school cultures dominated by the *'cultural arbitraries'* of the dominant class. To some extent his work resonates with Bernstein's analysis of elaborated and restricted cultural class language codes (1977). Bourdieu coins the term *'cultural capital'* to explain how *'the children in the dominant classes are given master patterns, linguistic codes and relations to language and culture which allow them to be successful in education'* (Blackledge and Hunt 1985 p. 168). Of course, Bourdieu writes within a Marxist analysis of society, whereas I am concerned with adult trainee teachers in school. But the idea of cultural capital raises two relevant issues. The first concerns the ways in which trainees' previous life experiences (including, but not only, those of their own schooling and of other educational contexts as adults) shape the sense they make of the job of teaching. The second is the contribution of cultural capital, acquired from past life and work experiences, to adult trainees' relationships within the interadult culture of their placements. Their cultural capital may help them sustain a natural fluency within those relationships and so have an indirect, but crucial influence on their capacities to learn.

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Within school-based teacher training, the mentor appointed from the school staff takes formal responsibility for trainees' learning at the placement. The learning relationships between mentors and trainees are influenced by being between adults and by assumptions about its tone. The term 'mentor', *'traceable to Mentor, a trusted friend of Odysseus in Homer's Odyssey, who acted as a guide and counsellor to Odysseus' son Telemachus'* (Yeomans and Sampson 1994 p. 2), has connotations of supportiveness which make Rogers' analysis of desirable teacher-learner relationships illuminating. There is limited space to do more than acknowledge briefly the contribution to this study of such a major analyst of learner-teacher relationships. His influence is reflected in the discussion of mentors' contributions to trainees' learning in Chapter 8. He places the needs of the learner at the centre of the relationship. He emphasises the *'facilitation of change and learning'* (p. 120) which encourages *'self-starting, self-initiating learners'* through *'a growth-promoting, facilitative relationship with a person'* (p. 134), rather than *'teaching,'* a process of imparting knowledge or skill (1983). His model of learning facilitation depends on the attitudes of the facilitator, who demonstrates *'a prizing, caring, a trust and respect for the learner'*, with *'sensitive and empathetic listening'* (p. 133). Facilitators seek to realise individual potential rather than focus on learners' deficiencies.

A facilitative relationship, such as that advocated by Rogers, seeks to avoid the dependency trap by putting learners in control of their own learning needs. They make their own sense of experiences, and facilitators help create the psychological and affective conditions within which experience can be used to construct meaning, and so become learning. A facilitative model might be viewed as a bridge which links more directive analyses of teacher/learner relationships to those models of learning which emphasise the contribution of experience itself as the location of and stimulus to learning.

Experiential learning theory, defined as *'the process of creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses'* (Jarvis et. al. 1998), has its most prominent exponent in Kolb (1984). He builds on the earlier work of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget to examine the relationship between learning and experience. He redefines learning as *'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience'* (p38). Here the emphasis is not on experience itself, but on the *'transactional'* relationship between learner and context. Each transforms and is transformed by the other, and knowledge is redefined as a *'transformation process'*. Drawing from Lewin, Kolb analyses learning as a four-stage cycle in which concrete experience leads to observation and reflection, from which develop abstract concepts and

generalisations. The implications of concepts are then tested in new situations (p. 21). Some of the data presented in Chapter 5 and 8 suggest that trainees learnt from their placement experiences through self-analysis.

However, commentators on experiential learning theory suggest that primary experience does not inevitably lead to learning, that *'learning can only take place if the learner is engaged at some level'* and that *'the uncritical celebration of experience needs to be avoided'* (Boud and Miller 1996 p. 9). Some learning about the world must, of necessity, be derived from secondary experiences, including those of others (Jarvis et al. op.cit). Those parts of teacher training processes based in the higher education institutions are examples of secondary experiences promoting learning in conjunction with primary placement experience. Nevertheless, Kolb's analysis of learning as the transformation of experience implicitly underpins those parts of job training which are located in the workplace.

The themes of adult learning, experience, and its capacity to transform learning fuse in Mezirow's analysis of learning as the transformation of meaning. He distinguishes between the *'formative learning of childhood'* and the *'transformative learning in adulthood'* (1991 p. 3). Whereas childhood learning is concerned with socialisation, adults need to modify their existing *'meaning schemes'* and *'meaning perspectives'* in response to new situations. Meaning schemes are models we apply to situations to enable us to interpret them, and so shape our responses. Through interaction with new situations, meaning schemes are transformed and inform the higher order, long-term and relatively fixed meaning perspectives. He further distinguishes between learning which is instrumental (*'task-oriented problem-solving'* p. 73), communicative (understanding others' meanings and learning to conveying our own), and emancipatory (*'identifying and challenging distorted meaning perspectives'* p. 87).

Mezirow's analysis prompts questions about the learning of trainees placed in workplace situations, where they may have limited and diverse previous experience. These concern the meaning schemes they bring, the forms of learning in which they engage and the extent to which their learning is emancipatory (see Chapter 11).

So far I have focused on the ways learning emerges from interactions where learners try to make sense of experiences (experiential learning), with or without the help of particular forms of learner-teacher relationship (adult learner models, facilitative models). The complexities of the relationships between learning and experience are explored from a different perspective by Lave and Wenger's analyses. They emphasise the contributions to

learning of the physical and social locations that are the contexts and content of learning (particularly workplaces). Their work is important for this study because it is centrally concerned with learning to do a job in a workplace, and so is directly applicable to learning to be a teacher through being placed in schools as a trainee (Lave 1988; Lave and Wenger 1991). Wenger's (1998) most recent elaboration of a *'community of practice'* will be discussed later in this chapter.

For Lave and Wenger, learning to do a job is only possible through experience of, and within, the community of practice that exemplifies and defines it. Starting from a concern with *'situated cognition'*, Lave argues that learning concerned with practice is difficult to disentangle from the context in which it occurs and to which it relates. Yet she notes that

> *the common remedy cognitivists have proposed for "cognitive deficiencies" has been to increase the conscious, verbally explicit strategies available to problem solvers* (p. 182).

She argues that *'practice is constituted in a dialectical relationship between persons acting and the settings of their activity'* (p. 143), and that cognition (or learning) which is concerned with practice is located *'in the experiencing of the world, and the world experienced, through activity, in context'* (p. 178).

Lave and Wenger's interest in cognition prompts them to focus on the situations in which learning happens, including those where learning is concerned with doing jobs in workplaces (op.cit. 1991). They examine the ways in which learners in a variety of non-professional (predominantly) work contexts learn to do their jobs and argue that, in such apprentice-like situations, novices learn initially by participating in communities of practitioners in limited ways. They distinguish between a teaching curriculum *'constructed for the instruction of newcomers'* and a learning curriculum, which is *'a field of learning resources in everyday practice viewed from the perspective of learners.'* Situated learning happens in response to needs. An increasingly complex understanding of the job is achieved through the development of learners' own schemata, derived from and in relation to, the work situations they encounter.

Two key principles of situated learning are that all the activities of the community of practice are the object of learning and that the community and individual practitioners within it shapes the opportunities for learning. It follows that learning the job is socially defined, being

participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means for their lives and communities (p. 98).

It even *'involves learning how to talk (and be silent) in the manner of full participants* (p. 105). Further, the social nature of both content and context of situated learning gives members of the community of practice extensive control over the possibilities for what, how extensively and how novices may learn

> *the social structure of this practice, its power relations, and the conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning* (p. 98).

The move from peripheral to full participation involves both an extension of time and responsibilities in the community, and personal change to *'an increased sense of identity as a master practitioner'*. But that development also presents novices with what Lave and Wenger refer to as a *'continuity-displacement contradiction'* (p. 115). Whilst needing to engage in existing practice to gain access to membership of the community, novices also tend to want to ensure its change and development, so that they can establish their own identities as practitioners. Conflict can develop between learners and existing participants in response to changing power relationships as *'each threatens the fulfilment of the others' destiny'* (p. 116).

Lave and Wenger have not been influential in promoting the moves to school-based teacher training prompted by DFE Circular 14/93. Nor are their theories derived from studies of learning to be a teacher. Nevertheless their analysis provides a model of learning which could represent a persuasive justification for those changes. Their emphasis on the interdependence of learning to do a job with the locations in which the learning takes place, makes Lave and Wenger's work a major influence on this study, which is centrally concerned with the impact of interadult placement relationships on trainees' learning. The influence of their analyses of situated learning is particularly evident in the discussion of how trainees learn in Chapters 5 and 6. Further, the analysis of trainees' responses to their placement experiences in Chapter 11, which explores the interaction of power dynamics with trainees' value systems and sense of self, might be taken as an implicit examination of Lave and Wenger's suggestion that

> *even when submissive imitation is the result, learning is never a matter of the 'transmission' of knowledge or the 'acquisition' of skill; identity in relation with practice, and hence knowledge and skill and their significance to the subject and the community are never unproblematic. This helps to account for the common*

observation that knowers come in a range of types, from clones to heretics (p. 116).

2.3 Professional learning

But learning to be a teacher is not necessarily the same as learning to do any other kind of job. It falls within that group of occupations called 'professions', which, though ill-defined in nature, are taken by Eraut (1994) to be most clearly defined in terms of specific knowledge bases which convey expertise on those who possess them. The value of literature on professional learning for this study is its concern with the nature of professional learning and the contributions of expert professionals to the development of novices. Therefore it is particularly relevant to the discussions, in Chapters 5,6,7 and 8, of how, what and from whom trainees learn.

Eraut distinguishes between *'propositional knowledge and practical know-how'* (p. 15). He points out that, in the discussion of the nature of professional learning, there has been a shift of emphasis away from knowledge accumulation towards a concern with the relationship of theory to practice. That shift has meant trying to unravel tacit knowledge (Polanyi 1967), defined by Eraut as *'that which we know but cannot tell'* (p. 15). Forms of tacit knowledge which may be used in practical situations are *'theories of action'* (Argyris and Schon 1974). The works of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) and Schon (1983; 1987) are important here, because they emphasise the close relationship in time of thinking and acting. Acting can seem routinised because of the speed at which deliberation occurs. The five-stage model of skill acquisition advanced by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (novice/advanced beginner/competent/proficient/expert), emphasises growing situational perception, a move away from reliance on taught plans, through deliberative planning, to intuitive grasp and tacit understanding. The more expert practitioners become, the less they become explicitly analytical. Similarly, Schon's model of reflective practice emphasises the extent to which the actions of skilled professionals, which appear routinised, are in fact characterised by rapid reflection. Skilled professional practice mainly relies on intuitive thinking in response to situations which previous experience makes familiar (*'knowing in action'*). Expert professionals simply know how to act, because they recognise situations and solutions from past successful practice. Thinking and acting seem inseparable. It is only in unusual circumstances that the rapid deliberative thinking of *'reflection in action'* is called for, although considered deliberation after the event (*'reflection on action'*) is part of the repertoire of professional skill. For the novice professional, the learning process is

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extensively concerned with using reflection on action to make sense of situations after the event and to plan for future action. In time, the skills of reflection in action are extended. Some professional situations become increasingly familiar, so that developing knowing in action extends the range of situations for which novices can successfully develop routinised sequences of action.

Criticisms of reflective practice theories are partly derived from their lack of clarity about the term *'reflection'* and the processes by which it emerges as reflection in action. Eraut suggests that Schön fails to distinguish clearly between reflection as deliberation (which he appears to emphasise), and as meta-cognition. He cites Munby and Russell's (1989) criticism that Schon emphasises the nature of action, rather than of reflection. Eraut's concerns about lack of conceptual clarity cause him to question the value of reflective practice models as frameworks for developing the learning of novice professionals. First, he suggests that, in practice, professional life tends to be so busy that deliberation seldom forms a planned part of it. Models that include deliberation fail to describe professional reality (Eraut p. 149). Second, Argyris and Schon's distinction between *'theories in use'* and *'espoused theories'* (op.cit.) emphasises the differences between professionals' explanations of how and why they act and the realities of why they do so. Eraut suggests that a key finding of research into *'knowledge elicitation'* is that *'people do not know what they know'* (p. 15). Within research into teaching, Brown and McIntyre (1993) take the view that effectiveness depends on *'a fluency of action which would be possible only if the action was spontaneous, largely automatic, and based on only very limited conscious examination of available options'* p. 107). They found that teachers had difficulty recalling their mental processes. They concluded that apparently routinised action is actually complex, and that, in the context of learning to teach, *'nor would it be desirable for student teachers to imitate wholesale the individual experienced teachers with whom they happened to work'* (p. 113). Further, the primacy of routinised behaviour suggests that experts too are likely to be fallible, since reflection in action is associated with expectations that routines will not be changed unless they do not work (Eraut p. 155). In short, models of professional learning, which emphasise the complexity of the relationship between thinking and action, underline the problematic nature of learning by interrogating professionals or by observing them at work.

However, relationships between novice and expert professionals can facilitate learning by making the novices' rather than the experts' practice the focus of 'reflection'. Joyce and Showers' (1980) five components of training include two (structured and open-

ended feedback, and coaching for application) which, in the workplace, emphasise an interactive relationship between expert and novice. This focuses on providing analytical commentaries on the practices of the novice. Schon (1987) describes how novice reflective practitioners develop by discussion of the 'practicum' in which novice and expert engage in shared problem solving. Day (1993) suggests that the concept of reflective practice (Schon 1983) is an incomplete recipe for effective professional development if it does not deal with the deconstruction of the novice's professional practice:

> Reflection will need to be analytic and involve dialogue with others. Thus Schon's (1983) notion of 'reflective practice' may itself be criticised for failing to deal with the importance of the discursive, dialogical dimension of learning, which can only emerge from the processes of confrontation and reconstruction (p. 86).

Eraut's contention that 'seeing like an observer cannot be the same as seeing like a teacher', because ' a teacher sees from within the action, not from outside it' (p. 31), recognises the value of experience, allied to experimentation, as a prelude to any worthwhile analytical conversation between a novice and expert. The possibilities of learning through experimentation are themselves dependent on feedback (p. 36). Otherwise, novice teachers are likely to rely on their own experiences of being schooled as the basis from which to construct their theories of action (Calderhead 1988; Eraut op.cit.).

However, schools are not inevitably places where analytical discussion of teaching is part of daily interaction (Calderhead ibid.). Primary school staffroom conversations can be dominated by 'the discourse of common denominators (which) is inherently insular, relatively static and sometimes reveals a tendency to decline to the lowest common denominator' (Pollard 1987 p. 106). Eraut's analysis of Fuller's model of teacher development (1970), which identifies the concerns associated with its early, middle (competence) and late phases (professionalism), leads him to suggest that, even when there is a predisposition to theorise, the concerns which preoccupy novice teachers are not those which concern experienced teachers or cause them to theorise. If Eraut is correct, then the professional discussions on occasions, such as staff planning meetings, for which trainees may be an audience, may have limited impact on their professional learning, because they are beyond their current professional preoccupations.

If professional skill is extensively intuitive, difficult to articulate and consequently difficult to scrutinise and change, novice professionals are presented with considerable difficulties in work placements. They may meet practices they find difficult to understand and which, being taken for granted, may be flawed. Any attempts on their parts to seek

clarification may be met with unease or defensiveness, so that novices' predisposition to rely on their own previous experiential learning (possibly as pupils) may be reinforced.

I now focus on the literature that relates to primary schools as the specific adult, experiential, workplace, professional locations for primary school initial teacher training.

2.4 The nature of school cultures

Studies of initial teacher training in primary schools tend to emphasise the classroom dimension of the job. The interadult dimension of the job is largely ignored, except where the relationships of trainees with teacher or mentor hosts are explored. Even where the contributions of formal mentors and host class teachers are acknowledged, these are seldom linked to the placement cultures in which they are embedded and about which trainees have to learn (see Section 2.5). Yet it is clear that working with colleagues is perceived by teachers as a major and significant part of the job (Nias 1989; Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989; Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992). Further, the changes within educational policy since the Education Reform Act have increased the need for collaborative and co-ordinated decision and policy making, not least to prepare for and respond to regular Ofsted inspections, or produce coherent school development plans. In an age of public accountability, published results, league tables, and Standard Assessment Tasks, staffs and their collective reputations tend to stand or fall together.

Nias and her colleagues' studies of primary school staff relationships have been formative influences on the development of this present study, because they explore the kinds of staff cultures in which individuals are likely to feel valued and to learn. The analysis of cultures of collaboration in their work has described staff cultures where shared beliefs about the acceptance and valuing of individuals, allied to a sense of group and team interdependence, promote conditions of security, in which openness is encouraged and differences of opinion are accepted. Nias' longitudinal studies of primary teachers (op.cit.) have shown how the quality of individuals' experiences of doing the job has been extensively influenced by the nature of the relationships they develop. They are happiest in mutually supportive contexts, in which they can '*make friends, share interests, enjoy companionship, and find mutual affection*', but might also experience '*staffrooms poisoned by rivalry, jealousy and suspicion making it difficulty to secure any remission from the pressures of classroom work*' (p. 152). A subsequent study of the conditions that promote whole school curriculum development in primary schools (Nias et al. 1992), concluded that a culture of collaboration was a necessary but not sufficient condition for whole school

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curriculum development. Both facilitation of collaboration and a predisposition to learn from one another were necessary if trust and openness were to lead to professional challenge and debate (p. 248-9).

Andy Hargreaves' (1994) discussion of the impact of school cultures on teachers' work builds further on Nias and her colleagues' work. He considers the impacts on teachers' work, at a time of change, of cultures that are characterised by individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality and balkanisation. The relevance of his analysis is examined more extensively in Chapter 10, where it provides a framework for examining trainees' perceptions of the impacts of placement cultures on their learning.

This body of work suggests that placement cultures may influence trainees' capacities to learn. A major concern of my present study is to examine whether and in what ways the nature of primary staff cultures, as perceived by trainees, influences their capacity to learn in, from, and about placements, in ways which enhance their professional development. Chapters 6 (learning about interadult dimension of the job), 8 (learning from staff groups), 10 (cultures as influences promoting and inhibiting learning) and 11 (cultures as influences on how trainees respond to their placements) develop aspects of the theme.

Discussion of the development of my own thinking is appropriate here, because it has contributed to the literature on primary staff cultures and their influences on trainees, and so has inevitably shaped the present study. Having contributed to the analyses reported in Nias et al. 1989, I had begun to make tentative links between my understanding of primary staff cultures and my work with trainees. My thinking about the impact of staff cultures on trainees emerges in Yeomans 1992, Wooldridge and Yeomans 1992 and Wooldridge and Yeomans 1994. In Yeomans 1992 I analysed attempts to promote trainees' thinking about aspects of the teacher's job associated with staff membership. I suggested that trainees could be sensitised to the experiences of staff membership vicariously through critical analysis of group experiences within the course, supported by a tutor. The theme of making explicit the tacit processes of the school as a workplace also appears in Hatch's analysis of the lessons trainees can learn from studies of teaching as work (1999). He asserts that *'teaching is a job - a job with particular characteristics, a job done in particular settings, a job requiring particular kinds of adaptations from those who do it'* (p. 229) . He adopts Becker's term *'socialisation by default'* (1970 p. 162) to argue that tacit processes of socialisation should be made explicit to trainees, by incorporating information about the nature of teachers' work into trainee programmes to ensure *'socialisation by design'* (Hatch op.cit. p. 229).

The contention of Yeomans (1992), that many trainees were able to recognise and share the experience of temporary staff membership during their placements is supported by Biott and Easen's study of 87 final year primary B Ed students (1994). They found that only five of that group said they had not felt like staff members at any time during a six-week placement. The two Wooldridge and Yeomans studies explored, in terms of acculturation, the influence of placement staffs (particularly mentors) on trainees' experiences of primary school placements. We suggested that, in seeking to induct trainees into placement staff cultures (to facilitate their capacities to learn there), mentors also exposed trainees to tacit 'acculturation' processes. By that term we meant that trainees were sometimes so anxious to accommodate themselves to their placements, and staff so convinced of the rightness of their ways of working, that trainees internalised the professional and interpersonal value systems of a particular staff at the cost of their critical perspective (Wooldridge and Yeomans 1994). Acculturation was particularly insidious because it was a *tacit* process: it was daily interaction that exposed trainees to

> *the norms of a specific staff culture* (which) *are the outcome and embodiment of personal and professional values, attitudes and beliefs which are implicit in classroom and staffroom behaviours, yet often unarticulated* (Wooldridge and Yeomans p. 139)

Being tacit, acculturation might have '*an unacknowledged yet profound influence on the development of students' own values and attitude, emerging as beliefs*' (p. 140). We concluded, therefore, that learning practices which assumed that trainees would fit in with a particular staff were likely to encourage acculturation, and so were no guarantee that they would develop insights generalisable to other schools - particularly given the tacit nature of acculturation processes. In other words, we saw acculturation as a powerful, but anti-educational, influence.

Hayes' findings that mentors expect trainees to demonstrate strategic compliance (1998), and to be '*willing*', indicate that primary school staffs assume trainees' behaviour should be shaped by specific school cultures and practices, as well as being a comment on trainees' personal qualities (1999). Knight and Trowler (1999) emphasise the influence of staff cultures in their study of new academics, when they suggest that '*socialisation through daily life is much more important than socialisation through events such as mentor meetings and course participation*' (p. 32). Hodkinson and Hodkinson (1999), in an examination of secondary school teacher trainees' use of study time during placements, also conclude that acculturation was a powerful influence on trainees. Whilst sharing our

analysis of acculturation as a tacit process, they conclude that it had an important explicit dimension. They suggest that

> *failure to fit in risks poor end of practice assessments and poor job references. The student teachers, knowing this, are trying to fit in for strategic purposes in addition to psychological ones* (p. 282).

Their analysis links with Lacey's earlier work on teacher socialisation (1977). He describes *'strategic compliance '*, when teachers appear to fit in with staff cultures but *'never fully accepted or believed what they pretended to'* (Hodkinson and Hodkinson op.cit. p. 283). These studies suggest that, whilst some trainees may actively collude in acculturation processes, others manage a spurious impression that they engage with the practices and share the dominant values of host staff cultures.

There are further elements of Lacey's analysis that may help to illuminate trainees' reactions to placement staff's expectations (see Chapter 11). He develops Becker's concept of a *'latent culture'* - *'the culture* (which) *has its origin and social support in a group other than the one in which members are now participating.'* (p. 70). The nature of the latent culture newcomers bring with them will influence their responses to the expectations of any new group they join. Their latent culture determines whether their *'situational adjustment'* strategies take the form of strategic compliance or of *'internalised adjustment, in which the individual complies with the constraints, and believes that the constraints of the situation are for the best'* (p. 72). Lacey also suggests a third possibility of *'strategic redefinition'*. This strategy depends on newcomers' abilities to redefine situations, so that they match more closely their own definitions of situations and appropriate ways to act within them. Strategic redefinition is achieved *'by causing or enabling those with formal power to change their interpretation of what is happening in the situation'*. Success is dependent on the ability of the performer, so that *'a good performance can result in a strategy being acceptable in a situation where it had previously been unacceptable'* (p. 73). This latter strategy suggests that trainees may not always respond passively to the expectations of placement staff, especially mentors, who have formal power in relation to trainees. Though with limited power, some trainees may not be without influence.

Lacey's suggestion that teachers are not inevitably passive recipients of socialisation processes is further developed in Nias' discussion of the importance of reference groups to the maintenance of teachers' sense of self, in the face of incompatible expectations (1985). Elsewhere, she concludes that teachers seek to shape their work in ways which are consistent with their views of themselves as people, so that they *'march to*

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the sound of a more distant drummer than legislators or administrators may think' (1986 p. 24).

It is less clear whether, when trainees do seek to fit in by adopting accepted practices, there is a long-term impact on their professional values. Edwards and Ogden (1998; also Edwards, Twisleton and Ogden 1997) are concerned that there may be such an effect. Writing from a social psychology perspective, they examine the practices of teacher mentors of primary trainees. They conclude that mentors seldom teach alongside trainees, but focus on analysis of practice which trainees largely carry out alone. Consequently, the planning frameworks used by schools and provided by their universities, dominate the professional practices trainees learn. Trainees do not

> *engage in discussion which demonstrate the cultural past and salient values of the community of practice and do not consider anything other than their performance as deliverers of the curriculum in this classroom, now* (p. 10).

Nor are they *'offered the opportunity to engage with an established professional knowledge base of primary school practice'* (ibid.). Instead, from both their universities and their placements, they acquire *'an approved pedagogy in addition to a statutory curriculum'* (p. 1), such as the detailed prescriptions of the literacy and numeracy hours and the National Curriculum.

It might be suggested that the processes which concern Edwards and Ogden are examples of the tacit but powerful nature of acculturation - but ones in which trainees absorb elements of a state-defined professional culture, communicated (wittingly and unwittingly) by placement staff and university education departments.

2.5 Initial teacher training and primary schools

The changes in national policy which introduced school-based initial teacher training stimulated a renewed emphasis on how schools in general, and school-based mentors in particular, contribute to the development of trainee' learning. In terms of this study, the most influential literature has been that, mentioned in Section 1.1, which considered the impact of the changed arrangements on trainee teachers' learning, including the influence of mentors and of the staffs to which they belong. An index of the perceived importance of mentoring was the start (1993) of a new journal devoted to issues of mentoring and tutoring within a wide range of professions (Mentoring and Tutoring).

In some instances (especially Edwards and Collison 1996), the literature emphasises the implications for trainees' learning about schools as organisations. It

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indicates the need for trainees' learning to develop a wider professional and school focus (rather than a narrow one that is concerned mainly with pragmatic solutions to classroom problems).

Edwards and Collison's analysis of the work of mentors in primary schools (1996) is important because it examines the ways mentoring might be different from the higher education tutor-trainee relationship it replaces. They consider the micro-processes of the mentor-trainee interactions, emphasise 'mentoring' rather than mentors in the formal sense, and so assert the importance of locating mentor-trainee relationships within a broader staff context. They also emphasise the importance of the continuing '*mentoring conversation*' that shapes trainees' learning during as well as before and after their classroom teaching episodes. Like Furlong and Maynard (1993), they suggest that mentors' functions could be placed on a continuum (carer, guide, challenger for Edwards and Collison). Furlong and Maynard found that mentors' chosen approaches linked to their perceptions of how trainees' professional development was proceeding. But Edwards and Collison suggest that the emphasis within an individual mentor's approach was

> *connected to how individual mentors wished to describe and act out their roles in relation to the training partnership with one higher education institution and to the priority they gave to the mentor role amidst the many competing demands on their time* (p. 8).

It seems that the specific learning needs of individual trainees did not drive mentors' selection of ways to support them. Consequently Edwards and Collison suggest that '*mentoring is not an instinctive activity which can be carried out by good practitioners as another layer of their professional function as class teachers*', but that its skills have to be learnt (p. 9). They further suggest that mentoring is related to, but different from, either teaching or counselling. It contains elements of each, because trainees need to learn in conditions which acknowledge the emotional dimensions of learning to teach '*in the public arena of a classroom* (which) *is particularly risky and therefore extremely stressful*' (p. 29). They assert that mentoring is an *active* process supporting *learning*, concerned with helping trainees deal with their immediate classroom concerns, with developing their longer-term capacity to interpret classroom events and promoting pupils' learning. Edwards and Collison acknowledge that there can be tensions in trainee-mentor relationships, when trainees, eager to be seen as teachers rather than learners, bring and apply models of being a teacher. There are particular difficulties when there is a mismatch between trainees' and teacher mentors' models of how to teach (see Chapter 11).

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Edwards and Collison's analysis of the connections between trainees, their mentors, and placements, is crystallised in their model for the relationships between higher education institutions and placement schools. They suggest that, frequently, trainee-mentor relationships becomes *'desert-islanded'*, *'with little connection to the wider experiences that might be available and with little support for individual mentors within their own school* (p. 138). Under such circumstances, isolation tends to produce an emphasis on minimising disruption to the school from trainees' presence. Fitting in is encouraged (see Chapters 5 and 11). Edwards and Collison propose that relationships should integrate the professional development of trainees and placement staffs. They use the model of Professional Development Schools in the USA, concerned with initial teacher training and continuous professional development. These seek to enable trainees to learn through becoming legitimate participants in schools where learning is seen as a process that can transform the institution itself.

Fish (1995) too is concerned that trainees' learning may become isolated and narrow. She suggests that it should extend beyond the immediate concerns of the classroom into wider understanding of both professional and school-wide issues. She seeks to redefine trainees' learning, when she contrasts *'the technical rational (TR) view ..that teaching is a simple set of competences and that these can be learnt by the student practising and the mentor advising and assessing'* with *'the reflective practitioner view.. that teaching is a complex, dynamic social activity with a moral dimension'* (p. x). She terms the latter *'professional artistry' (PA)*.

Fish's analysis runs parallel to that of Furlong and Maynard (1995). They contrast a competency-based with a reflective practitioner model of learning to teach, derived from Schon's theoretical model (Section 2.3). Their analysis of the influence of the latter is informed by the Modes of Teacher Education project (Whitty et al. 1992). The project indicated that, of those teacher education courses in England and Wales structured upon a specified philosophy of teacher education, over 70% had adopted a reflective practitioner model. However, Furlong and Maynard comment on vague use of the term and the variety of interpretations being applied. They trace two separate roots for thinking about teacher training. The first is Dewey's distinction between *'routine action - that is, guided primarily by tradition, external authority and circumstances'* (Furlong and Maynard p. 39), and reflective action, stimulated by the need to solve a problem:

the active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it (Dewey 1910 quoted in Furlong and Maynard p. 39).

Furlong and Maynard question this analysis (and others derived from it). They suggest that Schon's analysis of professional action represents a more sophisticated model, because it acknowledges the complexities of activities where *'knowing in action'* is characteristic of highly skilled performance, whether or not it can be explained by the actor. They suggest that Schon's analysis provides a convenient justification for school-based teacher training because it emphasises theorising about teaching (rather than learning theories about it). Further, it locates that process in working relationships between novice and expert practitioners. But Furlong and Maynard also suggest that Schon's model provides an incomplete solution to the preparation of trainee teachers. It starts from a view of how experts rather than novices learn, is not rooted in the practical realities of trainees' day to day needs, and has led to an over-emphasis on personal reflection as the panacea for trainees' problems. Maynard and Furlong's empirically-based analysis of trainees' learning emphasises that

> *the more sophisticated students' understanding of the assumptions they are making in their framing of practical situations, the more able they are to bring their teaching under their own control* (pp. 174-5).

They suggest five stages of development that they characterise as early idealism, personal survival, dealing with difficulties, hitting a plateau, and moving on. The influence of placement staff is experienced in three of the stages: through *'significant teachers'* from the past who had shaped trainees' thinking about the job (in stage 1), the decision to *'fit in'* with host teachers' styles (within stage 2), socialisation into host teachers' ways of working and talking - though not necessarily through adopting their perspectives (within stage 3).

Furlong and Maynard's emphasis on experience of teaching, in order to 'frame' or 'see' classroom situations, does not detract from trainees' need for expert support. Rather, their analysis determines how, rather than whether, trainees need support. They reject, as partial, the different models of support inferred from 'New Right', competence approaches, or derived from Dewey and Schon, because they are *'ideologically rather than empirically derived'*. They do not allow for *'the complexities nor the developmental nature of professional learning'* (p. 179). Furlong and Maynard suggest that the form of mentors' support should be a response to trainees' needs to develop both *'practical professional knowledge'* and *'deeper and more complex understandings of the assumptions they are*

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making in that professional knowledge' (p. 180). In their staged model of mentoring and student development, mentors' roles change, in response to trainees' development, from *'beginning teaching'* (mentor as model) to *'supervised teaching'* (mentor as coach), then *'from teaching to learning'* (mentor as critical friend) and finally to *'autonomous teaching'* (mentor as co-enquirer) (p. 181). In short, both trainees' learning and mentors' skills are seen as complex.

My own work with a team of colleagues researching primary school mentors (Yeomans and Sampson 1994) also informed my data collection. Within a detailed analysis of the *'dimensions'* and *'elements'* of the role mentors actually performed in relation to trainees, we examined the sets of relationships trainees developed in their placements. The Teacher Education And Mentorship project had two particular concerns that relate to the present study. First, we focused on trainees' learning when examining mentors' influences on, and relationships with, trainees. Second, we became interested in the influence of placement cultures on learning to teach and on the actions of trainees and mentors within placements.

Where trainees' learning is concerned, our conclusions about mentors' strategies are in line with those of Furlong and Maynard. Whilst they make specific links between trainees' stages of development and changes in the nature of mentors' interventions, we proposed an 'optimum fit' model. Within the latter, mentors' selection of strategies was matched to the phase of the course, the school context, the stage of the trainees' development, and mentors' experience and skill level (Yeomans 1994 p. 172). We suggested that placement cultures tended to influence both trainees and mentors. *'Mentor and mentoring were not synonymous'*. Rather, *'mentor-like actions were performed by a range of surrogate mentors'* (p. 138). Mentors were constantly juggling that role with others within the school. In a cultural sense, these mentors and trainees were not *'desert-islanded'*.

Affective concerns were important in sustaining the conditions under which trainees were able to learn, so that, in terms of learning, effective relationships with mentors tended to be synonymous with harmonious ones.

Within the TEAM project (op.cit.), Stephenson and Sampson discuss the placement conditions that are likely to sustain effective mentorship and promote trainees' learning. As far as the staff were concerned, they suggest the importance of cultures which emphasise collaboration, professional development and a shared view of effective practice, a willingness of staff to accept shared responsibility for trainees and share their expertise,

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allied to an openness about their own strengths and weaknesses (Stephenson and Sampson 1994). Here there are links with the Primary School Staff Relationships project analyses of primary staff cultures, although Nias et.al (1992) conclude that collaborative staffs are only a first, though necessary step, towards promoting effective professional development.

I have delayed discussion of the work of Calderhead and Shorrocks (1997) because it was published after I had completed data collection, and in its structure and focus it appears closer than any other study to my own.

Calderhead and Shorrocks seek to understand the processes by which primary school teacher trainees learn to teach during their training and first year in post. Their broad framework includes a focus on how trainees' thinking about teaching and learning changes during their course, what features contribute to any changes, and how the latter helped an understanding of professional development. Like this study, they use semi-structured interviews of trainees: Calderhead and Shorrocks' study is of twenty trainees on PGCE and Articled teacher courses over a two-year period.

Calderhead and Shorrocks explore several issues relevant to trainees' relationships with placement staffs and their impact on trainee teachers' learning. Building on Zeichner and Tabachnick's (1981) and Rust's (1994) findings that new teachers are progressively influenced by pressures to fit in to schools' practices, they point to the ways in which beliefs, embedded in taken for granted practices, can have a powerful influence on new teachers. They emphasise the importance of an individual's *'capacity to negotiate and manoeuvre within a powerful ideological context'* (p. 11). Their data suggest that trainees' early discomfort at some practices they observed was *'often prompted by a clash of values'* (p. 170). They confirm Olson's assertion (1992), that some trainees may find the process of *'professional self-actualisation'* so stressful in its impact on their belief systems that it *'may even lead them to consider leaving the course and abandoning their teaching career'* (p. 15). They indicate that fitting in was expected by staff and easier for trainees, *'because the systems were there and running and it was much easier to be effective by fitting into the class's normal procedures than to try to establish a parallel system of working'* (pp. 174-5). But trainees' own ideas about teaching could still be in conflict with what they saw (see Chapters 5 and 11).

However, Calderhead and Shorrocks' trainees also built their classroom practice on a mix of trial and error and modelling of other teachers' practices, including those they remembered as pupils. Their teaching models and strategies were also influenced by parents who were teachers, past work experiences with children, and (in the case of mature

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trainees) experience of other jobs. In short, they were extensively *'constrained by their own experience, by their own images of teaching'* (p. 206) (see Chapter 9).

These authors also suggest that, for these trainees, learning to be a teacher had an 'existential' dimension, related to how they saw themselves as persons. Feeling like a teacher was important for

> *a sense of personal achievement or self-actualisation.... it often seemed to accompany a feeling of being in charge of themselves and their job, rather than being simply an outside observer* (p. 184).

They emphasise that being a teacher was more than *'doing what teachers do'*, because it *'involves a personal investment, a feeling of being at ease in the role of teacher, an acceptance of teaching as being part of one's identity.'* The latter includes trainees being

> *able to reconcile* (their) *own values with those of the institution and the colleagues with whom one works* (p. 194).

If, as Calderhead and Shorrocks suggest, the feeling of 'being' a teacher *'signals that they are part of a culture and part of a teaching profession'* (ibid.), then there is a further encouragement for trainees to perceive and seek acceptance by placement staff through fitting in.

Calderhead and Shorrocks also emphasise the influence of <u>individual</u> placements and their staffs on <u>individual</u> trainees. Although they acknowledge the contributions of 'stage' models of learning to teach as a ways of exploring its complexity, they suggest that

> *learning in the professional development of teachers, however, is frequently content-, context-, and person-specific. The important question becomes not "How do students learn?" but "How do particular students learn X in context Y? ....Different student may learn different things in different ways, or the same experience may have a different significance for different students* (p. 193-4).

Themes exploring different trainee responses to different placements will be explored in Chapters 10 and 11.

Within placements, even mentors who were poor role models contributed to trainees' learning. It was clear that the quality of trainees' relationships with mentors was important to them (p. 203). But Calderhead and Shorrocks conclude that schools, as communities, also affect trainees' classroom practices because they *'accommodate a range of beliefs about children, the role of the teacher and the nature of good practice.'* which *'help to define the school as a community'* (p. 194). They recognise that the community's

influence is not inevitably constructive, because '*it is possible for communities to be dysfunctional, destructive and highly constraining, although they are nevertheless influential in the everyday activities of teaching*' (ibid.). They do, however, confirm the suggestion of Stephenson and Sampson (op.cit.) that collegial schools offer more supportive environments for trainees' learning.

There are particular differences between Calderhead and Shorrocks' work and this study. First, their focus is predominantly on learning to teach in the classroom, whereas I have taken a broader view of the nature of the job which includes both teacher-pupil and interadult dimensions. They do not examine closely the sets of informal placement relationships that sustain the formal learning relationship between trainees, their mentors and class teachers. Their work is surprisingly limited on mentors' contributions and adds little to other work on mentoring already discussed. When they indicate particular areas where further research is needed, Calderhead and Shorrocks include '*the nature of personal relationships in primary schools and the development of mentoring skills,* because

> *the extent to which teachers work collaboratively, jointly plan, teach and evaluate lessons, observe each other's practice and are encouraged to reflect on their own practice, evaluating it objectively, seems to be affected by the quality of relationships amongst teachers in schools, and by whether an ethos exists within the institution to support open relationships and constructively critical dialogue* (p. 209).

They seem unaware of the two Primary School Staff Relationships projects already cited, which contribute extensively to these very issues, yet are not mentioned. Finally, there is little attempt to conceptualise training for the job in broad terms. They do not acknowledge that teachers do anything outside classrooms which has a significant impact on what they do within them, or need to acquire the skills which relate to those other activities. This is in spite of extensive work by others, in areas such as school improvement and effectiveness, school cultures and staff relationships, teacher socialisation, school micropolitics and teacher identities. In their different ways, each of these suggests that teachers' formal and informal interactions with their colleagues have a major influence on their experience of doing the job.

2.6 Learning in communities of practice

Earlier I wove the thread of my own research interests into the discussion of the literature influencing this study. When the development of those interests is traced separately, it starts from a concern with the relationships of teachers with one another, the

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impact of staff groups on their members and the nature of staff membership, particularly within primary schools (Yeomans 1986; Yeomans 1987; Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989). Next, I focused on ways of helping trainee teachers understand the impact of staff groups on the experience of being trainee and teacher (Yeomans 1992). Then I concentrated on the influence of mentors, who had training responsibilities, yet also embodied the staff cultures shaping trainees' placement learning (Yeomans and Sampson 1994). This latter study contained an examination of *'acculturation'* (described in Section 2.4) (Wooldridge and Yeomans 1994). My present enquiry now develops further the theme of the influence of groups on their members, by examining the influence on trainee teachers' learning of primary school placement staff as a whole and individually (including mentors).

The theme stretches over more than a decade. It is in one sense a surprise, therefore, to encounter a text which returns to the concern with groups, from which I started. That text is Wenger's developed analysis of *'communities of practice'* (1998), an idea he had initially outlined with Jean Lave within their examination of situated learning (Lave and Wenger op.cit. 1991).

Wenger's analysis is relevant to this study because, although not concerned with teacher education, his discussion of the community of practice of insurance processors builds a theoretical analysis of how <u>any</u> community of practice shapes the learning of its members and aspirant members. His analysis is of particular relevance to Chapters 5 and 6. He defines learning as a social phenomenon and explores the meanings of learning for individuals, their communities of practice, and the organisations within which these exist. His *'social theory of learning'* for novices, is built from *'changing participation and identity transformation in a community of practice'*. Newcomers are introduced to practice through practice, because *'that members interact, do things together, negotiate new meanings, and learn from each other is already inherent in practice - that is how practices evolve'* (p. 102). His analysis has elements in common with Edwards and Collison's recommendation of Professional Development Schools as a way of integrating the formal purposes of organisations with training for work within them. But. for Wenger, any community of practice constitutes the means of developing learning within and about itself.

Wenger systematically explores the links between each of the main concepts that contribute to the overarching theory - *'community'*, *'practice'*, *'participation'*, *'membership'*, *'identity'*, *'peripherality'*, and *'learning'*. He suggests that a *'community'* of practice has the characteristics of *'mutual engagement'*, *'joint enterprise'*, and a *'shared repertoire'*. It is concerned with mutual engagement because

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practice resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do. Membership in a community of practice is therefore a matter of mutual engagement (p. 77).

It is a joint enterprise in that it is *'communally negotiated'* (p. 78) and

because members produce a practice to deal with what they understand to be their enterprise, their practice as it unfolds belongs to their community in a fundamental sense (p. 80).

Over time the community of practice has developed a shared repertoire which includes

routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence (p. 83).

Wenger uses practice to mean *'doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do. In this sense practice is always social practice'* (p.47). He suggests that practice is both explicit and tacit :

It includes what is said and what is left unsaid; what is represented and what is assumed. it includes the language, tools, documents, images, symbols, well-defined roles, specified criteria, codified procedures, regulations, and contracts that various practices make explicit for a variety of purposes. But it also includes all the implicit relations, tacit conventions, subtle cues, untold rules of thumb, recognisable intuitions, specific perceptions, well-tuned sensitivities, embodied understandings, underlying assumptions and shared world views (ibid.).

He associates an individual's participation in a community of practice with the development of an identity which emerges from participation, because the latter is *'both a kind of action and a form of belonging. Such participation shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do'* (p. 4). In turn, he links participation to the concept of membership, which is associated with feelings of competence within the community of practice:

When we are with a community of practice of which we are a full member, we are in familiar territory. We can handle ourselves competently. We experience competence and we are recognised as competent. We know how to engage with others (p. 152).

Membership and competence are further linked to the development of an identity within that community:

In sum, membership in a community of practice translates into an identity as a form of competence...... we know who we are by what is familiar, understandable, usable,

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negotiable; we know who we are not by what is foreign, opaque, unwieldy, unproductive (p. 153).

This analysis leads finally to a reconceptualising of learning itself as identity transformation *('not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming')* (p. 215), which is associated with an enhanced capacity to participate in the community of practice.

The problem of how newcomers and novices become members remains. Wenger acknowledges the paradox that

> *if one needs an identity of participation in order to learn, yet needs to learn in order to acquire an identity of participation, then there seems to be no way to start.* (p. 277).

He suggests that newcomers are dependent on members' willingness to suspend the conditions of membership and allow the former access to shared understandings, from which outsiders would normally be excluded.

For Wenger, peripherality requires access to all three of the dimensions of practice he has identified: *'to mutual engagement with other members, to their actions and their negotiation of the enterprise, and to the repertoire in use'* (p. 100). His assertion that *'teachers, masters, and specific role models can be important, but it is by virtue of their membership in the community as a whole that they can play their roles'* (ibid.), relates closely to Nias et al.'s (1989) analysis of the role of *'culture bearers'* in sustaining dominant primary school staff cultures (see also Chapter 10).

To facilitate learning, peripherality must go hand in hand with legitimacy, because *'in order to be on an inbound trajectory, newcomers must be granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members'* (p. 101). Wenger's suggestions that, *'if a community rejected a newcomer for some reason, that person would have a hard time learning'*, and that *'legitimacy may take many forms: being useful, being sponsored, being feared, being the right kind of person, having the right birth'* (ibid.), have implications for the discussions of trainees' experiences of placement staff in Chapters 9 and 10. In the light of the data from those chapters, I shall return to Wenger's analysis In Chapter 12.

2.7 Conclusion

This review deals with those sources that have been most influential on my thinking about trainees' learning from school placement staffs. I have attempted to deal with the

tendency of this study to straddle boundaries, by considering the influential literature in each field that has shaped it. I have taken the view that the study is concerned with the learning of adult novice professionals in workplace contexts, and the impact of staff on their learning. Although the study is specifically concerned with the development of trainee teachers, the literature in that field, whilst relevant and informative, has tended not to focus on the interadult dimension of that job. Further, it has only partially been concerned with the impact of adults on trainees' learning (the focus on mentors being its predominant concern). The most influential link between my past enquiries into primary school staffs, their contributions to trainees' learning, and my present enquiry, is one that is not concerned with teacher training. Wenger deals with communities of practice, which develop in workplaces and other settings and which are both the object and the means of learning for their members and for newcomers who join them, including trainees. Each of the studies I have discussed contributes to an understanding of, but does not fully address, the influence of placement staffs on primary trainee teachers' learning. Consequently I suggest that I am addressing a gap in the literature.

This literature review has not included the key methodological literature sources that have shaped the ways this investigation has been constructed, a task I deal with in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methods

3.1 Introduction

The temptation in this chapter is to present an uncontentious account of the research process, describing familiar and well-established research techniques and using familiar research terms to confirm the *bona fides* of the methodology and of the research outcomes. Such an account would offer a systematic, planned, ordered and sustained progression from research issue, through the theoretical perspective adopted, via discussion of the methodological framework and ethical safeguards, data collection methods used and methods of analysing data.

Those procedures could make clear what I did and why, but might inadequately achieve a more problematic aim: to enable the reader to judge the *'trustworthiness'* (Lincoln and Guba 1985) of the analysis and the conclusions drawn from it, by exposing the microprocesses of broad research phases.

This study is an instance of research within a natural setting. Where naturalistic studies are concerned, a chapter describing research design and methods should reveal those aspects of the research process which are untidy, hesitant and temporarily incoherent, as well as those which are not. Then it may be more likely to convince the reader that analyses are coherent, ordered, rational and convincing reflections of the data. Exposed meandering trails become a crucial part of the 'truth value' which helps both researcher and readers determine

> *'how can one establish confidence in the "truth" of the findings of a particular enquiry for the subjects?'*
> (Lincoln and Guba op. cit. p. 290)

Problems of interpretation are enhanced in studies that use multi-case analysis, because such research explores similarities and differences between individuals' behaviour in different contexts whose similarities and differences may themselves contribute to those behaviours. Inevitably, such studies will produce generalised analyses of behaviour which distil a range of experiences, and so may not fully reflect that of any one individual. Then, the transparency of analytical processes becomes crucial, because the researcher's interpretations cannot adequately be confirmed merely by checking them with individuals.

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In short, naturalistic studies require accessible explanations of their research processes if they are to convince. They should describe research processes as experienced by the researcher. The truth value of this chapter rests on its capacity to enable readers both to judge the rigour of the methodology in the context of existing research traditions, and to determine whether the apparent messiness of parts of the research processes justifies confidence in the analysis. To achieve both purposes I present the design in terms of broad research strategies and through the unique flavour of this particular research process.

3.2 Theoretical perspectives

3.2.1 Naturalistic enquiry

The underpinning theoretical assumptions of the study are derived from established sociological and anthropological research approaches to naturalistic enquiry. I describe this research as naturalistic enquiry, because I seek to understand behaviour which takes place in naturally occurring settings (in this instance work placements), by collecting data when the people being researched (trainee teachers) are engaging in their everyday activities (learning to teach). The stance of naturalistic research within this study implies that

> *according to naturalism, in order to understand people's behaviour we must use an approach that gives us access to the meanings that guide that behaviour* (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 p. 7).

The research approach taken is interpretative. That is to say, it is concerned with interpreting and understanding *'the meanings events have for the persons being studied'* (Maykut and Morehouse 1994 p. 3), rather than relying on judgements about the nature of events as seen from the perspective of an uninvolved observer. It focuses unequivocally on the meanings trainees bring to their workplace encounters, on the ways their definitions of these situations influence their responses, and on their perceptions of how their learning has developed and been influenced. It is not concerned with the meanings of mentors, host teachers or a university link tutor. The focus on trainees' perspectives influences decisions about how data can be collected, meanings can be ascribed to them, analysis can be conducted, generalisations across trainees' perspectives made and trustworthiness can be determined.

The work is specifically influenced by assumptions derived from symbolic interactionism (the term coined by Blumer for ideas developed by Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934)). Symbolic interactionism takes the view that individuals learn to operate within

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societies and with one another through interaction, using the symbols they receive and convey, particularly language and actions. Through interaction, individuals develop a sense of self, influenced by the ways in which 'significant others' respond to them and by the cultures in which they participate. Cultures develop as shared understandings about the meanings of events and definitions of situations. It follows that, in order to understand why individuals act as they do in social situations, it is necessary to interpret the meanings they give to those situations when constructing their realities.

The set of assumptions outlined above has practical implications for the methods chosen to research how individuals behave in natural settings. Since the sociological researcher '*cannot simply observe action from the outside and impose an external logic upon it*' but must '*interpret the internal logic which directs the actions of the actor*', (Haralambos 1985 p.20), this interpretative study adopts the techniques of '*participant observation*' (see Section 3.3.1). The term means that researchers develop their understanding of how individuals act in, and make sense of, situations by themselves acting in established participant roles within the settings being studied, rather than seeking to remain detached observers of them (Atkinson and Hammersley 1998). When in the research settings, participant observer researchers try to behave in ways that are natural to them. They avoid acting in ways which emphasise their identities as researchers and those of other participants in the setting as foci for research. If and when researchers are able to become natural parts of settings being researched, participant observation enables them to observe other participants without distorting unduly the latter's' natural behaviour. Further, as participants, researchers may begin to experience for themselves the very processes which shape other participants' behaviour, and so enhance their understanding of it. In Section 3.3.1 I explain the particular form participant observation took in this study.

3.2.2 Trustworthiness

Interpretative researchers' concern with meanings and perspectives offers a particular difficulty for research design and data analysis. Interpretative ideas sit uneasily with positivist research approaches ('*synonymous with science or with positive or observable facts......objective enquiry based on measurable variables and provable propositions*', Maykut and Morehouse op.cit. p. 3). Further, interpretative research does not easily accommodate the research design assumptions implicit in positivist research principles: testable hypotheses, controllable experimental situations with isolation of variables and objective researchers who are separate from rather than part of the research

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process. The use of the terminology of positivist research within interpretative studies may establish false assumptions about the nature of the research process and inappropriate tests of rigour. In particular, the terms *'internal and external validity'*, and *'reliability'*, are associated with quantifiable outcome measures with statistical significance which ensure *'objectivity'* (Lincoln and Guba 1985 op.cit.).

Studies that seek to interpret meanings in natural settings need to ensure comparable methodological rigour to that of positivist ones, but by different means. Lincoln and Guba have suggested that naturalistic research requires both its own systematic and rigorous methodological procedures and a unique set of terms to describe them. Within the overarching criterion of research *'trustworthiness'*, Guba (1981) proposes an equivalent terminology that achieves the purposes of internal and external validity and reliability, but takes account of the circumstances of naturalistic enquiry:

> *that these conventional formulations be replaced with four new terms that have a better fit with naturalistic epistemology; these he has named 'credibility' (in place of internal validity), 'transferability' (in place of external validity), 'dependability' (in place of reliability), and 'confirmability' (in place of objectivity).* (quoted in Lincoln and Guba p. 219).

Lincoln and Guba's distinctions have been adopted as the framework from which the methodology of this study is built. First, the research has been conducted *'in such a way that the probability that the findings will be found credible is enhanced'* (Lincoln and Guba op.cit. p. 296). In other words, steps have been taken to convince readers that interpretations, generalisations and conclusions are *'credible'*, because they are consistent with the data collected, which in turn are credible representations of trainees' perspectives. Second, the extent to which the *'hypotheses'* of this research are *'transferable'* to other settings rests on judgements about the similarities between the research contexts and those to which findings might be transferred. In this study, *'hypothesis'* is used in a general, rather than a specifically positivist sense, as a provisional explanation for a phenomenon being studied. Third, whereas *'reliability'* is derived from assumptions that there can be replicable experimental situations from which similar results would be gained, the naturalistic equivalent, *'dependability'*, seeks to achieve comparable rigour and gain confidence in outcomes by making research processes as transparent as possible. In essence, readers can judge whether the data and the ways they were collected justify confidence in the conclusions derived from them. Finally, *'confirmability'* too uses

transparency to enable readers to confirm research outcomes by tracing the methodological pathways by which they have been reached.

Lincoln and Guba recommend a range of techniques for ensuring the overall aim of trustworthiness. These include, for credibility: *'prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis,* and *member checking'*, for transferability, *'thick description'*, being detailed description of the people and situations under investigation; and for dependability and confirmability the existence of *'audit trails'* which ensure that the rigour of research and analytical processes is accessible to scrutiny.

Prolonged engagement requires that researchers maintain their scrutiny over a sufficiently long period to be confident that their data reflects the realities they want to understand - which is also the intention of persistent (repeated) observation. Triangulation is a strategy by which the truth value of a tentative explanation of behaviour, gained from one data source, is checked by comparing it with other data sources which provide a different perspective on that same explanation. Triangulation may involve comparing different kinds of data (triangulation between methods - such as verifying observations of trainees by interviews with them), or comparing the same kinds of data from several sources (triangulation within a method - such as interviewing several trainees or observing in several comparable sites). Peer debriefing involves researchers in exposing the links between their data (and tentative explanations of them) to the critical scrutiny of their peers (colleagues, research supervisors). Explanations are themselves tested by ensuring that they can account for, and take account of, apparent exceptions of any negative cases that appear not to fit tentative explanations - which may then need to be modified. Member checking requires that the researcher explores tentative explanations with those being researched. Finally, the written research output should contain sufficient detail about the research processes for readers to be able to follow the trail from initial research issues, through design, data collection, analysis, and confirm for themselves that these are appropriately linked to dependable outcomes (the audit trail).

However, those writers emphasise that *'no amount of member checking, triangulation, persistent observation, auditing, or whatever can compel; it can at best persuade'* (p. 329) - a process I now begin.

Within the rest of the chapter I hope to develop an audit trail, which follows the details of research design and processes, including analysis, and exposes them sufficiently to convince the reader of the dependability and confirmability of the outcomes of the study.

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Descriptions and justifications of research methods and the ethical safeguards applied are also intended to contribute to the credibility of outcomes. Section 3.7 makes an important contribution to the audit trail, because it traces the sometimes elusive process by which research ideas are developed, analysis makes sense of data, and empirically-based explanations for trainees' behaviour are reached. Section 3.4 contributes particularly to judgements about transferability.

3.3 Research design

The research was conceived as a naturalistic, multi-case study of fifteen primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) trainees on a one-year teacher training course in one university. The 'cases' were the trainees themselves. But the research would involve observing and discussing with them their work in different placement schools, so that the latter could also be regarded as 'cases' of the placements in which trainees learnt. It would then be possible to explore learning issues across trainees and to examine how they were influenced by different placements. From an analysis of emerging themes and issues, a set of outcomes would be generated which reflected both recurring themes across cases and the diversity of experiences within the group (see Section 3.7.1). The choice of participants was determined by my work within the course the trainees had joined. I was the professional link tutor with oversight of their professional development. As part of that role I supported them by establishing and maintaining links with placement schools. I visited trainees in their placements, observed them teach and talked to placement staff. I responded to difficulties experienced by trainees or placement staff and monitored placements to ensure equity of treatment of, and judgements on, trainees. I also met the trainees at regular intervals at the university (both collectively and individually) to discuss their professional development and deal with specific issues which had arisen during placements. I was their personal tutor, responding to personal concerns that might arise during the course. I drafted their final references. However, I was not directly responsible for making summative judgements about whether trainees should pass the course. That decision was largely made by placement staff, particularly mentors, moderated by my observations of trainees and my discussions with placement staff.

The use of such an 'opportunity sample' has some implications for the transferability of outcomes. Yin (1994) suggests that *'sampling logic'* in which *'the data from a smaller number of persons are assumed to represent the data that might have been collected from the entire pool'* (p. 47), is inappropriate for case study. He suggests that the

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principle of 'replication logic' be applied to multi-case design. Each participant should be seen as a specific instance of the same phenomenon under broadly similar conditions. Similarities in the ways participants respond in the situations being studied can then seen to be outcomes of the similarities in conditions, and differences in response are the outcome of the ways in which specific participants and conditions differ from one another in detail. The extent to which a particular set of cases can be taken to represent other broadly similar cases (primary PGCE trainees on school placements) then becomes a matter of ensuring that there is sufficient description of participants and placements within the study for readers to make judgements about transferability to other contexts (Section 3.4).

3.3.1 Participant observation

My capacity to adopt convincingly the research stance of a participant observer had an influence on the dependability of this research, because the credibility of data I collected would be enhanced if my presence and actions were perceived to be natural parts of everyday routines. As professional link tutor, I was well placed to conduct this multi-case study as a participant observer. The role enabled me to both participate in and observe trainees' development, particularly through their work in schools. It gave me legitimate access to schools and classrooms where the trainees worked and reasons to act in ways that enabled me to collect research data, yet were natural behaviour for a link tutor. Trainees expected me to watch them teach, talk to them at length about their development and observe their interactions with placement staff. The latter expected me to observe and make notes about trainees in their classrooms, sit and talk in their staffrooms and discuss with them trainees' professional development. At the university I could legitimately discuss with the trainees their placement experiences and professional concerns. Indeed my effectiveness as both researcher and link tutor depended on my capacity to develop open and trusting relationships with trainees. In short, there was a close identity between what I needed to do as link tutor and what I wanted to do as researcher. I believe I was an unobtrusive participant observer, in the sense that in my field relationships my behaviour was naturally and authentically that of a link tutor. The main difference was that individual interviews with trainees would be tape-recorded, longer and more probing than those I would otherwise expect to conduct as link tutor.

I had been a participant observer researcher on two multi-case funded projects, concerned with primary school staff relationships (Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989) and mentoring processes in school-based primary school initial teacher training (Yeomans

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and Sampson 1994). My participation in the latter project had been also as professional link tutor. Consequently I was alert to the complexities of managing link tutor and researcher roles concurrently and of retaining an *'objective'* perspective. In particular, I knew that the link tutor role could help me retain my own sense of *'strangeness'*, because it required me to understand and, where appropriate, seek to reconcile the perspectives of both placement staff and trainees. Further, my insights would be constantly refreshed by the need to move regularly to new placements, talk to different trainees and so be sensitised to differences and similarities between them. Hence. the role helped me avoid the dangers of *'going native'* (Hammersley and Atkinson op.cit.) - that is to say, it prevented me identifying too closely with the perspective of particular groups or individuals and so being unable to present a confirmable analytical account of trainees' development.

However, the current study presented difficulties in balancing participation as link tutor with maintaining a researcher's stance.

First was the problem of perspectives and their associated realities. Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) assert that *'perspective connotes a view at a distance from a particular focus. Where we look from affects what we see'* (p. 15). I sought to understand the perspectives of trainees on their professional development, rather than those of placement staff - or indeed my own. My previous experiences of multi-case study had taught me that multiple perspectives could also generate multiple explanations. I was forewarned that I needed to ensure that my representation of trainees' realities was not distorted by my own, or those that were offered to me by placement staff. In other words, whilst engagement in the field was an important means of understanding the responses of trainees to situations and issues, its main purpose was to provide clues, hypotheses and questions about trainees' perspectives. I then needed to explore the latter directly with trainees.

Second was possible ethical tensions between observing as a researcher and participating as professional link tutor. Observation might suggest the need for interventions in trainees' professional learning. When trainees experienced professional difficulties (or personal ones that had an impact on their professional development), I needed to be able to intervene rather than merely observe. It was possible that I might affect data by doing so, in that I might modify trainees' placement experiences in some way. But if such occasions arose, it would be necessary to intervene. Consequently, although I was never complete observer, I moved between being observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant (Gold 1958) in response to changing professional and research needs.

Further, there was possible tension between collecting evidence that contributed to final judgements about trainees' professional competence, as professional tutor, and my need, as researcher, to encourage trainees to have open relationships with me. I had to ensure that their openness did not compromise their ability to complete their course successfully. I took the view that, on balance, the researcher and professional tutor roles were mutually complementary rather than incompatible. The fundamental ethical principle underpinning all my actions as researcher was that my professional obligations to trainees and staff, as link tutor, took precedence over research considerations (see Section 3.6).

3.4 The trainees and research contexts

Lincoln and Guba have suggested that transferability is helped by providing 'thick' descriptions of the cases being studied, so that the reader has sufficient information about their contexts to make judgements about the applicability of the research outcomes to other cases which have similar characteristics. In several places I have provided details about the trainees, their course, and their placements, which I hope will be sufficient to enable readers to make judgements about the transferability of analyses and conclusions to cases which they recognise as similar. Since this research concerns primary PGCE teacher trainees in school placements, I have provided information about their course, particularly of the arrangements for their placements (Section 1.3). Appendix A give information about trainees and their placement schools and further data is provided in later chapters about trainees (particularly Chapters 9 and 11) and schools (particularly Chapter 10). Appendices A4 and A5 provide biographies of trainees and descriptions of placements, although space does not allow for the extensive detail of a single case study.

Details are summarised below for convenience.

In this study the members of the group were all subject to the same course structure, which itself operated within the national framework for primary PGCE training established by Circular 14/93 (DFE1993). The balance of time spent in the university and in placements was the same for all primary PGCE trainees within the university and, in turn, was within the parameters set for all primary PGCE courses nationally.

As I have explained in Section 1.3, trainees were normally placed in two different schools from the same cluster. Their second placement was intended to extend their range of experience of contexts and year groups. In practice, in order to ensure breadth of experience, two trainees were placed in schools outside the cluster for their second

placement (but retained their links with me) and two additional trainees from a different group were placed within my cluster. Data include the additional schools and trainees.

As Appendix A shows, the group contained a balanced mix of ages, with five being 25 or under, and a similar number aged 26-30 and 31-40. Only three joined the course immediately on completion of their university degree course (Trainees 2, 6 and 13), although two others had a gap of only one year after (Trainees 1 and 8). Almost all had had previous experiences of work within educational contexts, many within primary schools (half, unpaid). Four had family already in teaching and several others had teachers as friends. For the majority, joining the course was their first career-directed decision. But seven had had previous continuous working lives of four years or more (Trainees 3,6,7,9,10,14 and 15). Six were or had been married, five of whom had children who lived with them during the course. This latter sub-group included one of the three men. In short, in almost all instances, trainees had a range of experiences which had prepared them for work contexts in general and primary schools in particular. They were not naive entrants whose only insights into primary teaching were derived from their own experiences of being pupils. Further, all had spent two weeks in a self-selected 'home-based' placement immediately before they joined the course.

There was a mix of urban and rural schools. All placements were in classes within the primary age range of 5 to 11. Three were lower schools (5-9 age range), two middle schools (9-13 age range), and one a junior school (7-11 age range) (Appendix A2). Teaching staffs ranged in size from five to thirteen plus head teachers (Appendix A2). Their sizes meant that, in all placements, trainees might become exposed to the influence of all the staff in group interactions, including whole staff ones (whether in staff meetings or through informal staffroom conversations). Two of the urban schools had large multicultural populations and two of the schools had all-female staffs. With the exception of two placements (School D placement two and School E placement two), trainees were in pairs or trios. Apart from School E, all the schools accepted trainees for both placements (Appendix A3).

3.5 Data collection methods

One of Guba and Lincoln's key principles for ensuring credibility (but which also contributes to dependability and confirmability within trustworthiness) is triangulation of research methods. This study concerns the perspectives of individual trainees, working within different social settings, rather than those of participants within a single one. Within

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this study, triangulation is both a problem for and a solution to questions of trustworthiness. It is problematic, in that the perspectives of a link tutor and of placement staff on trainees' learning were important as ways of illuminating trainees' perspectives on it. But it was trainees whose data provided insights of greater value. Only they had the possibility of thinking reflexively about their learning, whereas insights of observers, whether researcher or school staff, were at best tentative theories. Therefore the main focus of data collection needed to be trainees themselves. It seemed inappropriate to rely heavily on triangulation between forms of data. Therefore, whilst observational field data were sources of interview agendas, I chose not to conduct formal interviews with placement staff. Credibility in data collection came from triangulation of interview data from different trainees and so was largely within rather than between research methods. Tentative explanations derived from observation were confirmed or modified by interviews. They could then be explored during subsequent interviews with other trainees in the same and later interviewing phases. Further, they modified field perspectives and could reshape my thinking about data already collected, whose meanings were only partially understood. For example, Trainee 3 raised the issue of the negative implications of being a male in his first placement with an all-female staff. I then became sensitised to similar possibilities in subsequent interviews with other male trainees and observations in placements.

3.5.1 Field observations

Notes derived from field observations, informal discussions with placement staff and interactions with trainees during seminars at the university were used to develop insights into and ideas about trainees' learning.

I claim to have been able to enhance the credibility of my data, and the analyses derived from them through *prolonged engagement* with *persistent observation* of trainees. In practice I made fifty-five placement visits, typically five per placement per phase (approximately eighty hours), which was almost double the total a link tutor might make. Additionally I spent twenty hours at the university with the original thirteen trainees as a group in seminar sessions, when their placement experiences were the foci for discussion of professional issues. I was closely involved in analysing and thinking about their development from the first to the last day of their course.

But there was an asymmetrical relationship between field and interview data. The former were at best the source of tentative theories about the perspectives of trainees. Indeed, I was concerned that my link tutor relationships with placement staff did not cause

me to adopt their explanations for trainees' actions. Staff perspectives on trainees were inevitably coloured by their own priorities, real for themselves, but not necessarily those of trainees. Both trainees and placement staff were seeking to *'present themselves'* (Goffman 1969) to one another, sometimes in the presence of others who impinged on their professional relationship. They might behave differently towards one another when I, the link tutor, was present. Trainee 15 suggested that sometimes

> *you didn't experience a typical situation. I got so annoyed one day when you were there over lunchtime, because then we were actually spoken to ..... and knowing that the very next day I would not be.*

Such comments confirm the tentative nature of my observer insights.

Field observations were mainly used to develop *'analytical memos'*, and so were not analysed in the ways interviews were. Analytical memos were reflexive musings which contained my initial interpretations of the meanings of observations I had made, and their relationships to general themes, as these began to emerge. Analytical memos offered tentative explanations that could help clarify the meanings of subsequent observations and ultimately be explored through interview agendas (Appendix B). In addition, informal discussions and interviews with trainees could be followed up by field observations that might further illuminate explanations they had given.

3.5.2 Documentary sources

Documentary materials, particularly personal data about individual trainees generated by the course, also provided sources from which to develop insights into individual trainees' past experiences and the influences which might shape their perspectives, particularly at the start of their course.

3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

I have suggested that however perceptive I might consider my own or placement staffs' interpretations of trainees' observed behaviour, they were, at best, tentative analyses of trainees' learning, whose credibility could only be explored by discussing with trainees their own perceptions of their learning. Therefore, tape-recorded semi-structured interviews with trainees at the university and in placements were the principal data collection method. Each trainee within the group was interviewed after each of the two block placements. Comparisons could be made between a trainee in different placements and between several trainees who were in the same placement concurrently or at different

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times. Generalisations could then be developed about the group of trainees, by triangulating data from different trainees and sites.

Interviews were all conducted at the university in my room, during the daytime, after trainees had finished their placements. This was a quiet and private place and the telephone was disconnected. It was a place where trainees were accustomed to discussing individually their personal and professional concerns, one which they themselves would seek out when they had issues to raise about their course. In short, professional discussions there between trainees and their professional tutor were a natural part of course processes. Interviews differed in that they were tape recorded, and the interviewer (Appendix C) set the broad agendas. But the focus was still trainees and their experiences.

Although, at the beginning of the study, all trainees had agreed to be interviewed, I always re-confirmed that each was willing for interviews to be tape recorded before they started, expressed my willingness to turn off the recorder on request and re-checked their consent to my using data from each interview after it had been completed.

Typically, interviews lasted between thirty-five and forty five minutes. Their exact structure depended to some extent on interviewees. Each interview agenda had three main sources. These were, first, issues which were implicit in the initial research questions; second, tentative general hypotheses about trainees' learning derived from written information all course members provided on joining it, observations and informal discussion with trainees and placement staff. Foreknowledge of particular events in placements led me to raise issues particular to each interviewee. Unanticipated emerging themes, relevant to trainees in general, could shape subsequent interviews with other trainees.

The nature and purpose of semi-structured interviews also meant that, within my broad agenda, interviewees determined their direction. The agenda provided a set of issues trainees were invited to explore, with the emphasis firmly on the interviewer listening carefully, rapidly analysing responses and so following and exploring trainees' lines of thought and analysis through supplementary questions. The aim was to develop a professional exploratory conversation, focused on each trainees' professional learning, so that, once the interview had begun, the order in which issues were raised was largely determined by trainees' lines of thought. I kept a list of issues on my lap, but consulted it as infrequently as possible. After initial prompts, I maintained a mental checklist of issues interviewees had raised. I was then able to avoid revisiting issues already addressed, concentrate on listening, probing further and following any unanticipated relevant

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directions in which interviewees led me. The conversations that developed were skewed interactions between reflective talkers and a probing listener, within which both participants contributed to the directions the conversation followed (Appendix D).

Transcription and analysis of interview data are discussed in Section 3.7.1

3.6 Ethical considerations

My dual relationship with trainees, as professional tutor and researcher, presented ethical issues, often encountered in the study of social situations, to which I needed to respond, because trainees' subsequent lives might be affected. Ethical considerations had practical research implications too, since the credibility of interview data depended on maintaining relationships in which trainees felt sufficiently secure to be willing to share their experiences openly.

In Section 3.3 I referred to the ethical problems of a participant observer who is both researcher and professional link tutor. Participant observation could be an effective research strategy if I could address the ethical problem of boundaries between knowledge gained as researcher and actions taken as a professional tutor. A relevant analogy might be that of the religious confessional, where priests receive confidences that might present difficulties for their roles as citizens. Trainees needed to be sure that the confidentiality of an interview with the researcher would not expose them to negative professional consequences. They needed to be assured that, as professional tutor, I would not use interview insights to directly influence assessments of trainees' professional competence. However, an ethical position also seemed to allow (indeed require) that I did use the insights from research-oriented observations, informal discussions, and interviews to influence my actions towards trainees as professional tutor, where these would enhance trainees' development. I took the view that I could use any insights into trainees' needs to support them professionally, but that knowledge gained in situations which were additional to my professional role should not be used to affect the judgements of others about trainees' success or failure on the course. Knowledge gained as part of my professional role was a legitimate source of research data, provided I used it with the same standards of sensitivity and confidentiality I applied to my professional role. Professionally, that knowledge would normally be used to promote trainees' development, and so its anonymised use, subject to safeguards of a written ethical code, was unlikely to disadvantage trainees. To avoid doubt I had gained permission from the PGCE Course Committee to conduct the study. However, I knew more of the details of the professional and personal stresses of some trainees' current

lives than I was prepared to use as data - although such knowledge was sometimes alluded to in milder forms within interview data that trainees were willing for me to use.

It was essential, both ethically and practically, that there was a clear statement of ethical safeguards which was understood and accepted by trainees, yet which enabled me to enhance credibility within the research design. An ethical code (Appendix B1) sought to facilitate trainees' openness about situations, people, and difficulties they were meeting, as well as their successes. Openness depended on trust within their relationship with me. Trust required that trainees knew that anything they said to me as researcher would not be shared with any professional 'others', but would only be used for their benefit in my work as professional tutor.

I was aware of fewer ethical problems for the schools where trainees were to be placed, since the focus of the study was the trainees themselves. However, I wanted to adopt an overt participant observer strategy, with schools' staffs aware of the nature of my study, since I intended to spend more time with them than was usual as link tutor. Further, I wanted placement staffs to understand and accept the parameters of my study and their implications for the schools. In particular, they needed to know that the focus was on trainees and that, in order to avoid breaches of confidentiality and anonymity, I would not share individual trainees' data with teachers. Agreement was sought and gained from placements for me to spend additional time with trainees there, on the understanding that a summary of final outcomes would be shared with schools.

3.7 Data analysis and the development of hypotheses

Data analyses, with the development of empirically derived explanatory theories derived from them, are an important part of the audit trail on which dependability and confirmability rest. Unless the development of the explanations researchers build can be clearly tracked, there is bound to be uncertainty about their worth as credible reflections of data. Readers need to be convinced that analyses emerge from data, rather than that they are merely unrigorous confirmations of previously held views. Yet it is a research truism that researchers seldom comes to a new research concern with a blank mind. In the next sub-section, as a contribution to judgements about the credibility and confirmability of analyses and ideas built from them, I trace the developing relationship between explanatory theories and data.

3.7.1 Data analysis and grounded theory

Strauss (1987) has suggested that previous theory can be helpful in clarifying problems and issues within a new research study that bears some relationship to it. I had been a member of separate research projects on primary school staff relationships (1989 op.cit.) and on mentoring within primary initial teacher training (1994 op.cit.). Together with my work as a professional tutor with primary PGCE trainees over several years, these experiences shaped the nature of this new research focus and tended to make me susceptible to particular tentative explanations for my research issues (see Appendix I). The Primary Schools Staff Relationships project, which identified the important influence of staff cultures on the behaviour of members, led me to consider that similar influences might also shape trainees' placement learning. Similarly, the Teacher Education And Mentorship study shaped my thinking that mentors made an influential contribution to primary trainees' professional learning. Both projects represented parts of my past thinking and so contributed to my present frame of ideas for this new research focus: a personal *'progressive focusing'*. Of course, the new research focus was different from, though overlapping with, issues of staff relationships and mentors' work, and I had no clear overarching theory about trainees' work-place learning

However, I was anxious to allow my developing analysis of trainee learning to be data led. I sought to avoid pre-judgements by making explicit the tentative explanations that might shape where and how I looked and questioned. I took the view that my earlier work was important in sharpening my *'theoretical sensitivity'*:

> *the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand and capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't* (Strauss and Corbin 1990 p. 42).

In other words, my previous work heightened my awareness of some possible influences on trainee learning, but also sensitised me to the importance of actively seeking alternative explanations.

Like many naturalistic enquiries, the study set out to explore issues rather than check specific hypotheses derived from previous studies of work-based learning in general, or of teacher trainees' professional development in particular (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983). The stance taken on hypothesis development was that of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987; Strauss and Corbin 1990, Strauss and Corbin 1998),

developed through progressive focusing (Parlett and Hamilton 1976). Grounded theory is taken to be

> *theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed. Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection*
> (Strauss and Corbin 1998 p. 158).

Immersion in and comparison of data about different contexts or individuals within the research study enable tentative explanations to be developed, evaluated and refined in a *'characteristic funnel structure'*, through which *'over time the research problem is developed or transformed'* (Hammersley and Atkinson p. 175). I was concerned that the process of focusing should ensure that *'the concepts and the relationships among them are not only generated but they are also provisionally tested'* for their capacity to provide convincing explanations across the range of trainees. There should emerge *'a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation'* (Strauss and Corbin 1990 p. 24). Put simply, I did not start with a theory (even though I had some inkling of possible influences), but wanted to create one that emerged from the data.

A grounded theory approach placed particular emphasis on ensuring that the processes of data analysis and theory development are rigorous, systematic and transparent, so that their credibility and dependability are convincing. Grounded theorists have developed systematic approaches to ensuring that theory emerges through careful scrutiny of data in search of themes and categories of analysis, from which tentative explanations can be built and progressively refined (e.g. Glaser and Strauss op.cit.; Strauss op.cit.; Strauss and Corbin op.cit.). These processes are necessarily time-consuming. Two decisions were made to try to make analysis manageable without undermining its rigour.

First, all interviews were listened to several times before being transcribed. A fifty-mile round trip from home to work and a car stereo player were important here. Then each interview was transcribed selectively in the light of judgements about relevance to the issues being researched. I had made a decision that, when trainees strayed beyond my agenda into related aspects of their placement experience, I would allow them to do so. Within my professional relationship I did not want to prevent trainees bringing their agendas to interview meetings. Further, since grounded theory approaches are concerned to access participants' perspectives, apparent deviations from a researcher's agenda could become circuitous routes to unsuspected relevant issues and insights. For example, Trainee 7's vivid detailed description of her successful class assembly for a whole school made an

important point about her relationships with staff colleagues and contributed to our mutual professional concerns, although I did not feel it necessary to transcribe it in full (see Appendix D1). Where sections were not fully transcribed, the broad content of such passages was indicated within the sequence of a transcript and their places on the tape recorder counter noted, so that they could be revisited with ease as needed.

Second, the decision was made to use the computer software Hyperqual (Padilla 1993) to aid the process of qualitative data analysis. Hyperqual was chosen as a tool that would save time by speeding the process of data analysis, sorting and retrieval. It was unlikely to distance the researcher from the data and its analysis, because the development of themes remains in the hands of the researcher, who creates the categories which are stored as '*chunks*' of data on '*index cards*', grouped within '*stacks*' where all data related to a specific category are located (Tesch 1990) (see Appendices E and F). The software also had a facility which enables analytical memos to be attached to the end of each interview. By printing-out all data within a particular stack, categories can be easily scanned, so that they can be re-analysed into further sub-categories and used to shape the structure of individual chapters.

3.7.2 Relationships between analysis and theory: the issue of 'untidiness'

The primary purpose of this chapter is to contribute to an audit trail, which can satisfy readers that research processes and conclusions derived from them are credible, dependable, confirmable, transferable and so trustworthy (Lincoln and Guba op.cit.). The tests of trustworthiness rest in the ordered, rigorous and transparent nature of research processes, as '*systematic enquiry*' (Stenhouse 1975), in particular those addressing the relationships between data, analysis and theory. One concern in explaining such processes is that the rigour of systematic approaches sometimes also depends on untidy micro-processes. I shall try to satisfy readers of the rigour of my research processes, and so of the trustworthiness of conclusions, by exposing both the systematic and the untidy dimensions of analysis and theory development.

Data analysis and the development of hypotheses are continuous and multi-phased processes which were inextricably linked in this study. They contributed to several stages of the research processes I have already mentioned. These included using data and theory from previous investigations and relevant professional experience to inform hypothesis development in this one; being crucial to the ways in which field observations were used to generate the schedules for semi-structured interviews; and determining the pathways of

enquiry within them, in the form of supplementary questions prompted by analysis of interviewees' responses. Further, the outcomes of the first round of interviews were used to re-shape the agendas of those in the second round, although some themes were revisited to gain insights into the impact of different placements on the same trainees (see Appendix C).

The development of interview agendas was part of the process of *member-checking* referred to within Lincoln and Guba's criteria for credibility. Ideas derived from placement observation and informal discussions and noted in analytical memos, were checked with participants within interviews. In the long term, generalised hypotheses that finally emerged would also be shared with participants - although I did not assume that there would be an identity between my generalised interpretations and those of any single participant.

Then came transcription and computer-aided analysis. Computer software can give a deceptive picture of order and certainty. A particularly orderly structure of categories emerges. The data analysis audit trail can give a false impression of tidiness, which ignores complexity and might be taken to imply analytical superficiality. Hyperqual compounds that impression by enabling all data to be located in some category (although any unit of data can be placed in several stacks). Appendix E lists the categories I created in the initial sorting of data into stacks. They allow no possibility that data remains unanalysed, since even data which did not seem to generate a category could be placed temporarily in a 'puzzles' stack, be re-visited later, and assigned to a category.

The process of creating categories involved *'constant comparison'* of units of data, so that similarities and differences were identified. Each new unit of data was placed in an existing category, unless it did not fit - in which event it became the basis of a further analytical category. This is the first sense in which I took account of Lincoln and Guba's recommendation of negative case analysis. The second sense emerges in the development of the structure of ideas that became the basis of the internal structure of individual chapters. For example, in Chapter 10 I tested the analysis of the influence of staff cultures on trainees' learning against the seemingly contradictory accounts of trainees. In Chapter 11 I develop a typology of ways trainees responded to the expectations of placement staff by analysing cases, clustering similar responses and building new response clusters from cases which did not fit the existing tentative structure, until all cases had been accounted for.

The development of the overall structure of the study and of each chapter were themselves further stages of theory generation. The themes and headings for individual

chapters were developed from groups of associated data categories. When each chapter was being constructed, the data within categories relevant to the focus of a particular chapter were revisited. For each chapter a data array was constructed, in which themes relevant to that chapter were generated from the data. Appendix G lists the processes by which I moved from sorting of data through to constructing the detail of chapters. Appendix H then gives, as a specific example, the data array from which the structure of Chapter 10 originated. This pencil and paper phase was, in effect, a resorting of data. In other words, computer-aided data analysis was an initial stage, in which data were sorted into broad categories and themes that influenced the structure of the study as a whole. Then, fine-grained re-analysis of data was used to develop individual chapter structures. For example, in some chapters (such as Chapter 11), it was important to examine a wide range of data categories from particular trainees, so as to explore individual perspectives in depth. In others (such as Chapters 5 and 6), the search for generalisations across trainees might emphasise comparison of data from all trainees within particular categories.

But beyond the structured approaches I have described is the untidiness that was equally crucial to the rigour I sought to achieve. The difficulty and complexity of the processes by which a researcher makes sense of data at each stage of analysis is captured in McEwan's fictional description of a composer, struggling to develop the theme which he knows is present in a part-completed symphonic manuscript, but which eludes him:

> *He was working backwards really, sensing that the theme lay in fragments and hints in what he had already written..... In the finished piece the melody would sound to the innocent ear as though it had been anticipated or developed elsewhere in the score. Finding the notes would be an act of inspired synthesis* (McEwan 1998, p.76).

In contrasting the apparently effortless coherence which he seeks in the completed work with the chaotic *'fragments and hints'* from which he believes that coherence will be built, McEwan exposes the complex and sometimes meandering processes through which ordered development is achieved within the finished work.

In the short term, progressive focusing may be fuzzy and tentative in order to achieve clarity and confidence in the long term. I relied on a range of cognitive stimuli to help build a new set of coherent and convincing insights from the individual experiences and meanings of fifteen people. Without neglecting the sustained 'conversation' with the data, I initiated 'conversations' of other kinds about them. These were sometimes face to face, with fellow professionals, through interim papers presented at informal university staff seminars, as well as at conferences. Conversations with research supervisors further

extended my critical perspectives on data and interpretation. Such *'peer debriefing'* (Lincoln and Guba 1985) contributed to the development of credibility. Face to face stimuli also included encounters with subsequent groups of PGCE trainees, whose placement experiences sometimes clarified meanings within my data. The joint impact of these two stimuli could have a powerful impact on developing analytical structures, particularly those of writing-in-progress.

> *a tutorial with PhD supervisor:*
> *The draft chapter has been sent a week before. But much has happened within that week which is all to do with work rather than the thesis. One issue is difficulties between a mentor and a PGCE trainee that is becoming a clash of wills. The trainee has complained that she is having difficulty with her mentor who she perceives to be prejudiced against her.*
> *The supervisor asks if a typology I have developed works. I refer to the recent incident and suggest that it confirms the analysis, because it is an instance of nonconformity of student with mentor's expectations within her class. I see that 'power' is an underpinning issue which seems to affect which pathway a trainee will take in the relationships with their mentors, and that this insight will enable me to complete the analytical loop between the typology and ideas with which I started* (Fieldnote June 1999).

Virtual conversations between 'I' and 'me' were equally important. They were often stimulated by encounters with data, which I sought to capture within reflexive analytical memos. For example, the analysis preceding the writing of one chapter often triggered thinking about other chapters, aided by a word processor, which provided flexibility and fluidity to the development of tentative chapter structures:

> *I sit in my room. At one side are printouts of data stacks which I am sifting to identify units that can help build the Chapter 10 structure. Across the room is the laptop, where I develop a version of the structure. There I incorporate emerging ideas that are triggered by this latest re-reading of data. I can move headings around the screen and so explore their emerging relationships to one another.*
> *Ideas about relationships to other chapters filter through -. so at the moment I have two files open - one for Conditions chapter, another in anticipation of Methodology chapter - for which I make notes. This is how I come to be writing these notes - thinking that one way of developing my audit trail is to expose the process by which I am moving from data, via analysis, to overarching structures.*
> *I constantly make minor corrections, thinking reflexively. It might be suggested that I have a butterfly mind. Nevertheless, I try to make a virtue of what I cannot escape* (Fieldnote December 1998).

Cognitive stimuli arrived in a variety of unexpected forms. Sometimes they were prompted by engagement with others' writing:

Reading a McEwan novel and seeing a section which appears to encapsulate the problematic nature of analysis - which needs to be structured and logical, but whose structures and logic are innately complex and multi-layered (Fieldnote July 1999).

At other times, temporary escape from a desk and word processor could provide 'thinking distance' which helped clarify the relationships between data, structure and text:

Walking across Dunwich Heath, the sun shining . Thinking about the McEwan excerpt., making sense of the problem of explaining the complex nature of the logic of data analysis (Fieldnote July 1999).

Ultimately the 'I' - 'me' conversation could become a meta-analytical process through which I thought about the process of analysing analysis.

Seeing that one way of illuminating the trustworthiness of my conclusions may be to allow the reader an insight into that very moment and the ways in which it has affected the writing of a chapter on data analysis. There comes a point at which it is difficult to identify the source of the stimulus, and I only know that it is part of a process of progressive focusing (Fieldnote July 1999).

3.8 Summary

Interpretative research involves complex processes. These combine systematic procedures with ephemeral moments, when flashes of insight transform quantities of organised data into persuasive hypotheses about a problem. I have tried to expose both aspects. It is now for the reader to judge the trustworthiness of my analyses, in the light of the research processes I have described, the appendices which are intended to elaborate them and the data which emerge from them.

I have sought to convince by using Lincoln and Guba's analysis of trustworthiness in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

To ensure credibility of my research outcomes I have tried to show that, in the research processes, I have been involved in prolonged engagement with and persistent observation of trainees and their placements. I have used triangulation within my research design, by using observations to develop tentative hypotheses that could be explored within interviews, as well as using triangulation between interviews to confirm them and develop generalisations. Peer debriefing with colleagues and supervisors has contributed to the refinement and reshaping of hypotheses, by making me articulate their relationships to data, particularly through the exploration of negative cases for which my analyses needed to account. I have used member checking when I explored emerging hypotheses and

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confirmed interpretations in interviews, as well as through the sharing of tentative outcomes to interviewees.

I have tried to provide sufficient description of the national context of teacher training, the trainees' course and placement arrangements, individual trainees and placement schools, to enable readers to judge the transferability of analyses I have developed (both in the text and in appendices).

I have sought to ensure the dependability and confirmability of my analyses (and further enhance their credibility) by providing an audit trail which exposes both systematic and seemingly haphazard parts of the research process, including the details of and justifications for the research design, how its methods were put into practice, how I responded to ethical issues and how initial thoughts developed, to become tentative hypotheses and then research outcomes.

Ultimately the connections made are the product of the researcher's rather than readers' minds, in Denzin and Lincoln's terms, a *'bricolage':*

> *The product of the bricoleur's labour is a bricolage, a complex, dense, collagelike creation that represents the researcher's images, understandings, and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis. This bricolage......will connect the parts to the whole, stress the meaningful relationships that operate in the situations and social worlds studied* (Denzin and Lincoln 1998, p.4-5).

But it is readers who decide whether these connections are securely made.

Chapter Four
How Trainees' Learning Develops:

4.1 Introduction

In Chapters 5 and 6 I discuss by what means trainees learnt in their school placements, but separate the discussion into learning about working in classrooms (Chapter 5) and their learning about the interadult dimensions of the job (Chapter 6). In those chapters I use an organising framework of four modes of learning which is grounded in and derived from the very data it structures. For clarity I use this chapter to explain the nature of that organising framework. However I am aware that, in presenting that framework before the reader has had access to the data from which it is derived, I risk giving the impression that a framework has been imposed on the data arbitrarily, rather than that one has been derived from it. For this reason in Appendix K I have explained how the framework has emerged. Without wanting to prejudge the trustworthiness of the data in those chapters, I summarise here the shared set of key ideas that structure them. I present a framework of four interdependent modes of student learning. Within Chapters 5 and 6 I shall seek to show that this framework emerges from and is reflected in the data - although, like all models, it necessarily consists of a set of generalisations which may not cover every situation.

The framework is influenced by Lave and Wenger's analysis of work-based learning, as *'situated learning'*, in which the learners are engaged in *'legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice'* (1991 p. 30) (see Section 2.6). In the context of learning to be a teacher, the formal agreement to accept students on placement in a school legitimated their presence in the community of practice which was the school's staff (see Chapter 2). Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the nature and extent of the participation legitimated by the agreement. In broad terms, trainees' roles during placements reflected Lave and Wenger's view that

> *peripherality suggests that there are multiple, varied , more- or less-engaged and - inclusive ways of being located in the field of participation defined by a community* (p. 34).

The data suggest that when trainees were *'located in the field of participation'*, they adopted different modes of learning at different times. By 'mode' I mean a general orientation towards events that influenced the ways in which students were able to interpret them, and learn through and from them. The term is concerned with the nature of trainees'

learning responses to their placement experiences, rather than with the nature of their experiences. However, modes of learning were sometimes constrained by the nature of the experiences that were accessible, rather than being always a matter of selection. The main constraint came from the extent of trainees' *'more or less peripheral engagement'*. The framework reflects the varying degrees of emphasis within each learning mode between the perspective of an observer and a participant. The predominant learning modes were those of *'observer'*, *'participating observer'*, *'participant'*, and *'observing participant'*. A given mode of learning could reflect either a dominant observer or participant perspective, but also incorporate both perspectives to different degrees and with changing emphases.

4.2 The modes of learning

Observer mode

When trainees were in *'observer'* mode, the school and staff were predominantly objects of observation as well as shapers of trainees' actions, including their freedom to observe. In Lave and Wenger's terms, trainees were legitimately located within the field of participation that was the school, but in observer mode their peripherality was extreme. They participated only in that they had access to settings where participants acted. They were present on occasions when, in classrooms, teachers taught and pupils learnt and, in staffrooms, staff interacted with one another. But they did not contribute significantly to the processes they were seeking to understand. Observer mode could be a means of gaining some insight into how to act when a participant. Thus it could be important as a mode of learning when trainees first arrived at a new placement, in that it could help them fulfil two immediate aims. First, they wanted to identify the rules and norms of the placement in which they were to learn to teach. Second, they hoped to learn about the skills of competent teaching by watching practitioners in action. Of course, to observe was not a totally passive act. Looking was often supplemented by listening and reading on occasions when trainees were told, shown and given information about specific aspects of how the school functioned.

Participating observer mode

The notion of *'participating observer'* reflects my suggestion that there was a continuum from observing to participating, rather than an absolute distinction between them. Learning in this mode continued to emphasise observing rather than participating.

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When trainees observed pupils in classrooms and teachers in staffrooms, inevitably they also participated to some extent. By their very presence they were likely to affect classrooms and staffrooms, and pupils' and teachers' actions within them. But there was an intuitive boundary between actions that were predominantly peripheral to classroom and staffroom events and those which were shapers of them. The learning mode of participating observer reflected the experience of being predominantly an outsider, whose actions remained peripheral to the main purposes of the school context in which the trainee was participating. Trainees were located in places where purposeful action happened and might contribute peripherally to it, without doing so in the sustained and authentic manner in which involved participants contributed. When they acted in participating observer mode, trainees might begin to understand more clearly how participants worked and thought, but with limited access to the perspective or experience of a participant.

Participant mode

The boundary between observer and *'participant'* was crossed when trainees *felt* that they had a share of responsibility for professional outcomes in classrooms or in staffroom discussion - in short, when, however fleetingly, they began to understand what it *felt like* to be a teacher and began to gain a sense of whether they could cope. Learning in participant mode meant that trainees took a full part in the current professional activities engaged in by members of the community of practice, even though initially this might be for limited periods. In that mode, trainees' responses were predominantly affective in nature. For example, the initial experience of taking a teacher role, albeit for restricted periods, exposed many trainees to intense affective demands associated with feeling exposed. Although trainees performed parts of teachers' jobs, the experience of doing so was unfamiliar to them and they might have limited evidence that they could cope. Consequently, although they were aware that learning to do the job presented cognitive challenges, they were more sensitive to their own immediate affective reactions to experiences, such as being confronted with a class of pupils.

Observing participant mode

'Observing participant' mode is distinguished from that of participant, in the balance of their affective and cognitive components. In participant mode, trainees were affectively pre-occupied with their responses to the activities in which they were engaged. But, as observing participants, an awakening cognitive awareness enabled them to perform the

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cognitive feat of remaining centrally engaged in the experience of action, whilst also taking an observer's perspective on it. In this mode, trainees' capacities to participate and observe were interdependent and mutually informing. Their capacities to observe their own participation often first emerged in the form of evaluative analysis, subsequent to participation. But over time, there could be progressively more frequent and rapid switches between emphases on participant and observer perspectives within the mode. Trainees could develop the ability to perceive situations objectively, as if they were observers, whilst centrally engaged in them. They began to be able to observe with a participant's perspective and participate with the perspective of an observer, almost simultaneously. Trainees became observers and analysts of their participation during, as well as after, the event. In effect, their observer perspective enabled an informed commentary to be relayed to the participating self, to shape actions, and monitor outcomes.

Observing participants' learning became reflexive in nature, in that they were able to both act and think about themselves as actors. Of course, trainees could also be reflexive about their experiences as observers or participating observers. But by definition, in both those modes reflexivity was dominated, and therefore constrained, by the observer perspective that placed trainees wholly or predominantly outside the actions under scrutiny (as well as by their initial lack of knowledge about subjects and how to teach them). At best, it could further illuminate the insights gained from a fringe rather than an involved standpoint. This limitation accounts for the difficulty of the trainee who *'felt at the start I had to find ways to teach things that I wasn't too sure about'* (Trainee 8).

In time, trainees' capacities to learn by observing the actions of other teachers were enhanced by a participant perspective, which enriched the insights they were able to gain into the meanings of and reasons behind their colleagues' actions. The learning mode of observing participant enabled trainees to adopt a chosen perspective largely at will, unlike that of participating observer, which implied a perspective confined by the limited nature of trainees' involvement. Observing participants could involve themselves in staff interactions, yet interpret and understand their meanings with observers' perspectives.

I realise that the framework I construct raises issues (which I shall consider in Chapter 12) about *'peripherality'* within Lave and Wenger 's analysis. Here I note that the nature of that engagement with professional activity and learning characterised as *'observing participant'* is a developed case of *'more-or-less inclusive ways of being located in the field of participation'* (Lave and Wenger 1991 p. 34).

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The reflexivity of an observing participant also links that aspect of the model to Schon's analysis of reflective practice. The reflexive cognitive sensitivity of the observing participant is akin to '*reflection in action*' (Schon 1987). In the longer term, the latter could promote the considered analysis of teachers' situations which Schon has characterised as '*reflection on action*' (ibid.) . Trainees could use past observations and experiences to unravel the logic of complex teaching situations, in which previously their actions had been dominated by largely intuitive thinking.

4.3 The framework in general

The above analysis implies that the learning implications of and insights to be derived from responses in observing participant mode, were ultimately more complex than those that could be achieved in observer, participating observer or participant mode. But the model is not intended to suggest that there is inevitably a linear development through a sequence of stages, nor that it is hierarchical in its implications. Rather than suggesting sequenced phases of development, the different learning modes represent an attempt to characterise a mind set which evolved, yet might shift to and fro, as a consequence of and in response to changing circumstances and opportunities available to trainees.

The ability to achieve cognitive and affective shifts was also important for trainees' capacities to generalise about their learning. Trainees sought first to make sense of how a particular school worked and to develop sufficient skills to enable them to cope with teaching a particular class within it. Their long-term learning was dependent on individual trainees' capacities to generalise from one school and apply what they had learnt there in subsequent placements – although, again, that learning was not inevitably linear in its development.

The framework raises other broad issues that emerge from the data and deserve brief examination here. They are first, the relationships between cognitive and affective responses to placement experiences; second, between practical experience and learning; third, the contributions of others whose talk and actions contribute to learning processes.

Cognitive and affective responses were part of each mode of learning to varying degrees. Each was capable of influencing the other. For example, when trainees were able to think clearly in and about their roles in their placement schools, they tended to feel more comfortable and so perform more effectively there. Conversely, feelings of discomfort could inhibit trainees' cognitive skills, especially when their self-esteem was undermined. In other words, because they felt bad, these trainees might be unable to think clearly.

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In broad terms, when trainees were being observers or participating observers, they tended to respond to events in predominantly cognitive ways - although there could be an affective dimension, prompted, for example, by the stress of initial participation in a new placement and engagement with unfamiliar experiences, people and contexts. By contrast, when they were in participant mode, trainees' increased engagement with unfamiliar activities and their greater responsibility for the consequences of their own professional actions, were new experiences that stimulated a predominantly affective response. Affect often temporarily stifled trainees' capacities to respond cognitively to their classroom and interadult professional experiences, although they might be able to do so subsequently. When they learnt as observing participants, trainees' cognitive faculties reasserted themselves. The capacity to act and concurrently think about action, which was characteristic of observing participant mode, was reflected in a productive balance between affective and cognitive responses to professional events.

The implications of responding cognitively or affectively impinge on the relationship between practical experience and learning. The data will suggest that placement experience in itself tended not to promote learning, unless it stimulated cognitive responses. Trainees occasionally referred to learning from pupils, but their comments make clear that they learnt by thinking about experiences that involved pupils, rather than from the experiences themselves.

Of course, to restrict attention to trainees' self-development ignores the important contribution to their learning made by some adults within the schools (see Chapter 8). Day's suggestion that 'reflection is a necessary but not sufficient condition for learning' and that 'confrontation either by self or others must occur' (1993 p. 88), reinforces the point that thinking is often refined through critical interaction. Interaction may take the 'virtual' form of trainees' reflexive conversations, in which they examine past actions with the purpose of improving future performance. But the presence, frequency and quality of interactive talk with teacher colleagues were characteristic of beneficial interventions by school staff in trainees' learning.

In Chapters 5 and 6 I explore the theoretical framework I have proposed, as it relates to the means by which trainees learnt about working in classrooms and about the interadult dimensions of teachers' jobs. Then I shall revisit it in terms of trainees' overall placement learning (Section 6.6).

Chapter Five
How Trainees Learnt To Work With Pupils

5.1 Introduction

Trainees learnt to work with pupils predominantly by becoming progressively immersed in classroom processes, largely through planned stages whose details were set out in a Primary PGCE Handbook, which confirmed that the development of classroom knowledge and skills was the primary purpose of the school experiences. For example, in Experience B, objectives were

> *to develop the basic classroom skills to teach effectively, maintain discipline and manage pupil behaviour, and secure effective learning;*
>
> *to develop knowledge and understanding of the primary curriculum as a whole and of the structures and methods of implementation with particular year groups* (p. 65).

Trainees would be *'situated'* in the schools to learn to teach. There were explicit arrangements that facilitated that process and clarified the kinds of classroom activity in which trainees might legitimately engage. The arrangements were intended to support workplace learning in classrooms. For purposes of learning to teach, trainees were accepted as legitimate teacher participants in the classrooms of members of staff. There they made teaching contributions that were initially peripheral, but were intended to grow in extent and importance.

Trainees' own accounts confirm Lave and Wenger's view that, where complex jobs are concerned, workplace learning is an essential means of achieving expertise. Immersion and insight were closely linked:

> *You just generally learn as you go through it. You can't tell anybody about how a school works. Because you go in and think, this is a total nightmare. I've no idea what's going on here* (Trainee 5).

Learning was often fine-grained and so could be imperceptible:

> *it's all grist to the mill. Some of the things are so fine that you can't see at that time what it is. But you notice it in a year or two's time after several accumulated experiences* (Trainee 10).

But the data suggest that there was cumulative development in the nature, range, and complexity of trainees' classroom learning, as an outcome of time spent with pupils. Over time, trainees' insights and skills developed and became increasingly multi-layered. When their participation in classroom activity became more extensive and their contribution more central, there appears to have been some corresponding effect on the nature of the insights they achieved.

The most clearly defined modes of learning about teaching pupils were as observers of classroom activity and active participants in it. However, there were two further important phases, when the interaction of observing and participating contributed to the modes of learning I describe as participating observer and observing participant. The former was facilitated by periods when trainees were contributing to classrooms in minor ways. They began to make clearer sense of other professionals' actions, refined by insights gained from limited and controlled experience of the same processes - for example for limited periods or with small groups of pupils. Observing participant learning emerged from periods of extensive and sustained participation, in which trainee teachers took major responsibility for classes of pupils.

I now examine each mode in turn.

5.2 Learning as observers

Learning by observing was a planned element within trainees' placements, particularly during the initial serial phase. The Handbook noted that trainees '*may not have had the opportunity to watch children grow and developing their learning*', and suggested that, in addition to observing in their own classroom, they had specific opportunities '*to observe in other parts of the school*" (p. 68). Observing placed trainees outside the processes they were seeking to understand, but could be a means of gaining some insight into how to participate.

I have suggested that observing was an active mode of learning. Trainees sought information that would help them gain insight into classroom practices and policies. Information could often be found in such places as accumulated staff meeting minutes, on staffroom notice boards and occasionally in staff handbooks. Trainees frequently accessed the most important aspects of formal structures through induction meetings, where they were given copies of school brochures and timetables and were told essential information about routine arrangements (such as registration of pupils, what to do on playground duty, or payment of coffee money). These induction processes were intended to clarify staff and

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school expectations and priorities. In effect they indicated how outsiders needed to act in professional contexts within the school.

In its broadest sense, observing included listening. Planned induction processes were supplemented by trainees' own eyes and ears, witnessing daily structures in operation and clarifying the detail of what they had read and been told. Further, as legitimate peripheral participants who were also novices, trainees could legitimately ask hosts about their work.

Although observing drew on limited engagement with the processes and the perspectives of the people being observed, it enabled trainees to gain considerable insight into classroom skills during the early stages of placements. Thus one trainee found that *'my class teacher taught me a lot just by watching her'* (Trainee 5), whilst another *'learnt so much because I held back. I took a back seat, and then when it was time* (to teach) *I had all this confidence'* (Trainee 6).

During the early stages, planned observations enabled trainees to watch the detail of teacher-pupil classroom interactions:

> *Within the first week or two in the serial practice I'd sit down in the class observing. I had ample opportunity to watch her strategies and watch how the kids react to her* (Trainee 2).

Listening could also help learning about classrooms:

> *I learnt that shouting makes absolutely no difference at all to any child. ....Because there was a teacher in the classroom opposite who used to yell the whole time. It made no difference- the noise didn't go down* (Trainee 5).

Observation also helped develop an understanding of hidden aspects of the job:

> *just by shadowing my class teacher and watching her doing everything. When she had free time it wasn't free, because it was marking and preparing for the next lesson and making sure you've got everything you need* (Trainee 6).

It helped trainees begin to understand how to act in teacherly ways when they were with pupils in other school contexts:

> *In assembly - how you were expected to behave. Especially keeping your class quiet* (Trainee 9).

The chance to observe a range of teaching methods enabled trainees to access the teaching strengths of different teachers and compare ways of working, *'because you get used to the teacher you're with and you think that's perfect because it's working'* (Trainee 5).

Occasionally a trainee might meet a teacher whose attitudes and ways of working offered an example of the kind of teacher the trainee would like to become. Such was Trainee 4's experience:

> *I only observed one of her lessons. Just the way she had with the children was so inspiring...... But it was her character coming out, it wasn't just a big act. The way she so obviously adored the children. She wasn't soft with it. They knew where they stood with her. She had a real authority. A wonderful teacher. I'd just love to go and teach like her* (Trainee 4).

Trainees sometimes made connections between such positive examples and the attributes of their existing ideal teacher:

> *my current teacher organised an Easter day. ....She want to have some fun with them, just do something silly for an hour, which is something that I really agree with and warm to anyway* (Trainee 2),

and their preferred teaching style:

> *She had a quiet manner as well. She never shouted, and I like that attitude in the classroom. She was very positive. She loved kids* (Trainee 2).

This trainee was not identifying a *'role model'* she wanted to copy, so much as validating *familiar* qualities, which she intended to express in her own teaching:

> *I've found people that I agree with rather than trying to be them. She's all the things that I agree that a teacher should be like.*

Other trainees too used observation to identify how to implement the teacher qualities they sought to emulate, by sifting and selecting from skills which impressed them in different teachers - for example:

> *It was actually observing her, the control methods that she used over the children, and then seeing if I could* (them) *develop with the children* (Trainee 9).

> *I have learnt from the way that she taught and organised the classroom* (Trainee 13).

But as well as learning *'from people who are doing it the way that you like'*, trainees could also

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> *learn - and possibly more actually - from the people who are doing it the way you don't like, because you can actually sit there and think 'I can see how that (problem) occurred* (Trainee 15).

Observations of inappropriate teaching methods could reinforce the qualities trainees hoped to bring to their own practice:

> *The one thing she had was the discipline - but they were terrified of her. I couldn't be like that* (Trainee 14).

Further, such negative examples could shape the specific classroom strategies trainees adopted:

> *Spellings I gave them were ones I'd taken from the work they'd written. The class teacher had the most obscure spellings. She had one that included the word 'quart'. I don't think I've ever written the word 'quart' in my life* (Trainee 7).

In summary, rather than providing trainees with role models they sought to emulate, the most likely outcomes of observing teachers in action were that they clarified and confirmed trainees' existing, but partially-formed, versions of the teachers they hoped to become. Further, they selected and adapted specific skills from a range of examples and incorporated them within their own emerging style:

> *You see things going on where you make your own judgements and think, 'Oh I'd never do that', or 'that's a good idea, I'll take that one on board'. There's going to be things that I agree with and disagree with, and you form your own teaching personality out of that* (Trainee 4).

5.3 Learning as participating observers

The information and insights trainees gained as observers of teaching helped them participate more effectively. But observing and asking questions were, at best, vicarious preparation for experiencing the realities of doing the job, partly because *'sometimes you don't know what you don't know'* (Trainee 5).

Trainees first experienced these realities as participating observers in classrooms in two ways. First, the serial phases of trainees' placements, which enabled them to observe experienced teachers at work, also gave them opportunities to be fringe participants in classrooms. Their first serial placement, in particular, gave opportunities to teach on a small scale or for limited periods. Trainees were not yet pre-occupied with the affective consequences of taking temporary but major responsibility for a class and its learning (more characteristic of the block phase). Where learning about teaching pupils is

concerned, becoming participating observers changed trainees' perspectives from those of outsiders to those of peripheral participants. They could begin to make sense of teachers' actions with the perceptions of novices who had participated in teaching in restricted ways. These included talking to pupils, to explore their understanding, working with groups on tasks prepared by the teacher, planning and teaching group activities, and working with the whole class on activities with a restricted time or skill frame (such as reading a story).

Second, as a consequence of their learning in observer mode, trainees sought to adopt the ways of working and acting which they perceived were characteristic of teaching in the school. In frequently referring to the idea of *'fitting in'*, some trainees recognised that they were required to conform:

> *As trainees we do go by their guidelines. It wasn't discussed, it was assumed- there's your subjects and that's what you will achieve* (Trainee 6).

Others made a positive decision that to do so met their own developmental needs, in that *'I was learning to operate within that structure. I was trying to fit in'* (Trainee 4), and that *'fitting in to the way the school does things....I found that really helpful anyway'* (Trainee 8). Further, several trainees accepted that, in the interests of pupils, *'for me to go in as a different teacher and change her system altogether is not actually going to help them'* (Trainee 15). They concluded that to adopt existing norms and practices was a relatively safe way of starting to experiment with a teacher role in the context where a particular version was used - especially when, in the early stages of their placements, many trainees were more likely to be seeking ideas than wanting to develop their own.

5.4 Learning as participants

Learning by participating was characterised by trainees' sensitivity to their own affective reactions, rather than by their capacities to think about what they did. Trainees took increasing responsibility for teaching groups and whole classes, initially for short lengths of time, then for sustained periods of several consecutive days. They discovered what the experience of teaching felt like. In the short term they often encountered feelings of powerlessness, prompted initially by fear that pupils might not respond to them as if they were teachers and then by a sense of responsibility for ensuring that learning happened:

I still have not got over the emotional turmoil of being in front of a class of 24 people entirely reliant on you for their learning (Trainee 11).

Even though, within participant mode, survival was trainees' main preoccupation and feelings predominated over cognitive responses, they could learn from their intuitive responses to unexpected situations:

You're in there, the teacher has gone for some part of the time, and situations occurred that you had to deal with when she's gone (Trainee 2).

In such circumstances, success could have a positive impact on self-belief and confidence:

I think teaching comes with confidence. Your practice doesn't make perfect, but the more you try the more confident you can get and the more you can get across what you want to get across (Trainee 6).

Participating enabled trainees to discover the range of skills that were required, and commitment of time that was entailed:

It's changed my ideas about what teaching involves.... how much extra there is. The emphasis is on all the stuff that happens outside the classroom, all the observations, all the recording, all the National Curriculum, all the planning (Trainee 15).

Even the basic demands of completing routine administrative tasks, concurrently with organising pupils, presented challenges which preoccupied some trainees:

I didn't realise it was such hard work in the mornings. When it was assembly - trying to get them into assembly at the same time (Trainee 13).

Learning what classroom teaching felt like, in participating mode, was a necessary prelude to, rather than an effective means of learning to teach in the long term. The trainee who suggested that *'I learnt a lot on that first block, just from doing it'* (Trainee 5), was misrepresenting a complex process, in which affective concerns could inhibit the impact of cognitive responses on the development of teaching skill.

At some time, usually during the block phase of their first placement, many trainees felt sufficiently secure in their capacity for classroom survival to be able to respond cognitively, as well as affectively, to their classroom experiences. They became increasingly self-aware, perceptive about the actions of other teachers and able to use both to further develop their emergent professional skills and insights. The re-emergence of a cognitive dimension to trainees' learning characterises learning in observing participant mode.

5.5 Learning as observing participants

Although I have treated *'observing participant'* as a separate mode of learning, the term attempts to characterise an evolving mindset that encapsulates both learning through participating and through observing, in close interaction with one another. The term refers to trainees' capacities to participate fully in sustained periods of teaching, yet become self-aware and other aware whilst doing so, as well as subsequently. An enhanced cognitive awareness is stimulated and affect is transformed from apprehension to satisfaction, relief and security.

The reflexive qualities of observing participant mode stimulated learning about classrooms *'from realising things weren't going right, or had gone right , thinking about what I had done, and then changing things'* (Trainee 8). Periods of cognitive insight of progressive frequency and increasing depth tended to accompany and be outcomes of participation. Eventually, when either participating in or thinking about teaching, trainees were able to revisit and make clearer sense of previously encountered situations whose meanings and implications hitherto had been perceived only superficially, dimly or differently. In Nias' phrase, trainees were able to *'see anew'* because perceptually they were *'in a state of preparedness or expectancy, because of* (their) *past experience'* (Abercrombie 1969 quoted in Nias 1987a), as the following two examples demonstrate:

> *I'd made sure I had a focus group each time and that the others could do work that they could get on with and they were effectively learning. Earlier I tried to give them work, and it was obviously pitched too high, and it was just chaos really. But I learnt more by doing that* (Trainee 14).

> *Planning - I realised that I could do more with less. I didn't have to be so well worked out beforehand. Especially because I did change things - even though I put something in a scheme I did something different when I came to the lesson. That was self-analysis* (Trainee 10).

In time, the capacity for self-analysis and analysis of the actions of classroom colleagues might become integrated with a capacity for sustained and sophisticated engagement with teaching issues. Trainee 11 demonstrates that capacity to analyse detailed empirical evidence and derive important conclusions grounded in them:

> *Although I had quite a successful morning on that integrated day, I felt that part of the success was because some of the children weren't working to the best of their ability on tasks. You want to leave groups of children on their own, non-teacher-intensive groups. But if you were to say what they were learning from that, they*

might be chatting about Neighbours or Home and Away rather than making triangles. You then have to differentiate each individual activity as well. If you've got four groups working at different activities, if you pick your groups in terms of ability, that activity they do in one groups is not an activity that another group can do. So take four activities and three abilities, you've got twelve things to think about if you want to differentiate it without doing it by outcome. But if you had a whole class activity you could differentiate it at three different levels and you've got three things to think about. That's why I suggest you have to be superhuman. Unless you justify differentiation by outcome, it's very difficult to do..........that has come primarily from myself (Trainee 11).

An important dimension of learning in observing participant mode was that it enabled trainees to learn from their errors, rather than feel anxious about them. With affective responses under control, analysis of inappropriate actions could identify remedies:

Doing an activity that went badly wrong had a good effect on me. I tried to do a science experiment where the material is torn in half. I hadn't done it myself prior to that. I had an idea what should happen if it happened. Consequently the activity was a disaster (Trainee 11).

Similarly,

I was pitching my language at 9 and 10 year olds. But most of the children didn't have a vocabulary to cope with that. I had to remember that if we were watching a video it was important to stop it and make sure they understood what had happened (Trainee 9).

The frequency with which trainees referred to their errors as sources of learning, seems to suggest that errors often stimulated reflexivity and, when routinely adopted, that error analysis became a means of continuing self-development, provided it did not lead to an over-emphasis on failure (see Chapter 8), and so prompt negative feelings:

if you learn from your mistakes too much you're continuously thinking, well I've failed on that one. So you lose heart (Trainee 15).

As observing participants, trainees were able to achieve more complex insights than they were able to achieve when they were operating in any other learning mode. In becoming more objectively self-aware, trainees began to be able to see more clearly what was problematic about the job. They began to understand what it was they did not understand and, in seeking remedies, they became more reflexive and more analytically observant of the teachers with whom they worked.

5.6 The nature of individuals' analytical capacities

So far I have explored the broad dimensions of the ways these trainees learnt about working with pupils, without distinguishing between individuals. Of course, individual trainees' abilities to learn were partly a function of the differences in their own analytical capacities. In particular, the more analytical trainees were, the more rapidly and extensively they could learn in observing participant mode - although the capacity to be analytical also enhanced the quality of insight within observer and participating observer modes also and might reduce the affective impact of participant mode.

Trainee 15's suggestion that, in one placement, *'what I learnt from that was that I can swim, but I don't know whether I can swim well'*, expresses many trainees' awareness that the consequences of merely responding to events might be successful survival without any insight into why, how, and to what extent strategies being used were effective. They valued constructively critical analysis:

> *My class teacher told me I was always too self-critical, but then I tend to err on that side, I don't think that's a bad thing, as long as you can recognise the good points as well* (Trainee 4).

Indeed, reflexivity was the most important learning tool available when a trainee *'felt I was teaching myself as I went along, because I was left with a class at such an early stage on my own'* (Trainee 2).

Analysis changed observing from a passive to an active process. Observing became *'perceiving'*, a word which suggests a capacity to identify the connections between teachers' intentions, the meanings their actions sought to convey, and pupils' responses:

> *like in a P E lesson when she managed to get them back just by saying 'Now we don't do that do we?'. I suppose what she was doing was she was putting the onus on them with the threat behind, but not actually issued* (Trainee 15).

When trainees began to take a responsible part in teaching, the capacity to analyse experience often accelerated the pace of learning. Learning was a process of inferring teaching implications from what pupils did, through analysis of what their actions meant:

> *I suddenly realised children in the classroom who could add up 5 and 5 couldn't make a set of 4. They could do it on a piece of paper but they didn't know what the largest number was or which was more, 2 or 1. It just completely threw me for a week* (Trainee 11).

Individual trainee teachers' capacities for self-analysis were important influences on their capacities to learn, particularly in the long-term. But significant short-term influences on how trainees learnt were the ways school staff intervened in trainees' development.

5.7 Staff interventions in trainees' learning

Teachers contributed to trainees' learning most effectively when their interventions encouraged and stimulated trainees' reflexive capacities. They did so by observing trainees teach and then giving them an external perspective on their teaching, which provided both specific feedback and a model of how to be analytical:

> *You can only see a certain part. You can either see yourself in the class or you can see the children. The other person looking in can see things that you wouldn't* (Trainee 6).

Further, by the manner in which they engaged in feedback, they could stimulate trainees' own analytical skills:

> *It was encouraging me to work out for myself what I was doing and to be able to pick out the good things I was doing as well* (Trainee 8).

Trainees were being helped to achieve the transition from the restricted learning possibilities of being participants, reliant on staff as reflective agents, to the unlimited ones of becoming reflexive observing participants who could recognise that

> *The whole triangle is very important: the feedback you give yourself, the feedback from other teachers and the feedback you get from the children* (Trainee 6).

5.7.1 Absence of support

In a few instances, trainees had limited access to support within their schools and were sometimes left to rely on their own ideas, even when they were novices:

> *She always left it completely up to me, even though I had only been in the job for two months. I was really clueless at that stage* (Trainee 4).

Where trainees were given an amount of classroom responsibility that they found excessive, inadequate support could contribute to a decline in self-confidence:

> *They'd have me in the class all day on my own. I thought it was good experience for me to have. Looking back on it I wasn't ready for it. It knocked my confidence a lot, even though I coped with it at the time* (Trainee 2).

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There were twin disadvantages: affectively, of feeling unsupported, cognitively, of absence of feedback. For example, in her second placement, Trainee 15 felt that nobody was interested, and that she was being denied means of improvement:

One day I thought 'I'm just not going back. All I'm doing is trying to find out if I'm doing right, trying to find out if I'm swimming or sinking.' And even if I was sinking, there was nobody around to notice or to tell me (Trainee 15).

5.7.2 Superficial and uncritical feedback

Some trainees were given few indications that their classroom performance was inadequate. But the feedback they received was cursory, or bland:

The feedback was all very general - I was prompt and I was suitably dressed. I want to know if I'm doing alright (Trainee 7).

They were left to infer how effectively they were performing, unless there were problems:

I've figured out that if they don't say anything then you're doing well. It's usually when you're not doing something well that they'll give you feedback (Trainee 2).

Some teachers' concerns focused on restricted aspects of performance, which if satisfactory, justified confidence in the trainee, but did not lead to structured feedback:

She's a very positive, a very nice person, and a very lovely person. But she didn't have the time to give me constructive criticism. She gave a cursory glance at what was going on. If her class was controlled, that was satisfactory for her (Trainee 11).

Trainees' comments indicate frustration when teachers' approval was not reflected in systematic discussion of their learning:

I want to know about the detail in my plans, which were fairly detailed, or the content of my lesson, or control over the children (Trainee 7).

Even when a trainee was broadly successful, she was equally likely to want developmental advice:

for some reason, she (class teacher) *seemed to think that everything I did was wonderful. Which I think was also unrealistic, because I know everything wasn't wonderful* (Trainee 4).

5.7.3 A deficit models of feedback.

Detailed analytical feedback could make an important contribution to trainees' self-confidence and to their capacities for professional self-development. But conversely, some forms of feedback could undermine trainees' self-esteem and so introduce affective costs that negated possible benefits for trainees' learning. Trainee 8 contrasted the effects of feedback from a class teacher and a mentor in different placements. The class teacher's comments had caused the trainee to feel that *'everything I was doing was completely wrong and I didn't stand any chance of getting any better ever.'* In contrast, in her final placement, the mentor

> *did written feedbacks, and that helped to build my confidence. Because as long as I know where I'm going wrong and how I can improve it, or what I'm doing right, I can help myself* (Trainee 8).

In the latter instance, the mentor's ability to build Trainee 8's confidence enabled the trainee to define *'where I'm going wrong'*, as a means to self-improvement rather than a source of undermining criticism. Similarly, Trainee 15's analysis, expressed in terms of *'subjectivity'* and *'objectivity'*, confirms that if self-esteem suffers, subsequent performance can be undermined:

> *The problem is, the learning of a trainee is subjective as well as objective. So if objectively you're not comfortable to begin with, it does affect you subjectively. And at the very beginning in that school I just used to go home and think 'I don't know what the hell I'm doing'* (Trainee 15).

The defining quality of undermining feedback was that it compared trainees with a version of performance that was unachievable in the short term. That version tended to be the performance of an experienced teacher:

> *From the way she spoke to me it was as though she wanted me to have her thirty years experience gained in the one year I was doing* (Trainee 13).

Inevitably, trainees appeared deficient in skill when compared with such a notional idealised standard, so that feedback then identified what the trainee could <u>not</u> do:

> *They seemed to expect you to be able to 'do it', and were put out if you were doing anything in any way other than what they expected* (Trainee 12).

Trainees perceived comparisons which used such *'deficit models'* to be unjust and hence unfair, because they set unachievable short-term goals. Further, if feedback did not reflect

the aspects of performance that trainees had thought were successful, burgeoning self-esteem could be stifled:

> *It can be quite demoralising to be given an ideal model when you think, hold on, it's not as bad as that. Because at such and such a time I've perceived that* (the practice observed) *to be successful in other classrooms* (Trainee 11).

Trainee 12's observations confirm that, by emphasising inadequacies, a deficit model fails to define the trainee as a learner.

> *It wasn't 'We know you're only learning and we'll help you on your way.' It was 'Well you're doing that wrong aren't you? '* (Trainee 12).

Other trainees confirmed the link between not being treated as a learner and diminished self-esteem:

> *I think she found it hard to cope with the fact that I was still learning - and I still am learning now. With the constant criticism I used to get from her, in the end it just wore me down* (Trainee 13).

Trainee 10 indicates that an emphasis on deficiencies even has the capacity to alter trainees' self-perceptions:

> *He was very critical to start with in all his feedback and he never came out positive. So in my evaluations I started putting just negative things down and not any positive. He then started saying to me 'Why don't you put any positive things down about the class?'* (Trainee 10).

In the long term, sustained deficit model interventions could promote and reinforce a spiral of declining confidence, so that a trainee *'felt I was really struggling. The more depressed I got, the worse everything seemed. '* (Trainee 12).

5.7.4 Treating trainees as learners

When their interventions were based on the premise that trainees were learners, teachers encouraged positive trainee responses both affectively and cognitively. Such teachers' affective and cognitive empathy with trainees' perspectives enabled them to recognise that trainees wanted to improve, to know when and in what respects they performed well and when and how further improvement could be achieved:

> *You are in a learning situation so you are trying to find ways to improve - so it's the same problem you've got with children really - how do you affirm what they do well and try to correct what you want to see change?* (Trainee 10).

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There was a balance of probing and support, expressed through the nature of the feedback learners received. Such teachers first identified what trainees did well, and so established an affective base for enhanced self-esteem and a cognitive base for self-improvement:

> *Her main feature was that she was so positive about everything you did. But not in the way of just saying 'Oh that was really good.' She highlighted the things you did that were good. But she didn't leave it at that. Whenever she evaluated anything she'd always give you points to consider that would stretch you further* (Trainee 4).

> *Even if you did a really bad lesson she would not say this was really bad. She'd pick up on the good points and then say now this is what you need to work on - and give you three areas. ....it made you more positive about looking ahead to see what you could change* (Trainee 6).

When trainees' self-esteem was sustained, confidence was promoted and resilience strengthened:

> *On more than one occasion I was given negative feedback, but I was given support on how to improve, that's the difference* (Trainee 11).

Then, rigour in teachers' comments could provoke constructive and analytical responses from trainees:

> *There were things I didn't notice that she would pick upon that I found really helpful. She really made you think about them and try and consider them for next time? ....Obviously that's how you learn isn't it? Not by getting told you're wonderful but by having constructive criticism . But she'd always start off by praising you and encouraging you* (Trainee 4).

There was a sensitive combination of support and challenge, set within a changing learning agenda, in which trainees' emergent skills prompted a shift in the location and focus of mentors' attention .

> *What my mentor tried to do was move me on each time. So once she'd found out I could stand in front of the kids and do the teaching, get them quiet, she then started focusing on other things – like, 'Why don't you try next time moving around the classroom, to pick up on ones who are not concentrating?' Then towards the end of the block we started focusing on pupils' learning - because as far as she was concerned she'd evaluated everything she could about my teaching* (Trainee 1).

I am prompted to characterise this stance on support and feedback as that of a *'learner model'*, because it recognised that trainees were learners, whose skills were inevitably restricted and so should be built constructively, whilst their self-esteem was maintained. A detailed analysis of feedback strategies within a learner model is beyond the

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scope of this research. But notable features were affirmation of trainees' successes, constructive advice and perceptive questioning seeking to stimulate self-analysis.

Teachers who adopted deficit and learner models appeared to have ideal versions of skilled teaching, which they used to inform judgements about where to focus trainees' attention. But exponents of a deficit model compared trainees' classroom performances with their own idealised standard, without taking account of the stages of development or natures of trainees. They emphasised gaps in trainees' learning. In contrast, those who used a learner model based their interventions on a perceptive analysis of trainees' cognitive development as learners and of their affective resilience. They built on trainees' successes.

5.8 Mediating classroom contexts: intervention, scaffolding and constraint.

In this section I explore the ways teachers influenced trainees' learning by contributing to or mediating the particular classroom conditions in which trainees learnt.

5.8.1 Classrooms, intervention and scaffolding

There was no simple correlation between classes being difficult or co-operative and their capacity to stimulate learning. A responsive class could boost the self-esteem of an initially diffident trainee such as Trainee 7, who, in her first placement, had felt *'hard done by being there'*, but, in her final placement, had her confidence boosted by *'a really nice class'* which *'went like a dream. It's the first time I've been very successful a doing anything'*. However, a compliant class could restrict trainees' learning. At School F, where Trainee 3's *'confidence as a teacher has zoomed'*, he nevertheless acknowledged that

> *I just like a quiet working atmosphere. I was lucky with that school. I just walked in on it. Maybe it wasn't the best thing, because I don't have the trouble-shooting ability like Trainees 4 and 7 had to have* (in School F).

Classroom challenges could prompt trainees to develop behaviour management skills precisely because they met problems for which they devised solutions:

> *They were a very bubbly class, very excitable, and I had to find ways of putting the lid on them at times without squashing them.* (Trainee 10).

But trainees could also meet classroom situations where difficult challenges inhibited rather than stimulated learning.

The link between what trainees learnt and the classrooms where they worked was particularly apparent in schools with multi-ethnic populations (Schools A and F). There,

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trainees might encounter classroom situations which questioned their assumptions about pupils' learning. For example, teaching pupils who were second language learners could expose trainees' tacit assumptions about the connections between oral facility and language structure, meaning and written form:

> *They speak English. They talk to you. You think 'of course they can speak English. What are people talking about, saying the kids don't understand English?'- until they try and write it down. They'll say a sentence to you and they'll write something completely different* (Trainee 12).

Further, trainees' own cultural assumptions could be questioned. For example, pupils' gender attitudes challenged trainees' assumptions forcibly:

> *The boys hated the girls and the girls hated the boys.....at home the women are segregated from the men, so that's just passed on. I found it a real problem, especially during group discussions* (Trainee 4),

particularly where gender-based attitudes affected pupils' responses to trainees as authority figures:

> *When they come to school and the majority of staff are women ruling over them the pupils do find it hard, especially the boys* (ibid.).

The point that emerges is not that multi-ethnic classrooms were different from all-white ones in their capacity to stimulate trainee learning. Rather, they presented familiar and important themes for trainee learning - such as teachers' communication skills, their capacities to interpret and respond appropriately to pupils' actions, curricular learning, classroom management and gender attitudes. But they did so in more complex ways than in schools where trainees shared the tacit cultural assumptions that regulated classrooms. Multi-ethnic classrooms could extend trainees' learning in general, as well as their learning about multi-ethnic contexts in particular, provided they could translate the implications of the events they experienced into lessons for classrooms in general. Their capacity to do so was largely dependent on the relationships of new experiences to their previous ones. In Vygotsky's terms (1962), trainees were likely to learn from new contexts that were within their *'zones of proximal development'*. Trainees could learn from unfamiliar situations when they could recognise their commonalities with previous situations from which they had learnt. They had greater difficulty where there was a disjunction between past and present experiences, with fewer starting points from which to build strategies. They found

particular difficulties in classrooms whose micro-culture was extensively influenced by a macro-culture that was unfamiliar to them:

> *I went to that school without much experience. I had spent some time in American schools...it was completely different as far as what the teachers expected from children and children expected from the teachers* (Trainee 3).

Such problems were even more likely to arise in multi-cultural contexts :

> *The head had a go at me for handing out dual language leaflets........(the problem was) because the children were all saying 'Oh she's Urdu, she only speaks Bengali. I'm not going with her* (Trainee 7).

Of course, trainees' zones of proximal development were individual.

When trainees met difficulties, mediating influences were necessary to ensure that trainees learnt from and within them. The most important source of mediation was the constructive interventions of experienced staff (mentors and class teachers). They could provide *'scaffolding'* of appropriate professional interventions (Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976), which enabled trainees to build from their existing learning. In such circumstances, trainees could and did learn in and from classrooms that posed challenges. Such interventions included making links between familiar and unfamiliar contexts, relating their current levels of professional skill to new situations, and sometimes modifying situations so that they more closely matched individual trainees' zones of proximal development.

Help which acted as scaffolding was different from affective support. Both were important, but they made different contributions to trainees' capacities to succeed. Scaffolding was concerned with enabling trainees to make cognitive links between their current understanding of teaching and learning and unfamiliar situations. It was more directly interventionist in its impact on trainees' learning than was support. Support was primarily concerned with sustaining the optimum affective conditions likely to bolster self-esteem and security, and so transform difficulties into opportunities to learn. For example, whole staff support, with palpable affective impact, is found in Trainee 15's description of

> *a wonderful occasion when I could have hugged them all, when we'd had a really bad session. The children were totally crazy, and I walked in* (the staffroom) *and they said 'Are you OK?. I remember when something like that happened to me.'..... They were being totally supportive without being patronising. They were saying 'don't worry, it happened to me.*

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The intervention of Trainee 1's class teacher was partly affective support, partly an attempt to modify classroom conditions to match that trainees' zone of proximal development and so enable her to respond to them cognitively rather than affectively:

The teacher would come in. She didn't do a lot, she would sit with a boy who couldn't speak English. But it was just the fact she was there that gave me confidence.

5.8.2 Classrooms and constraints.

The particular classrooms in which trainees were placed and the teachers who had created them, could have an equally influential cognitive impact on trainees' learning.

When trainees were attached to classes they entered a domain where the influence of individual teachers was powerful. Teachers normally worked within school-wide administrative and curricular frameworks, sometimes with school-wide consensus about pedagogic styles. But the details of day to day classroom arrangements were partly socially negotiated between teachers and their pupils and partly expressed teachers' cognitive maps of learning. The latter were formed by teachers' implicit assumptions and explicit beliefs about pupils learning and the classroom arrangements (both physical and organisational) which were likely to promote it. The nature of these arrangements, together with the degree of flexibility of host teachers' attitudes towards them, could facilitate or constrain trainees' attempts to make sense of their classrooms, work within them, and, in time, make them their own.

At one end of a continuum were classrooms where constraints were sufficiently inflexible for them to become hindrances that limited what and how trainees learnt. These were most frequently restrictions on trainees' classroom curriculum planning and timetable flexibility. For example, Trainee 2 *'wasn't happy with the timetable, but it wasn't something I felt I could change in any way'*. Sometimes (particularly in larger schools), planning constraints were consequences of school-wide frameworks:

Everything is planned in year groups and you haven't got any flexibility at all (Trainee 7).

However, complex organisational frameworks did not inevitably imply restricted trainee experience. Much was dependent on the flexibility of class teachers' attitudes to their trainees' learning needs. Many teachers allowed trainees to modify existing planning frameworks:

There were certain things you were expected to cover....but there's still scope for doing it your own way if you wanted to (Trainee 9).

At the opposite end of the continuum were class teachers who, having judged their trainees' abilities, allowed them considerable freedom over what and how classes should learn. Such freedom was often associated with interventions which provided scaffolding and were supportive in impact, so that trainees were instilled with confidence, even when they had been unsure initially whether they could cope:

I felt lost to start with, and then I really enjoyed it. There were people there to support you .. they would come up with ideas.. .It was 'well here's the class, you can do what you like'. (Trainee 7).

The freedom I had there was a valuable experience and possibly the one I call upon most when I start work. .... The class teacher didn't go off and do something else. She observed me frequently (Trainee 11).

These experiences contrasted with that of Trainee 15, who, in the same school one term later, had similar freedom to make her own decisions, but lacked both affective support and a scaffolded framework:

Basically from the day I went in I was supply. It was this is the class, no feedback, no help, and no support..

5.9 Summary

In this chapter I have suggested that, where trainees' learning about classroom teaching was concerned, there was an explicit understanding on the part of both trainees' and most school staff that trainees were legitimate peripheral participants in classroom life, including teaching itself. Opportunities were planned which were intended to enable them to become decreasingly peripheral in terms of the extent and quality of their classroom participation. I have further suggested that trainees' classroom learning developed through the modes of observer, participating observer, participant and observing participant. There was a tendency for each mode to develop in sequence, although trainees might also continue to adopt different modes in response to changing circumstances and opportunities. The pace and extent of development were influenced by the differing analytical capacities of individual trainees and by the extent and nature of support and intervention from school staff.

There was diversity in the nature, quality and extent of staff interventions in trainees' learning about classroom teaching. Learning was facilitated when trainees were

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placed with teachers who were prepared to modify classroom conditions in ways that facilitated trainees' learning opportunities, without harming those of pupils. Such class teachers intervened to scaffold trainees' learning, provided affective support and were flexible in their expectations of how trainees planned and worked in classrooms. Constructive relationships with mentors and class teachers might have a positive affective impact on trainees' feelings of security, and so contribute indirectly to their learning by promoting their self-esteem. But staffs' direct influence on trainees' learning was strongest when mentors and class teachers engaged in analysis of trainees' classroom performances, in ways which treated them as learners and sought to build from their successes, rather than adopting an approach which dwelt mainly on their deficiencies

The complexity of trainees' classroom circumstances appeared to determine what trainees learnt, rather than whether they learnt, particularly when they had access to affective support, and sources of scaffolding that brought these situations within their own zone of proximal development.

In the next chapter I apply a similar analytical structure to trainees' learning about the interadult dimensions of the job. I then consider the influence of their experience of working with adult members of school staffs on trainees' classroom learning.

Chapter Six:
How Trainees Learnt To Work With Colleagues

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5 I noted that the dominance of classroom-oriented concerns within trainees' learning agendas was confirmed by teachers' assumptions and supported by the emphases within the formal agreements between schools and the higher education institution. Insofar as these agreements were concerned at all with the obligations, implications and skills of working with colleagues, issues of staff relationships focused on their significance for that classroom-oriented agenda, rather than being, in themselves, elaborated parts of trainees' learning agenda. For example, the School Experience booklet suggested in general terms that when trainees were not teaching, they should *'engage in the general life of the school so that they become more aware of the role, duties and responsibilities of a teacher'* (Structure of block experience - School B p. iii). But there was no attempt to specify what these might be. Course documentation emphasised trainees' obligations to school staff and did not indicate that staff would be expected to support trainees' learning about working with colleagues. Trainees were required to

> *be co-operative, willing and courteous. Establish a positive working relationship with the teaching and non-teaching staff,*

and

> *be willing to seek help, consider advice, accept constructive criticism*
> (Primary PGCE Handbook p. 21).

Of course, in seeking to develop their classroom learning, trainees encountered members of school staffs. They were present at some of the places where and occasions when staff members interacted formally and informally and so had access to some aspects of the interadult dimensions of the job. Evidence presented in this chapter suggests that, when trainees engaged actively in the life of a school staff, there were multiple positive benefits. But there were considerable differences in the range and quality of trainees' experience of the interadult life of the school staff, even though trainees had broadly similar access to the teaching dimensions of the job. These differences were particularly important because they appear to have had an impact on trainee teachers' learning about classrooms too.

I now examine the means by which trainees learnt about working with colleagues. I use the same framework of observer, participating observer, participant and observing participant I discussed in Chapter 4 and applied in Chapter 5.

6.2 Learning as observers

Most staff expected that trainees would spend some time in places where all or parts of the school staff gathered. Frequently, trainees were present at assemblies and in many schools at formal meetings of the whole staff and staff groups, such as year groups or key stage groups. They had access to the staffroom, where they could see how staff interacted informally and hear their concerns. Indeed, trainees might be criticised for not spending some time in the staffroom (see Section 6.3.1). However, in one school, trainees were actively discouraged from making 'working with colleagues' an explicit part of their learning agenda. When trainees arrived there, the head teacher gave them written instructions about when they should and should not use the staff room, so that there was time and space for school staff to have their lunches without interruption.

Although there was no formal requirement that trainees spent time in staffrooms and observe the social processes there, inevitably they did so. Initially trainees were outsiders, who observed staff interaction, but made little contribution to it, since they visited for two days per week during the serial phase of their placements. They gained impressions of staffrooms' interpersonal climates and of the nature of professional relationships. For example:

> *There weren't any cliques as such. The Headteacher came down and she sat amongst them, laughed with them, had jokes with them. In that sense it was very informal. But when she got up before the bell, everyone else got up and followed her out of the staffroom. The helpers came in and were integrated with no problems - there was no 'you sit over there.' It was cosy* (Trainee 3).

Observation might trigger speculation about the reasons for the kinds of informal staff interaction noted. A male trainee, in the same school as Trainee 3, in a later placement, inferred a link between its nature and the staff being all-female and long-established:

> *It was a mother's meeting. A lot of it was family and women's talk and things about the kids - what about this family and that family? Gossiping. I think they'd been there so long and they'd been teaching so long they didn't want to talk about it* (teaching) (Trainee 12).

Observation was particularly important in the early days of trainees'

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placements, because it provided them with valuable information. Trainees often wanted to understand how staff behaved towards one another, as a guide to how they too might behave.

> *I was more wary, trying to look for people's expectations. In school C I could have gone in and taken the register straight away, but I didn't want to do anything until I was asked to do it in case I was upsetting someone* (Trainee 12).

Sustained observation was important in modifying initial impressions. Sometimes the implications of interadult communication were elusive, being expressed through fleeting interactions over a sustained period.

> *When you first arrived and you looked at the way planning was done and the interaction between the classes - there didn't seem to be any. But when we started to look deeper, when we had been there a month, we realised that there were things that were continuing* (Trainee 13).

Time did not inevitably change trainees from observers to participants. But it did tend to widen their access to different kinds of gathering and to the times and places where they occurred. Further, trainees' sustained presence in a school often initiated the transition from observing staff interaction to becoming a fringe participant within it, which I have conceptualised as being a participating observer.

6.3 Learning as participating observers

In terms of the interadult dimensions of the teacher's job, trainees could be considered as participating observers when their presence at formal and informal settings was accepted by staff and when there was mutual understanding that it was appropriate for trainees to contribute to staff interaction in ways which were minor in significance and peripheral in impact. There were often limitations on the nature and quality of participation and sometimes on the range of trainees' access. In this mode trainees participated mainly by their presence, rather than through the impact of their contributions. They were with, but were not members of the staff, yet had begun to develop sufficient insights to be able to make some sense of staffroom processes.

For some trainees, being a participating observer might be a temporary and transitional mode of learning about interadult dimensions of teaching. It could be relatively fleeting in duration and might be confined largely to the serial phase of a placement - a prelude to more extensive interaction with staff during the *'block'*, when trainees

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contributed actively and regularly, rather than merely watched, listened and occasionally commented.

Sustained presence in staffrooms during block practices made trainees and staff more familiar with one another and so provided more opportunities for trainees to contribute to interaction and be encouraged to do so:

I felt more accepted as part of the staff during the block. You're just more involved, and it's very hard to be involved when you're only there two days a week. Being at staff meetings and all the other meetings, just being in the staffroom at breaktime or whatever (Trainee 4).

6.3.1 Seeking acceptance: fitting in, misinterpreting, and transgressing

The ways trainees participated during those early days in school helped or hindered the extent to which staff accepted them:

I could have just sat in the staffroom when they were talking away to themselves - this happened the first couple of days. But once they got to know us and vice versa, we joined in (Trainee 4).

Acceptance was influenced particularly by trainees' perceptiveness and by how they interpreted and responded to norms of staff behaviour and staff expectations of trainees' behaviour. In turn, an important means of achieving acceptance was the capacity to fit in, discussed in classroom terms in Chapter 5.

Fitting in with staff had both short and long term significance for trainees' learning. In the short term, paying close attention to the detail of staff interaction enabled trainees to identify the formal practices and informal behaviours they needed to adopt when taking a teacher role there. In the long term, fitting in could enable trainees to understand the nature of interadult school processes in general, and the impact of staff norms in particular, on teachers' experiences of their jobs.

The processes of fitting in with staff norms and expectations involved compliance rather than negotiation. But trainees tended to want to be at least tolerated, and so initially usually co-operated (though see Chapter 11).

In order to fit in with norms, trainees needed perceptual skills to enable them to identify what these were. As with classrooms, trainees were usually told about explicit arrangements for formal settings such as staff meetings. But it was unusual for trainees to be told about the subtleties of staff interpersonal behaviour, or advised about implicit understandings and unwritten rules. The head of School A was unique in telling trainees when to use the staffroom.

Mainly, their perceptiveness and sensitivity guided trainees' behaviour:

You got a feeling of what was expected. If you were caught when you were not doing those, (although they were unwritten), rules in a way, they held that against you. There were quite a lot of unwritten rules that you just had to pick up on (Trainee 4).

They could become aware that there were expectations and what these were:

You also get the idea that other teachers are very aware of what you are doing, especially outside the classroom. Nobody even hinted at anything, but you just pick up the idea that you should behave in the same way as the other teachers should do (Trainee 9).

When trainees were able to understand the implications of staff interaction for their own behaviour, they could choose to behave similarly if they wanted to become an unobtrusive part of the professional landscape;

You don't want to appear in front of other staff as a trainee teacher who has no idea how to behave' (Trainee 9).

But Trainee 12's experiences illustrate the problematic nature of the perceptual problems trainees could meet. A decision to rely on staff behaviour, as a guide for trainees' own actions, could be flawed:

The staff were very close knit. Because they come over as friendly, then you relax. Only you're not supposed to relax that much (Trainee 12).

Trainees sometimes learnt about the subtleties of staffs' expectations by unwittingly breaking unarticulated rules:

When I was having a really hard time on the block and not spending time in the staffroom, because I was trying to get things ready for the class, everybody was offended by this (Trainee 12).

The instance above demonstrates that school staffs sometimes had a particular view about behaviour that was <u>expected</u> from trainees. But behaviour which staffs considered acceptable for themselves was not always deemed so for trainees. They might also have a different view about what trainees were <u>allowed</u> to do:

If you'd have gone in and taken the register without checking, you'd have upset someone and they wouldn't have told you (Trainee 12).

Trainees might remain on the fringe of staff interactions, as a consequence of their own behaviour:

if I had an hour's worth of setting-up to be done at lunchtime, then that's what has to be done. I can't not set-up the classroom because they want me to sit upstairs and chat (Trainee 12),

or because limitations were imposed on their formal or informal participation in interadult contexts. For example, one school did not encourage them to be an active part of professional meetings:

We weren't getting any of the group support they had. I had my class teacher/mentor to rely on to tell me if I was doing this right. Whereas the staff were having the opportunity to get together and talk about things that were coming up (Trainee 8).

Such trainees could remain fixed in participating observer mode, or revert to being little more than intermittent observers of staff interaction. The limitations on their capacity to learn about interadult dimensions of the job became cumulative disadvantages.

6.3.2 Limitations on participating observers

When trainees were restricted to being participating observers, they were disadvantaged in two ways. First, they often had access to a limited range and quality of opportunities to learn about teachers' experiences, as members of a staff:

I was doing the teaching that I was supposed to be doing, and I really did like the children, and felt I was getting my message through to them. But the other aspects of teaching, like planning and getting on with colleagues, I felt I wasn't really learning (Trainee 1).

Second, unlike the predominantly cognitive impact of this learning mode on trainees' classroom development, when trainees were restricted to participating observer mode, their capacities to learn about working with colleagues could be inhibited by the affective impact of feeling like outsiders in the presence of an interacting staff group. For example, Trainee 12 felt she was expected to maintain a distance from the rest of the staff when initially they

gave the appearance there were no barriers or distance to be maintained.- but there were, and I didn't find that out until later (Trainee 12).

Trainee 13's comments exemplify the negative experience of not being treated as a participant. In one of her placements she and her fellow trainees were not included in staff informal social life:

When it came to events going on in the staffroom we weren't included. That was the cut-off point. We weren't encouraged to come to any of the outside activities.

As a consequence they *'never felt that we were fully accepted.'* Such trainees sometimes felt isolated. Then, diminished support could become a self-fulfilling prophecy, because trainees felt disinclined to seek it:

If you had a problem and you wanted to go and talk to somebody about it, I didn't feel you were really able to do it, because it would then be discussed as a staffroom issue (Trainee 13).

In extreme circumstances a spiral of decline could become established. Trainee 12, who felt alienated from the staff, lacking support and struggling in the classroom, had used her lunchtimes for classroom preparation. But she still found herself in an unwinnable position, where she met criticism for absence from the staffroom

I thought I was doing what I was supposed to be doing - I'm trying to get my work done, that's what I'm here for (Trainee 12).

6.4 Learning as participants

Learning in participant mode could be pivotal to the development of many trainees' insights into interadult dimensions of teaching, in that it meant more than mere access to the places and occasions when staff met.

At its simplest level, participation was concerned with the gradual expansion of trainees' interaction with a range of individual staff, building from the initial base of their professional relationship with their mentor and host class teacher. This mode of learning had a predominantly affective quality - a consequence of its tendency to be linked to times of relative stress, (such as joining a new adult group), when cognitive solutions were less easily accessible.

Staffs, as hosts, controlled the range, nature and quality of interadult experiences of trainees. But trainees' willingness to participate influenced the extent and quality of their access to formal and informal staff interactions, because other staff witnessed trainees' actions. Staff might judge trainees' personal and professional qualities on the basis of the latters' capacities to cope effectively with pupils and relate to adults. Approval could be the gateway to inclusion, whereas, being seen to cope inadequately might cause staff to limit trainees' access to participation in their interactions. Consequently, specific events were sometimes critical in their impacts on trainees' interadult learning, both in gaining

them access to particular interadult experiences and by enhancing the range and quality of their interaction with colleagues. The contributions of such 'critical' events will be discussed in Section 6.4.1 .

The most frequently recurring critical experiences were school assemblies, which trainees were sometimes asked to lead with their class of pupils. Adult staff were usually part of the audience and so viewed a sample of trainees' developing professional skills. Trainees comments that *'it was a big achievement'* (Trainee 7) or *'I was a nervous wreck'* (Trainee 13) point to the affective impact of taking an assembly. Judgements and reputations were made:

> *The staff seemed to be quite impressed by the work that we both put into our respective assemblies* (Trainee 13).

In turn, trainees' status with their colleagues and the quality of their relationships with staff were affected.

Apart from relationships with host class teachers and mentors and access to staffrooms, the extent of trainees' access to and participation in interadult contexts varied from school to school. Differences in opportunities for participation were sometimes due to organisational influences. For example, in schools where curriculum planning happened in sub-groups, trainees were usually present at group meetings:

> *As far as year staff meetings were concerned I was always there having a small input* (Trainee 3).

In smaller schools, where the organisation of planning was a whole staff process, trainees might have access to a range of professional groups in which they could experience staff collaboration at first hand.

> *When we came to Christmas and we started planning for the next term, that was absolutely wonderful being there, because we could get together, initially everyone, to brainstorm the whole topic* (Trainee 13).

The very size of some large schools emphasised the more diverse nature of opportunities to participate in the informal aspects of staff room life :

> *the staffroom conversation at School F was all about school, about the kids at the school. ...It was less 'themselves' orientated and more reaching out and talking to you. I liked the bigger school, I liked the way you could mill around and talk to a lot of different people*
> (Trainee 3).

In contrast, the same trainee had previously found, with a smaller staff, that *'because it was a small school it was a well-knit group'* and harder to penetrate.

6.4.1 Membership and quasi-membership.

A broad distinction can be made between those staffs where it was possible for trainees *to 'feel part of the team'* (Trainee 10), *'accepted as part of the staff'* (Trainee 4) and those where it was not. Differences between staffs help to explain why, in her first placement, Trainee 13

> *always felt that no matter what classroom I went into and what teacher I talked to I could discuss freely what I was doing in my classroom. I felt very comfortable* ;

whereas in her second placement she commented that *'I felt quite alone at times'*.

However, there were subtleties within that distinction, which emerged over time. Many of those staffs who developed a positive view of an individual trainee still distinguished between the privileges allowed to trainee members and those of staff members. For example, Trainee 4 was perceived by both her host schools to be a successful trainee. Yet *'although I felt accepted as a trainee member of staff, there was obviously a big difference.'* Her example of differences between acceptable trainee and staff behaviour indicates that frequently, trainees achieved *'quasi membership'* and so remained peripheral participants, whose boundaries and status were akin to, but different from, those of staff membership:

> (Trainee members are not allowed to) *talk about the Head behind her back. We'd be allowed to think those things, but no way would we be allowed to say them. But if you're a member of staff they're all, well, entitled to, and they do quite a lot of it. Which we listened to. That's all part of knowing your status* (Trainee 4).

In that staff, trainees, as quasi- members, were part of the safe audience of insiders who could be trusted. But the trainee's careful selection of *'entitled'* indicates there were privileges of membership reserved for permanent staff.

Yet quasi-membership had positive aspects. During her final placement, when Trainee 8 had a successful job interview, the staff's interest in and pleasure at her success demonstrated their genuine affective concern for her.

> *It got round. I phoned my class teacher the evening I got the phone call to say I had got the job. ....When I got in in the morning, my class teacher told somebody*

else, and they all told somebody else. They all sang 'Congratulations' when they found out (Trainee 8).

As a consequence of gaining staff approval and acceptance personally and professionally, some trainees were able to transform both the nature of their relationships with staff and the range of their opportunities for interaction. Sometimes, trainees achieved the transition from trainee and visitor to staff member and colleague, with the help of critical events I referred to earlier. The importance of such occasions was that they demonstrated whether or not a trainee could and did act in ways which staff perceived a teacher would. Trainee 1's success in being '*very much assimilated into the Year Five team, so that I felt part of that*', was precipitated by her dependability in a shared crisis:

> *We had a very bonding experience on a school trip....we dressed 180 kids as Tudors....year 5 were going...... coaches haven't been booked. I learnt very quickly how to entertain 30 kids ....we got these coaches.... we all had tea on the grass and a child falls over and breaks her arm....During that experience I was really involved. I took on the teacher role... I felt they relied on me as much as I was relying on them* (Trainee 1).

Similarly, the experience of a school trip was a critical incident in the development of Trainee 7's relationships with year group staff, but one which confirmed her alienation from them:

> *On that school trip I got into a lot of trouble. I was sitting on the second to back seat and the children were writing me messages and so I was writing messages back. One of the staff stormed down with a clutch of sick bags, and I asked her if they were for me. She said 'No, I think somebody responsible needs to be here at the back'* (Trainee 7).

The implication for Trainee 7 was that her opportunities for interadult learning were largely restricted to observer mode and her participation with her staff year group limited. The implication for Trainee 1 was that, subsequently, the opportunities and benefits of learning in observing participant mode became accessible to her as a consequence of being accepted as a member of the staff year group.

6.5 Learning as observing participants

Some trainees in some schools experienced few distinctions between the ways they and other staff participated in staff interaction, so that, in effect they became staff members. When trainees were able to participate in such ways, the conditions were established which enabled them to learn as observing participants. Inclusion promoted feelings of security,

which, by releasing trainees from the affective stress of feeling like an outsider or of self-consciously trying to fit in, freed them to become more cognitively aware. As I indicated in Chapter 4, cognitive awareness emerged as insights into the specific lessons to be learnt from colleagues about how trainees should contribute to the staff group. But it also contributed to an understanding of the significance of staff relationships issues in development of the school and their implications for doing the job elsewhere. In short, becoming an observing participant in the interadult parts of the job was a consequence of acceptance into staff membership/quasi-membership, because the latter allowed trainees to participate actively in formal and informal staff interactions. Yet they were also able to respond to them analytically and reflexively and so learn from them.

Of course, in some schools trainees could only gain restricted access to staff interaction, no matter how sensitively they sought to fit in, or in other ways influence how staff responded to them.

There were two reasons why becoming observing participant was beneficial to trainees who achieved that transition. First, they avoided the limitations on participating observers (Section 6.3.2), whose stance provided an outsider's restricted perspective. Being observing participants implied that trainees were able to select the perspectives they adopted at a given time, whether it be the relative objectivity of an outsider, or the reflexivity of an insider's analysis of the experience of participation. In short, they were able to use peripherality when it was to their advantage.

Second, being an observing participant provided an increased range and quality of opportunities for trainees to learn, because they were treated as part of staff teams, and so, as insiders, could access a wide range of professional and personal staff gatherings:

> *From the key stage meeting in the afternoon to the assessment meeting during lunchtime, and all the staff meetings. It will all contribute to your development* (Trainee 11).

They were able to achieve insights into the implications of teaching in classrooms in isolation from other teachers, whilst working in ways which co-ordinated with explicit and implicit staff-wide agreements about professional practice:

> *Even if you weren't listening to the meetings it still informed you about how basic staff targets are met. It all will have some contribution to your development* (ibid.).

Trainees were able to use those meetings to deal with their immediate classroom teaching concerns:

But having year group meetings once a week, that was really helpful. Like doing Cambridge maths, to find out that everyone was having the same problems on a certain section, and how they were going about changing things, and not actually sticking to the scheme (Trainee 8).

Sustained participation could generate opportunities to experience the affective dimensions of group membership. Trainee 10 enjoyed

being able to fit in and to feel welcome. There was this feeling of being quite well-knit with that Year Four team and discussing lots of ideas with them .... Then when I came back in the January block I felt like a regular member of the team quite soon (Trainee 10).

'To feel welcome' encouraged trainees to seek advice from and share ideas with staff, and so enhanced trainees' access to and benefits from membership, including its impact on classroom performance:

I was able to pinch other people's ideas and then ideas that I put forward people were able to say ' Oh you could do that, and you could do it like this' (Trainee 3).

In contrast to the experiences of remaining an observer or participating observer, the benefits of being an observing participant were affectively incremental. The more trainees felt like trusted colleagues, the less fragile was their self-esteem:

A staff that were open to ideas from you and a staff that you could go to if you need advice and you don't feel a hopeless failure. They make you feel you can do it - here's the responsibility, and here's some guidelines. (Trainee 13)

Enhanced self-esteem was reflected in greater security, which made a trainee more inclined to be open about problems, and to seek out support from the wide range of people whose support was available:

I could discuss freely what I was doing in my classroom. ......If there was ever a particular thing I was stuck on, then there was always somebody somewhere who could help (Trainee 13).

Trainee 13's comments confirm the important causal link between access to membership and enhanced access to means of learning. When trainees were treated as colleagues, they could seek support and advice from staff other than their mentor or class teacher:

Towards the end of the block I think I drew something from each classroom (Trainee 13).

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If you want some advice or you've got a problem, then just being able to go to a member of staff and say 'how can I do this?' or 'Do we have the resources for whatever?', was really nice (Trainee 9).

Trainee 10 eloquently summarises the advantages of becoming a successful observing participant:

The informal opportunities to find out things from people probably only happen because you've got the rapport built. You feel a part of the team, and so you approach them more, they approach you more, and so you've got more opportunities to learn from them (Trainee 10).

Unlike the experience of those trainees who were observers of, rather than participants in staff professional and interpersonal life, observing participants tended to benefit from a virtuous spiral, in which security and learning interacted. Enhanced levels of participation promoted feelings of belonging and security. In turn, the latter stimulated further participation and accelerated opportunities for learning about the interadult aspect of the job.

But to be accepted as an integral participant in staff interaction could accumulate benefits for trainees' classroom learning too.

6.6 Learning about staffrooms and learning about classrooms: a synthesis

In Chapter 5 I analysed the processes by which trainees learnt how to become effective classroom teachers. I linked that analysis to Lave and Wenger's concept of *'legitimate peripheral participation'*. I suggested that trainee teachers' classroom learning developed through observing, being a participating observer and participating in classroom processes. When they first participated in classroom teaching, trainees' responses tended to be dominated by affective concerns. But when they participated successfully, trainees became more comfortable in classroom roles, were able to be increasingly analytical in their responses to events there and, in particular, to be reflexive about their own classroom performance. Hence I used the term *'observing participant'* to characterise that classroom stance.

The explicit agreements between the university and the schools about the conditions governing trainees' learning in school represented an understanding that, in Lave and Wenger's terms, they could become *'legitimate peripheral participants'* in classrooms. Further, the detail of planned arrangements specifically required and the realities of practice confirmed that successful trainees moved from peripherality to a central position in both the

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nature and quality of their classroom work. They moved from observing to working with, and then to replacing the teacher, both in the extent of their teaching commitment and often in pupil's perception of who was their teacher. In short, I suggested that they moved beyond legitimate peripheral participation towards more central roles in classroom processes.

Different assumptions underpinned the ways in which trainees' learning about teachers' interadult life developed. The detailed information about placement arrangements sent to schools suggested that trainees might have access to professional gatherings such as planning meetings. It was implicitly understood and accepted by all parties that trainees were likely to have access to staffrooms outside teaching sessions and when staff gathered. But there was no agreement, expectation, or responsibility to plan within school for systematic development of trainees' insights into interadult aspects of the job. Consequently there was no formal attempt to scaffold trainees' learning about teachers' relationships. There was no agreement or implicit understanding that trainee teachers would become legitimate peripheral participants in the interadult school lives of the staff. Each school determined for itself whether and to what extent trainees might become legitimate participants in interadult activities. There were often specific arrangements for trainees to have access to formal staff meetings. But where the informal interpersonal staff life was concerned, access was normally dependent on the responses of individual members of staff to trainees.

In practice, many trainees remained predominantly observers of, rather than participants in, school staffs' interadult lives. Their learning modes were at best restricted to those of participating observers. The staff acted as gatekeepers of membership and were frequently inclined to perceive trainee teachers as visitors. However congenial a visitor a trainee teacher might be, there still tended to be practical distinctions between trainee staff membership and full membership. This distinction suggests that trainees who staff found congenial were often accepted by their host staff as legitimate peripheral participants, but as quasi-members of staff. The full privileges of membership were granted to a few trainees only, who moved from the status of peripheral trainee quasi-members of staff towards that of colleagues. For them, participation in the staffroom implied centrality in terms of its quality, in that they experienced the realities of interadult staff life, albeit for a limited time, rather than merely observing them. Confirmatory evidence of mutual approval and acceptance came from the three trainees (2, 6 and 13) who gained permanent posts in host schools.

Of course, there was no certainty that such experiences would be comfortable. In a staffroom where it was normal to discuss colleagues, trainees too would be legitimate targets - but the detailed analysis of such situations is beyond the scope of this study.

If trainees both felt like and were accepted as staff members, they had achieved success that was more than symbolic in its implications. Membership, including trainee quasi-membership, gave trainees the considerable benefits associated with access to learning about the interadult dimensions of teaching in observing participant mode. First, they had access to a broadened range of interpersonal situations and experiences. They were more likely to be encouraged to attend and to participate in formal meetings where professional issues were discussed. They were more frequently included in informal professional gatherings in classrooms and the staffroom and so were more likely to feel comfortable in becoming active participants in non-professional talk, both as listeners and contributors. In short, trainees were able to extend their means of learning about classroom teaching issues, as well as about interadult staff professional and personal life.

Second, the interaction of trainees' and staffs' insights into one another's' personal and professional qualities had consequences for the nature of their relationships. The more trainees were perceived a people with histories and experiences to which staff could relate, the more likely were staff to treat them as colleagues. Under such conditions, trainees' learner status became the focus of support and advice rather than a barrier to participation. Staff were more likely to offer and trainees to seek ideas and support when trainees felt accepted as insiders, rather than merely judged or tolerated as novice professional visitors.

Third, when trainees felt comfortable, they were better able to choose for themselves whether to participate or sit and listen. They were able to both think about the widened range of professional and interpersonal processes they observed and be reflexive about their own participation within them.

Fourth, the beneficial effect of membership on trainees' affective state had the capacity to reinforce their self-esteem and so indirectly had a positive influence on their classroom performance.

Fifth, when trainees were treated as colleagues they might also be given specific informal insights into the complexities of staff relationships. These could provide insights that help them negotiate their own professional relationships. For example:

(of one subject co-ordinator) *You had to handle her very carefully. I learnt that from the mentor. She said 'You have to be over-enthusiastic and generous with your words.' So I did that. It worked* (Trainee 3).

Trainee 11 suggested that to be favourably perceived as a colleague could have major professional implications too. There could be a *'halo'* effect, where trainees whose personal qualities prompted staff approval benefited from a more favourable staff perspective on their professional performance. Conversely, personal disapproval could prompt a negative professional response.

> *It also affects their attitude towards you in your teaching. ....Because staff look at you in a positive way, therefore they are looking to help you more. Therefore they think you are a nice person. People are not completely objective in everything they do. People think you are an idiot, and no matter how brilliant a teacher you are, sometimes they will allow their judgements to be coloured by their personal opinion of you* (Trainee 11).

His analysis raises questions about the learner and deficit models of trainees' performances discussed in Chapter 5. As members of staff, host class teachers and mentors were themselves shapers of and susceptible to shared staff perceptions of trainees. Without inferring a link between liking a trainee and adopting a learner model of performance, it is tempting to speculate that there might be circumstances in which staffs' personal relationships with trainees predisposed observing teachers to adopt one model rather than another. Issues of power, addressed in Chapter 11, are foreshadowed here.

In summary, trainees who were accepted by school staffs as quasi-members or members were doubly advantaged, whereas those who were not were doubly disadvantaged. Where staff allowed and trainees earned access to the benefits of membership, the range and depth of trainees' learning about staffs' shared professional and interpersonal lives were extended. Trainees then gained from enhanced educative, practical and affective support for their classroom learning too. Conversely, exclusion from staff membership led to the double disadvantage of restricted insight into shared professional and interpersonal lives and restricted support for classroom performance.

Chapter Seven:
What Trainees Learnt

7.1 Introduction.

This chapter outlines what trainees learnt in their school placements, in order to contextualise the discussion of processes. I do not intend a systematic examination of the specific teaching skills learnt by trainees, of how they accumulate content knowledge, or develop the ability to communicate it so that pupils learn. Each of these topics is a study in itself, and beyond the scope of this analysis. Rather, I focus on those aspects of their learning which, as a consequence of being within a school and under the influence of its staff, enable trainees to understand the nature of teaching as a job which comprises working with pupils and with adult staff, together with its impact on themselves. These aspects of the job are of particular importance within vocational learning, because they can be accessed only indirectly and vicariously through the university-based parts of a teacher training course, which provides an inadequate substitute for the insight and understanding gained through immersion in school life.

Of course, trainees did not arrive on PGCE courses in total ignorance of teachers' jobs. Criteria for acceptance on the course required that, at interview, each trainee had demonstrated a sufficient awareness of the nature of the job and evidence of an aptitude for it to suggest that they understood the implications of doing it and were likely to complete the course successfully. Further, it was unusual for a trainee to be accepted without recent direct experience of primary school. Often trainees' sensitivity to the nuances of teachers' professional lives had been raised by previous experiences, particularly where mature trainees were concerned (see Chapter 10).

I draw on evidence from the range of experiences of individual trainees. But I do not suggest that the insights gained by any one individual inevitably reflect those achieved by all. Their capacities to achieve sophisticated insights of generalisable value from a placement were linked to trainees' sensitivities to insights (see Chapter 9), to their previous experiences and to whether the conditions in a placement school facilitated trainee learning (see Chapter 10). It was inevitable that learning from one placement transferred to the next (as Section 7.5.3 will discuss). There could be a mismatch between the perspectives on teaching implicit in the professional practices of a placement, the professional perspectives

trainees brought with them, or that of other primary schools not yet encountered. A new placement could be *'like a whole, completely different experience'* (Trainee 6).

In short, even though there was a common structural course framework for all placements, what each trainee learnt was partly an outcome of where they were placed and of their individual capacities to respond constructively to the learning opportunities available to them.

Some aspects of learning were predominantly through a particular mode. But others developed in a variety of ways, often in response to the changing nature of trainees' insights. Where readers' understanding is particularly clarified, I have indicated the particular mode in which specific aspects of their learning seem to have developed.

7.2. Learning about the nature of the job

Trainees' understanding of the nature of the job initially developed by listening and looking. Then, in time, the experience of doing parts of the job as participants deepened their understanding of its affective impact in particular. Learning as observing participants eventually helped trainees make sense of their experiences, and use those insights to improve their effectiveness as participants.

Their understanding of the nature of the job was important in the short term as a necessary condition for them to fit in, learn and perform effectively in each placement. But it also had long-term implications as part of their learning about being a teacher.

7.2.1 School structures and routines

Insights into school structures and routines provided a short-term framework that enabled trainees' to fit into the day to day arrangements of a school. In the long term, they gave trainees insights into the extent and character of routinised aspects of the job which were likely to permeate their future teaching careers.

Trainees' learning about school-wide planning is an example of the dual short and long-term implications of what trainees learnt. In the short term, they learnt about the planning structures which they needed to adopt as part of the schools' strategies to ensure a coherent curriculum and to ensure they might perform successfully in classrooms. But such insights also served long-term purposes of developing trainees' understanding of planning frameworks in general, particularly when, like Trainee 13, they moved between schools with different approaches:

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When it came to planning at B, you went straight into producing schemes of work. The actual gathering of ideas you did by yourself. Whereas at D you had one week where we all together put our ideas on paper, then the following week we split up into Key Stages (Trainee 13).

'Structures' refer to the planned aspects of organisation of time, places and people within school, which had been formalised in explicit ways through discussion and directives which all staff members were required to adopt. 'Routines' refer to the recurrent patterns of behaviour which typified how structures were interpreted and applied by all staff, as well as informally negotiated patterns of activity which had developed to ensure that what individual staff did served group needs. For example, trainees became aware of the structural requirement that registers were kept and completed in particular ways twice per day. They also came to understand the classroom routines, which achieved that purpose and ensured registers reached school offices. However, the boundaries between structures and routines were less clear in regions where individual teachers had considerable freedom to decide how they acted. Organisation of classroom work was a notable area where teachers often expected and were allowed discretion. Often a complex web of routines had been developed, sometimes in a piecemeal way, which, in effect, became a sophisticated informal structure governing the behaviour of participants in a particular class.

The routines which host teachers had developed in their own classrooms, provided limitations on trainees' freedom of action:

I had to follow the timetable as much as I could. If I did need to change I had to tell the teacher. I didn't feel I could do things in just any order (Trainee 6).

However, where there were opportunities for access to other classrooms in the school, trainees learnt that there was not necessarily any uniform agreement on the most effective ways of structuring classroom activity and so were able to consider the implications of each system:

Each class operated differently. You've got five different teachers using five different models (Trainee 11).

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By their natures routines were usually informally negotiated, taken for granted procedures, which had either evolved or had been developed originally as a response to the needs of a specific situation. Consequently, although trainees were frequently told about the most important of these, they relied on their eyes and ears to identify their more subtle aspects:

Normally they went into assembly a line of girls and a line of boys. So as punishment it was a recognised thing throughout the school - you could tell which classes had been in trouble in the morning because they came in boy-girl-boy-girl (Trainee 7).

During their serial visits, trainees might observe that their host teachers routinely spent time on activities that had limited direct influence on pupils learning - an impression that might be confirmed by scrutinising notice board lists and documentation about how their school worked. Taking on more extensive responsibility for the teacher's role, particularly during the block experience, gave trainees experience of coping with classroom routines as participants. Dealing with minor classroom administrative tasks was often an unanticipated dimension of the job:

I had a lot of admin to deal with. Money coming in from all directions. Reports slips to come back and numbers to check off (Trainee 13).

Yet they discovered that being able to cope with administration and routines within time constraints, and be seen to do so, was an unavoidable and publicly visible dimension of working interdependence within the school:

One of the targets I set myself was not to be last into assembly - and I did it (Trainee 13).

Outside the classroom too, the most routine of tasks might reveal unexpected complexities:

I used to do my teacher's playground duty. That's remembering what you have to do to co-ordinate with the other teachers on duty - blow the whistle at the right time (Trainee 1).

7.2.2 Working in classrooms

Although the detail of what was learnt about classroom teaching is beyond the scope of this study, it is relevant here to comment on the development of trainees' thinking about the nature of classroom work.

Anxieties about classrooms and how to work within them were usually uppermost in trainees' minds when they anticipated their placements. By the end of a first placement, trainees had experienced the realities of classroom teaching, and had begun to grapple with the fundamental skills essential to competent classroom teaching:

> *Learning how to sit in front of a group of children, and start learning about control and curriculum content. I was amazed at very young children, how little they could do* (Trainee 12).

Credibility in the eyes of pupils and staff, which tended to be trainees' major initial concern, was closely associated in their minds with controlling a class, especially when they worked within systems which emphasised whole class teaching. *'Control over the class working at the same time'* (Trainee 8) was emphasised in many situations. But when cognitive responses to participation began to emerge and trainees became more analytical, that restricted view of teacher skill was soon replaced by a more sophisticated awareness that effective performance required that *'you've got to learn your organisation, your class management, relationships with children'* (ibid.). The demands of some placements required particular classroom skills:

> *I think I learnt a lot at this school in terms of just organising a big class. 34 children of diverse abilities..... they need to be grouped quite strategically for them to be working effectively* (Trainee 14).

When trainees began to participate in the work of teachers, they experienced the breadth of activities that the job entailed. As they began to juggle with competing and often concurrent demands on time, they often felt under pressure - partly a consequence of their inexperience, but also a foretaste of the realities of the job:

> *I found difficulty keeping up with preparation and planning. I could keep up with it, but I started to think is this all there's going to be to life in teaching?* (Trainee 10).

They had not always anticipated fully realities such as the time commitment the job required:

> *We knew it wasn't a 9 to 3.30 job '.....it was from 8 in the morning until 5, half past five some nights. It made me aware of how much was expected of you'* (ibid.).

Teaching could seem unlike other jobs some trainees had experienced:

> *As opposed to an office job,* (where) *you'd walk in and the work would be there. You'd systematically go through it, file it away, go home. And you'd do the same thing day in day out. You can't do that with a classroom* (Trainee 6).

Trainees' relationships with their host teachers were influential in shaping their classroom insights (see 8.2.1.2). But, in addition to being an important influence on trainees' capacities to perform effectively (Chapters 6 and 10), interadult school relationships were also important as a dimension of what trainees learnt.

7.2.3 The staff: groups and individuals.

Trainees gained some understanding of the complexities of interadult work relationships and of their impact on the job of a teacher. Their relationships with a mentor or host class teacher were inevitably skewed by the expert-novice overtones of its formal dimension, and reinforced by undercurrents of assessor and assessed (see Chapter 11). But relationships with staff in general provided important insights into the implications of joining a work group whose members were, in many respects, unavoidably mutually dependent. Trainees began to discover, as observers and participants, that being a staff member could carry the benefits of mutual support and the obligations of compliance with tacitly understood ways of working and acting. Where structures encouraged mutual support, trainees benefited from the experience of that process and from its outcomes.

> *I got all my support from the year group staff. I went to A for arts and RE, to B for science, to C for English and geography, and D for history, and my class teacher for maths. PE we stumbled along together* (Trainee 4).

At an interpersonal level too, some trainees discovered and enjoyed the affective rewards *of 'the camaraderie in the staffroom, particularly in a big staff like school F'* (Trainee 10).

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Understanding the significance of fitting in confirmed the general principle that the price of support and affiliation was often conformity with a set of norms which governed the behaviour of teachers, including trainees. For example, perceptive trainees became aware that they too were subject to the collective requirement to act in ways which were identifiably teacher-like - in all situations where and at times when they were on display to pupils within the normal school day:

All the things you would do as teacher as far as children are concerned when they aren't your direct responsibility were expected of me, as in telling children off in assembly when they are talking. If you're being a teacher you don't let a child run down a corridor (Trainee 10).

Unfulfilled expectations of a similar kind explain the rebuke Trainee 7 received from colleagues when, on a school trip, *'the children were writing me messages and I was writing messages back.'*

To be seen like a teacher also required that trainees looked like one: *'like dress - there was quite a high dress code - quite smart. That was kind of expected. '* (Trainee 4).

Obligatory forms of behaviour also characterised informal relationships with and between staff in places such as the staffroom, where trainees had to learn to replicate staff behaviour:

Like wiping down the surface if it was all covered in coffee, or washing up your mug, or re-filling the photocopier when it had run out - all those kinds of things were expected (Trainee 4).

including how to interact:

You listen to them, you look interested, even if you're not, and you get the conversation around, even if it's just to teaching, because then you can join in, you can give your input, you can talk about it. (Trainee 3).

Although trainees learnt that individuals' freedom to act unilaterally in their professional work and in relationships with staff was constrained, they sometimes discovered that, in some respects, group norms might allow staff to be individualistic. For example, in some schools there was tacit acceptance that individual teachers select their

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preferred pedagogic structures and methods, even when the head had a different preferred teaching approach:

> *The head was hoping to move towards a more integrated day, and she pointed me in that direction when she observed me, but the class teacher wasn't working that type of system, was fully aware of the practical difficulties of working it with that particular class* (Trainee 11).

One problem for trainees was to discriminate between those teacher behaviours they were expected to adopt and those responsibilities reserved for experienced staff. The difficulty was particularly acute if they found that tacit boundaries varied from school to school:

> *In my first school, if you'd have gone in and taken the register without checking* with *someone you'd have upset them and they wouldn't have told you* (Trainee 12).

In summary, trainees' experiences of working in placements taught them that teaching was a job shaped by routines, requiring complex skills beyond those initially anticipated and which consumed considerable time. They began to understand that, although classroom work often isolated them physically from other teachers, the influences of the staff group could shape individuals' behaviour in a variety of school situations. As temporary teachers, trainees too were constrained by group expectations. So, they began to understand that to do the job of a teacher had an impact on themselves as people.

7.3 Developing a teacher's perspective

The longer the time trainees spent in placements, the more aware they became that teachers had particular ways of perceiving, interpreting and responding to professional situations which were identifiably teacherlike. The development of trainees' teacher perspectives was initially prompted by watching and listening to staff, and in time was stimulated by affective reactions to participating, and then became further refined cognitively through reflexive analysis in observing participant mode.

In observer mode, trainees began to develop an initial superficial understanding of the ways teachers think about their jobs, as a by-product of their early placement visits. For

example, as visitors with outsiders' perspectives, trainees tended to be sensitised to the tacit, unacknowledged implications of accountability pressures on a school staff. As an audience for, rather than authors of, schools' efforts to present themselves to others, trainees could more easily recognise the impact of outside audiences on educational processes in the school:

> (of classroom displays) *An awful lot of work was done by the teacher and not the child. I thought what sort of message are you trying to give? It was as though they were trying to give this message to the parents that everything here is wonderful* (Trainee 13).

Engagement with problematic aspects of the job as a participant was a pre-requisite for understanding the natures of these and, in turn, for resolving them. But the development of trainees' capacities to think like teachers was largely a consequence of being an observing participant, able to think analytically about the processes in which they were engaged. Perceptions became more sophisticated once a trainee moved from *'the days when you actually needed a lesson plan in front of you to guide you....to the last lesson where you could just stand up there and just talk impromptu* (Trainee 3).

It is important to be clear that, insofar as trainees saw part of their learning as being about thinking like a teacher, their concerns were practical rather than metaphysical. They wanted to understand how skilled teachers interpreted and organised situations in which learning and teaching became effective. The *'really important* (insights) *that you get out of being in a school'* were the *'really useful, practical, how to manage in the real world type of tips'* (Trainee 10). For example, Trainee 10's classroom concerns brought him to the view that *'the management of putting things out and clearing up has such a large bearing on the lesson that it becomes almost the most important thing to get right.'* Similarly, Trainee 6 was given graphic insight into the principle advocated by her colleagues - that her credibility as teacher was linked to pupils' perceptions that teachers were infallible. Her comments illuminate two aspects of learning to think like a teacher. The first concerns accessing craft knowledge, through the accumulated experience of effective established teachers:

> (I was told) *If you don't know what button to press, don't let the children know you don't know what you're doing. Pretend something's happened that shouldn't have*

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happened. Because as soon as they know that you don't know, then that's it. They'll lose all their confidence and faith in you (Trainee 6).

The second aspect involves applying it:

It did happen to me - I'd forgotten what to do. One girl said to me 'You don't know what to do, do you?' I said 'Of course I do. I tried it a few minutes ago and it worked. Go get the other teacher and see what he thinks (ibid.).

Although trainees' concerns were practical in nature, insights into the practical applications of teachers' thinking inevitably had implications for trainees' behaviour and ultimately for how they felt too. Understanding how trainees needed to behave if they were to fit the role of teacher and, in turn, how they felt when doing so, contributed to their understanding of the nature of the job. They began to understand that the job required particular kinds of role behaviour, so that other teachers and pupils would see them as 'authentic' (in that in content and tone their behaviour replicated that of existing staff). Observation of teachers' routine patterns of behaviour indicated how trainees should behave if they were to convince pupils to treat them as teachers:

Learning certain aspects of the standard role model for the school has to do with the school culture that the kids have been encouraged to fit into, that you have to continue with to some extent. They would expect to be shouted at in certain conditions (Trainee 10).

Observation and analysis of the classroom behaviour of teachers, particularly the teacher of their host class, were important in providing models from which to build or depart in classrooms:

She was really strict. I suppose that more experienced teachers just want an easy life and she didn't get the children to volunteer a lot of information, or she didn't get them to talk a lot. She told them all the time (Trainee 7).

In time, trainees also began to understand that the boundaries of the job stretched beyond their pedagogic role *'to be able to fill the role of a teacher inside and outside the classroom.'* (Trainee 10). It was especially important that trainees learnt to discriminate between teacher behaviour specific to one placement and that which had broad application and could usefully feed trainees' developing repertoire of skills. For example, Trainee 10 realised that

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> *'There are certain ways that I would act in F that I wouldn't necessarily act in a different school.'*

Otherwise

> *'You could go in thinking I'd learnt how to talk to children and discover that you'd learnt how not to talk to children in this particular place'* (Trainee 10).

For trainees, one outcome of adapting their behaviour to match the needs of the job was the discovery that acting as a teacher had affective consequences.

Trainees' understanding of the feelings that could be stimulated by doing the job came initially from observing the day to day behaviour of the staffs of their placement schools. For example, through being alert to what teachers did and said, trainees were able to make judgements about the impact on teachers of doing the job in a particular school with a particular pupil catchment:

> *They think they have a lot to put up with because of the situations of some of the children. Like being taken away to another country for 23 months and then being brought back here, and the teacher having to cope with it. Children in the class not being able to speak a word of English* (Trainee 2).

Trainees might observe that pupil-oriented concerns dominated informal staff interaction:

> *A lot of the conversation in the staffroom would be about 'Have you seen whatsisname who was here several years ago - that's the third time the police have had him up'. That was a theme - concern with the children and concern for some of the backgrounds that some of them came from* (Trainee 10).

When trainees participated in teacher-like ways in classrooms and elsewhere in the school and began to be treated as teachers, they experienced for themselves the implications of feeling like a teacher. Feeling like a teacher was often a response to being treated like one by pupils:

> *Being respected by children who aren't in your class and don't know you as a teacher, children actually stopping running when they see you* (Trainee 10).

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Apart from promoting trainees' self-esteem, such experiences reinforced trainees' understanding that pupils' reactions largely determined whether trainees felt like teachers in classroom.

When trainees developed classroom skills that enabled them to behave like teachers, their self-esteem was further reinforced by successful performance and, in turn, their confidence was boosted:

> *I think my confidence as a teacher has just zoomed..... I've come to the stage where I feel comfortable chatting, and if anyone walked in I'd still continue with it, no problem* (Trainee 3).

Such positive experiences contributed to what trainees learnt in three ways. First, they helped trainees discriminate between how they might feel when they became qualified teachers, fully comfortable with and engaged in a school context, as distinct from their feelings as trainees, with the disadvantages of being novice visitors of inferior status. Second, by affecting trainees' self-esteem, they confirmed their resilience in the face of the affective demands of the job. Third, by helping trainees to relax and feel secure, confident and successful participation in school processes in classrooms and elsewhere released cognitive responses and so promoted the self-awareness of observing participants.

7.4 Incorporating personal qualities and value systems

Where trainees' feelings were affected by particular experiences of doing the job, they often emerged with a clearer awareness of those aspects of themselves which were concerned with what they thought was important and worthwhile in the way the job was done. In other words, they became sensitised to their own personal qualities and value systems.

Participation could prompt trainees begin to question whether they were the sort of people who were suited to the life of a teacher. They might discover that *'to get a balance when you're in a teaching situation is quite hard'* (Trainee 10). That balance seemed to have two aspects. The first was in their attitudes to the amount of time devoted to the job compared to the rest of life:

> *You think 'Am I really cut out to do that, work in that mode for a working life, be in a "work through" situation?' - home is a place for relaxation* (Trainee 10).

The second was between strong commitment and resilience when success did not inevitably follow. Some trainees began to deal with competing feelings when loss of confidence in the face of unfamiliar situations caused them to begin to doubt their developing skills:

> *I seemed to have lost everything I had gained at school C. My confidence and my approach to teaching. I felt I had to work my way up again. ......I felt I had lost all that through having to come down to Year 3* (Trainee 6).

But such experiences could heighten self-awareness. Trainee 6 began to discover that she had the determination to deal resolutely with circumstances where loss of confidence and self-esteem might undermine competence:

> *Over the Easter period I had to get a grip and say, you want to be a teacher at the end of the day - you don't know who you will get in September. You'll just go in and do it - and that is what you've got to do now* (ibid.).

Her account shows that, when trainees felt challenged by events, they could emerge with a newly discovered will to shape them. Such elements of each trainee's personal qualities might also cause them to respond critically to school experiences. For example, the requirement to adopt prevailing classroom practices might unearth an intensity of reaction that surprised a trainee herself:

> *Even when I was in charge I couldn't force myself to let them* (pupils) *'choose', because it's like - they should be working! (Laughs) It's very hard. My choosing is at the end of the day* (Trainee 12).

or reveal preferences for a different kind of school context with which they felt a personal affinity:

> *Whatever it is about that sort of school, I like it - the social working aspects of it. It's more about personal relationships than academic things* (ibid.).

In extreme situations, a deeply felt sense of personal values might cause a trainee to reject the dominant values which underpinned the ways a class was run by the host teacher, seek

to inject her own, and so jeopardise some of the support she might otherwise have expected (see Chapter 11):

> *The problem was I didn't agree with the class teacher's approach, so she sort of deserted me after she'd realised that* (Trainee 7).

In Chapter 5 I suggested that trainees' learning was partly a response to the positive models provided by teachers whose skills they admired and whose perspectives they intuitively shared, as well as to negative instances which indicated practices to avoid. Access to such models also contributed to what trainees learnt, in that they helped trainees to clarify the value systems that shaped their professional actions.

Where trainees were unsympathetic with observed practices, they often were stimulated to identify other, more effective methods:

> *There were times when I thought, 'No, if I was doing that lesson I wouldn't like to do it that way, I'd take a different approach.' So it's quite good. You can think then about what makes you work and what would be best for you* (Trainee 13).

When trainees felt that host teachers' professional actions were derived from value systems which were dissonant with their own, they might be prompted to identify courses of action which reflected the latter. Occasionally, a palpable sense of unease prompted a trainee to reject explicitly teaching approaches that embodied unacceptable values, in spite of possible difficulties:

> *She* (the host teacher) *told them all the time. And I didn't, and that took the whole lid off and it just went chaotic. That was the problem* (Trainee 7).

As well as prompting alternative courses of action, such value system clashes could be catalysts that clarified and made explicit the tacit value positions that had initially stimulated unease:

> *My own perceptions of what was a good standard of behaviour and standard of classroom activity conflicted to what was going on with my*
>
> *class and still seemed acceptable to the school as a whole. I think it helped mould my attitude towards discipline, children's learning* (Trainee 11).

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More frequently, trainees adopted many of the routine practices which structured their host teachers' ways of working, but might do so critically, often with clear views of how they might have proceeded, grounded implicitly in alternative value systems:

(giving pupils boundaries for choice)

> *I'd try and give them something like a game , but it was a specified maths thing , something where they could just play with maths apparatus. Or a specific task, rather than 'go and play with something'*(Trainee 12).

(using display as a means of valuing pupil's effort

> *My view of displays is that you're wanting to show the children what you're working at and what they are doing. So the majority of it should be the children's work, presented in a nice way to make them feel encouraged* (Trainee 13).

In short, experiences which were apparently negative in content could help to clarify or refine the value system which underpinned a personal perspective on how teachers should act professionally. The development of a more clearly focused and articulated personal perspective on how the job should be performed was not inevitably dependent on trainees being in sympathy with the dominant professional perspectives of a placement school's staff, or significant members of it.

A picture develops of trainees who, sometimes, came to a placement believing that they needed to be taught what and how to teach, but who emerged from the experience aware of the interdependence of professional actions with personal qualities and values systems. The combined effect of these insights was that trainees developed, to different degrees, a more explicit personal perspective on the nature of the job and on effective and worthwhile performance. By becoming self-aware rather than self-centred, they began to clarify, confirm, or refine the value systems which shaped their own perspectives on teaching

7.5 Individual placements and generalising learning

The refinement of trainees' personal perspectives helped them to discriminate between practices that worked in a practical sense and identify those that they considered legitimate, because they were consistent with their value systems. That process contributed to trainees' long-term professional learning, because it enabled them to use experiences in one school to achieve learning that was generalisable to work in others.

The process of building generalisable insights required a shift in trainees' perspectives from a focus on short-term solutions to immediate professional problems, to the development of general principles that could guide them in any school context. Tips from teachers and trainees' own solutions were valuable immediate responses to current problems. But they also had long-term importance if, in responding to the challenges of one class or school, trainees could build skills and knowledge relevant to many - especially by adopting the analytical stance of observing participants. Their placement schools were locations for trainees' immediate learning. But they also became instances from which they could begin to make tentative generalisations about schools and experiences yet to be encountered, and develop skills that might be relevant in new situations.

Learning to generalise required that new insights were assimilated into existing schemata of teaching effectiveness, which were then modified. New experiences might confirm trainees' existing insights into teaching, particularly during their final placement, but could also modify their understanding because *'you try and pick out what you think is the best of all of them'* (Trainee 11).

By evaluating the qualities of each set of classroom routines, trainees sometimes further refined their own preferred versions *'because there were some things I thought, well yes, I could do it like that'* (ibid.). The following instances show trainees building on experience to formulate a set of principles of generalisable value as a basis for future professional actions.

How to prepare for lessons:

> *I think planning was the biggest thing I learnt. - making sure you had the objectives right at the beginning, making sure you knew exactly what you were doing* (Trainee 3).

Ensuring work met the needs of pupils with different abilities:

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Once you know the children it's easy to differentiate. You plan the task and think 'I know so and so will have trouble with that, and so and so will find that easy. So I'll do this with him and that with her' (Trainee 5).

Matching teaching style to pupil needs:

A lot of my problem was I was aiming too high. So my language changed, my whole demeanour, attitude changed in the classroom (Trainee 1).

How to motivate individual pupils to work:

Literally seeing what works with each child and remembering what works with each child (Trainee 9).

How to approach relationships in a new placement:

To make sure I'm coming over the right way, or thinking about what I'm saying, or keep my distance from people (Trainee 12).

Of course, trainees could not always predict which aspects of their learning in one context had relevance for a new placement. Inevitably the experience of working in any school shaped the ways trainees were predisposed to act in subsequent placements. But they also might find that, although some of their newly acquired skills were transferable, new circumstances demanded that new skills be developed:

The problem before was control over the class working at the same time (on the same activity). Now it's going to be knowing what is happening in different groups when children are working on different things (Trainee 8).

Trainees might also learn that over-hasty generalisations could be flawed, especially if placements were different in structure, social catchment, perspectives on teaching, or in the tone of staff relationships. Those who expected to progress beyond their current levels of teaching skill when they moved to a new placement were sometimes surprised to find unexpected challenges. Many discovered that, in spite of the structural similarities of different primary schools, there were often important differences between them.

Trainees might find that staffs had developed different solutions to similar concerns, as an outcome of the particular mix of people, experiences, attitudes, circumstances and processes within a particular school. For example, organisationally, trainees often found that there were different approaches to such fundamental aspects of the job as curriculum planning:

At F it was a scheme of work to cover a half term, and at B it's topic based. So each week has a different topic (Trainee 8).

In some instances the distinctive nature of classroom processes was attributed to social or ethnic differences:

At school A there's so much more to the teaching job. You've got to take into account pupils' backgrounds, their development in another country. ......You've got to get down to each individual child. Whereas at school C you've got special needs, high fliers, but the middle bit seems to merge (Trainee 1).

Subtler and more pervasive differences between staff attitudes towards the job were suggested by differences in day to day routines. Such differences affected trainees' perceptions of the interpersonal dimension of the life of school staffs:

(Of school A) *They are very fixed in their ways. They don't socialise very much. They have their own lives, they very much stick to it. They don't go out of their way to ingratiate newcomers* (Trainee 11).

(Of School B) At breaktime they're always in there.... They turn up just before school, they do what they've got to do, they get on with it and they go home as soon as school has finished. The people at school were there for the social life as well (Trainee 12)

7.6 Summary

By learning to fit in with the ways of working in one placement, in the short term trainees began to develop insights into the nature of the job, the influence of its structure and routines, the complexities of classroom work and the extent of its demands on their time. Their learning spread beyond a narrow focus on classroom teaching to include an awareness of the impact of interadult dimensions of the job. These insights had long-term

implications for their professional development and socialisation. As their insights developed, they began to construct a more complex understanding of how teachers felt, thought and acted, so that they gradually developed for themselves a teacher's perspective. This was informed by a growing awareness of the importance of value systems in directing their actions. They did so partly by observing and talking to teachers in their placements and partly through reflexive analysis of their own experiences of being participants.

The growth of trainees' teacher perspectives was part of their developing capacity to use the experiences in a particular placement to build insights of generalisable significance for other placements and for their long-term learning - although trainees were sometimes surprised that the different demands of new placements could produce unexpected challenges.

It is important to reiterate that this analysis of what trainees learnt has deliberately ignored the complex issues (beyond the scope of this study) of the development of trainees' content knowledge and of their detailed pedagogic skills.

Chapter Eight:
Who In School Influenced Trainees' Learning

8.1 Introduction

The discussion of who influenced trainees' learning is affected by the analysis developed in Chapters 5 and 6. There, I suggested that staff contributed in three main ways. First, trainees in observer mode learnt by watching teachers perform aspects of their job, including interactions with pupils and with one another in professional contexts such as staff meetings. Second, their learning as participants could be influenced by the affective support they received from staff. Such support helped establish the conditions under which trainees were more likely to learn, because their feelings of security were enhanced and self-esteem maintained. Third, trainees' analytical capacities, especially as participating observers and observing participants, were further stimulated by teaching staff who intervened directly in trainees' learning.

Before analysing the contributions of school staffs to trainees' learning, it is important to revisit the suggestion in Sections 5.5 and 5.6 that trainees contributed to the development of their own learning. The suggestion that '*you have to analyse yourself an awful lot and that's hard*' (Trainee 14) reflects the problematic nature of analytical processes. As well as being illuminative, insights could add to complexity, because '*the more you do, the more bits you can see in a problem*' (Trainee 5). Occasionally, trainees were self-reliant from necessity, because they were given limited help. Conversely, self-reliance could mean that, with no professional observer, classroom errors contributed to learning because they were less likely to undermine self-esteem:

> *I just made a pile of mistakes that I never had had the opportunity to make, but made them by myself in the class with nobody watching. .....And there was no embarrassment, there was no negative feedback from anybody, and that helped a lot to get me feeling OK* (Trainee 2).

Of course, self-reliance was not merely a substitute for help from staff. It could stimulate '*reflection on action*' (Schon 1987) when trainees considered the impact of their own actions and modify subsequent ways of teaching:

In the technology there weren't enough cog templates to go round for all the groups
......So I had to integrate the technology with science because of that. And it actually
stuck - I did that throughout the block practice, because I got used to it and I liked it
(Trainee 10).

Similarly, when trainees spoke of *'learning lots from the children'* (Trainee 5) or *'learning*
most from working with the children' (Trainee 11), they referred to ways in which their
own analytical capacities were stimulated by pupils' reactions to classroom events:

(You learn) how to teach something next time, because you think the children won't
understand that and they get it in ten seconds (Trainee 5).

My curriculum knowledge I honed to the level of the children. I had to go back to
the basics really (Trainee 11).

But trainees' learning was enhanced when their own analytical capacities were
stimulated by the interventions of a range of school staff.

8.2 Learning from staff.

Within this analysis, I distinguish between those contributions prompted by the
formal structures of the schools' trainee support arrangements, and those which emerged
informally from staff, including non-teachers, who had no direct responsibility for trainees'
learning.

8.2.1 Planned learning relationships

In Section 1.3 I outlined the formal arrangement, agreed between the university and
schools, that a mentor in each placement had oversight of arrangements for trainees'
guidance, feedback, and assessment, in liaison with host class teachers. Schools were
encouraged to ensure that their own arrangements established clear demarcations between
the responsibilities of mentors and class teachers. Either or both mentor and class teacher
might carry out structured observations of trainees. Where there was more than one trainee
per school, there might be different arrangements for trainees in the same school - one
being placed in the mentor's class, whilst those in other classrooms had the attention of a
mentor and a separate class teacher. In addition, there were other staff whose formal
responsibilities within each school's structure impacted on trainee learning. The most

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important of these were curriculum leaders and leaders of sections of a school, such as year or phase groups.

8.2.1.1 Learning from mentors

In most instances mentors made important contributions to the development of trainees' learning. This statement may be unsurprising, given the nature of mentors' formal roles, but was not an inevitable outcome. Mentors were responsible for formally assessing trainees' performance. Their assessment role could initially inhibit the development of a close and trusting relationship, particularly when a mentor was not also a trainee's host class teacher:

> *With the mentor coming in I was thinking 'Oh God, please make them behave' - and it's because the mentor doesn't know the class. Also it's different because it's your mentor and you know that she writes the final report on you, even though it's in conjunction with the class teacher* (Trainee 9).

Further, mentors' sometimes had other school-related formal responsibilities which consumed their non-teaching time. If they had too little time to share between too many roles, trainee teachers could be disadvantaged:

> *The mentor was overstretched in terms of being the year head and responsible for French in the school...... So our times together were a bit more limited* (Trainee 10).

> *The mentor is a Year Six teacher, but just before Easter she got the job of Year 5 co-ordinator for next year. So she's much more involved with the Year 5 area since she got the job* (Trainee 3).

Trainees' judgements of their mentors' contributions ranged from finding them unhelpful and/or unsympathetic,

> *There wasn't any sympathy or advice. I felt that this was not the place to go if I needed help* (Trainee 12),

to valuing them as *'wonderful, amazing, a brilliant mentor'* (Trainee 4). More frequently they inclined towards the latter view. The impacts of mentors' personal qualities and their professional skills could overcome the distancing effects of being mentored by a teacher from another class:

She would give you different strategies to possibly approach something and was incredibly helpful. She's so open, and so if you were having major problems you wouldn't worry in the least about going to speak to her (Trainee 9).

An analysis of mentors' influences on trainees' learning confirms the relationship between affective support (which indirectly influenced learning by creating conditions under which it might thrive) and professional interventions (which were intended to have a direct impact on learning). Trainees were more secure when they were affectively supported (see Chapter 5):

The mentor, she gave me a lot of help, when we had meetings. Giving me confidence. - 'You're looking better, getting more confident, we can see that.' In the staffroom I was actually talking, not sitting there looking glum (Trainee 1).

They were then better able to respond to the learning opportunities arising from their experiences in school:

I just need a bit of reassurance that I'm going down the right path. The mentor was the person who gave me that (Trainee 7).

Of course, the impact of mentors in general on trainees' learning was mediated by the personal qualities of individual mentors. The strong personal commitment of some mentors to their role meant that they responded to times of particular need with an extensive programme of structured support.

I was taking up a lot of the mentor's time. She had three of us to mentor and she was acting as my class teacher because I didn't have the support from my class teacher (Trainee 8).

Mentors' professional qualities emerged in the systematic and comprehensive nature of their arrangements, support and interventions in trainee learning. For example, they ensured that trainees understood how to fit in smoothly with school norms:

She had the three of us trainees together, got out these planning sheets, the topic webs, short-term forecasts, what have you. They were all filled in just the way she would do them. She said 'right, this is the way you need to have it done' (Trainee 3).

The fusion of affective and professional dimensions is reflected in the nature of those mentors' interventions which trainees valued. As discussed in Chapter 5, the most helpful feedback was that which reflected a *'learner model'*. Trainees repeatedly highlighted the effectiveness of mentors whose *'feedback was well-balanced'* (Trainee 10). The elements in that balance were being *'really positive as well '* (Trainee 3), combined with a willingness to stimulate trainees' own thinking about their work:

She would always come back to saying 'Bearing in mind that all the things that went very well, here are the things that you can look at to make an improvement' (Trainee 10).

...asking me why I thought things didn't go as I wanted them to, or what I'd done that did make things work, making me think about what I had done (Trainee 8).

Opportunities for regular and frequent contact with mentors tended to be enhanced when a trainee was based in a mentor's classroom. Then, sustained interpersonal contact could ease the formality prompted by mentor-trainee assessment relationships, particularly for more diffident trainees:

That (arrangement) *was a big help to me because I'm not very comfortable with new people until I get to know them. I think it's a big help only having one person to have to analyse everything with.......she was around at the beginning and end of school. So if I had anything I wanted to talk to her about she was always there* (Trainee 8).

To have one's class teacher as mentor did not inevitably lead to increased interaction about professional development. Where a mentor was responsible for more than one trainee, she might find she was able to give less, rather than more, informal support to the trainee in her classroom, because of the need to ensure planned support for mentees in other classes. For example, Trainee 4

really felt I picked the short straw having her as mentor and class teacher. I just felt I didn't get quite enough time. The times I had with her were because she was

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my mentor rather than because she was my class teacher. We had the time all together.

Conversely, over-frequent contact could become a source of problems if a trainee had a difficult professional relationship with the mentor-class teacher in whose classroom she worked :

> *The only unfortunate thing was that I was put with a mentor who was also my class teacher and it was too claustrophobic* (Trainee 14).

To summarise, the assessment dimension of mentors' planned role and their other responsibilities in the school sometimes restricted their capacities to develop positive affective and professional relationships with trainees. Their personal qualities often determined the effectiveness of these relationships. Trainees tended to find mentors affectively supportive, particularly when mentors were also effective in promoting trainees' learning by adopting a *'learner model'* of support. When trainees were placed in mentors' own classrooms, contact was often more frequent, and there were more opportunities for talk about trainees' learning. However, the quality of the relationship determined whether frequent contact was a blessing or a problem.

8.2.1.2 Learning from host class teachers

Trainees' host class teachers could make or mar trainees' placement experiences. For Trainee 9, class teachers had *'been the most important factors in both schools by a long shot. It makes a huge difference the teacher you're with '*. She contrasted her time with a class teacher who was *'absolutely superb, incredibly helpful'* with the negative experience of two other trainees:

> *I know that Trainee 13's had a really difficult class teacher this time round and Trainee 8 had a really difficult class teacher last time, and they haven't enjoyed their experiences* (Trainee 9).

There were three main ways in which host class teachers could promote their trainees' learning. They could influence the conditions under which trainees learnt, intervene directly in it and provide affective support. Each was also an aspect of mentors' contributions. But, additionally, trainees and host class teachers shared a concern for, and day-to-day involvement with, the same class. Consequently, each had motives and

opportunities for regular contact. In practice, class teachers were strategically placed to have a strong influence on trainees' day-to-day experience of school placements.

Class teachers' willingness to allow trainees to observe them teach, gave access to models of experienced teachers at work:

My class teacher taught me a lot just by watching her........ During the serial phase, if I found a situation where I thought 'I'm not sure how I'll deal with that' - but dealt with it - I'd try and see if I could see it with my class teacher (Trainee 5).

By providing trainees with access to genuine responsibility for pupils and their learning (at the appropriate time), class teachers gave trainees space within which to learn for themselves:

She let me have full rein of the children and the class.... It was her positive attitude towards me that allowed me to be creative with the displays, allowed me to develop (Trainee 3).

The class teacher was prepared to stand back and let you have the class (Trainee 11).

Opportunities for self-development were supported by the availability of practical help if it was needed. Trainee 3's experiences in two different schools demonstrate, in contrasting ways, that class teachers' attitudes could facilitate learning. In his first placement

I didn't get any teachers' resource books until the last week when she was sifting through the cupboards and she found all these work sheets. and said 'These are here if you want them, it may be too late now' (Trainee 3).

He then moved to a school where

the class teacher said 'Oh by the way we did this last year. Do you want to have a look at this for your lessons coming up next week?' She just took me under her wing practically (ibid.).

Class teachers showed their affective support, in its simplest form, when they were willing to spend time with trainees in those phases of development when their frequent presence was helpful.

At the beginning she was in every lesson watching, and then it was once a week mainly (Trainee 3).

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> *I had to have a lot of help and I got that mainly from my class teacher, because she was there all the time* (Trainee 1).

Conversely, when a class teacher was frequently away from the classroom her absence was resented:

> *She helped to do the reading three times and after that she was being whisked off by the head teacher* (Trainee 15)

and professional conversation was restricted:

> *My class teacher never said a thing. I never spent any time talking to her. She never spent any time with me at all* (Trainee 7).

Affective support often emerged through both the tone and nature of comments made:

> *She just never made me feel like I was failing or doing badly. She always kept things really positive, and I liked that* (Trainee 3);

> *She let me get in there , make a hash if I made a hash - I didn't luckily - and took me aside, and said 'Next time you come to that situation try this or try that'* (Trainee 5);

so that in some instances the professional impact of relationships was enhanced by their personal dimension:

> *My class teacher was important as well - and a friend. It made a big difference to me* (Trainee 14).

Class teachers' fine-grained understanding of the context in which trainees were working enriched the value of trainee-class teacher talk. They could help trainees anticipate problems they might face:

> *She wasn't going to make any bones about what the class was like* (Trainee 1).

For example, class teachers' understanding of the constraints of shared lesson frameworks could enable them to respond to trainees' problems with the structure of lesson timing :

> *A lot of help on my time management - not finishing lessons early enough to give time to clear up - or time to give out homework* (Trainee 10).

Their knowledge of specific classroom contexts made trainees confident that they would not misinterpret the behaviour of difficult pupils inappropriately - as trainees' lack of skill:

You know that if your class teacher is in your lesson, because they knew the children, if one child was being particularly difficult they would know it was because that child was always difficult (Trainee 9).

Trainees would then more willingly turn to class teachers for advice:

If I had any problems or difficulties I'd talk to him about them. Partly because it was his class so he knew them (Trainee 9).

Class teachers' direct interventions took three main forms. First, they were willing to offer ideas for and advice about teaching processes - for example *'some good ideas, she gave me tips from all her experience, hints on what to do'* (Trainee 3) and *'a lot of advice about control'* (Trainee 8). Second, they offered evaluative feedback and advice, having observed trainees' lessons:

She was watching regularly and made written and oral criticisms of my style, strategies I used for organisation. She was one person who went out of her way to help me (Trainee 11).

Third, they stimulated trainees' self-evaluation through discussion of trainees' own analyses of their own teaching:

Evaluating the lesson myself and with the class teacher. Then going on from there and saying "well we did this wrong, what are we going to do about it next time?' (Trainee 6).

To summarise, the framework of informal relationships they were willing and able to develop enhanced the overall impact of class teachers on trainees' development. Although in-school agreements with the designated mentor sometimes meant that class teachers took the responsibility for structured classroom observation with written feedback, their influence was strongest when they also supported trainees informally and by their accessibility. Trainee 7's comments exemplify the sense of unfairness experienced by those few trainees who saw their peers supported, but who felt neglected by their own class teachers :

(The class teacher) didn't come and see me in the morning before school started. If I was lucky I saw her at break, but often I didn't see her until lunchtime, and then immediately after school she'd just come over and say 'goodbye, I'm going now', and that was it. ....It's really unfair. Trainee 3 had so much support, and I used to be fiddling around on my own...... and Trainee 6 was really friendly with her teacher (Trainee 7).

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She confirms that host class teachers who interested themselves in their trainees' development had both an affective and a professional influence.

8.2.1.3. Learning from other responsible staff.

Although it was mentors and host class teachers who were formally responsible for trainees, they also learnt from staff who had specific school responsibilities that also carried an obligation to help trainees. These staff were of two main kinds: those, such as year leaders and school section leaders, who were responsible for the work of school staff and pupils and those responsible for specific subjects within the curriculum. In practice both inevitably were concerned with people and curricula to varying degrees.

Year and section leaders were sources of help for trainees because the latter became part of the staff sub-group for which the former were responsible. Consequently it was an appropriate part of their professional relationship for trainees to seek and team leaders to give advice.

> *I had trouble with one child in my class. I felt that as a trainee teacher I was perhaps failing, there was something I was doing that was affecting this child and making him disruptive. I didn't know that he was disruptive in other lessons. But when I did go to the head of year and say I have got a problem she was very supportive* (Trainee 6).

Year group links increased the possibility that trainee and section leaders' teaching responsibilities might bring them into regular contact and so provide the occasions when support could be sought and given:

> *The year head was very helpful as well. I had a problem with one of her class who was in my maths group. I went to speak to the year head about it. she said 'What I'll do is speak to him and then you come and speak to him in my classroom and then we'll both speak to him together'* (Trainee 9).

Although the data on subject co-ordinators' are limited, they appear to suggest that co-ordinators' help, though available, tended to be in response to trainees' initiatives:

> *My mentor devised a plan of observation that went up in years, and I observed the maths co-ordinator. It was just chatting to her about my situation - that I didn't feel confident about maths at the time....* (Trainee 1)

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I spoke to Mrs N about being a co-ordinator and she gave me some literature (Trainee 12).

Co-ordinators then willingly provided *'a lot of input as to how to best approach their particular subject'* (Trainee 9):

> *She then came in and observed me teaching and then did an evaluation in my file. She swapped with my class teacher in order to come in and see me - which was really helpful* (ibid.);

> *The science specialist was very good in terms of working with me to cover any areas of science that I hadn't had any experience with* (Trainee 10).

Heads' influences on trainees' learning tended to be indirect. They structured the institutional framework within which trainees learnt and many did so by meeting trainees when they first arrived at the schools. However, only the head teacher of School A went so far as to issue trainees with a set of rules for trainees' conduct in the school. Otherwise, head teachers' direct impact on trainees was in introducing them to ideas of accountability for their work, for example, by requiring trainees to fulfil the same obligations as other staff:

> *He* (head) *collects the files in from all the other staff, so he collected ours in as well so he could keep an eye on what was going on* (Trainee 14).

8.2.1.4 Learning from other class teachers

In many placements, the planned support structures for trainee learning involved a wide range of class teachers, because trainees' planned programmes included observing a broad range of classrooms and teaching models. These contributed to their store of ideas for short-term use and, in the long term, helped trainees to form their own teaching styles:

I did try different approaches to teaching. And that came really from going round to each class....It wasn't that people sat down and said 'you could do it like this' It was just from what I'd seen and thought - 'maybe I could do it like that' (Trainee 13).

> *I'd been in every year group. Some of them are calm and some of them are a bit louder. So I already knew there were varied styles of teaching* (Trainee 2).

Trainee 10's regret that *'the thing I think I probably missed was the chance to see more staff teaching - different people so you saw their different styles'* confirms the value trainees placed on such opportunities.

In middle school placements, strong subject structures exposed trainees to the influence of a range of subject staff whom they could observe at work and so broaden their range of exemplars:

> *You get used to the teacher you're with and you think that's perfect because it's working. You see somebody else and they're completely different* (Trainee 5).

Further, in many middle schools, the need to develop relationships with several subject staff could also widen the range of staff who commented on trainee's own classroom performances:

> *If I had comments about my lesson that staff had been in to see, what they said was incredibly helpful and very very constructive.* (Trainee 9)

8.2.1.5 Teachers' personal qualities

So far I have examined the sources of support for trainees' learning within the formal structures planned for that purpose, or those within the broader school structure for co-ordinating teaching and the curriculum. I have indicated that trainees gained through both formal and informal opportunities promoted by planned support structures. In other words, that structure created the formal obligations to facilitate and promote trainee learning. But the extent and quality of that support was mediated by individual staff's professional and personal attitudes - a point to which I now turn.

The contributions of individual professionals to the learning of specific trainees partly depended on the person filling each role. The qualities individuals brought to their professional roles mediated and could transform the impact of the roles themselves - either positively or negatively. The data already cited in Sections 5.7.1/2/3/4 and 8.2.1.1/2/3/4 give instances of mentors, class teachers and curriculum leaders who were particularly helpful and unhelpful to trainees.

Where formal obligations to trainees were less rather than more explicit, and contact less rather than more frequent, individual staff members' willingness to be proactive with their support was particularly important. Trainees' experience of support from curriculum co-ordinators confirms this point. For example, in his first placement, Trainee 3 found that

> *The only person at School A I could ask for advice was the maths co-ordinator. She was very helpful. I actually wished at times that she was my class teacher* (Trainee 3).

Then in his final placement his experience of another co-ordinator was that

if you wanted wheels or timber it was like getting blood out of a stone . You just had to crawl to her to get stuff (Trainee 3).

The contrasting experiences of Trainees 14 and 1 demonstrate that the extent of the support and interest of head teachers too was as much dependent on individuals' qualities (which influenced their priorities), as on their obligations toward trainees. Trainee 14 received unsolicited practical help:

The head at my other school head was a delightful man. He said to me, 'Look, you're going now. I'll give you this planning grid. It'll be handy if you're going to be teaching the little ones next time' (Trainee 14).

But when Trainee 1 had a particularly stressful class, she was supported by many staff, but not her head teacher:

The only one that didn't was the head. But she had very little to do with us anyway. She doesn't go into classrooms so she doesn't really know. (Trainee 1)

This quotation suggests that the more peripheral individuals' formal obligations to trainees, the greater was the significance of their personal and professional qualities in determining the support they gave them. The importance of staffs' individual personal and professional qualities comes to the fore when I consider the influence on trainees' learning of staff who have no formal responsibility for them.

8.2.2 Indirect learning relationships with staff

Lave and Wenger's concepts of *'legitimate peripheral participation'* and *'communities of practice'* (op. cit.) suggest workplace relationships in which novices learn through engagement with the ways of working and workplace living of the staffs they join. In other words they suggest that novices may learn from staff who have no direct responsibility for their development as learners, as well as from those who do.

There appear to be three main sets of circumstances in which trainees learnt from such staff. The first was when trainees participated in formal and informal group settings, where the behaviours of individual staff reflected ways of thinking and acting which were characteristic of the staff as whole, professionally and interpersonally. In other words, individual staff, as group members in group settings, acted in ways that were consistent with dominant staff professional and interpersonal cultures. In so doing they became agents

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(*'culture bearers'* in the terms used by Nias et al. 1989) through whom ways of working, and value systems implicit in them, were transmitted to trainees. Cultural transmission was achieved when trainees observed, accepted, and adopted the ways of acting which were characteristic of a particular staff group (see Chapter 10).

Second, learning, in the form of cultural transmission, could be promoted through interaction between trainees and single staff members, where the staff member's behaviour exemplified that of the school's staff in general.

Third, trainees sometimes learnt by observing and interacting with individual teachers whose influence was a function of their own professional and personal qualities, rather than a reflection of their staff group's professional and interpersonal cultures.

8.2.2.1 Learning from the staff group

In placements where there were supportive staff cultures or sub-cultures, staffs' impacts on trainees' learning were likely to be particularly strong. Such placements offered trainees a network of empathetic staff who made them feel at ease, were open about their own professional practices and willing to talk about trainees' problems.

> *It's just the way they talked to you that was very helpful. If I had needed anything, then they would have been there. Whenever they saw you they were just friendly; 'How's it going?' It's just a general attitude* (Trainee 12).

These networks were particularly valued if trainees encountered adverse circumstances, because they could be crucial in sustaining the trainee's willingness to persevere:

> *Just general chat in the staffroom. I could go and I could say 'so and so's giving me a real problem and he's done this today.' And other teachers, not just the class teacher and mentor, would say 'Oh I know' and go through how they coped with it, which gave me support* (Trainee 1).

In Trainee 11's analysis of the ways he learnt during one school placement, he emphasised the value of learning that emerges from access to a community of practice:

> *You are in there with people who have been in the profession for twenty, thirty years, one year, who each have something to contribute and that is the way you learn. ..... In that respect you pick up from everybody, the whole environment* (Trainee 11).

Trainees' very presence at formal and informal occasions in places where staff groups interact with one another made school staffs influential sources of learning:

In assembly, in the staffroom, year group meetings....... I've been into a couple of Year 6 meetings during the serial (experience)... they never stopped talking (Trainee 9).

Sometimes, participation in staff formal meetings was a planned part of trainees' learning which extended their learning opportunities in range and frequency:

You become very much part of the staff and like it or not you have to sit in on every meeting (Trainee 11).

Trainees' capacities to learn by analysing situations for themselves could also enable them to learn from and in spite of staffs who were not supportive. Two trainees' perceptions of the workings of the same school staff indicate how a staff, going about their everyday business, inadvertently could shape trainees' insights into the effects of doing the job on teachers' attitudes to it.

There was nobody in the staffroom for lunchtime...... They like to tiddle away and come back in and have their lunch late and leave late. So they seem to leave everything to the last moment whatever they do (Trainee 11).

They'd been there so long and they'd been teaching so long they didn't want to talk about it. Not that it doesn't interest them, but the novelty's worn off. Breaktime is switch-off time (Trainee 12).

These data appear to link <u>who</u> trainees learnt from with <u>how</u> and <u>what</u> they learnt about staff habits and attitudes, the impact of staff groups on their members and the processes through which group attitudes are formed and transmitted.

In some schools, trainees were exposed to the influence of particular sub-groups created by schools' organisational frameworks. In larger schools particularly, parallel classes within a pupil age group led to year group meetings, where staff discussed and planned their year's curriculum. Such sub-groups, often close-knit and habitually interdependent, could become an important source of support and learning for trainees who joined them:

They certainly did all their planning together and had meetings on a regular basis. They were all very supportive and very helpful to me (Trainee 9).

There was this feeling of being quite well-knit with that Year Four team and discussing lots of ideas with them (Trainee 10).

Further, that very interdependence was a means of learning about the affective rewards of membership of a small staff sub-group by experiencing it directly:

> *The only ones I had anything to do with were in my year group. They were incredibly supportive and helpful. That particular year group was renowned for its closeness and they did work particularly well together* (Trainee 4).

Trainee 4's description appears to reflect many of the characteristics of schools containing what Hargreaves (1992,1994) has called 'balkanised' sub-cultures (Section 10.5.3), in that their internal cohesiveness is a threat to the cohesiveness of a whole staff. Yet from the perspective of a trainee who was part of the sub-culture, such sub-groups could be important sources of affective support and professional learning.

Even in smaller primary schools trainees gained particular support from small interdependent sub-groups (such as the teachers of early years pupils), particularly where school buildings encouraged interaction:

> *My focus was very down this end with the class teacher and the other Early Years teacher. She was very good. You tend to get stuck there. I hardly went to the other classes* (Trainee 14).

In schools with supportive staff cultures or sub-cultures, staffs who were collectively helpful and supportive in group and sub-group contexts also expressed those qualities through members' individual encounters with trainees. Trainees' accounts of such placements indicate that, within them, many teachers supported trainees' learning within their individual relationships:

> *I can't think of one member of staff that didn't give me some help at some point. They were all really helpful* (Trainee 5).

> *Quite a few of the teachers were very willing to give you pieces of advice* (Trainee 13).

Often, help emerged through casual, unplanned encounters:

> *Even putting displays up- meeting people around the place that are doing it* (Trainee 5).

> *They'd give you a little piece of advice about a lesson that you'd been talking about. I just liked listening to them, because the teachers there had had quite a lot of experience* (Trainee 13).

8.2.2.2 Learning from individuals.

Trainees were also supported by and learnt from individual staff members whose helpfulness was characteristic of themselves as individuals, rather than a symptom of a dominant staff culture. Unplanned encounters with such individual teachers in shared spaces such as the staffroom could provoke discussions that provided influential professional advice:

> *June taught me to write properly. She was one of the people who would go in the staffroom. She was always so approachable* (Trainee 7).

> *There were a couple of other teachers who were in the staffroom at lunchtime who used to talk about the children in their classes, different things they had done and things that had gone well and things that hadn't. If I had any problems they would tell me who would be the best person to talk to* (Trainee 8).

Sometimes a teacher's willingness to support trainees' learning was prompted by current shared agendas or past shared experiences. These could stimulate empathetic ties and so encourage the process of giving and seeking support: for example, being the natural partner in the parallel class within the same year group,

> *The other Year Three teacher - I'm not very good on technology and she's really good at it - she was a big help......She'd tell me what she thought* (Trainee 8),

having recent memories of being a trainee,

> *The science lady within Year Six was very helpful. I found her incredibly supportive. I think it's because she's a relatively new teacher herself. She had a lot of good advice. She could relate to the way I was feeling* (Trainee 4),

or having particular insight into the difficulties a trainee was meeting:

> *I was given some assistance there from the reception teacher, who, whilst not wanting to be overtly critical of the methods used in the classroom above her, was aware of what the children were doing...... having just had them a year before* (Trainee 11).

The empathy between trainees, as visitors, and relatively peripheral staff members, may explain why staff other than established class teachers were often important sources of professional help:

> *The 'Section Eleven' teacher was a good balance in that respect, because she could say 'Why don't you try this? But I wouldn't recommend we did that'* (Trainee 10).

A lot of it was from the supply teacher, or from the probationer (Trainee 12).

The nursery nurse in that class was helpful. You could go to her and say "I'm thinking of doing this. What do you think? (Trainee 13).

Nor were teaching staff the only source of affective support. When the need arose, trainees turned to whoever was prepared to offer sympathetic support:

The secretary was really friendly. The photocopying lady was brilliant. I spent ages chatting to her. I spent a long time talking to the caretaker. They were the people I went to talk to about everything (Trainee 7).

8.3 Summary and discussion.

In this chapter I have suggested that, notwithstanding self-reliance as a means by which trainees learnt, the affective support and professional advice of a range of staff extensively influenced these trainees' professional development. The former sustained their self-esteem and confidence in the face of difficulties, which enabled them to respond positively to the latter. The most important sources of both professional and affective support were those staff members who had some formal responsibility for contributing to trainee learning. When mentors organised programmes to enable trainees to observe teachers in other classrooms, these teachers also contributed to trainees' learning by providing models of teaching approaches .

However, teachers and other school staff also made important contributions to trainee learning in unplanned ways. Such contributions had the greatest impact when trainees' placements were with school staffs whose habitual behaviour towards one another predisposed them to support trainees. Then, the supportive qualities of unplanned interactions augmented structured sources of support. In addition, sometimes particular individuals were supportive in placements where the staff in general was not pre-disposed to be so.

It is tempting to comment on the relative importance of different sources of support for trainees' learning - in particular that of mentors compared with host class teachers. But the data appear to indicate more subtle processes at work. They suggest that different sources of support contributed interdependently and so gave an additional dimension, which is ignored by judgements of their relative contributions. This analysis reflects some of the structural characteristics identified by Nias (1987b), in a case study of the professional relationship between a primary school head and her deputy. She uses the

metaphor of 'finger and thumb' to characterise the expressive and instrumental roles within their relationship:

> 'Like finger and thumb they were similar but different, capable of independent operation but adapted to co-ordination, functional when alone but additionally powerful when acting together' (p. 51).

She further suggests that they had evolved procedures that also had the qualities of redundancy (Landau 1969) and slack (Cyert and March 1963). That is to say they

> enabled every vital function to be carried out by more than one component, creating in its members (and its users) confidence in its security and strength,

with

> spare resources which can be used to cushion an organisation against uncertainty (ibid.).

In short, within an interdependent relationship, their skills and the system they had evolved were overlapping rather than complementary.

Nias' analysis may have some parallels in the planned structures of formal support for trainee learning in host schools. Like finger and thumb, their joint efforts were more effective when the two worked in co-ordination. Further, where procedures worked well, the contributions of mentors and host class teachers were overlapping. Although mentors organised overall programmes and had formal responsibility for trainees, both they and host class teachers observed, advised, supported and assessed them (although class teachers' assessments tended also to be formative). Mentors in each school negotiated with host class teachers the balance within responsibilities. But mentor and class teacher could have untapped resources, both instrumental and expressive, available to support trainees' learning at times of particular need. In their systems too there was overlap, redundancy and slack. The robustness of arrangements for a separate mentor and class teacher could compensate for the inadequacies of either partner. For example, although Trainee 7 believed her class teacher 'thought I'm the pigheaded person I am and she'd better just leave me alone', she was able to gain the reassurance she felt she needed from her mentor:

> When things were going wrong she'd say 'It's not going wrong because your planning is bad, it's because you've got difficult people who are having a bad day......the mentor really appreciated what I was trying to do.

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When trainees were placed in their mentor's classroom, overlap could be achieved by arrangements that provided a second perspective from another teacher (as explained in 8.2.1).

Further, in schools where supportiveness was characteristic of everyday interaction, there appear to have been cumulative benefits for trainees. Systems were strengthened because their planned robustness was vitalised by the inherent supportiveness of responsible staff, who, as culture bearers, embodied the characteristics of the dominant staff culture. Informal and unplanned support was also available from other staff whom trainees met and who, within informal conversations, shared small but cumulative insights into learning and teaching processes. In short, professional and affective support became multi-layered. An incident in Trainee 9's learning development illustrates such processes at work. A special needs co-ordinator provided specialised help at a time when other sources of support were unavailable:

> (A pupil) *started running round the classroom, which would have been funny if I hadn't been trying to keep control of the class. I walked into the staffroom at break. 'I'm going to kill him!' My class teacher wasn't there. The special needs teacher was there. She said 'Try , and if he gives any more trouble just send him down to the special needs room.' So I tried, and he carried on creating chaos - and I was losing control of the class. So I sent him down - which was great, because I knew there was that safety point* (Trainee 9).

Put another way, the effects of the combined contributions of mentors, host class teachers and other staff members were greater than the sum of their parts.

In the search for clarity, I have so far developed an analysis that, with the exception of Section 5.6, has temporarily suspended the common-sense assumption that trainees differ from one another in their capacities to benefit from similar learning opportunities. In the next chapter I explore the different starting points from which trainees approached those available in their placements.

Chapter Nine:
Influences On Trainees' Capacities To Learn In Placements

9.1 Introduction

At several points in the analysis so far developed, I have suggested that trainees were differently equipped to respond to learning opportunities in their placements. I acknowledge that differences between school micro-contexts (for example different encounters with different pupils in different classrooms) could give different trainees different experiences in the same school. But I have suggested that, even where there were broad similarities in the experiences of several trainees (for example access to the same staffroom) it was likely that different trainees would respond to and learn from them in different ways and to different extents. In this chapter I analyse the nature of the influences which shaped trainees' capacities to respond to, cope with and learn from events and situations in their schools.

Here, interview data are supplemented by personal information about age, family and past work experience, provided by trainees during the first week of their course. I started from the common-sense hypothesis that previous experiences might shape trainees' responses to their placements, although I did not yet know how. I have used the information to provide broad indications of patterns across the group of trainees.

Each trainee brought with them a set of inescapable 'givens' that could determine how they made sense of, responded to and learnt from events within their placement schools. The data indicate what these givens were and suggest that some trainees were explicitly aware of how their responses were shaped. First I examine trainees as people, in terms of their gender, age, personalities and value systems. Then I consider their previous life experiences, before discussing how networks of relationships unconnected with placements influenced trainees' work there.

9.2 Trainees as people

The age, gender, personalities and value systems of trainees could influence how they were pre-disposed to behave in their placements, how staff responded to them and how trainees responded to events there.

9.2.1 Age and its implications

Nine of the fifteen trainees were aged over twenty-five. Of these nine, five were over thirty (see Appendix A3). There is only limited evidence that age was, in itself, an influence on how trainees responded to their experiences in school. Two of the older trainees referred to the maturity gained through age as an explanation for their capacities to deal with problems in placements. Trainee 12 cited *'being older'* as the reason why she was able to successfully ignore school A's written rules about times when trainees might use its staffroom - because *'I didn't find it important.'* Trainee 6 believed that maturity obliged her to be self-reliant in the face of relationship difficulties with her class teacher:

I thought, 'I'm the oldest. I've got to take care of myself' (Trainee 6).

Of greater importance than age itself was its corollary that the five older trainees had their own children and families. *'My own experience with my children'* (Trainee 6), shaped the teaching priorities of three of this group, through *'having seen the progress of my own daughter'* (Trainee 15) and *'what I would want for my own children'* (Trainee 12). However, concern for family could also be a source of difficulty. Trainee 15 described the dilemmas she faced when, unlike younger trainees, the guilt she felt at not spending time with her daughter nevertheless invaded her capacity to learn:

If you are a 23-year-old and you don't have anything else you can put everything into it. ....Partly it's physical, partly the stress and the guilt and everything else that you get, simply just to get here, can wear you down. There are some days when you get home and you think, 'I want to spend time with her ' (Trainee 15).

She suggested that her experience was shared with other trainees who were parents:

There are two distinct camps within our group. It's people like me with the kiddies and everything else, and the people who haven't. It is definitely harder, and that inhibits the learning (Trainee 15).

Trainee 14 confirmed that *'it's extra hard if you have got extra commitments.'* For a father too, being a parent was an additional time pressure :

I was doing an awful lot of work at the times when I don't think I am at my best - like 8.30 or 9 o'clock when my kids have gone to bed (Trainee 10).

9.2.2 Gender

Primary school placements gave the three male trainees experiences of joining a small male minority within predominantly female teaching staffs. At different times two male trainees had been placed with the same all-female teaching staff, where they had both met similar affective difficulties. The initial tentativeness of being a stranger who *'felt as a male in a predominantly female profession* 'was confirmed by practical arrangements which ensured that *'straightaway I was put in my place* ':

> *It's actually the handicapped toilet is the male toilet ....The first day I walked into the staffroom I saw everybody walk into this room, and I thought, 'Oh that's the toilet'. So I walked over there; and I didn't even have my hand on the handle, and I was politely told that was the female only toilet , and yours is down there sonny* (Trainee 3).

Staffroom talk tended to exacerbate the feeling of being an outsider :

> *The conversation is totally geared towards female things like what kind of tights they bought yesterday; the decoration they are going to do in the house. There's no other male support for you* (Trainee 3).

Male trainees could feel intimidated and become isolated by an absence of shared personal agendas:

> *The staffroom was quite an intimidating place. I was always on the periphery of it. I never got involved. I had very little in common with any of the people there, other than perhaps the things we'd watch on television. I often found myself just sitting there for a long period of time just listening to them* (Trainee 11).

Talk was less likely to become a social lubricant which might facilitate a trainee's welcome with a female staff, or encourage feelings of being comfortable personally and professionally. A female trainee confirmed that this staffroom was indeed like *'a mothers' meeting'* (Trainee 12). But for her, *'motherliness'* had positive gender connotations with which she empathised:

> *That's what it's like as a staff, motherly. I think that's what I'm like as well. I'm quite maternal* (Trainee 12).

Maleness could influence staffs' expectations of male trainees, such as stereotypic assumptions about their skills:

> *I was very much asked to do a lot of technology stuff. I was expected to know about computers. I was expected to know how to use a saw. I do thankfully, but if I didn't,*

that would be a bit of a let down for them. Somebody's car broke down one day and they said 'Oh, would you have a look at this?' Straightaway it was to me. I thought, 'Yes I'll have a look, but don't expect miracles.' I was there for a purpose, and it was mechanical, dirty jobs kind of thing (Trainee 3).

Gender differences might also have implications for relationships with host class teachers and for the quality of support received from them:

The class teacher again was a huge influence. I don't think she took to me at all. I think she wanted a female - that's the impression I got. This male-female thing raises its head again (Trainee 3).

The class teacher was older than my mother... she gave a cursory glance at what was going on. If her class was controlled that was satisfactory for her (Trainee 11).

However, maleness did not inevitably carry negative connotations. Trainee 11's first placement had also been with an all-female teaching staff. There too he had felt that, in some respects, being a male hindered rather than helped integration with staff, because of

their staffroom talk, which is quite fruity sometimes and quite personal and so a little bit awkward (Trainee 11).

But this staff responded positively to his presence. A female trainee, who was also in the school, suggested that the staff *'mothered him. He used to get away with murder'* (Trainee 12). Trainee 11 confirmed that he had extensive personal support in a placement that Trainee 12 had found difficult:

I couldn't have been with a nicer staff. They were all helpful to me, they gave me lifts to and from school on occasions, they gave me articles, collected tapes from the library for me, they've phoned me at home and made me dinner in their own house (Trainee 11).

Trainee 3's experiences in his final placement confirmed that some staffs responded favourably to male trainees. Although there were three male teachers on this large school staff, his female year group colleagues valued his contributions as a man. When he applied for a job vacancy in the school, they supported him strongly:

Three or four of the women in the year group that I would have been in, had I got the job, really wanted me in the year group..........They actually said to me that they need a young man in the school because there was too much bitchiness going on (Trainee 3).

A female trainee with the same staff confirmed that Trainee 3 was not self-deluding:

Trainee 3 said 'they're wonderful.' They would be wonderful to him, he's a man. All those women! (Trainee 6).

There are limited data to illuminate the female perspective on gender as a placement concern, beyond those concerning female trainees' obligations to their families (Section 9.2.1). As explanation, I offer the tentative hypothesis that, for female trainees who join predominantly female staffs, gender may be a taken-for granted influence not worthy of comment, except when the unexpected presence of a male draws attention to the features of a female-oriented micro-culture. Of course it may also be that a male researcher has greater difficulty accessing female gender perspectives.

9.2.3 Personality and its impact on behaviour

Several trainees identified ways in which their personalities influenced how they responded to their placement experiences. Trainee 8's tendency to quietness emerged as an asset in helping her understand the interpersonal complexities of new placements:

> *I know the way I do things because of the kind of person I am. Not be too outgoing to start with, and then as you get to know the different personalities within the staff, get to know what you think they consider is acceptable* (Trainee 8).

In contrast, Trainee 7 knew that, in new situations, she was initially slow to respond to expectations, but that eventually her energies were suddenly stimulated :

> *I'm like that at my new school. I hate it, I hate everybody there. I'm always like that wherever I go. I'm just impossible to begin with. I just can't get going. Then suddenly it happens to me........... I'm a bit of an all or nothing. I don't gradually build up to things. That's not school D, it's me* (Trainee 7).

For Trainees 12 and 15, their personalities emerged as influences on their strength of feelings about interadult professional relationships. Both found compromises difficult in the face of 'fitting in' expectations (discussed in Chapter 6):

> *It was all to do with being submissive, which doesn't come naturally to me. I prefer everyone equal* (Trainee 12).

> *It's priming down your character to fit the character that is needed,*
> *- a lot more formal than I am* (Trainee 15).

The influence of trainees' personalities on their responses to interpersonal situations emerged in their classroom behaviour too. Trainee 5's view was that, since the

nature of personality was largely fixed, effective classroom performance depended more on applying the qualities a trainee already had than on adopting counterfeit behaviours:

> *It's no good pretending to be someone else in the classroom - because it's then acting all day long. So you've got to teach as you are as a person* (Trainee 5).

Other trainees' analyses of their approaches confirm their preference for presenting a classroom self consistent with their personalities:

> *I just like a quiet working atmosphere.....I'm being me - that's the way I am in my personal life I hardly ever shout anyway* (Trainee 3).

> *I work on gentle steel, which works in the long run but not in the short run. Now I don't think I'll ever change from that* (Trainee 15).

Being oneself could create difficulties, particularly in relationships with adults. Trainee 12 had such difficulties, which damaged the support she received in one school:

> *I consider myself a middle class person, but not in that way. I think I'm a lot more down to earth. I know I'm direct. ....According to them it's the way I am that's stopped them taking me under their wing* (Trainee 12).

The failure of the same school staff to treat Trainee 15 in ways she thought reasonable, was a shock to her too:

> *Being spoken to (one day), and knowing that the very next day I would not be. ....that was exactly what happened. It just got me speechless* (Trainee 15).

Trainee 15's difficulties in coping with staff expectations, which constrained the ways she felt able to behave, are an extreme version of the experience of several other trainees. She provides insights into the difficulties sometimes faced by trainees with strongly defined personalities. The mismatch between her personality and her perceptions of the behaviour expected of her had a profound effect. She came to question her own sense of self:

> *I'm not really happy with myself. I don't like myself at the end of this year, whereas at the beginning of this year, which is the first time for ever I think I actually liked myself* (Trainee 15).

She began to doubt her suitability for the job, because she felt shaped by it in ways she disliked:

I suppose I have a great - vision - if you want, and I think I'd be so bitterly disappointed that I'd be squashed, because I can't really see how it would work........ I think on the way you start getting harder, and more cynical and getting that edge (ibid.).

The implications of her difficulties will be discussed more extensively in Section 11.2.4.

9.2.4 Trainees' value systems.

In Section 1.5 I suggested that the values, beliefs and attitudes which constituted an individual's value system might themselves be linked to aspects of personality and might emerge as expressions of it. Past experiences too may have had a mediating influence on the value systems implicit in trainees' behaviour (as I explore in Section 9.3).

When they were interviewed, trainees did not necessarily use the terminology of values, beliefs or attitudes to articulate their thinking about, or responses to, experiences in schools. Whilst it is not clear that all trainees were strongly influenced by consistent value systems, data suggest that the actions of some were. These informed their own professional and interpersonal actions, as well as their thinking about those of placement staff. Some trainees demonstrated clearly defined values, articulated in their beliefs about and expressed through their attitudes to placements and to the job.

I do not intend to suggest that trainees were always or necessarily aware of relationships between value systems and actions. But several trainees made explicit links between their professional actions and aspects of their personal value systems, when discussing why they preferred to act in particular ways. For example:

I couldn't ever adopt a style that possibly worked for somebody, but I disagreed with it (Trainee 15).

You have your own feeling about what you want these children to learn and how you'd want them to be in life. All I can say is I have certain standards with my own children. Similarly one takes that through into school teaching (Trainee 14).

I explore the links between professional actions and value systems by analysing the comments of two trainees, whose value systems had a strong influence on their thinking about placements. In different ways, each makes links between actions and value-oriented motivations to act.

Trainee 7 emphasised caring about people, which emerged through her beliefs about pupils' learning processes and the kinds of actions which were consistent with such beliefs.

Her choice of affective language appears to confirm the value position that underpinned her actions (as well as being a reminder of the complex relationships between personality and value systems, suggested in Section 1.5):

> *I'm a very sort of people person. It's just **caring** about the people that influences the way I do things.......... I was **desperate** for them to enjoy what they were doing.........*
> *I used to **anguish** long and hard about how to do things.*

She makes a further link to attitudes, through her strong sense of responsibility:

> *If it happened to be boring, then it's going to put them off for ever because of me. What a responsibility! I felt very responsible to keep their minds open, to keep them interested in everything they did.*

She stresses the pervasive influence of her value system on her thinking about professional actions:

> *It's a ridiculously idealistic approach, but if I don't start out being an idealist, what am I going to be like in 30 years?* (Trainee 7).

The relationship between beliefs, attitudes and actions emerges through Trainee 2's concern with pupils' needs to feel secure in their relationships with teachers. She believed that secure and mutually respecting interpersonal relationships should be the foundation of her classroom actions.

> *They've got to feel secure with you as a person. I think that comes from simple things, like you saying please and thank you and them knowing that you respect them, and respecting their space as well* (Trainee 2).

The link with attitudes is then made through her emphasis on enjoyment. By inference, respect for pupils implies their right to enjoy classroom processes:

> *and the fun aspect, they've got to enjoy it with you or otherwise they won't get anywhere* (ibid.).

Although the evidence that trainees brought strong value systems to their placements comes from a minority, there may be a tendency to under-estimate the influence of values on trainee's perspectives on the nature of 'good' professional practice. Trainees who alluded to aspects of value systems did so as part of discussions about their placement learning, rather than about their values. Frequently they chose to emphasise values, because they had been placed in situations where values were challenged. It was challenge itself that

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appeared to stimulate articulated value positions. In this respect, challenges to value positions seemed to help some trainees clarify the moral bases of their professional actions. But that is not to say that the actions of trainees in placements which were congenial to their values were uninfluenced by values considerations. Rather, it may be that they were less likely to need to articulate the moral justifications for their professional actions, since these remained unchallenged. The responses of Trainee 7 in two different placements lend some credence to this hypothesis. In her first placement, she had been in sympathy with the classroom practices of her host class teacher. It was only when she changed placements that she chose to articulate her values, in response to the classroom practices of her teacher that the trainee perceived were alien to her:

> *When I was at school D I took a lot of advice from the class teacher and she spent a lot of time helping me. But that was because we worked in a very similar way. Perhaps my class teacher here felt unable to offer me the sort of advice I needed for what I was trying to do, because it was poles apart* (Trainee 7).

In other words, a need for beliefs and attitudes to become explicit was sometimes prompted by situations that questioned hitherto take-for-granted assumptions about 'right' ways to act. They were then articulated as justifications for choosing particular forms of professional action - particularly when trainees wanted to act in ways that undermined the values implicit in classroom practices they saw:

> *Her style is so regimented and so different from the ways I would want things to be, I had this feeling there was always going to be a clash of cultures* (Trainee 10).

> (Of classroom displays) *An awful lot was done by the teacher and not the child. ....But my view of displays is that you're wanting to show the children what you're working at and what they are doing* (Trainee 13).

The above instances offer further support for the contention that trainees could and did learn constructively from placements where they observed negative teaching models (Section 5.1).

Trainees' value systems appear most influential in their concern for and sensitivity to people, both adults and pupils.

Where pupils were concerned, trainees' expressed their concern for people in their motivation and commitment to teach them. Trainee 4's emphasis on wanting *'to create a relationship with a class of children'*, was echoed in Trainee 7's concern for pupils' individuality, (reflected in how she responded to them):

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I'm genuinely interested in what they think and where they're coming from, because unless you know that how can you possibly get through to them? (Trainee 7).

For Trainee 15 however, a similar value position emerged as an emphasis on the needs of particular pupil sub-groups:

I think my bent is towards the disturbed kiddies. And more towards individuals than the actual class. .....because that's basically my character (Trainee 15).

Of particular importance for trainees' development as teachers were their person-oriented beliefs about the conditions that best supported pupils' learning. For example, trainees emphasised self-reliance,

I wanted them to be responsible for it (classroom order)*rather than me. They were their rules* (Trainee 7),

promoting ways of organising which could enhance pupils' capacity to learn,

The way our classroom was organised was very traditional and very mechanical. I question the value of that mechanical atmosphere and tried to counter it in my own planning (Trainee 11),

and concern to promote pupil confidence, and so facilitate learning,

After the school I have been in before I have an even stronger belief that they need confidence, because without confidence you're lost. If you don't believe in yourself, nobody's going to believe in you (Trainee 15).

Many trainees' person-oriented values also emerged in their readiness to take responsibility for developing and sustaining their relationships with school staff. Of course, as Trainee 10 suggested, self-interest encouraged positive relationships with school staff:

It does help if you show you try to act on (advice), *because you do then move on to something else to learn the next time, and that helps the relationship between you and the mentor - she feels she's not just talking to thin air* (Trainee 10).

Equally, trainees' subordinate status in such relationships meant that they needed both sensitivity and persistence in seeking positive outcomes. Frequently their efforts were crucial in establishing productive relationships with whole staffs :

You just have to try and get on with all of them. You just have to get in there and find someone you like, make a real effort (Trainee 5).

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I could have sat in a corner and just listened, but you don't, you get in there and you try and get a word in edgeways, that sort of thing (Trainee 3).

Sometimes trainees' efforts could transform initially flawed relationships:

Once I had found out (the class teacher) *was threatened by me I went out of my way to show that I wasn't quite as threatening as she thought. And we had quite a good relationship by the end* (Trainee 4).

I would comment on some of the children and some of their work and their attitudes - which previously I had just jotted down . And it seemed to escalate from there. By the beginning of the block we just got on like a house on fire (Trainee 6).

So far in this chapter, I have focused on the ways in which trainees' responses to people and events in their placements manifested aspects of the self (including those derived from gender and age). In the next section I examine the ways in which trainees previous experiences had specifically influenced their responses to their placements.

9.3 The impact of trainees' previous experiences.

9.3.1 Previous teaching-oriented experiences

Most trainees had much to learn about the content of the primary school curriculum, as well as about how to teach it. Although the DfEE required that at least half the content of PGCE trainees' first degrees was relevant to National Curriculum primary school subjects, many trainees had covered only one curriculum subject. Even then the specific subject content of their degrees was not always applicable to primary school curricula. A few trainees had degrees whose content was immediately relevant to primary schools. A historian used her knowledge of historical processes to enliven pupils' experience:

They had a worksheet on 'how we know'. It was basically reading a story and then the children did bits and pieces. So that would have taken a lesson. But to me as a Historian, if somebody gave that to me I felt I wouldn't learn anything from it. It was just a lot of words. ......So I did a blanket dig. And they remembered it because it was all visual (Trainee 6).

A musician, whose skills were in short supply, rapidly became the subject expert for her year group:

I helped (the year leader) *with his music lessons, because he did the music before......... So I wrote the music plans for the term, which everybody used* (Trainee 4).

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Further, her skills enhanced the esteem in which this colleague group held her:

In a way it made me more acceptable, more useful, more highly thought of in a way. Because I did have something to offer (ibid.)

But trainees' previous experiences of schools and of learners in other broadly educational contexts tended to be more important than their degree content as preparation for placements. Of course, during trainees' PGCE year, the university-based sessions within their course were planned to have a growing influence on work in school - but this aspect of their learning is outside the scope of this study.

None of this trainee group entered their placement schools ignorant of the implications of doing the job. All had spent two weeks in a preliminary placement before joining the course and in practice had further direct experience observing and helping in schools. In addition, many had worked with playgroups or playschemes (Trainees 7,8 10,11,13) or Sunday school (Trainee 10). Two other trainees had had full-time caring roles, one with Barnardo's children (Trainee 8), and another with refugees (Trainee 4). Four trainees had worked as paid instructors or lecturers with adults (Trainees 3, 5, 10, and 14). I have already noted that five trainees were influenced by the experiences of caring for their own children.

Of course, all past experiences did not have an equal or similar influence. The data suggest that the extent and nature of past experiences were of particular importance in promoting some trainees' readiness to learn, but hindered that of others. Trainee 13's and Trainee 3's contrasting accounts indicate the range of trainees' school-related experience. The former was steeped in experiences of child learning:

I have done quite a few playschemes over summer holidays, and I have had playschool experience through my family and connections there, doing days here and there. I've also another friend who is a reception teacher who kindly allows me to go into her classroom whenever I need to go in for anything. I spent three weeks one summer in there with her........ I've been gathering experiences together right from senior school, and it's been constant. I'd say it was from when I was about 14 really (Trainee 13).

But Trainee 3's only experiences of teachers, in a different culture, tended to build expectations that did not necessarily transfer to English primary schools:

I spent some time in American schools. That was obviously totally different to what goes on in British schools. It was completely different as far as what the teachers

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expected from the children and the children expected from the teachers........ If they wanted to go to the toilet they had to take this block or piece of paper, or whatever, then they weren't supposed to be there without it, and they would have had to go to detention........ The teacher turned up in dungarees and tennis shoes, really dressed ad hoc compared to the way I would dress......... (Trainee 3).

A few trainees were consciously influenced by their own school life. Trainee 4 traced the roots of her attitudes to teaching to contrasting experiences of her own teachers :

Different teachers and their attitudes to me and my learning influenced me. For example I had a really encouraging English teacher and I liked the subject and I got on well with it. But then biology - I was looking back at my old reports - in the first and second year I had a really encouraging teacher and I was doing really well. And the by the fourth year my teacher changed. He told me right through my last two years that I was going to fail Biology - and I believed him , and I did fail. ..... you have a lasting effect on children - and it's very important this whole idea of encouragement (Trainee 4).

Trainee 5's peripatetic school life prepared her for the challenges of 'fitting in':

I've been to a lot of schools myself, so I know how a lot of schools work. It doesn't worry me to walk into a classroom and start off. I did that so many times when I was a youngster (Trainee 5).

Many of those who had worked with children in some supervisory or teacher-like capacity were often shaped by those experiences - but also in different ways. Previous relationships with children often affected their hopes for and expectations of pupil-teacher relationships in their placements:

I think some people fear that if they're friendly with the children, then they're going to lose control of them. But I disagree. I did a lot of work with children in youth clubs and disadvantaged children on holiday. We didn't spend our time shouting at them. You could be friendly. They still respect you, they'll obey you (Trainee 7).

Sometimes, such past experiences had specific influences on how trainees approached teaching:

Teaching riding you've got to differentiate, you've got to have different types of lesson, think, 'Oh that won't work, I 'd better try that.' Because I've done that for so many years, you think, 'I wonder if that will work in the classroom?' and it does (Trainee 5).

But previous child-adult experiences could also give a partial or distorted preparation for classrooms. Ways of behaving sometimes had to be adjusted:

I've dealt with groups of children in other contexts, youth club, children's section of a church meeting .... if the child comes to a youth club the child expects a certain kind of relationship - that to some extent you're not so much loco parentis as a semi-loco uncle, or an older friend (Trainee 10).

Assumptions about the complexities of teaching had to be modified;

I used to watch the teacher very carefully. The way she put across the lesson. However, I used to think it was lot easier than it is, not realising the phenomenal amount of planning that went into these lessons for her to make it look as easy as it did (Trainee 14).

Models of pupil behaviour might have to be drastically revised:

I'd come from an area where you don't have an ethnic minority group at all, so I had no knowledge of it whatsoever. Having that class as well, I was a bit disoriented. ...... (my ideas) got slung out of the window (Trainee 1).

At the beginning of this section I discussed the relevance of trainees' degrees to the primary school curriculum. The relevance of Trainee 2's degree for teaching was in work placements, which had given her work-related skills:

In my placement year I worked in a company that had 3 divisions. So I knew about organisations and how people worked together (Trainee 2).

Her degree experience emphasises a feature of trainees' past lives that had considerable influence on their capacities to learn from placements. Many had experienced work situations that, in some way, prepared them for those aspects of teachers' work where interaction and interdependence with colleagues were crucial.

9.3.2 Work-oriented experiences

Although this entire trainee group had spent time in primary schools before joining the course, I have no evidence that they had extensive access to the interadult working life of teachers there. Experience suggests that voluntary helpers are seldom privy to curriculum and staff meetings and at best have fleeting glimpses of informal staffroom life, even if they are allowed into staffrooms. But access to experiences of interadult work groups of other kinds could be valuable preparation for working within a school staff.

Nine of this group of fifteen trainees had spent a year or more in paid employment unconnected with teaching. The majority worked in contexts where interaction with people

was a crucial part of doing their job well. They had a strong sense that those experiences had been an invaluable foundation for working within a school staff.

Trainees identified two particular benefits from their previous work. First, interaction with many kinds of people helped them talk to and empathise with a wide range of viewpoints:

> *I used to work in a mental hospital as well as a cleaner as a trainee job. That really was a good eye-opener. It made you think and see things from different angles* (Trainee 15).

That skill could be important in relating to pupils and their parents,

> *You could talk about your washing machine or football - full stop, and that's what the people are gonna be like who you are gonna be teaching. And that's what the parents are gonna be like. And you've got to realise that and respect that that is their world - and their world is just as good as your world* (Trainee 7).

or in establishing relationships with new colleagues:

> *The kind of work I was doing involved mixing with a wide variety of people of all social classes at a very intimate level, because you work together very closely. It was a half-manual half-clerical job. You rely on other people for assistance and to watch your back. Also it prepares you to mix in any circle* (Trainee 11).

Second, several trainees' previous jobs had needed teamwork skills, which they predicted would be relevant to staff collaboration:

> *My previous work experience has an almost unbelievable beneficial effect on now....... because I was a manager, I was in charge of people....... Teams of adults are quite often worse than children. Working in a company where you have to get on with everyone helps in the staffroom especially. I natter away to anybody and I can fit in a room of people and be a presence, join in the conversation when it seems appropriate and be able to be pushy enough to join everybody rather than go sit on the periphery and look and feel left out* (Trainee 9).

Trainee 10 offered a perceptive analysis of the relevance of his work in industry for teaching. He emphasised the interpersonal skills he had developed there:

> *Things like interpersonal skills you learnt in industry. How to fit in with teams, how to be aware of the dynamics of teams, how to look for things like sub-cultures, and what they mean; and not to get personally aggrieved when somebody seems off-hand with you.*

He identified specific instances when he was aware that skills were transferred:

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I did find it was easy to establish a rapport with most of the staff there. Particularly the teachers of the year group I worked most closely with. And even one or two people that others said could be a bit difficult. You could understand what these people's particular difficulties or hot buttons might be and try and work around that (Trainee 10).

Trainee 11 had worked in a job that helped him sustain a realistic view of the rewards of teaching at times when problems arose:

I think that idealistic picture soon gets lost in the quagmire of day to day teaching. It's very hard to step back and think to yourself, hold on, when you're a bit depressed. But I don't think I have lost sight of that, because I can relate it to having cleaned out water tanks the size of this building manually with a Hoover, wearing a pair of shorts and a gas mask; and scrubbed rust off the side of a water tank for two days in the freezing cold winter when it's raining on top of me (Trainee 11).

9.4 The network of existing relationships.

Some trainees benefited from networks of existing relationships, which supported their work in placements, particularly when those relationships were linked to schools. In all, six trainees (2,5,7,11,12 and 13) emphasised the influence of family and/or friends whose professional insight into school processes informed their thinking and attitudes. For example, Trainee 5's family was steeped in teaching:

My mother's a teacher and she's had children in the house for remedial teaching, and I've helped with that. My brother's also a teacher, my sister-in-law is a teacher (Trainee 5).

Trainee 11's family teaching connections were important as a means of accessing a wider set of relationships with friends who were teachers:

A very close member of my family is a teacher at a very high level in exactly the same kind of school. She's deputy head in a primary school in inner London....... Through her I know a lot of members of that staff, and also my girlfriend is a teacher as well (Trainee 11).

Connections with teaching through friends and family were important because they contributed to trainees' insights into the job during their placements. For example, they influenced Trainee 11's thinking about models of effective teaching,

It's certainly having an influence on my model, and I'm questioning the value of that influence in my own personal development. I'm finding a bit of a dichotomy (Trainee 11),

as well as offering the practical advantages that they *'have helped me enormously in terms of resources.'* (ibid.) Family connections gave Trainees 2 and 5 insights into interadult dimensions of the job:

> *I get to know all the other side about issues between the head and the staff, and then we discuss it - the management of the school as well* (Trainee 2).

> *My mother's idea is never take sides at any point. So you just sit on the fence and get on with whoever you can* (Trainee 5).

But the value of friends and family who understood schools was particularly strong at times when trainees were themselves dealing with the complexities and stresses of classroom teaching. Then, they were used as professional reference groups, whose judgements were valued and who, though uninvolved, could offer trustworthy advice on trainees' professional actions, or express an objective view on those of host staffs:

> *I drew upon my mother on a number of occasions, simply because I wasn't getting help in class. I did go back to people I knew at home and said 'What can I do about this?'* (Trainee 11).

> *I had seen this other teacher who I knew quite well. She said 'You look worried to death, and I said "I am'. She was the science co-ordinator at* (another) *school, and she gave me ideas all over the place, and I felt so much better about the whole block, not just the science* (Trainee 2).

Trainee 2's account alludes to the affective support also offered by reference groups at times of difficulty. An external reference group was important when the host staff was a partial source of stress. It could validate trainees' perspectives in the face of contrary evidence:

> *I talk to my mother, usually every night when I'm upset, and she's been to school, and said she's worried about me because such and such has happened. She comes back and says 'So and so has said that they think this,' and it's given me a bit of help - knowing what professionals in the job think* (Trainee 2).

> *I'm lucky. I've got friends who teach, so if I've got a problem I ring them up. I ask for help for planning ..... .So if I think staff are picking on me or whatever, then I ask friends what they think* (Trainee 12).

9.5 Summary

I have reviewed the evidence about the personal characteristics, qualities and previous experiences that contributed to trainees' response to challenges and opportunities of their placements and influenced how staff and pupils there responded to them. I have suggested that the most important of these were age, gender, personality, value systems and previous experiences of contexts concerned with teaching, schooling and other work situations. Networks of relationships external to placements could be important for some trainees.

This range of influences could both help and hinder trainees' development. Older trainees might bring a more balanced perspective to their placements, but age could also carry family responsibilities. Gender could be an issue with male trainees, particularly when they were in exclusively female staff groups, but could be an asset or a barrier in different staff groups. Trainees who had well-defined personalities tended to be aware that these shaped their behaviour in recognisable ways - with both positive and negative consequences for different individuals.

Many trainees had had substantial experience of teaching contexts that had already begun to shape their assumptions about what ought to happen in classrooms. Mature trainees who had had substantial paid employment in other work contexts, often brought teamwork skills, which enabled them to respond sensitively and perceptively to the interadult dimensions of the teacher's job. Trainees who had well-established networks of relationships, especially those which included family and friends with insights into schools, started with clearly-defined sets of expectations of life and work there. When trainees began to develop their teaching roles, these networks became valuable reference groups that were sources of professional advice and affective support.

To some extent value systems may be seen as a bridge which links personality and experience. Value systems are rooted in both, though their sources can be difficult to trace. Further, because trainees' value systems often became apparent through their behaviour and their justifications for it, attempts to differentiate the influence of personality from that of experience tend to be fruitless. The point is that the fusion of the influences of personality and experience predisposed many trainees to behave in particular ways that carried value-laden meanings.

I have suggested that placement situations that challenged trainees' value systems often clarified them and acted as catalysts for their expression. Of course, trainees' subordinate status presented dilemmas in such circumstances, so that they might or might

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not choose to act in ways their value systems suggested. Here, external reference groups became crucial. First, they could sustain trainees whose actions expressed value systems counter to those they met in placements. Second, they could support those trainees who chose not to express contrary value systems, by helping them preserve intact their suppressed value systems and protect them from erosion by the values, beliefs, attitudes and practices of their placement.

This analysis is concerned with trainees' perspectives and so tends to portray reference groups as positive influences. However, by their nature, external reference groups tended to reinforce, rather than question, trainees' value systems and so tended to promote inertia rather than change. In practice, judgements about the constructiveness of reference groups' influences on the qualities of trainees as novice teachers depended on the nature of the value systems of trainees and their placements.

Even with access to external reference groups, trainees' decisions whether or not to express their value systems had their dangers. The implications of trainees' strategies for responding to perceived constraints on their freedom of action are explored in Chapter 11.

It is important to reiterate that this analysis has explored a matrix of influences that affected different trainees in different ways. The implication of the analysis is that all trainees arrived at their placements equipped in different ways to respond to and learn from experiences there. Some trainees already had a multiplicity of well-established insights into a teacher's job and the skills and qualities that equipped them for some aspects of it. Others were disadvantaged in ways that were sometimes beyond their control. In short, what trainees brought with them and what each placement offered interacted to shape learning outcomes. The purpose of the next chapter is to examine the nature of placements which were likely to help trainees make best use of the qualities, skills and insights they brought.

Chapter Ten:
Interaction, Cultures And Trainees' Learning

10.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore the features of school placements which were most likely to promote trainees' learning. I develop an analysis that suggests that, to understand the complexities and diversity of trainees' placement experiences, it is important to explore the connections between their learning, interaction and placement staff cultures.

The relationship between trainees' learning and their placements appears to be complex. Trainees were capable of learning in placements that they found uncongenial. It should be remembered that those trainees who had been left to fend for themselves felt that *'being thrown in at the deep end was one of the best things that could have happened'* (Trainee 2), or that *'It was all down to me, but in a way I learnt from that'* (Trainee 14). There were those placements, such as School D, where all trainees felt their learning had been influenced positively by 'a *really nice school*' (Trainee 7), '*a very happy one* ' (Trainee 13), where *'I learnt a lot* ' (Trainee 14). But in others, trainees' experiences were inconsistent. For example, at Schools A, B and F some trainees developed well, but others did not find conditions there conducive to their learning. For Trainee 13, School B was a place where *'I never felt that we were fully accepted.'* Yet Trainee 11 '*couldn't have been with a nicer staff*' at School B, though she '*never felt fully comfortable*' at School A. However, Trainee 12, who at School B ' *didn't feel encouraged at all by anybody the whole time'*, at School A felt that '*whenever they saw you they were just friendly'*. Trainee 3 moved from School A, where '*I felt we were on our own'*, to School F, where *'I could go to any number of people for advice.'* Yet Trainee 7 found School F a place where '*I felt a lot of people looked down on me'*.

To summarise, although some schools tended to provide consistently positive environments for learning, trainees who had a positive experience in one school did not necessarily have a similar experience elsewhere. Nor was a positive placement for one trainee inevitably so for others.

The evidence of Chapters 5 and 6 indicates that trainees learnt most effectively when staff actively promoted their learning. Learning was closely associated with the quality of interaction between trainees and host staff. In brief, learning was enhanced where staff ensured that trainees had access to peripheral participation in their community of practice - though learning about interadult dimensions of the job was often restricted,

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because both schools and the HE institution emphasised and planned for the classroom dimensions of the job rather than its interadult dimension. Mentors and host class teachers had their greatest impact on trainees' learning where they carefully planned trainees' professional experiences, responded to their expressed needs and gave systematic and constructive feedback, using learner models of feedback (Section 5.6.3) rather than deficit ones, which tended to inhibit learning (Section 5.6.4).

The impact of these influences on trainees' learning was closely associated with the extent, nature and quality of trainees' interaction - first with formally responsible school staff, second with whole staffs (or substantial sub-groups of them). Interaction with the latter could extend access to participation in the community of practice.

10.2 Structures that facilitated learning through interaction.

Some aspects of schools' organisational structures facilitated the development of trainees' learning. They enhanced opportunities for access to situations in which trainees might interact with, learn from and be supported by experienced professionals. These structures were of two kinds: those that were planned for trainees (such as the partnership framework and the ways it was implemented by each school) and those that, though they were not, nevertheless had an important impact on the quality of trainees' professional interactions.

10.2.1 Structures planned to support trainees

The broad structures for trainees' placements, set out in the course handbook, were further refined through mentor training courses for school staff. Both emphasised the pivotal contribution of mentors and host class teachers in maintaining a professional dialogue with trainees.

Of course, the effectiveness of arrangements depended on how each school implemented them. In most instances agreed arrangements were fulfilled and typically,

> they took the trouble to observe you at all levels regularly, from the head down - from both teacher and mentor (Trainee 11).

But a trainee in the same school, in a later phase, commented that though her mentor observed her,

> (the class teacher) wasn't there. I actually kept a record of when she was there....she helped to do the reading three times, and after that she was being whisked off by the head (Trainee 15).

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Her experience reinforces the point that the quality of trainees' learning experience depended on how carefully host schools applied partnership arrangements. The touchstone of effective mentor/host class teacher contributions was sustained interaction that offered professional scaffolding and affective support (see Chapter 5).

In Chapter 8 I noted the benefits trainees gained in those schools where there was redundancy and overlap within schools' support teams. The point was made also that trainees benefited when the nature of staff relationships ensured that trainees felt they were within a supportive interpersonal climate, and part of an extensive network of interaction (Section 10.5.3).

10.2.2 Unintended influences on trainee-staff interaction.

Trainees could and frequently did learn through features of schools that promoted regular interaction with staff, even though they were not planned with trainees in mind.

10.2.2.1 Physical contexts and interaction.

The layouts of schools promoted trainees' learning when they facilitated interaction between trainees and staff. They could encourage unplanned interaction and make planned interaction easier. School size and the location of trainees' classrooms within buildings particularly influenced learning.

Previous data refer to the importance of staffrooms as places where trainees learnt by listening to and sharing in *'just little conversations with her in the staffroom'* (Trainee 4), or *'just general chat in the staffroom'* (Trainee 1).

Staff size affected access to other staff. A small staff had the advantage that

> *it was easy to get to know everyone and know what they do and are good at* (Trainee 8),

whereas Trainee 8's experience of a large staff had been that, because

> *there's so many different members of staff, …. it's difficult to know who is responsible and who to turn to for advice.*

An advantage of working within a bigger school was *'the way you could mill around and talk to a lot of different people'* (Trainee 3). But access to a range of people in a large school could go hand in hand with being physically isolated. For example, Trainee 3's interactions with staff were restricted by his location:

> .... *my classroom was in a hut out on the field. You didn't get that meeting* (Trainee 3).

Of course, isolated classrooms were not only a feature of large schools. Contact with other staff could be difficult in any school with dispersed buildings. School D's five classrooms were housed in four separate buildings, which inhibited staff interaction:

> *You do find people tend to shut themselves away in other buildings a bit. Unless they make the effort to come down at lunchtime, there is that distancing bit* (Trainee 14).

The location of trainees' classrooms could facilitate access to affective support from fleeting interaction with teachers in adjacent teaching spaces:

> *There was the lady next door who I got on really well with .....But that was totally informal, totally social - we would chat in the morning for two or three minutes* (Trainee 15).

Location was even more important in sustaining planned learning interactions. The impact of mentors on trainees' learning was facilitated by informal contact. For mentors who were not trainees' host class teachers, physical proximity offered informal opportunities for talk, when

> *The mentor was next door and helped a lot. She would poke her head round the door* (Trainee 1).

In some instances, the tendency of large, dispersed buildings to isolate, worked to the advantage of trainees who were separated with, but not from, their staff year group:

> *the alternative staffroom, with all the year six tending to have their lunch together in one of the Year Six huts* (Trainee 10).

> *You are separated as a year group..... The way the building's set up I would always have to go into year six on the way up to the staffroom* (Trainee 1).

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In summary, school and staff size, physical structure and trainees' location within the buildings affected trainees' professional learning by facilitating or hampering their opportunities to talk to other staff, get to know them and gain day to day professional help and affective support.

10.2.2.2 School organisation and opportunities to participate

Trainees gained when schools' existing organisational frameworks supported their access to networks of interaction and so facilitated trainees' understanding of how schools functioned. For example, where a school's systems helped the flow of information between staff members, they were also important in helping trainees understand the workings of the school and in facilitating their sense of inclusion:

> *We had a day book with everything written in it and left open in the staffroom - any messages, anything about the children, about the staff, was left in there for everyone to see. We were encouraged to use it as well* (Trainee 5).

Staff year group structures in some larger primary schools could both facilitate and inhibit trainees' development. When trainees were included within sub-groups, access to and participation in staff year groups with shared pedagogic concerns could provide extended professional and affective support through their networks of relationships (see 8.2.2.1), Conversely, a tendency to compartmentalise could obscure trainees' sense of how a whole school functioned, where

> *there are little sections within the school that tend to work on their bit, and I don't see them all coming together* (Trainee 2).

Highly structured, pre-planned curricula could also exclude trainees from planning processes, whereas a more flexible approach to planning could extend trainees' participation in curriculum planning:

> *I was involved right at the start and my ideas were included in what we were doing, rather than like at School F, where someone else had done the scheme of work and it was up to me to adapt it* (Trainee 8).

Informal contacts were further encouraged when mentors and trainees were linked by the school's organisation - for example in age-phased school sections or year groups in large schools:

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(The mentor) *was right opposite me and she had the rest of Year Three, and I had Year Three as a whole at times for music, so I'd have her class. We just had constant contact* (Trainee 4).

Similarly, proximity could facilitate support from year group leaders. When Trainee 6 '*had trouble with an Art class*',

> *The head of year in the next room said 'You handled that really well, I would have done what you did'* (Trainee 6).

These two instances show that organisational arrangements could reinforce physical layouts to bring trainees into close and regular contact with the professional expertise and affective support of experienced teachers.

Access to year group meetings could mean that '*you get to know your Year Five team before you get to know anyone else..... my final report does say that I became part of the year team*' (Trainee 5). In schools where Key Stage Two pupils worked with several teachers, the complexity of liaising with a range of staff gave trainees access to a spread of professional relationships:

> *It was a middle school and therefore had subject specialists. ..... You got a lot of input from them as to how to approach their particular subject* (Trainee 9).

Trainees could benefit when informal staff norms encouraged regular gathering, so that

> *it was nice to go in at lunchtime and have half an hour... they talked about children they were having problems with* (Trainee 8).

Of course, opportunities for participation also arose precisely because some staffs were more inclusive than others, and allowed or encouraged trainees to contribute to their shared professional and affective life. In other words, in some staffs, trainee participation in informal staff life was defined as legitimate, rather than intrusive and peripheral to it.

10.3 Interaction, affect and learning.

In Chapter 6 I suggested that trainees' participation in staff professional and social gatherings extended the range of professional help to which they had access. But the affective dimensions of such interactions could also facilitate learning, particularly where staff attitudes encouraged trainees to participate in, rather than merely observe, staffroom

interaction. Affective support had the capacity to sustain trainees' self-esteem, professional motivation and receptiveness to guidance.

10.3.1 Interaction and affective conditions

The previous analyses of trainees learning to work with pupils (Chapter 5) and colleagues (Chapter 6) have included many data references to trainees' feelings - words such as *'support'*, *'positive'*, *'happy'*, *'comfortable'*, *'encouraging'*, *'accepted'*, *'welcome'*; as well *as 'criticism'*, *'negative'*, *'depressing'*, *'unhappy'*, *'disconcerting'*. A recurring theme was that trainees learnt most effectively where there were positive affective conditions that could provide security, establish confidence and sustain it when it was low. Trainees were clear that *'you've got to feel comfortable to learn'* (Trainee 12) and that *'you work better when you are given a positive push* (Trainee 5). Conversely, negative affective conditions could, in themselves, undermine trainees' self-esteem and confidence. For example, when Trainee 13 was continually told by her class teacher that *'you're doing that wrong aren't you, and you're doing that wrong, and you shouldn't be doing it like that'*, she felt *'too scared to do anything by the end'*. Affective support sustained trainees' capacity to learn, particularly when, like Trainee 1, they met difficulties.

Trainees benefited from any placement situations, whether formal or informal, where they were able to interact on broadly equal terms with experienced professionals. For example, sometimes opportunities came through participation in school trips, when

> *I was really involved. I took on a teacher role. I was responsible for my class*
> (Trainee 1),

or

> *We were in the bar every night. The thing is they talked about everything in front of me. They didn't say 'We need to discuss something, do you mind?' ......and they'd ask for my contribution* (Trainee 5).

In many instances, staff actively welcomed trainees. For example,

> *The atmosphere at School D is that they try to make trainees welcome ......try and make you feel at home to start off with (Trainee 13).*

> *This school has been a lot more supportive... they have helped me more. It's just by the atmosphere in the school and the way they've treated me ...... (Trainee 3).*

So far in this section I have suggested that staff relationships which encouraged extensive trainee-staff interaction facilitated trainees' learning because they were both educative and affective in their implications. I now focus on the contributions individual relationships made to facilitate student learning through interaction.

10.3.2 The contribution of individual relationships

Trainees worked with classes for which class teachers had professional responsibility and often felt affective '*ownership*', so that constructive relationships with host teachers were especially important, particularly when the latter were also mentors (see Chapter 8). The data indicate that positive learning relationships between trainees and some individual teachers were especially valued where relationships with whole staffs were unhelpful:

> *I was never very comfortable in the staffroom atmosphere, although I made good relationships with some of the teachers* (Trainee 11).

> *Everyone kind of ignored you apart from one or two people who went out of their way to try and make you feel welcome* (Trainee 10).

Those host teachers who willingly shared their pupils, exemplify the dynamic interplay between professional learning and affective support for trainees. For example:

> *The very minute I walked in there she decided to accept me as a teacher.......... it was her positive attitude towards me that allowed me to be creative with the displays, allowed me to develop* (Trainee 3).

But not all staff or individual class teachers responded to trainees by accepting and supporting them. Some host teachers largely distanced themselves from their trainees' day to day professional learning, and consequently had minimal impact on their professional development. Trainees 7 and 6 were concurrently in the same school as Trainee 3:

> *The class teacher didn't pass any remarks at all, except on the discipline. That's why I was so paranoid about it....she watched me teach once a week and so did the mentor. They wrote an evaluation.* (Trainee 7).

> *My class teacher never said anything to me, until one day during the block I said to her 'How do you think I'm doing?' She said, 'Well, to be quite honest, before the block I was quite worried'* (Trainee 6).

Sometimes, trainees felt staff used them as conveniences, and that their learning needs came second to school staffs' own priorities:

For assembly the class teacher very much tried to take over..... she has a reputation for assemblies and she wanted to keep that up...... which meant an entire chunk of the week went out of the window (Trainee 11).

we were very much used as covering mechanism to do their reports, to meet parents, do their whole school planning. These were the times I was given responsibility for the class, and it was just thrust on me when I didn't want it (Trainee 10).

Occasionally a class teacher made clear that a trainee was an intrusion:

She told me she was very attached to her class and she didn't want to give them over to me. When it actually came to me doing my block, if she was going out of the classroom she made a big effort, saying 'I've lost my home now' '(Trainee 13).

The importance of constructive affective and professional relationships between trainees and host teachers is emphasised even more by the negative effects of flawed trainee/teacher relationships:

The more time I spent with the kids the worse we got on. It wasn't that you couldn't talk. It was all very friendly and civilised. But I upset her somehow, and she just didn't come near the classroom at all (Trainee 12).

The common theme in each of these professional relationships is the extent, nature, and quality of the interaction between trainees and teachers. References to *'feelings'*, *'failure'*, being *'paranoid,'* *'upset'*, emphasise the affective implications of relationships whose purposes were ostensibly professional.

Although the precise reasons for the breakdown in Trainee 12's professional relationship can only be inferred, the apparent significance of handing-over responsibility for pupils may link it to similar accounts of difficult trainee-teacher relationships. A common theme appears to be that relationships could founder where trainees threatened a well-established status quo in ways that caused host teachers to feel undermined themselves. First, there were value-laden differences in professional expectations that seemed difficult to reconcile:

I think my teacher was astounded because I went through the whole thing of where they are from, what are their beliefs, what language do they speak? She didn't know and I was horrified (Trainee 7).

There was lots of emphasis on planning and wonderful displays, so you fit the work around that.... it all seemed very superficial and the wrong way round (Trainee 13).

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Unsurprisingly, these instances coincided with uneasy teacher-trainee relationships. Second, as graduates, these trainees tended to be older, more articulate and more confident than most undergraduate trainees, and so might threaten insecure host teachers:

> *As one teacher to another I think she just saw me as a threat. ..... I used to ask lots of questions....she'd done a PGCE two years ago* (Trainee 14).

> *We didn't hit it off at all to begin with.......there was a lot of tension around and then I discovered that she was actually quite frightened of me* (Trainee 4).

This analysis, which links such attitudes to host staffs' own levels of self-esteem, is confirmed by Trainee 12's suggestion that the staff in her final placement were *'secure enough in what they were doing to be able to be generous, never threatened by trainees'*. The underlying tensions in some trainee/teacher relationships raise issues about the nature of the power dynamics within them - a theme I shall revisit more extensively in the next chapter.

10.3.3 Interaction, networks, groups and cultures

As well as interaction within trainees' dyadic relationships with teachers, networks of relationships had an important impact on trainees' professional development.

In addition to the networks planned to support trainees' development (Chapter 8 and Section 10.2.1), those staff networks of relationships which had developed in response to their own needs, rather than those of trainees', could nevertheless influence trainees' professional development through the indirect affective impact on trainees' of interaction with colleagues. Equally, interaction that concerned professional issues had a direct impact on their learning, whether they participated in, or merely listened to staff interaction. These networks might include whole staffs, professional sub-groups established for school purposes (Section 10.2.1) and informal sub-groups created by influences such as school geography (Section 10.2.2.1).

At this point it is relevant to link the discussion of trainees' learning, networks and interaction, with the idea of *'cultures'* within staffs. Andy Hargreaves (1994) defines cultures of teaching as *'beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things amongst communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years'* (p. 165). His definition overlaps considerably with that of Nias, Southworth and Yeomans, referred to in Section 1.5. They emphasise the process by which cultures are developed and communicated. Further, they suggest that cultures are communicated by

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'culture-bearers' who *'represent in their persons and by their speech and behaviour what it is that members deem to be worthwhile .... and of what they approve'* (ibid.). Interaction, through language and other forms of behaviour, is the means by which cultures are created, expressed and understood, since it is only through interaction that values, beliefs, attitudes meanings and norms are formed and communicated.

Interviews with trainees confirm that they were aware of the existence and nature of cultures within their placements (even though they did not use the term), and that they often experienced their impact. It might be suggested that the data are inadequate in form and scope to make trustworthy statements about the detailed nature of the staff cultures of each of the placement schools, and that trainees' perceptions of staff cultures might not coincide with those of school staffs who were members of them. Certainly, data represent trainees' own analyses of the behaviour of placement staff, rather than staff members' own perspectives. But even when individual trainees had not been accepted within staff cultures, and so could not claim to understand the experience of membership, they could observe cultures through the membership behaviour of culture-bearers and experience them through the ways they were treated by members.

Both Hargreaves and Nias and her colleagues emphasise the need to think in terms of dominant cultures rather than pervasive ones, since several sub-cultures may co-exist in one school. Staff cultures, as perceived by trainees, may differ from those perceived by full-time staff who belong to different sub-cultures. Different trainees may experience the same staff culture differently, again depending on where and how they fit into a placement's cultural landscape. Further, trainees' perceptions may be influenced by their status and relatively short stays in placements. But differences between trainees' and staffs' experiences of staff cultures seem to be ones of perspective and complexity, rather than of authenticity. Each may emphasise different characteristics of staff cultures. But when trainees experienced staff cultures as supportive, they were supportive in their impact on trainees' learning. Indeed, their insights as observing participants may be more rather than less perceptive than those of insiders, whose perspectives lack an outsider's objective dimension. In short, trainees' perspectives were not necessarily those of members. But, in terms of trainees' definitions of the situations they experienced, the cultures as described by them were perceived as real, and were real in their consequences for trainees' actions (Thomas 1931). Being cultures-as-experienced, they were legitimate perspectives on staff cultures.

The processes by which interaction communicates the nature of staff cultures have implications for trainees' learning about the nature of teachers' jobs - particularly their interadult dimensions. Because they were culture bearers, individual staff members, through interaction, offered trainees glimpses into the nature of staff sub-cultures and cultures. Further, where interaction with staff groups enabled trainees to experience partially the benefits of staff membership, their knowledge of professional and interpersonal staff processes was extended and their access to professional and affective support for their classroom work was enhanced (Chapter 6). In some instances the virtuous spiral of affective support and professional help could transform trainees' professional relationships with staff from those of novice amongst experts, into colleague-like ones, characterised by mutual exchanges of professional knowledge, skills or perspectives. Conversely, trainees subject to the disapproval of a significant staff group had diminished access to professional and affective support.

Where staff cultures predisposed staff to collaborate professionally and be mutually supportive, those same attitudes were more likely to permeate their relationships with trainees. Trainees then tended to be included in interaction and supported by staff. In such circumstances, their learning was then influenced by staff culture, because interaction, which created and sustained the latter, also became the means by which trainees experienced and understood cultures and could access their benefits of affective and professional support. Trainees' data support this hypothesis, though they suggest that the links between staff cultures and enhanced trainees' learning are subtle - a subtlety I now try to explore.

Andy Hargreaves' (1994) discussion of teacher cultures is again relevant here. He distinguishes between the *content* of teacher cultures (*'substantive attitudes, values, beliefs , habits, assumptions and ways of doing things that are shared within a particular teacher group, or a wide teacher community'*) (p. 166) and their *form* (*'characteristic patterns of relationships and forms of association between members of those cultures'*) (ibid.). When applied to trainees' learning, in Hargreaves' terms, the content of the staff cultures of their placement schools appears to determine what trainees might learn about the attitudes, values, beliefs, habits, assumptions and ways of doing things of placement staffs - and might inform their learning about cultures of primary teaching in general. But the form of staff culture tends to determine how trainees learn from and within each staff, and in particular, the extent to which they are able to participate in staff interaction. Hargreaves' typology of forms of teacher culture helps here. He identifies four broad forms:
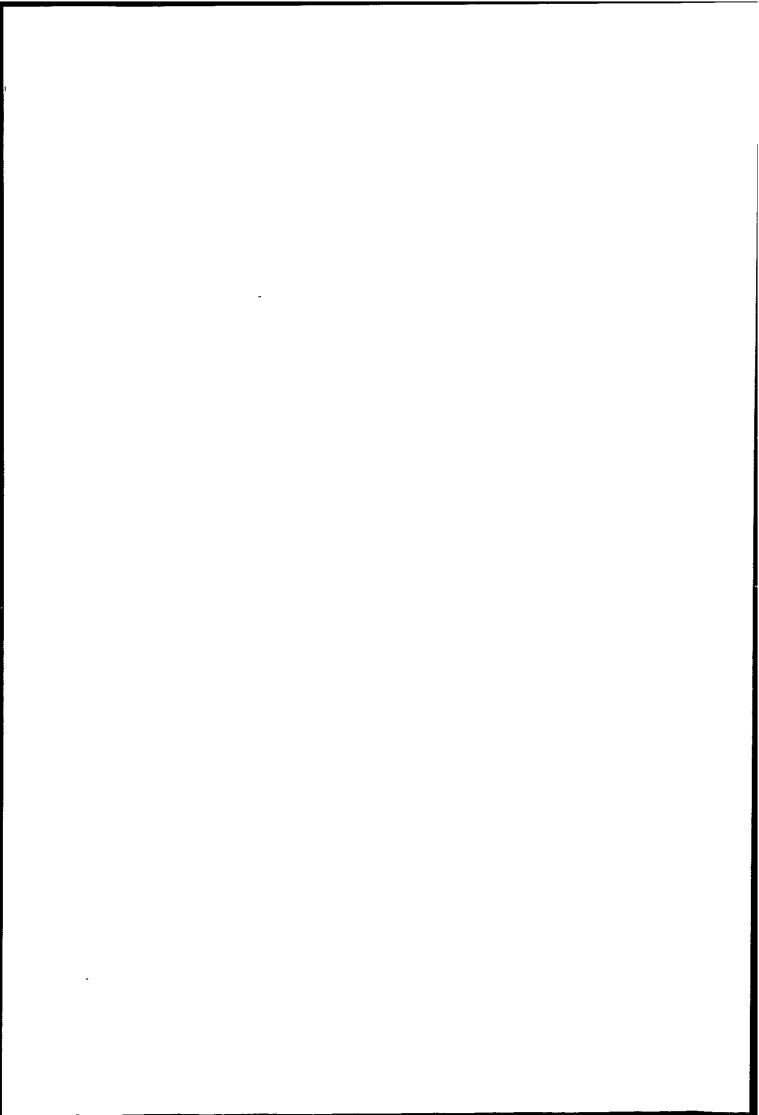
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individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanisation. Individualism is reflected in *'segregated classrooms dividing teachers from one another so that they see and understand little of what their colleagues do'* (p. 167). Collaborative cultures (a term coined by Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989), embody collaborative working relationships which are *'spontaneous'*, *'voluntary'*, *'development-oriented'*, *'pervasive across space and time'*, and *'unpredictable'* (p. 192-3). Hargreaves suggests that *'collaborative cultures rest on relationships that exist persistently and pervasively across the whole school'* (p193). He contrasts collaborative cultures with contrived collegiality, which is *'administratively regulated'*, *'compulsory'*, *'implementation-oriented'*, *'fixed in time and space'*, and *'predictable'*. Last, balkanised cultures emphasise sub-groups that are

> *strongly insulated from each other.........balkanised teachers belong predominantly to one group more than any other. Teachers' professional learning occurs mainly within their own sub-group (such as the subject department* (pp. 213).

In terms of Hargreaves' typology, trainees' data suggest that none of their host schools consistently exemplified the qualities of whole school collaborative cultures. Three schools appear to exemplify balkanised and individualised cultures and contrived collegiality. School F was a placement where there were different perspectives on its dominant culture. Data indicate a dominant staff culture, balkanised into largely self-contained year groups, reinforced by an administrative framework that devolved day to day decision-making to year group leaders. Those staff who were outside year groups became isolated, so that, even in the staffroom,

> *the more superior 'I think I'm good' staff just sat in the square in the middle, whereas other staff sat on that back row, especially the Section 11 staff* (multi-cultural support), *who were never spoken to by many of the other staff* (Trainee 7).

Trainees recognised the dominance of balkanised, self-contained year groups. But they tended to emphasise the extent to which they were or were not part of the supportive sub-culture of a year group. For them, the more influential culture was that of their sub-group, which affected their day-to-day experiences and relationships more than did the school-wide culture. They were participants in the former and largely observers of the latter. What mattered for them was whether, like Trainees 10 and 3, they were accepted within their year group sub-culture - in which case it was experienced as collaborative and supportive - or whether, like Trainees 7 and 8, they felt outsiders. In the latter cases, trainees emphasised a sense of isolation from school staff In that respect, trainees replicated

the Section Eleven teachers' experiences of the balkanised culture, because the latter's work with a range of classes isolated them from 'strongly-insulated' year groups.

School D's dominant culture appears to have been individualistic. Its head gave staff considerable curricular freedom. Its four separate buildings allowed only two teachers to meet without using an external door. Its staff visited the staffroom intermittently and 'people tend to shut themselves away in other buildings' (Trainee 14). Trainees there tended to enjoyed their time in the school and relationships within it, but emphasised their relationships with individual teachers, particularly their host class teachers, thus reinforcing the perception that individualism dominated. Yet here too, Trainee 14 had commented on the benefits of the single instance of the supportive sub-culture of the two Early Years classes, in a shared building (8.2.2.1).

School B appeared to be dominated by contrived collegiality. The head teacher required regular meetings of the whole staff and of upper and lower school sub-groups and emphasised to trainees the staff's collaborative values. Yet previously cited data suggest that collegiality was stronger in rhetoric than in substance, not pervasive, nor always including trainees.

> *They come over as friendly.......It gives the appearance there were no barriers or distances to be maintained, but there were* (Trainee 12).

> *There was an atmosphere of 'we work together as a team, everyone is made welcome'. But that's only on the surface and it's quite superficial* (Trainee 13).

Of the three other placements, although School A's all-female 'mothers meeting' of a staffroom was cosily collaborative for those who could share its restricted agenda, it seems to have been professionally individualistic in terms of classroom practices and expectations. The teacher cultures of Schools C and E, both middle schools with supportive year group structures, had many balkanised qualities.

It would be an over-simplification therefore to suggest that the form of dominant school culture determined whether trainees were likely to feel supported. It may be predicted that, by definition, trainees will feel supported by collaborative cultures but not by those where there is contrived collegiality. But trainees may participate in supportive sub-cultures within a whole staff. These may exist in balkanised cultures, such as that of School F, C and E, or as a sub-culture within the largely individualised school culture of School D. What matters for trainees' learning seems to be the nature and extent of their

interaction with a collaborative group - whether that exemplified a dominant whole staff culture or a collaborative *sub-culture*.

I suggest therefore that, for trainees, the important cultures-as-experienced were those in which they interacted most frequently, which were often sub-cultures within a whole staff (such as at School F). Cultures-as-experienced could be supportive, indifferent, or occasionally hostile to trainees. When they were supportive, staff cultures-as-experienced could be more or less inclusive of trainees. Some were driven by collaborative values, tolerate difference, encouraged openness, and so tended to accept trainees (see Nias, Southworth and Yeomans op.cit.). Others had tight and exclusive criteria for membership (such as School B). Trainees might be accepted as members only if they conformed to them. Trainee 15 alluded to this price when she suggested that at School B there was a '*game*' to be played by trainees of '*fitting in and adapting*' (see Chapter 11).

In some circumstances, the criteria for membership might discriminate between trainees, which may explain why, at the all-female School A, female Trainee 12 empathised with the values of a staffroom '*like a mothers' meeting*' and felt supported, whereas male trainees 3 and 11 felt they were, unavoidably, outsiders.

10.4 Discussion

I began this chapter by noting the diversity of trainees' experiences in the same placements. I suggested that this might appear to counter a hypothesis that specific conditions tended to promote trainees' learning. I now suggest that diversity in trainees' experiences of different placements is consistent with that hypothesis and with the analysis I have developed in this chapter. Whether positive or not, individual trainees' judgements on specific placements can be accounted for in terms of the specific conditions within each which tended to promote (or restrict) interaction and so influenced (or inhibited) learning - either indirectly by providing (or withholding) affective support, or directly through specific interventions, ideas or advice each received. I now revisit the analysis to show how these 'contradictions' are resolved by it in specific instances.

School D

The positive comments of each trainee at School D seem consistent with a school where multiple buildings isolated staff and promoted an individualised culture, which was encouraged by a head who allowed considerable curricular freedom. In turn, host teachers allowed trainees similar classroom flexibility. The absence of pressures for staff conformity

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may partly explain the cordiality of staff's relationships with trainees. In this instance, the extreme restrictive effect of isolated buildings on staff interaction may have encouraged the supportive relationships between each trainee and host class teacher, because interaction with a trainee was better than no adult interaction at all. Responsive pupils tended to present few problems of behaviour management, so that trainees had ample opportunities to apply their emergent professional skills in relatively 'safe' classroom environments, with accessible professional and affective teacher support.

School B

School B seemed to be a placement where staff professional and personal relationships were extensively shaped by the collegiality the head teacher actively sought to contrive. Trainee 11's past life experiences enabled him to respond constructively to staff fitting in expectations. He developed a positive relationship with his host teacher and also with his mentor, so that, in a relatively small staff, their positive regard for him appeared to prompt widespread staff approval, he could *'get away with murder'* (Trainee 12), and enjoy extensive professional and personal support. The sponsorship of a host class teacher seems to have been crucial here. In this particular instance, the rarity value of being a male in an all-female environment seems to have been an asset too.

Neither Trainee 12 nor 13 established positive relationships with their host class teachers and consequently lacked wide professional support. Within a staff where conformity to norms was expected, Trainee 12's apparent confidence seems to have been perceived as unwillingness to *'know her place'*. A negative staff view of her personal qualities developed and she became increasingly isolated. Trainee 13, at a different time, also suffered from the consequences of contrived collegiality. The head had insisted that she be placed with a class teacher who was a reluctant host. In a culture where collaboration was imposed, this teacher seemed unable to hide her reluctance from her trainee, or give her constructive professional help. Support from other staff was affected by priority given to an impending Ofsted inspection rather than to trainees.

School A

When Trainees 11 and 12 moved to School A, their placement experiences were reversed. Unlike their time at School B, Trainee 12 was happy, Trainee 11 was not. School A's staff culture was dominated by professional individualism within broad parameters set by a head who *'never comes in any of the classrooms .... a very matriarchal figure, coming*
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down from the ivory tower' (Trainee 12). Over time, the long-established female staff had developed a well-rehearsed set of interpersonal agendas and routines, which the head was keen should not be disrupted by trainees. These routines included late arrivals and early departures. Conversations, centring on *'family talk and women's talk and things about the kids'* (ibid.), were familiar territory for Trainee 12, herself a mother. Having learnt from her negative time at School B to *'make sure I'm coming over the right way'*, she became personally comfortable within this staff group, professionally engaged by the learning needs of a multi-cultural pupil population and supported by a positive relationship with her class teacher/mentor. In contrast, male, unmarried Trainees 11 and 3 were unable to empathise with staffroom agendas there, which they perceived to be family-oriented, or establish constructive professional relationships with their class teachers within its professionally individualised culture. The contrast between the relationships with their class teachers and those of female trainees at School D with their female class teachers, suggests that the influence of gender on male trainees' professional relationships may be emphasised by individualised <u>professional</u> staff cultures, where there is also an all-female staff, whose 'cosy' staffroom interaction also excludes males.

School F

School F exemplifies the influence of sub-cultures within a balkanised context in ways which explain why Trainee 3 valued his time there, and Trainee 7 became isolated. Male Trainee 3 developed constructive professional and personal relationships with his host class teacher, who sponsored his access to a consistently supportive year group sub-culture. Being a male was an asset there, and his year group lobbied strongly in his support when a permanent job vacancy arose. Conversely, Trainee 7 felt that her alienation from the professional values of her class teacher was at the root of the disapproval of and exclusion from her year group, who *'thought I was irresponsible'*.

The limited data about Schools C and E, which only hosted a trainee each in the final placement, appear to indicate similar balkanised structures having a similar influence on trainees' learning.

Several general points are raised by the discussion so far.

First, there are often links between trainees' relationships with host class teachers or mentors and those with the staff group or influential sub-group. This may be expected in cohesive staffs, where dominant staff cultures shape and are shaped by the value systems and actions of individual staff members. Trainee 13 acknowledged the interdependence of

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group and individual attitudes when she explained her reluctance to seek a mentor's help with classroom difficulties:

> *when I did want to talk to somebody about what was going on in the classroom I didn't feel I could go to the mentor.....because of conversations I'd hear in the staffroom about the problems other members of staff were having.*

She feared that to share her problems with one group member was to expose them to all.

But access to sub-cultures is similarly usually associated with trainees' relationships with their host class teachers and those teachers' memberships of such sub-cultures. Fractured relationships with host class teachers tended to deny trainees access to membership and support of sub-cultures too, as they did for Trainee 7 at School F.

Sometimes, the positive influence of an individual could compensate for the lack of support from a staff group. This was so at School F, where the mentor's positive support for Trainee 7, ostracised by her staff year group, may be partly explained by the mentor's membership of a different year group sub-culture in a balkanised school. Conversely, Trainee 14's first placement had been in a school where the class teacher-mentor *'was very intimidating'* but *'the staff in school in general were very supportive.'*

Second, where trainees' relationships with staff individually and as groups were most constructive, there seems to have been reciprocal benefit, with trainee and group valuing one another - a characteristic of cultures of collaboration (Nias, Southworth and Yeomans op.cit.) Although there are no instances in this study, of whole staffs that were collaborative in all respects, at School F Trainees 4 and 3 seem to have achieved relationships of mutual regard with year sub-groups (the former through her music expertise, the latter partly through being a male). Trainees 1, 2 and 9 had similar experiences in similar sub-groups in middle school contexts. In each instance there were strong relationships, reinforced by clearly-defined sub-group boundaries which included the trainees. The latter contributed actively to group needs, and were accepted, because each was seen to value the group (by making use of it and adopting its norms and professional values).

Third, when staff individually or collectively were under pressure in some way, trainees too appeared to suffer. This phenomenon may explain the deterioration in trainees' experience at School B between the first and second placement. By the time of the latter, the head teacher's continuing insistence on professional collaboration, an impending Ofsted inspection, and the prospect of a school amalgamation seemed to cause pressure on staff to

be shared by trainees - largely through reduced levels of professional support. It seems that, under such conditions, trainees either become an additional burden, or a means of alleviating pressure by freeing staff from teaching. Participation became problematic for trainees too, since it implied sharing pressures as a price of gaining insights into collective professional lives.

Fourth, the evidence of Chapters 5 and 9 is that trainees can sometimes thrive in spite of placement conditions that tend to inhibit their learning. But such instances are tributes to the trainees' own capacities and resources, rather than indicators of the benefits of learning in difficult conditions. Rather, inclusion in and acceptance by staff were important facilitators of trainee learning, if not guarantors of it .
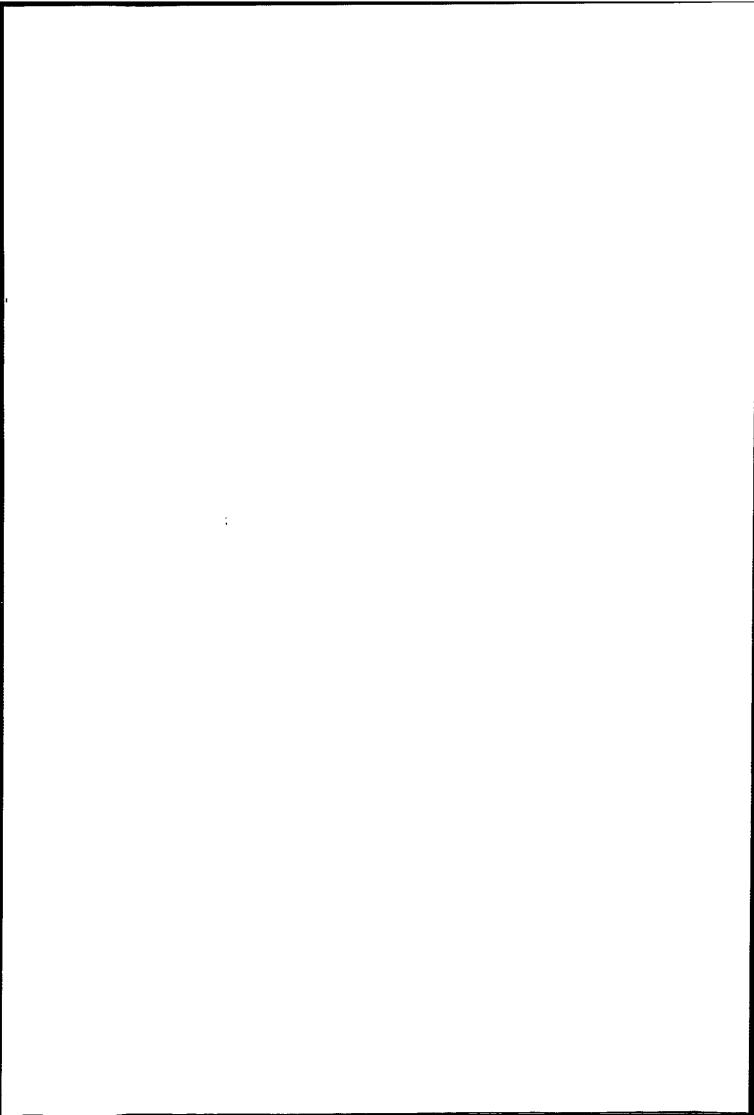
10.5 Summary

Successful learning depended on trainees' capacities to respond to opportunities. But the extent and nature of opportunities for learning were influenced by the extent, nature and quality of their interaction with host staff, individually and in groups. Trainees learnt through interaction, which training structures sought to promote by design. The effectiveness of training structures was dependent on the extent and nature of staff's commitment to them. Interaction was facilitated by some whole school structures, organisational and physical features that were not primarily intended to promote trainee learning. The quality and extent of trainees' interactions with host staffs (and thus of the affective support they received and of their professional learning) could be further enhanced by the influence of the dominant staff culture or sub-cultures to which trainees were exposed, particularly when they were assimilated within them. From trainees' perspectives, the nature of a whole school culture may have less impact on trainees' learning than that of a staff sub-culture with which they have greater day-to-day contact. Consequently, balkanised forms of staff culture could have a positive impact on trainees' learning, even if they may inhibit the development of whole school cultures.

Under optimum conditions for learning, the extent and positive quality of trainees' interaction with host staff ensured that they had access to affective support and professional help from their colleagues (with host class teachers and mentors adopting learner models of professional support), and to opportunities to share in professional collaboration. The latter assumed trainees had access to membership of supportive staff cultures or sub-cultures. Responsible staff were actively committed to the development of trainees' learning, so that there was planning for trainees' participation in school processes of all kinds, rather than

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only in those focused on classrooms. Trainees thrived when sustained interaction with both pupils and adults in school was recognised by staff in general (as well as those directly responsible for trainees), as a legitimate contribution to trainees' learning, and where staff responded to trainees accordingly.

Of course, as Chapter. 9 has suggested, trainees come differently equipped to respond to experiences in their placements. The range of ways in which they did so is examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Eleven:
'From Clones to Heretics': Trainees, Power, and Placement Relationships

11.1 The power dynamics of placement relationships

In the previous chapter I examined the influence of interaction with placement staffs and their cultures on trainees' learning. In this chapter I focus on trainees' responses to those interactions. I consider whether there were patterns in their responses and, if so, whether these had implications for their learning. I focus on Lave and Wenger's suggestion that, because identity can mediate learning, *'knowers come in a range of types, from clones to heretics'* (op. cit. p. 116).

Trainees' placement learning was facilitated by structured professional relationships with host class teachers and mentors (Chapter 1), which carried the power dynamic of those between learners and teachers. For clarity I have adopted Handy's distinction between *'influence (an active process) and the ability to influence or power (a resource)'* (1981 p. 112). That power dynamic was reinforced by its associated connotations of novice and experienced practitioners, as well as those of assessed and assessors.

Although learner-teacher relationships contained an implicit power dynamic which tended to promote trainees' dependent status, the personal characteristics and qualities of trainees and host teachers and mentors could mediate the effects of that dynamic.

Trainees' ages, gender and past experiences affected their professional relationships. As chapter 9 indicated, all fifteen learners were mature adults, nine of them over twenty five, and five with their own children (9.2.1). Three were males who worked with female host teachers and mentors (9.2.2). Trainees' own personalities and value systems influenced their perspectives on placements, their behaviour during them and the ways in which they contributed to relationships (9.2.3, 9.2.4). Some trainees had had a wider life experience than others. Previous employment experiences (9.3.2) made an important contribution to the ways in which trainees anticipated, recognised and responded to work relationships, including those dominated by teacher-learner power dynamics. The range and nature of trainees' previous experiences of primary schools (9.3.1), and current access to other perspectives on their work (9.4), influenced how they responded to and whether they questioned or adopted their teachers'/mentors' models of practice, advice, and support.

Of course, the power dynamic of each professional relationship meant that its nature was governed by the perspectives of host teachers/mentors (who were better placed than trainees to impose their definitions of appropriate teacher-learner relationships), rather than those of trainees. Host teachers'/mentors' perspectives on and behaviour towards trainee learners were similarly affected by <u>their</u> own experiences, personalities and value systems (Section 8.2.1.5), which in turn, determined how they interpreted and responded to trainees' behaviour. For example, In Section 10.3.2, I noted that confidence could be as much an issue for hosts as for trainees. Unconfident teachers could react adversely to trainees who were themselves confident, mature and competent; in short, whose self-presentation did not match stereotypic expectations that learners were dependent and submissive. Lack of teacher confidence may explain why some teachers used the power conveyed by the teacher-learner relationship to offer consistently negative criticism. The presence or absence of shared social perspectives and conversational common denominators could facilitate or inhibit the development of productive relationships - for example, with all-female staffs, negatively for male trainees or positively for mature female trainees with families (Section 9.2.2).

The possibilities of dissonant relationships were perhaps greatest between trainees and host class teachers - whether or not they were also trainees' mentors. Classrooms tended to be places where class teachers' personal imprints on practices and norms were particularly strong, because these were the outcomes of sustained interactions between a particular teacher and a specific set of pupils, involving subtle negotiations (Pollard 1985, Kutnik 1988). They were rooted in teachers' experience, and could reflect cherished value systems.

The tightness or flexibility of the parameters host class teachers placed on trainees' classroom freedom of action tended to have an important impact on trainees' opportunities to extend their learning (Section 5.8.2). Host teachers might be reluctant to see delicately constructed and complex teacher-pupil understandings disturbed. The arrival of newcomers, who sought to adopt teachers' roles in such contexts, was inevitably sensitive for pupils and teachers, particularly when the process of apparent usurpation was initiated in the presence of host class teachers, who often remained ambiguous background influences.

Mismatches between host teachers'/mentors' and trainees' perceptions of 'who' trainees should be (in terms of age, gender, experience, confidence), how trainees should behave, what they should do and even why and where they were placed in a particular

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school and classroom, had a particularly important impact on trainees' placement relationships. Trainees' data indicate that power could be and occasionally was used inappropriately. For example, teachers sometimes prioritised their needs before those of trainees (Trainees 10 and 11), withheld their support (Trainees 7 and 12), or even appeared to consciously make a trainee feel unwelcome in their classrooms (Trainee 13).

In Section 1.6, I referred to the value systems which trainees brought to their experiences in placements. I used the term to include values, beliefs and attitudes. I suggested that values are the foundation of beliefs and attitudes, expressed through actions - though where the latter are concerned, it is sometimes easier to infer the values implicit in them than the beliefs that they may express. The relationship between personal value systems and professional classroom practices could create difficulties for trainees.

The congruence between their own and their class teachers' value systems could determine whether constraints on trainees' freedom of action led to pleasurable or uncomfortable classroom experiences. Again, within a learner-teacher power dynamic, trainees might be required to behave in ways which were inconsistent with their own value systems, particularly their beliefs about desirable ways of acting. A notable example (to which I shall return), is Trainee 15's feelings that she had to 'prime down her character' in her final placement. Ultimately trainees' placement experiences tended to cause them to question, develop, confirm, or clarify their own professional value systems (Sections 7.3.4, 9.2.4).

To summarise, two sets of dynamics interacted with one another within trainees' placement relationships. First, the interpersonal dynamic within their relationships caused trainees and hosts to make judgements about one another, partly shaped by expectations formed through previous experiences of trainees and primary teachers. Second, the learner-teacher professional power dynamic itself created particular assumptions about how each should behave in professional terms. It was particularly important that both had a shared view of their own and one another's behaviour as learner and teacher. The nature of the relationship that emerged was an outcome of the interplay between the two dynamics. Difficulties could arise when either trainee or host teacher/mentor perceived that the other was not acting appropriately.

But individual host teachers and mentors were themselves members of staffs and of their communities of practice. I have suggested that, in a professional community such as a school staff, novice professionals' relationships with individual teachers may be expressions of their relationships with the staff as a whole (8.2.2). The nature of placement

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staff cultures is such that, although some teachers' relationships with newcomers, such as trainees, might be untypical of the staff in general, where trainees were exposed to a dominant staff culture, or clearly-defined sub-cultures, there were often broadly consistent sets of relationships between trainees and whole staffs, including mentors and host class teachers. As Chapter 10 suggests, in such instances, the behaviour of individual staff members was frequently that of culture bearers, who exemplified group behaviour.

I suggested (8.2.2) that when interpersonal relationships between trainees and their host class teachers and mentors were constructive, trainees' relationships with other staff were likely to be influenced similarly. Being members of staff cultures and sub-cultures, with considerable knowledge of their trainees, mentors and host teachers inevitably shaped group attitudes towards them. If there were difficulties in trainee-host class teacher relationships, host teachers' perceptions of trainees were likely to shape whole staff perspectives. Again, the power dynamic in the trainee-host teacher/mentor relationships intervenes. In this instance it emerges as the capacity of host teachers, being insiders, to influence their colleagues' perceptions of trainees, as outsiders.

Trainees often found that the power dimension of their relationships with staff was expressed as the need to fit in (Section 6.2.1). Trainees' references to fitting in tend to suggest that they usually acknowledged the legitimacy of the underlying power relationships with their teachers. The constraints expressed by the term reflect limitations on their behaviour within both classrooms (the dominant physical context of trainee/host teacher relationships), and staffrooms (that of trainee/whole staff relationships). The nature of trainees' responses to key individual teachers' and to whole staffs' expectations of how trainees should act were crucial to the development of constructive placement relationships, to the quality and nature of their interaction (Chapter 10), and in turn, to trainees' opportunities to learn.

Of course, the influence of interpersonal dynamics on the nature of trainees' placement relationships, particularly with their mentors and class teachers, meant that they did not inevitably respond in similar ways to similar expectations of how they should act.

11.2 Individual trainees' responses to placement conditions

11.2.1 Differences in trainees' responses

Some placements were more conducive to learning than others, because they provided different opportunities for or constraints on trainees' freedom of action and access to interaction with staff. But the data indicate that sometimes trainees responded differently

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from one another, even within the same placements. Further, they might modify their response strategies in their final placements in the light of experiences of their earlier ones.

In what follows, I explore the range of trainees' responses to their placements by identifying and analysing cases which are exemplars of the different approaches which emerge from revisiting the data. Then I examine the patterns that appear to link them to similar data from other trainees.

I suggest that there are four dominant patterns of trainees' responses to placement conditions, exemplified by four distinct cases. To some extent each represents a different response to the power implications of trainees' status as learners.

11.2.1.1 Case one

Trainee 3 was a single male in his late twenties, whose previous insights into schools had largely been gained through American forces schools. He joined the course with limited insight into the detailed working of English primary school classrooms.

His first placement was with an all-female staff. There he was unhappy with his working relationships with the host class teacher, who

> *picked out all the negative stuff.... Even the way she spoke to me wasn't very positive. It was very 'why are you here?' But she never picked up and said 'you had good control of the class, that was really good'.*

He was unhappy with the range of work he was doing, and with her tendency to intervene in ways he found inappropriate. Yet he was unwilling to discuss his concern with her or with his mentor;

> *My mistake maybe was not going to her and saying straight out 'I just don't like this, I don't want to do this, can we discuss this?'.*

Although he found the staffroom conversation of an all-female staff difficult, his strategy was to

> *just learn to sit there and take it in and listen and try and get involved.*

In his final placement, *'the very minute I walked in'*, Trainee 3's class teacher *'decided to accept me as a teacher, and she let me have full rein of the children and the class'*. He found that *'we got on brilliantly'* because

she had such a great attitude within the class towards the kids. She had a quiet manner as well. She never shouted, and I like that attitude in the classroom.

Here, he felt he had found a role model whose ways he was eager to copy:

I model myself on the class teacher in a way. I watch the way she handled the class, handled the situation. I would maybe have bawled at them, but she handled it quietly, and I picked up on that.

When he began to take sustained responsibility for the class, he remained disinclined to adapt even the smallest organisational details of their joint classroom:

I would have moved a few things around, but I didn't feel it was my classroom to do that in.

He took what he could from other members of his school year team:

I never pushed myself in because I never felt like a real teacher. I needed those teachers. I needed them to ask questions about lesson plans, where I was going, where they wanted it to go.

By the end of this placement, Trainee 3's confidence had grown hugely. One of his final lessons epitomised that transformation:

I was always sort of wary about conversing with the class. I was worried about there being a disaster, the lesson just going down the pan, and on Monday I was talking about drugs and tobacco.......This started at eleven o'clock. At five past twelve I went 'Oh it's time to go, sorry, you have to go now. Hands down now.' We were just chatting, chatting, chatting; kids asking me questions, I was answering. I was asking them questions.. ...... It was the best lesson I have ever done.

Analysis

Trainee 3's behaviour in both his placements is compliant and predominantly passive. He accepts the status of learner without demur, even when he feels unhappy with his class teacher's attitude to him. His initially ill-formed professional values struggle to emerge from negative relationships with his host class teacher and feelings of being an outsider in a female culture. He is outwardly stoical in the face of criticism, unwilling to voice his feelings and, even in the staffroom, seeks to fit in conversationally.

Compliance and passivity also characterise the positive experiences of his final placement. He recognises a role model whose practices he adopts, is reluctant to amend small details, and suggests that he would willingly adapt his own practices if hers' were different. He uses his year team as sources of ideas, but believes it would be inappropriate

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to voice his own. He ends with an experience that may transform his reliance on safe, controlled teaching methods. But even this success emerges from a familiar subject and an eager class to whom he responds, rather than from a planned new approach.

11.2.1.2 Case two

Trainee 2 willingly accepted the power implications of her learner status, and the legitimacy of the ways they were expressed. She felt she had fitted in well with her first school (the same placement, at the same time, as Trainee 3). She had achieved that by *'co-operating with your teacher and your class'* and *'things like helping out with the Christmas play'*. She had been prepared to take extensive responsibility, even at an early stage, when *'sometimes I was more flexible than I was really ready to be'*. One consequence of her willingness to accept responsibility was *'that makes you part of the team really....they know you're taking that responsibility'*. She took a sanguine view of that school's rules about when trainees could use the staffroom. She was prepared to adopt them and to recognise their legitimacy:

> *It's their show really. You've got to fit in with it. It's compromise really. They've been there a long time and doing the same rituals, so you can't just wade in and say 'well I'm going to do this, I don't care what you think'.*

She saw her intention to fit in as a positive stance, because it was likely to facilitate acceptance and approval by the staff:

> *It's being willing to get on with people and willing to put yourself out for people. Show that you want to be there, trying your best. Then people respect you because you do and that makes you fit in.*

Where her learning was concerned, Trainee 2 left the placement feeling that

> *I've got much the same ideas. They've got a bit more educated as to the reasons why I've got them. It was a gut feeling before, but now it's an educated thing......before it was because of the way I was brought up, the way I did things, the way things should be done...now I know it is because there is a good reason.*

She had responded constructively and actively to expectations in a placement where being a trainee teacher could be difficult. She emerged with her thinking clarified and had become an accepted trainee member of the staff:

> *When I went into my new school I felt I wished I was back in my old one. I realised how much I had fitted in there.*

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She approached her final placement in similarly constructive ways. There again, she suspended her initial doubts about unfamiliar practices and methods of organisation:

> *It's so structured. ......I thought, this isn't really me. This isn't the idea I came into teaching with. But it works for them, and I think the children are more mature.*

She became *'very much involved with the Year Five teachers, part of the team'.* The year team had *'helped me to learn about my role and about how to cope with different things'.*

One outcome of her experiences in this placement was that she revised her view of the previous one:

> *Since I've left there I've realised the lack of planning that I saw, because the planning is so structured and so under control where I am now.*

Towards the end of her final placement, she was offered and accepted a permanent teaching post in the school, an outcome which confirmed that she engaged positively with her placements, having temporarily suspended her doubts about the worth of the practices of each.

Analysis

Trainee 2 is consistently proactive in her attitude to being a trainee. In her first placement she seeks to co-operate, is flexible, and even when she is dubious about staff expectations, can find constructive reasons for them. She accepts that placement staff can legitimately exercise their power to make demands on her as a learner, even when to do so means that she adopts practices with which she has limited sympathy. She is able to rationalise this response. She believes that conforming to placement expectations is a constructive stance that can facilitate relationships with the staff, enable her to evaluate practices, and gain insight into the value systems which sustain them. She is prepared to temporarily suspend her doubts about value systems that are dissonant with her own. But she does not consider her own value position compromised, because she adopts the practices of a different one in order to discover the professional implications of doing so. She has no negative affective symptoms from this decision, which is not experienced as the use of power over her - first, because she <u>chooses</u> to engage, second, because she does not regard the decision to engage as compromising her value systems.

In her final placement, she is willing to engage with unfamiliar systems whose worth she doubts. In time she modifies her professional ideas and become comfortable with

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these systems. Her constructive acceptance of the legitimacy of dominant practices seems to influence staff perceptions of her. She becomes part of the year team, perceived as a successful exponent of the school's model of professional practice.

11.2.1.3 Case three

Trainee 15 recognised that she was *'very idealistic and utopian'*. Before deciding to become a teacher, Trainee 15 had had a varied life experience, including time as a volunteer leader on a kibbutz. Her strongly-established value system emphasises *'self-reliance', sociability, independence, a whole set of personal qualities as opposed to educational ones in a narrow sense'*. She was a mother, and acknowledged that her emphasis on social rather than academic learning could distort her expectations of children:

> *When I go to parents' evening, teachers say 'go on, ask how (your daughter)'s getting on socially'. I think that's important...... I realise I have got improve my academic expectations of the children.*

She had clearly-defined beliefs about ways of acting within classrooms,

> *I'm not for shouting. I'd rather everything was calm and nice. You can have a relationship of respect, that you can have for them and they have for you,*

which she felt were linked to deep-seated attitudes that would be difficult to change:

> *Compromise is OK, but it's actually changing that I wouldn't agree with. I wouldn't agree with going in being a dragon.*

In her first placement she learnt *'from the people who are doing it the way you like ....and possibly more actually from the people who are doing it the way you don't like'*. But she remained consistent and unshaken in the beliefs that determined what were those ways.

> *It's changed my ideas about what teaching involves, not about how I'd like to teach.*

There, she valued the staff's treatment of her as a prospective teacher, rather than as someone for whom the *'trainee'* label implied inferior status. That attitude was consistent with her own emphasis on respect for children, and her disinclination to emphasise the power dynamic implicit in teacher-learner relationships:

> *If they make you feel welcome, then you are actually being respected not as a student but as a prospective teacher. If you're thought of as a student then you have to behave as a student.*

Her experience was that respect and support from colleagues could transform a trainee's experience of the job:

If you've got that backup you feel comfortable. Otherwise you just feel as if you are in the class, door shut. ..... I think you have to have that interaction with adults. To be able to support them in return as well.....To be totally honest, if I went into a school and the staff were not as one I really would find that difficult.

With hindsight, the comments above seem a prediction of unhappy experiences to come.

Trainee 15's perceptions of staff attitudes in her final placement were the antithesis of those she had praised in her first one. She felt unsupported :

From the day I went in I was supply. It was 'This is the class'; no feedback, no help, no support.

In the staffroom, trainees were *'pretty well ignored'*. In that school, she sensed an unspoken set of expectations of how trainees should behave, in order to become accepted:

They have to suss you out and work out whether they like you or not. If you play the game.

She came close to abandoning the placement:

One day I thought 'I'm just not going back. All I'm doing is trying to find out if I'm doing right, trying to find out if I'm sinking or swimming'.

Her strategic response was to disengage as far as possible from all except the essentials of the classroom: *'I used to walk in, do my job, walk out.' 'The game of fitting in and adapting'*, was one whose rules she felt disinclined to accept. Her determination *'to survive'* caused her to comply with the form, rather than the spirit, of that staff's expectations of trainees. By doing so she sought to maintain the value system which had brought her into teaching:

You had to do things which are totally petty. To put labels on my file - that was one of my feedbacks. The next one was abbreviations. The evaluation was in a different way. You had to give in a photocopy and I was giving in the original. A big fuss was made about this, and I thought 'I will do it and I'll play the game.' But inside I was thinking, 'Hang on, there's twenty-six children down there. They are more important than me abbreviating, giving photocopies or originals of evaluations.

She justified her conformity in terms of concern for the children's needs, which was itself an expression of her value system:

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It wasn't fitting in with the school, it was fitting -in with the children's needs. Choosing to fit in.

But having made her values compromise, she felt fundamentally and negatively changed:

At the beginning of this year I actually liked myself.........Now I've gone into the 'I've gritted my teeth and I did it'. But I don't really like me any more.

Analysis

Trainee 15's value system is strongly felt, and well established. It permeates her attitudes to children, to the job of teaching, her own classroom behaviour and to relationships with children and adults alike. She is unwilling, indeed unable, to abandon it and reluctant to compromise. In her first placement, role exemplars help her identify ways in which she can more effectively sustain her value system within her classroom actions. Examples of incongruent practices that she observes reinforce it. In a supportive context, she feels valued personally and professionally by staff colleagues. Their behaviour towards her expresses a particular view of her as learner, in which relationships are between professional equals, rather than ones that emphasise dominance and compliance.

Her final placement is disconcerting, because attitudes to her as a trainee there conflict with those in her first placement and with its congenial value system. In her new placement, power is exercised in ways she sometimes perceives to be unreasonable, particularly when she is expected to adopt practices which are at variance with her own value system. She elects to appear to '*play the game*', but her justification is that same, threatened, value system. Though outwardly conforming, she experiences inner turmoil. Her actions are counterfeit in meaning, since she dissociates herself from the professional practices she is required to adopt and the value system they reflect. She feels increasingly undermined by the compromises she has sought to make. Unlike Trainee 2, she is unable to '*suspend her disbelief*' in practices that underpin a value system she rejects. Consequently her acceptance of them is experienced as the imposition of power over the value system she cherishes.

11.2.1.4 Case four.

Trainee 7 had had a notably successful first placement. Her responses to and relationships with pupils, parents and staff were informed by a well-defined value system, which contained strongly held, articulated beliefs in the importance of '*caring about people*'. These influenced her attitudes to her work with pupils,

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I was desperate for them to enjoy what they were doing.. I felt very responsible for keeping their minds open, to keep them interested in everything they did...... ;

to the kinds of relationships she sought to develop with pupils,

I think some people fear that if they are friendly with the children then they're going to lose control of them. But I disagree;

and to her contacts with parents:

You could talk about your washing machine or football. That's what the people are going to be like who you are going to be teaching, and that's what their parents are going to be like. You've got to respect that that is their world, and their world is as good as your world.

Although *'I would have liked more feedback'*, the apparently individualistic professional culture of her first placement (Section 10.3.3) allowed considerable flexibility in the ways the staff and she worked, both collectively and individually. In turn, Trainee 7's class teacher gave her scope to develop her own ideas, but provided support when it was needed:

I took a lot of advice from the class teacher and she spent a lot of time helping me.

Trainee 7 had *'a brilliant time'*, culminating in a publicly successful class assembly, with *'people coming in and taking pictures of my Chinese display'*. She left her first placement feeling that *'if you've got more freedom it's better'*.

The move to her final placement at school F was a shock. There, in a relatively large, administratively and socially balkanised school (10.3.3), the curriculum was tightly structured, and *'everything is planned in a year group'*. She rapidly found that her host class teacher's methods ran counter to the value system that had facilitated her recent conspicuous success. Dissonant professional beliefs seemed to be reflected in approaches to such fundamental teaching concerns as discipline,

She was really strict... had I gone in and been very much like she was, I don't think I would have had the problems I did,

the nature of classroom interaction,

She didn't get them to talk a lot. She told them all the time, and I didn't.... the first thing I did was have them all together on the floor to talk,

the relationships between lesson content, structure and pupils' learning ,

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her art lesson on perspective she didn't have one postcard of a real painting that illustrated the point she was trying to teach - and there were some in school. She just started drawing all these lines on the boards and it's all very technical. So I found all these pictures with it in.

and ways of presenting work and writing:

Everything had to be beautifully presented. Well I wasn't really into that. As long as I could read it that was good enough for me.

Trainee 7 was reluctant to adopt classroom practices that expressed the value system she had rejected:

I wanted (the pupils) *to be responsible for* (the classroom) *rather than me. They were their rules. When I first arrived I couldn't believe the way they sat there just like dumplings, and didn't do anything except open their books, and didn't have any life.*

She may have been fortunate to be with a host teacher who, having understood that her trainee *'didn't agree with the class teacher's approach',* chose not to exercise her power to require conformity with her current practices. Rather, she *'sort of abandoned me after she'd realised that'.*

But there was a price for classroom success. Because *'I broke all the rules'*, Trainee 7 seemed to question and undermine the value system sustaining teaching in that and other classrooms, particularly in her year group. Abandoned by her class teacher, she was also discouraged from participating in year group meetings, and experienced their disapproval.

I felt a lot of people looked down on me in that school. I felt very upset about it a lot of the time.

She led a relatively isolated placement existence, sustained by the supportive mentor from another year group, and non-teaching staff, but regretting that she lacked the range of professional support enjoyed by other trainees in the school:

It's so unfair. Trainee 3 had so much support and I used to be fiddling around on my own.

Analysis

Like Trainee 15, Trainee 7's firmly established value system informs her professional actions and shapes her judgements about worthwhile professional practices, particularly where relationships with pupils are concerned. There are few pressures for

conformity within her first placement. She is free to express her value system in her classroom work. Her conspicuous success reinforces it and her confidence.

However, in her final placement, her value system is challenged by the well-established, distinctive and value-driven practices of her host teacher and year group. Trainee 7 is unwilling to adopt her host teacher's practices, which are alien to her value system. Her class teacher chooses to abandon her rather than exercise power over her professional actions, so that she is not prevented from developing her own value-driven strategies. However her exposition of a professional value system, which runs counter to that of her host year group, alienates, and so isolates, her from them.
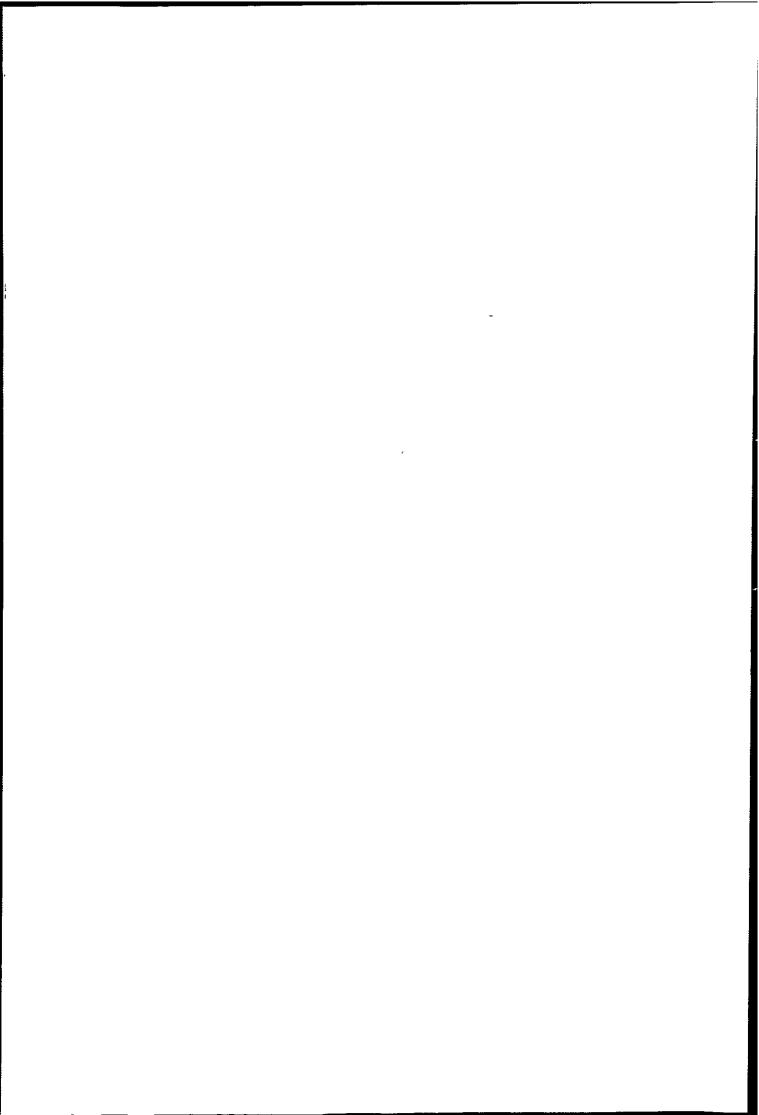
11.3 Identifying patterns

11.3.1 The cases

Each case appears to present a distinctive approach to dealing with the expectations of placement staff. The nature of trainees' approaches appears to be largely determined by how they deal with two particular problems in their placements. These are, first, how they deal with perceived dissonance between their own and placement staffs' value systems and second, how they respond to the ways power is used in trainees' learner-teacher relationships with staff. The two appear to be linked.

Where value systems are concerned (and the actions derived from them), trainees are presented with the dilemma of whether and how to fit in with each placement staff's expectations. There are established procedures and expected patterns of adult and pupil behaviour in classrooms and in interadult relationships between staff and with trainees. Each case is a response to the match or mismatch between trainees' value systems and those implicit in placement staffs' expectations (collectively and individually). When trainees and staff mutually perceive that their value systems are in harmony, there are few difficulties and frequent successes. When there are dissonant value systems, tensions may arise and trainees have to choose how they will respond. Tensions are particularly likely when both trainees and host class teachers have strongly-developed, but conflicting, value systems, or when a strong value system pervades a staff culture - because the latter tends to govern the detail of day to day actions in classrooms and staffrooms.

When dissonance in value systems arises, issues of teacher-learner power dynamics become crucial. An assumption of the teacher-learner relationship is that, where different expectations exist, those of the teacher will prevail. These assumptions are reinforced by the expectation that an outsider, working within the frameworks of a professional group

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they temporarily join, will adopt existing norms. In the case of trainees whose value systems conflict with those of their host teachers (whether as individual professionals or as culture-bearers), the host teachers may require not only that their own value systems are undisturbed, but further, that in order to ensure classroom continuity, trainees behave in ways which express them.

These cases appear to offer four distinct patterns of responses to the problems that may arise from dissonance between trainees' and teachers' value systems, given the nature of their power relationships. The features of each pattern suggest the use of terms *compliance* (case one), *engagement* (case two), *strategic compromise* (case three), and *nonconformity* (case four).

Compliance

Compliance appears to reflect an uncomplicated view, (consistent with the idea of legitimate peripheral participation), that trainees can progress smoothly towards becoming skilled participants by learning to adopt the practices of their host communities of practice. Trainees are more likely to achieve their goal when they are welcomed within a staff group – which compliance is likely to facilitate. Participation conveys a feeling of membership rather than mere access to occasions when the community can be observed at work, or to advice from its members. It appears to have a positive impact on trainees' self-esteem, motivation to learn and ability to succeed in the classroom (Chapter 6). Success further enhances self-esteem and the esteem in which the community holds trainees. Without his own strongly-defined professional value system, Trainee 3 remains compliant throughout and accepts the power implications of his learner status (although he is clear about what constitutes fairness in his relationship with his first host class teacher). He is conspicuously more successful where he feels valued and supported by his second host class teacher and the professional sub-group to which he and she belong. But much of his learning arises from reacting to professional events, perhaps because as yet his value system has no clear expression in his professional views and actions. As learners, compliant trainees are passive reactors to stimuli, and compliance is no guarantee of full participation, which only the community can grant (as Trainee 3's first placement shows).

Engagement

Engagement is a proactive response, which is as dependent on the learner as on the responses of host communities to their presence. Engagers seem as likely as compliant
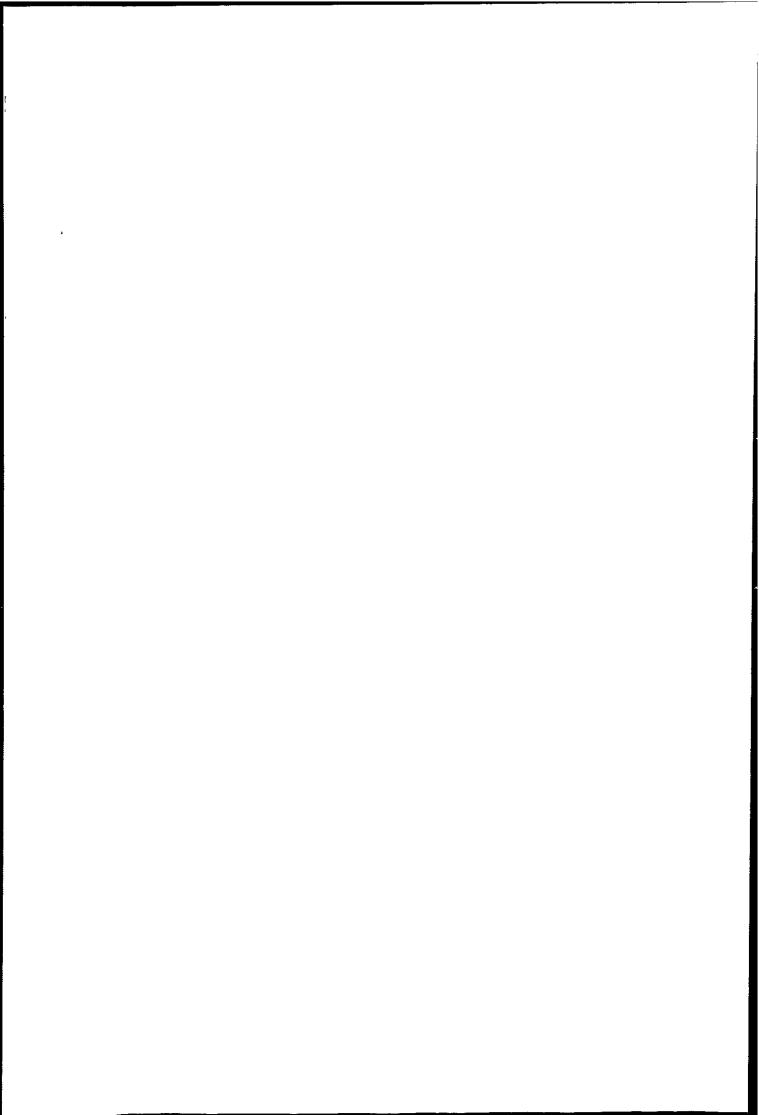
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learners to thrive in situations where they feel valued and are welcomed. They often have value systems that give them a view about the worth of the professional actions they observe and are asked to adopt in their host schools. But their participation is not dependent on congruence between their own and their hosts' value systems. Their response to incongruence is to critique situations and actions, but to participate in them wholeheartedly. The outcomes may be that aspects of their value systems, or the ways they are expressed as professional actions, are modified or are confirmed. But either way, learning occurs, because their views about worthwhile professional action have been tested and perhaps modified.

The power dynamic within engagers' teacher-learner relationship is not a problem. Their willingness to *'compromise'*, be *'flexible'* and acknowledge the possibility of alternative definitions of effective professional practice, tends to ensure that they are more likely to become accepted as temporary members of the staffs they join (Section 6.4.1), and so benefit from both professional and affective support. In impact, their stance is reminiscent of Lacey's description of *'strategic redefinition'* (Section 2.4), in that, because staff tend to perceive their attitude as constructive, engagers are often able to earn the freedom to develop some of their own classroom solutions. In Lacey's terms, their *'good performance'* allows *'those with formal power to change their interpretation of what is happening in the situation'* (op.cit. p.73).

Engagers seem likely to learn from a wider range of placement conditions than compliant trainees, whose lack of a clearly defined critical perspective is especially inhibiting when they meet difficult conditions.

Strategic compromisers and nonconformists have clearly-defined value systems, which they apply to their judgements about worthwhile professional actions. Their value systems have often been shaped and confirmed by past professional experiences, and sometimes by role exemplars, both congruent and dissonant with their existing perspectives (Sections 5.2, 9.2.4). When they encounter practices (involving adults or pupils), which exemplify professional and personal value systems distinct from their own, both types condemn such practices in terms which emphasise values implications, as well as pedagogic effectiveness. But strategic compromisers differ from nonconformists in their responses to the dilemma of how to act when confronted with dissonant expectations.

Strategic compromise

The use of the term 'strategic compromise' is influenced by Lacey's (1977) analysis of teachers' responses to expectations, dissonant with their own value systems, but placed on them by colleagues, especially head teachers. I use the term in preference to Lacey's 'strategic compliance', because Trainee 15's compliance is intended to be partial, and seeks to disengage actions from their underlying value systems. Strategic compromise recognises that the required compliance has implications that extend beyond the surface meanings of actions. It is a form of 'impression management' (Shipman 1967) rather than compliance, in that the latter suggests acceptance of underlying dissonant value systems. The compromise is to comply with the superficial detail of required behaviour, partly as a survival mechanism, but sometimes because trainees' value systems may dictate that compliance is in the best interests of pupils. However, strategic compromisers continue to reject, rather than engage with, the value systems from which such practices are derived. The decisions of Trainees 12 and 15 to spend little time with staff outside the classroom may be reflections of the 'psychologically uncomfortable' state (Nias 1987c p. 99) caused by the 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger 1957) which arose when they felt constrained to act in ways which were consistent with their hosts' value systems, but were incompatible with their own.

Further, the strategic compromises made can lead to profound affective difficulties, which arise from the mismatch between their value systems and the practices they adopt. The attempt by Trainee 15 to disengage from alien value systems, but adopt the practices through which they were expressed, appears to have reinforced her own value system by emphasising its mismatch with practices she had adopted. She cannot escape from psychological discomfort, and is alienated by the experience of doing the job. She considers that, to counter the threat to her value system, she might need to abandon her plan to become a teacher:

> I suppose I have a great - vision if you want - and I think I'd be so bitterly disappointed that I'd be squashed, because I can't really see how it would work.

Her response is consistent with Nias' evidence (1986, but quoted in Nias 1987c) that

> Teachers often leave jobs or even the profession when they are faced with prolonged and continued dissonance between the values which from a central part of their self-image and their occupational lives (p.100).
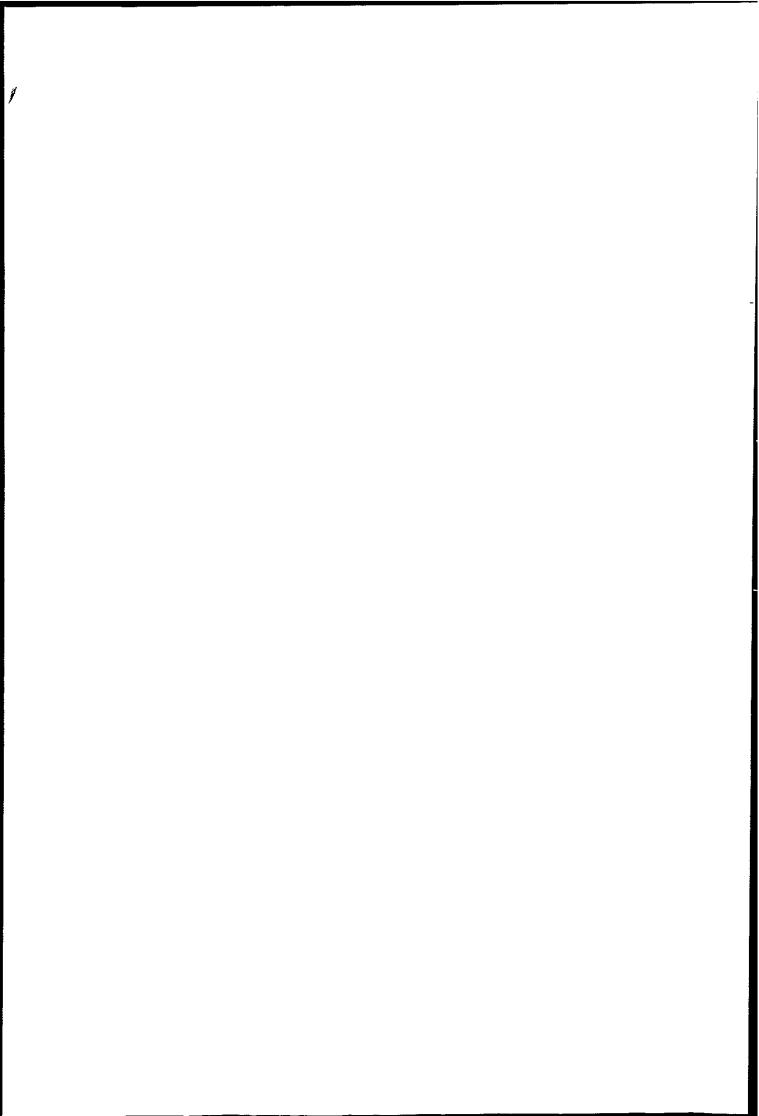
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Nonconformists

For strategic compromisers, the difficulty seems to be that idealism and compromise sit together uneasily. Unfortunately, the power dynamic in learner-teacher relationships means that their hosts can require a trainees to adopt practices and accept treatments which are dissonant with their own value systems and, in other circumstances, would be rejected. Confronted with a similar dilemma, nonconformists decide that the costs are too great and are unwilling to make compromises with their value systems. They challenge the assumption that teacher-learner relationships should legitimate power over the details of how learners should act when professional practices are alien to their values. For them, the affective and professional costs of possible isolation are exceeded by the affective and professional costs of denying their established and coherent value systems.

Under favourable, flexible and supportive placement conditions, their individualism carries limited risks. But where professional norms are tightly defined, and are derived from a coherent value system that differs from that of the learner, classroom success may bring few friends. The outcome may be self-affirmation, but is not necessarily self-development. The rightness of what is already believed is confirmed, but the growth of insight is restricted by a reluctance to examine alternatives.

Trainee 7's class teacher decided to withdraw from professional dialogue, rather than require compliance with classroom practices derived from a different value position. It is only possible to speculate how nonconformists might respond to the exercise of power by teachers who determinedly require compliance. My experiences in other contexts suggest that, rather than opt for strategic compromise, when pushed to extremes, they, or the school, may sometimes ask for withdrawal from the problematic context. Nias' evidence already quoted appears to support that hypothesis (1986).

11.3.2 The trainee group

I have identified cases that exemplify, most clearly, four different strategies indicated by the data. I do not want to overstate the extent to which the range of responses of all fifteen trainees fit the analysis. Some trainees' responses reflected some characteristics of one of the patterns, without exemplifying it fully. Other trainees exhibited different patterns of response at different times, when they reacted to new circumstances. But the data from the remaining trainees in the group appear to confirm the broad terms of the analysis.

Of the fifteen trainees, two consistently tended to be compliant. As well as Trainee 3, Trainee 8's lack of confidence in her own skills in first placement made her reliant on her mentor who *'was very good at picking up positive points as well as things to work on'*, and on the support of a year group who helped her to adopt such details of practice as

> *doing Cambridge Maths.....to find out that they weren't all sticking to the scheme as rigidly as they said you should at the start.*

She was equally compliant in her final placement, where her concern to fit in explained her self-presentation strategies:

> *Not to be too outgoing to start with, and then as you get to know the different personalities within the staff, get to know what you think they consider acceptable , then to start to join in .*

Engagement was the consistent response of seven trainees (1,2,4,5,9,10,14). Like Trainee 2, they appeared to have distinct value systems that informed their attitudes to their placements. But a key component of their value positions was flexibility:

> *You have to be very flexible about the way you do things and the way it has been done before ....I think that's very important....you can't have too many hard and fast ideas* (Trainee 4).

Consequently they adopted wholeheartedly practices which might represent alternative value systems - an attitude I characterise as *'suspension of disbelief'* :

> *You can't come in and want to do things totally differently. You're essentially borrowing someone else's class.* (Though) *I would have liked to see a totally different approach* (Trainee 10).

> *My language changed, my whole demeanour, attitude changed in the classroom* (Trainee 1).

For them, the issues of power in their relationships with their teachers posed no difficulty, since suspension of disbelief implied a constructive response to alternative patterns of practice. Engagers tended to incorporate features of practice they met into their developing repertoire of professional skills:

> *You can't completely copy what someone else does. But you can get ideas from them and then develop your own particular strategies* (Trainee 9).

> *You can just boil them all down into the melting pot. You think 'Oh so and so did this. I'll give it a go.'* (Trainee 5).

Of course, having engaged wholeheartedly with unfamiliar ways, they might still remain unconvinced;

> *I think I'll take it with me, though I'm not sure whether I'll implement it like that again. However, until I came here I couldn't have done that. I've always heard about these rotating groups. But because I didn't do it before like that, it really hit me hard* (Trainee 14).

This last point reinforces Handy's distinction between power and influence (Section 11.1). Whilst accepting the power of mentors and class teachers to regulate trainees' actions in placements, engagers remained *'gatekeepers'* of their own value systems, which were only influenced when <u>they</u> chose, and which remained the yardstick by which practices were evaluated. Further, the point has already been made that engagers' constructive attitudes could be seductive for placement staff (Section 11.2.3.2), and so change the extent to which teachers' power to constrain trainees' actions was translated into decisions to exert influence over them.

Trainees 13 and 11 are interesting because, like Trainees 7 and 15, they changed in their response patterns to different placements. Both were engagers in their first placements. But Trainee 13 felt constrained by attitudes in her final one. Initially she tried to engage with a host class teacher who resented her presence (Section 10.3.2). Under these conditions, whilst adopting the classroom practices she was required to maintain, over time Trainee 13 became unhappy about the ways power over her was exercised.

> *I learnt what I wouldn't want to be like if I ever had a student with me.*

Now a strategic compromiser, she was superficially conformist, but became increasingly isolated from and uncomfortable with the staff.

> *I'd sit in the staffroom and eat my lunch for about half an hour...eat and drink. I just felt I should keep my opinions to myself.*

Following a productive first placement, in which Trainee 11's engagement with professional practices helped clarify his own professional attitudes, he moved to a placement which challenged his fledgling professional standards. There he developed classroom practices that questioned those of his host:

> *I was going out on a limb to make sure that things like lines and queues, which were almost frowned upon, were done correctly.*

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There are common elements in the experiences of Trainees 7,11,13 and 15. All switched from engaging with placement practices, as a reaction to placement conditions which they considered extreme. They experienced clashes between their own and their hosts' value systems, which focused on attitudes to pupils and adults, and emerged through staffs' professional actions. They opted either for strategic compromise (13,15) or nonconformity (7,11), yet for similar reasons. In particular, their justifications for courses of action focus on the needs of pupils. For example, Trainee 15's strategic compromise (*'choosing to fit in with the onus not being on the school but on the children'*) and Trainee 7's nonconformity (*'I wanted* (the children) *to be responsible'*) are justified in similar terms.

However, I have already been noted that, where trainees' rudimentary practices and the value systems expressed through them are unchallenged by those of placement staffs, trainees willingly engage with ways of working in placements. In short, trainees who adopt strategic compromise or nonconformity are responding to the conditions they meet, as much as to their own value systems.

The responses of the two remaining trainees tend to confirm that trainees' placement behaviour is shaped by conditions there, as much as by their own value systems. Trainee 12 had chosen strategic compromise in her first placement, where she felt increasingly at odds with staff and their attitudes. She resolved to learn from an experience that had undermined her self-esteem. In her final placement she was superficially compliant, protecting her value system, until her returning confidence and professional and personal empathy with staff attitudes there encouraged her to engage increasingly with them. It appears that, in the light of experiences in her first placement, she predicted how her hosts' power over her as a learner and outsider might be used. She began to adopt a stance of engagement, once she perceived she could empathise with its value system. Trainee 6's initial tentativeness in her first placement tended to make her compliant. But, having begun to develop her own professional insights and acquired some confidence, in her final placement she increasingly responded by engaging more actively with her experiences there, and used them to build further her own professional value system.

11.4 Implications

Four important implications of this analysis need to be emphasised.

First, it is clear that, although trainees' emergent professional value systems influenced how they responded to each placement, the impact of staff on trainees' behaviour was not neutral. Trainees' patterns of response emerged from the interaction of their own value system with those of placement staff, especially significant individuals such as mentors and host class teachers.

Second, in discussing the ways in which teachers develop *'defences of self'* (1987c p. 101), Nias has explored the ways in which teachers tend to develop strategies which seek to resist modifications to deeply-embedded value systems which constitute an important part of the sense of self. The four ways of responding to placement experiences appear to represent different solutions to the problem of matching/mismatching value systems. For compliant trainees, their own fledgling professional value systems presented few problems of dissonance. Engagers accepted that the possible influences on their value systems were a legitimate and acceptable part of the process of learning. In their distinct ways, and with varying success, strategic compromisers and nonconformists sought to protect their own value systems from exposure to the dissonant value systems of their hosts. The evidence that some trainees' responses to the conditions of different placements can change, gives further credence to the suggestion that their ways of responding are strategic defences of self, under different placement conditions, partly informed by insights acquired from earlier placements.

Third, different placement strategies may carry affective benefits or costs. Where the interaction between trainees' value systems and placement conditions encourages trainees to be compliant, or to engage with placement values and practices, trainees may be more likely to be accepted as temporary members of those communities. Trainees who opted for strategic compromise or nonconformity tended to become isolated from the affective support staff groups might offer. Both kinds of response reject hosts' value positions and tended to cause trainees to feel alienated from their professional surroundings. Trainees tended to experience resentment when the power dynamics of their relationships as outsiders with staff groups, and as learners with teachers, coincided and required trainees to behave in ways which countered their established value systems. The alienation of nonconformists was compounded by the possibility that they might be ignored by their hosts (as was Trainee 11), or openly rejected by them (as was Trainee 7).

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Fourth, as suggested in Chapter 6, affect is connected with learning. The positive affective conditions associated with trainees' membership of staff groups tended to facilitate learning, extend the range of professional support available and broaden the range of professional situations to which trainees had access. Strategic compromisers tended to be disinclined to use such opportunities if they arose, and those who did not conform were likely to be denied them. In both instances, negative reactions to placements tend to promote self-affirmation. But unwillingness or inability to engage wholeheartedly could inhibit the professional development that might emerge from engagement with, and critique of, other perspectives.

It is important to remember that power and influence could be used beneficially. Indeed, the assumption that they would be so used underpinned the rationale for mentor-guided work-place learning, and was fundamental to teacher-learner relationships. More often than not, staff's power to shape trainees' actions was used constructively and willingly conceded by trainees. This group of trainees contained clones (compliers) as well as open and closet heretics (nonconformists and strategic compromisers). But it also included trainees (engagers) whose relationships with placement staff exemplified purposeful, legitimate, and educative use of power to influence trainees' learning productively, without confining their capacities for self-development.

Chapter 12

Learning To Teach and Workplace Learning

12.1 Introduction

Before revisiting the issues raised by this study, I want to briefly review the process of conducting the research and to consider ways in which the research might be further developed.

The decision to adopt a participant observer strategy carried with it the risks of polluting data on occasions when I might need to fulfil my participant responsibilities at the expense of my researcher perspective. In practice this has offered few problems. Rather, difficulties trainees have met, and to which I have needed to respond, have tended to enhance my insights rather than threaten my researcher perspective, because they helped me conduct interviews with a clearer understanding of placement issues from trainees' perspectives.

However, it could be suggested that trainees themselves do not always understand the processes by which they learn (remembering Brown and McIntyre's difficulties in getting experienced teachers to explain their teaching decisions in their 1993 study). Ideally I would have liked to illuminate some cases by following a very few trainees from day to day, so hoping to capture key moments in their development as they happen, and checking them in discussion with trainees. However, such a strategy presented practical difficulties for a single researcher, seeking to understand a whole trainee tutor group, and with other commitments - the disadvantage of a link tutor as participant researcher strategy.

I have pondered how to begin to understand individual trainees' learning in ways which they themselves are not able to do, whilst also accessing the fine-grained detail of its development. There may be interesting research possibilities in co-researcher approaches to analysis of a very few cases, in which the quartet of trainee, host class teacher, mentor and researcher link-tutor participant observers each contributes what any one of the others cannot access alone. Host teachers and mentors would offer detailed knowledge of day to day events, which a link tutor researcher could not access. But a link tutor's perspective would act as an antidote to the possibilities that placement cultures might distort the perceptions of the former. Indeed, differences in perspective might be very illuminating.

A further possibility might be to use insights from this research as the basis for interview agendas with future groups of trainees. Certainly, work with other trainees subsequent to data collection has tended to confirm some hypotheses proposed by this study, as well as helping to bring new insights to the data.

Finally, I am aware that, by deliberately focusing on a broad spectrum of trainees' learning from placements, I may have addressed inadequately some issues which are worthy of further detailed research in their own right. Some obvious examples which, as far as I am aware, have not been extensively researched elsewhere (unlike mentors' roles), are male trainees' experience of primary school placements, changes in trainees' status during placement, and the development and impact of trainees' teaching-oriented value systems.

I began this study by suggesting that, given the complexity of the relationships between the issues within its theme, I could most fruitfully build readers' understanding by examining each in turn. But having disentangled strands and traced them separately, I now want to rebuild their connections, in the hope that a different, patterned complexity achieves clarity and insight.

My aim is to select those strands whose pathways most lucidly express the relationships between issues. I hope to achieve the task in two stages. First, I remind the reader of the key findings which have emerged from examining themes separately. Then I consider how these interact, so that I can provide an insightful and trustworthy analysis of trainees' workplace learning.

12.2 Summary

This study sets out to understand the ways in which the professional learning of primary school trainee teachers (individually and collectively) is influenced by the primary school staffs with whom they spend their work placements. Its main findings are summarised below. I specifically do not deal with the detailed processes by which their content knowledge and pedagogic skills develop.

I identify four dominant 'modes' of learning through which trainees' professional learning develops, related to both classroom and interadult dimensions of the job. These modes of learning, as observer, participating observer, participant, and observing participant, represent changes in the complexity of trainees' perspectives on and insights into the job and its demands. Changes in mode between observer, participant observer and participant are stimulated initially by increases in contact with pupils and staff. When (or if, in the case of staffrooms) the frequency and extent of trainees' participation makes them

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central rather than peripheral participants, affective reactions initially dominate cognitive ones. The rapidity of trainees' transition to observing participant mode is dependent on a sense of security reducing affective responses and so bringing cognitive ones to the fore. To become an observing participant is to be both engaged and self-aware. Trainees can think reflexively, begin to interpret classroom events with teachers' insights, and make rationally determined decisions.

Trainees do not all respond similarly to similar placement experiences. Their responses to placement experiences (and those of placement staffs to trainees) are influenced by inescapable personal characteristics, such as their age, gender and personalities, as well as by their value systems and past experiences of life, work and teaching.

Trainees learn partly through self-reliance and self-analysis, though many have access to support from external personal and professional reference groups (including families), who sustain trainees' value systems and self-belief. But their relationships with mentors and host class teachers have an extensive influence on their learning. When these are positive, trainees learn through both planned and informal regular day-to-day feedback.

Sustained staff interventions can accelerate the process of changing learning modes, by providing the critical insights of an expert, informed observer. But trainees' heightened affective reactions, especially during participant mode, make them particularly sensitive to the affective qualities of the advice and feedback they receive. Teachers promote trainees' learning most when their professional support maintains trainees' self-esteem and enhances their security. Then, trainees not only develop their professional insights, but also respond constructively when interventions challenge them professionally - because staff treat them as learners, rather than emphasise the deficiencies in their skills.

Trainees' interaction with staff is affected both by the ways each placement implements planned structures for their learning and by unintended influences, which promote or inhibit interaction. Unintended influences include schools' physical layouts and organisation, which can affect the frequency of planned and unplanned interaction. In addition to their contribution to learning about class teaching, informal contacts help trainees understand how to behave in the school and to learn about the ways staffs in general interact.

Trainees learn best when carefully structured support from those staff with formal responsibility for their development is reinforced by supportive whole staff attitudes. These extend trainees' circles of unplanned, informal interaction about professional and personal

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issues, in places such as staffrooms (with individuals and sometimes with groups and whole staffs).

The dominant staff culture in each placement tends to encourage or inhibit interaction between trainees and staff members, because teachers' behaviour towards trainees can be that of *'culture bearers'*, in that it reflects norms and value systems of the staff as a whole (or important sections of it). Supportive staff cultures are likely to support trainees too. But the immediate (sub)culture with which trainees are most closely involved (especially within *'balkanised'* staff cultures) is a more important influence on interactions than the dominant staff culture.

Although trainees' teacher training course follows national requirements in the extent to which it uses work placements as a means of learning to teach, both the university and schools tend to view interaction with placement colleagues as a means of learning about classroom teaching, rather than as, in itself, a focus for learning. Trainees' opportunities to participate in formal and informal staff activity vary from school to school. Access to an understanding of the implications of staff membership is dependent on the attitudes of the staff as a whole, particularly on whether trainees are treated in ways that are consistent with how staff treated one another. But it is also dependent on trainees showing their willingness to fit in with staffs' ways of working and value systems. A minority of trainees develops relationships with colleagues which are akin to staff membership, but many have limited opportunities to experience its obligations or benefits. Those trainees who are accepted fully as staff members benefit hugely from access to broadly based affective and professional support, which tends to accelerate their capacities to learn about both interadult and classroom-oriented aspects of the job. Conversely, trainees who do not develop positive colleague relationships are disadvantaged by reduced opportunities to experience, and so learn about, interadult aspects of the job, and by the more limited support colleagues give them for their classroom work.

Relationships between trainees and staff sometimes reflect the imbalance of power implicit in those between teachers and learners (especially when the former are assessing the latter). Interpersonal dynamics may also affect teacher-learner ones, particularly with relatively mature, confident PGCE trainees, who may have varied past life experiences, children, or be male. Trainees sometimes have clearly-defined value systems. But these may differ from those they meet. Nevertheless, trainees' status tends to mean they are expected to *'fit in'* with practices derived from dissonant value systems.

I identify four types of trainees' response to situations where they are expected to adopt staffs' practices, even when these reflect dissonant value systems. I characterise these as *'compliance'*, *'engagement'*, *'strategic compromise'*, and *'nonconformity'*. Compliant trainees adopt the practices of their placements in detail and do so uncritically. Engagers are willing to suspend temporarily any possible misgivings about incongruent value systems, but retain the ability to critique their own and others' practices, and so are able to learn from both positive and negative instances of professional practice. Strategic compromise attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable, by trying to separate actions from the value systems that inform them, and then adopt the former whilst rejecting the latter. Nonconformists are unwilling to accept the power implications of their learner role and, where they are allowed to do so, adopt practices consistent with their own values systems rather than those of hosts.

The main consequences of these responses are that compliance is likely to facilitate acceptance within staff groups, but is not an inevitable guarantee of membership. Compliant trainees learn largely by reacting to events. Engagers' wholeheartedness and flexibility increases their chances of gaining the affective and professional benefits of staff membership, and their critical perspective enhances their learning opportunities. But strategic compromise can lead to affective discomfort and symbolic or actual withdrawal from the situations which caused it, without enhancing learning. Nonconformity is likely to result in isolation and in staff support being withheld. It tends to encourage self-affirmation and reduce the possibilities of enhanced learning (which engagement with alternative professional practices allows).

Some aspects of trainees' short-term learning (which is concerned with meeting the demands of a specific placement) begin to have long-term implications too. Trainees acquire an understanding of the nature of the job, to the point where, when they are successful, they begin to develop a teacher's perspective. They begin to perceive that their personal qualities and value systems influence doing the job. But, although trainees begin to be able to generalise broad principles from particular experiences, new placements often still produce unexpected challenges.

12.3 Discussion

I now examine the relationships between these findings by tracing three dominant themes which constantly interact with one another within this study. They are communities of practice and cultures, learning to teach, and facilitating trainees' development as

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teachers. I explore the ways in which placement cultures influence both trainees' learning and the actions of those school staff whose task is to provide trainees with the professional and personal help they need.

12.3.1 Communities of practice and cultures

The two ideas of *'culture'* and *'communities of practice'*, which have been central to this analysis, have different origins. *'Culture'* is derived from the study of how social groups (including work ones) interact and evolve. *'Community of practice'* is concerned with analyses of how novices learn jobs whose skills are contained in and are inseparable from the practices of working communities. But there appears to be limited difference between the meanings of the two terms. Although there are some differences in the ways *'practice'* is defined, definitions overlap considerably. Since Wenger's definition includes both explicit *'procedures', 'regulations', 'contracts',* and tacit *'conventions' 'intuitions', 'sensitivities', 'understandings', 'assumptions'* and *'shared world views'* (Section 2.7), his analysis closely matches definitions of staff cultures, which emphasise explicit *'norms'* and tacit *'beliefs and values; understandings, attitudes and meanings'* (Nias, Southworth and Yeomans op.cit. p11). Differences are of emphasis rather than substance (communities of practice emphasise structured, planned and articulated framing of practice; cultures emphasise the subtleties of value systems). Their common ground is to connect what members do with the meanings that actions convey, in that structures shape norms, which are also shaped by value systems. Wenger's phrase, shared *'world views',* embraces beliefs and values, which are central to the idea of cultures. Further, to share fully in a community of practice is to understand and share its culture. Even when, in a footnote, Wenger distinguishes *'practice'* from *'culture',* he does so in terms which tend to confirm their broad identity, by suggesting that *'practice is much more enterprise-specific and thus community-specific than is culture'* (1998 p. 291). For him, culture is a term generalisable across many communities of practice. But in this study, I have used *'staff culture'* to refer to the particular meanings negotiated by specific interacting groups of people, even though *'forms'* of culture (Hargreaves 1994) may be used to generalise across staff cultures.

One way of discriminating between the two constructs is to refer to the *'culture of a community of practice'.* By doing so, I explicitly separate ways of behaving and thinking from the community of which these are characteristic. I use community of practice in this restricted sense in my discussion, and take the *'practice'* in which it engages to be synonymous with its *'culture'.* This is partly because I want to emphasise that how

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communities act also expresses their value systems, and that *'culture'* necessarily includes both.
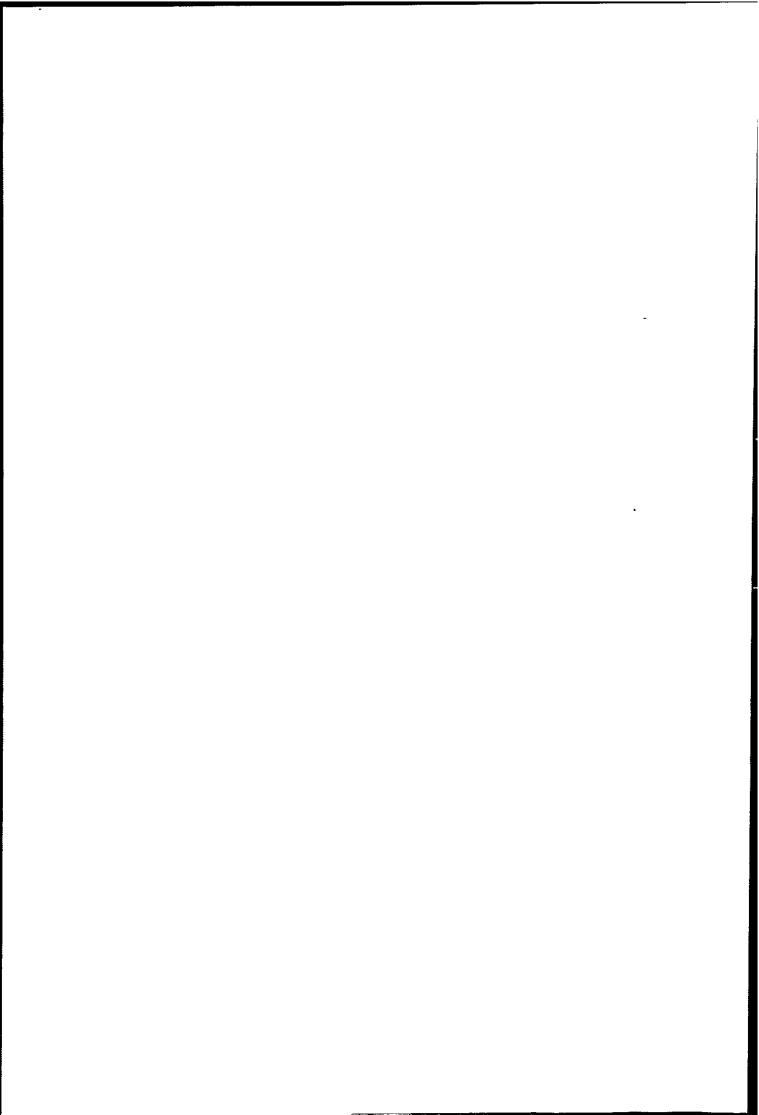
Analyses of cultures already discussed (Chapter 2), suggest that they develop through interaction, which builds and cements relationships to the point where a core of shared ways of behaving, including thinking, can develop. These convey a shared value system (although there may also be ways in which individuals differ from one another). In such circumstances, it becomes possible to identify *'membership'* of a culture by whether an individual subscribes to its practices and value system. Membership also implies that an individual is recognised and accepted by other members as *'belonging'*, and so conveys affective benefits of support.

In this study I deal with a particular practice, called teaching, carried out by teachers, who belong to specific communities of practice, called school staffs (remembering Wenger's insistence that *'practice'* is *'community-specific'*). I focus on how such staffs influence trainee teachers who are placed with them in order to learn to teach. In other words, here is a specific instance of being attached to a community of practice. Because primary school staff groups tend to be small, the impacts of staff cultures on their members can be especially powerful, since staff size tends to intensify the frequency of interaction and makes opting-out more difficult (Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989; Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992). My analysis suggests that being attached to a community of practice and joining it have separate meanings, whose difference is crucial to an understanding of staffs' influence on trainees, and is linked to the difference between being peripheral to a community of practice and having membership of its culture. A necessary (but not sufficient) condition of joining is *'fitting in'*.

Staff cultures impinge strongly on learning to teach because they contribute to both its content and its processes.

12.3.2 Learning to teach

The processes of learning to teach are regulated by procedures which require primary school PGCE trainees to spend most of their training year located in at least two school placements, and encourage arrangements for them to be mentored, supported and assessed mainly by school staff, whilst university staff monitor the support and assessment processes (Sections 1.2, 1.3). That situation has evolved, over more than a decade, from one where student teachers learnt about teaching in higher education institutions and practised it in schools, and where higher education tutors monitored and assessed their professional

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skills. The broad direction of that change has been relatively unchallenged, even if the detail of its implementation has not. Part of its impetus has been derived from wide agreement that school staff are better placed physically than university tutors to help trainees grapple with the day to day problems of teacher practice, and to support them in developing theories about practice which have long-term value for their professional growth. In essence, the changes since Circular 14/93 are an explicit endorsement of the advantages of workplace learning and of the importance of practitioners contributing centrally to trainees' development.

This study indicates that the processes in which trainees engage in their placements may, in several respects, be more complex than nationally required structures for learning to teach acknowledge. Workplace learning appears not to be a straightforward matter of being attached to a classroom, being told school and classroom rules, following them, teaching according to the National Curriculum, being given helpful advice by staff, following it, and developing into a beginning teacher.

First, it is impossible to separate the nature of the professional activity of a group such as a specific primary school staff from its interdependence with the culture to which it contributes and which it reflects. Trainees' evidence of the range of ways of working in different primary school placements confirms this analysis. Learning to teach within a placement requires that, in order to fully experience and understand the nature of the job there, trainees need to join rather than merely be attached to a community of practice - to understand and at least have experience of its 'world view' of teaching and being a teacher (if not necessarily to share it). Current workplace-based structures of initial teacher training rest on a false assumption that practice can be separated from culture, when, in reality, they are interdependent.

Second, the arrangements of a PGCE year build on the premise that the experience of working in different primary schools is broadly similar. It is then possible to use the short-term learning related to one placement to build long-term learning from which work in later placements can benefit. Notwithstanding differences between trainees, it is assumed that what one trainee can learn in one placement can also be learnt in a different placement by another trainee. It follows that trainees can be placed with different schools and expect to have broadly equitable experiences and treatment.

Yet the data from these trainees suggests that the differences in individual trainees' placement experiences are sufficiently diverse in quality and extent of access to experience, advice and support, for assumptions about equity to be problematic. In theory, objective

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and detailed standards performance criteria can be applied similarly to trainees in placements which, in reality, have diverse classroom conditions, variable kinds and levels of professional advice and affective support from responsible staff, and of informal advice and support from the community of practice (partly dependent on the nature of its culture). The process of assessing trainees' learning and professional performance can appear a subjective, even flawed, art, partly dependent on taking account of differences between placements, rather than an objective science. Trainees' success can partly depend on the lottery of where they are placed.

Third, teacher training processes depend on the assumption that trainees will learn to become teachers by observing, working within, and to some extent adopting the specific practices of one community - the process trainees refer to as *'fitting in'*, noted by Furlong and Maynard (op.cit. 1995), Calderhead and Shorrocks (1997) and Wooldridge and Yeomans (1994), and discussed in several chapters (particularly 6 and 11). *'Fitting in'* introduces trainees to issues of interadult relationships which are a major influence on teachers' experiences of doing their jobs. Yet there is little evidence of nationally planned or encouraged attempts to build trainees understanding of the contributions of interadult processes to the professional life and work of teachers.

Fourth, the evidence of this study is that the seemingly reasonable assumption that fitting in helps trainees learn to teach, can hide complexities which may undermine, rather than facilitate, the development of beginning teachers with well-formed critical perspectives - a point to which I now turn.

12.3.2.1 Learning to teach, 'fitting in' and joining.

Fitting in as a trainee with the workplace behaviour of a primary school staff is a complex process, because it is concerned with two linked sets of expectations which can compete with one another. In that trainees seek to join a community (of practice), they are subject to the same processes as any other newcomers seeking to be accepted by a new social and work group. But they also deal with the added complexities of having to do so as learners who need to develop the skills exemplified by the community of practice.

Fitting in as newcomers

Few newcomers are accepted unconditionally by few staffs. To be accepted into membership of a community requires that newcomers adopt its culture, including its norms, practices and value systems (Yeomans 1987; Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989).

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I have suggested that, like most newcomers, trainees' affective needs for comfort and security prompt them to want to be accepted by staffs in a personal sense. Their minimum purpose is to avoid antagonising the staff. But they hope to develop constructive relationships with a range of staff which is sufficiently wide for trainees not to feel isolated and unsupported.

It is unsurprising that members of the host community should expect to want to shape the professional and personal behaviour of newcomers, and that their concerns should extend beyond practices and norms to value systems - given the interdependence of professional actions and tacit value systems. Tacit features of their cultures are important to staffs' sense of being communities, in that these are invisible links which define membership. The natural wish to preserve important features of their cultures is likely to prompt staffs to want to constrain trainees' behaviour, since not to do so would be to undermine the value system which shared practices express. It is also unsurprising that trainees experience collective hostility from a staff group or sub group, if they are perceived to undermine its practices and value systems - as several examples confirm. Of course, access to genuine membership of the community of practice requires discernment, acceptance and adoption of its more subtle tacit features by trainees. Consequently, gaining access requires significant amounts of time and perhaps also a willingness to allow professional identities to be influenced. Trainees can only become members when they adopt the value systems of their hosts as well as their practices and, even then, are subject to staffs' willingness to allow trainees access to membership.

Fitting in as learners

As learners too, trainees expect to fit in with their placements' ways of working. Indeed their course requires them to do so, in the broad sense that they learn to teach by being located in a community of practice of teaching, and by being socialised into an occupational culture there. In turn, the latter is shaped by an official version of that culture. This is in the form of practices which are consistent with the teaching and learning frameworks recommended or required by legislation, orders, and officially-recommended prescriptions (currently for example, numeracy and literacy hours), together with the value systems implicit within them. Such frameworks prescribe what, to some extent how, and the organisational frameworks within which curricula are taught.

Arrangements for teacher training are similarly shaped by government circulars, which define their content, structure, and the standards by which trainees are to be assessed.

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The implications of official circulars are that trainees will learn to teach partly by understanding how to fit into the particular set of arrangements which each school has developed within its institutional culture, in order to accommodate official teaching and learning cultures. Indeed, Edwards and Ogden suggest that trainees become '*agents of policy delivery*' (1998 p10) (see Section 3.4). In other words, learning to teach is intended to be a process by which occupational and cultural stakeholders socialise new entrants into dominant official and institutional cultures.

The evidence of this study is that fitting in as learners can be problematic for trainees once it means more than working within the structures and routines developed by a particular staff community to help it achieve its professional purposes. The pressures on trainees to fit in are strong precisely because they are learners. From trainees' viewpoints, fitting in implies that, in order to appear authentic to pupils and staff in a particular school, they have to align their personal and professional behaviour with that of qualified professionals in their placements. But to do so requires that trainees understand and are seen to adopt communities' culturally acceptable practices, and, by implication, the value systems which these represent.

Trainees are particularly constrained in classrooms. Again, it seems reasonable that they implement existing classroom routines. Classrooms contain exemplars of the ways experienced teachers themselves adopt and adapt official and school professional cultures. By working in and with these, novices begin to understand what experienced teachers do, and how and why they act. These understandings are necessary preconditions for novices to be able to take on the role of teachers in these same classrooms.

But from trainees' viewpoints, fitting in presents several problems. It brings them beyond concerns with learning about professional practice to ones of adopting value systems. Evidence from this study suggests that as adults, many tend to have their own well-developed value systems. Within interpersonal exchanges they may feel as much adults as learners. If they are required to adopt practices which challenge their value systems, or if their life experiences are not acknowledged or valued, there can be a negative impact on their self-esteem (and hence on their capacity to learn). Further, findings indicate that different staff cultures can represent different sets of values, and may not inevitably provide positive models for trainees to emulate. Again, this is particularly so in classrooms, which tend to be personal spaces in the sense that, though they express official and school cultures, these are filtered through the value systems of individual class teachers and, in turn, expressed in the practices of their classrooms. In some instances, trainees may be

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under pressure to adopt practices which reflect one individual's professional values, rather than those of a professional community.

Nevertheless, there are considerable pressures on trainees to conform to the professional cultures of their placements. They are not only vulnerable because of their status as learners, strangers and visitors. Further, members of the very staff groups whose practices they may be expected to adopt also assess them. Questioning of or challenges to experienced teachers' ways of working can be perceived as criticism of a teacher personally and professionally. Perceived challenges from trainees can have repercussions on staffs' perceptions of trainees' suitability for teaching, since the basis of assessments of trainees is their capacity to work effectively as teachers within specific professional placements. Further, since school mentors make an important contribution to the assessment of trainees' professional competence, it is in trainees' long-term interests to show they can adopt the practices which, observation suggests, may represent each school's version of effective practice.

Yet, if trainees want to be accepted as temporary members of the community of practice (in other words if they hope to join it), they have to fit in in the full sense of being seen to adopt practices which reflect its value system.

I have indicated the ways in which different trainees try to resolve this dilemma of how and discussed whether to fit in with practices which reflect value systems they may or may not share, and the costs and benefits which accrue from different strategies. Only engagers seem able fully to solve the problem of reconciling the pressures towards conformity with their long-term professional development. It seems that they are able to prevent encounters with dissonant values from leading to the psychological discomfort of *'cognitive dissonance'*, which can arise when individuals act in ways which are inconsistent with views they hold (Festinger 1957 in Nias 1987c). I suggested that the roots of their achievement are in their abilities to *'suspend their disbelief'* in apparently dissonant practices. My explanation implies that engagers neither abandon nor compromise their personal value systems, but that, by psychologically defining themselves as learners, they are able to consider the possibilities of alternative courses of action without these impinging on deeply held value systems. Learners are able to adopt new courses of action without any implication that they are abandoning any aspects of a professional *'self'*, because, by definition, a learner's professional self is still being formed.

The study shows that achieving membership has major short-term benefits within the placements. These are, enhanced affective support, range of help for classroom work

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and extended access to opportunities to learn about interadult aspects of the job (which in turn has long term professional benefits). It is no coincidence that engagers tended to be more likely than other groups to gain membership, since the conviction with which they adopted the practices of their hosts is likely to place them in a favourable light with the staff. It is however paradoxical that it seems that it is their capacities to define themselves as learners which encourages staff to accept and treat them as members of a staff of teachers. The subtly different status of quasi-membership hinted at by some trainees, seems to imply that some trainees are welcomed at a personal level, and gain many of the professional and affective benefits of membership, but continue to be defined as learners, and so are not treated as professional equals.

An issue which remains is whether the significant short-term benefits of membership incur long-term costs.

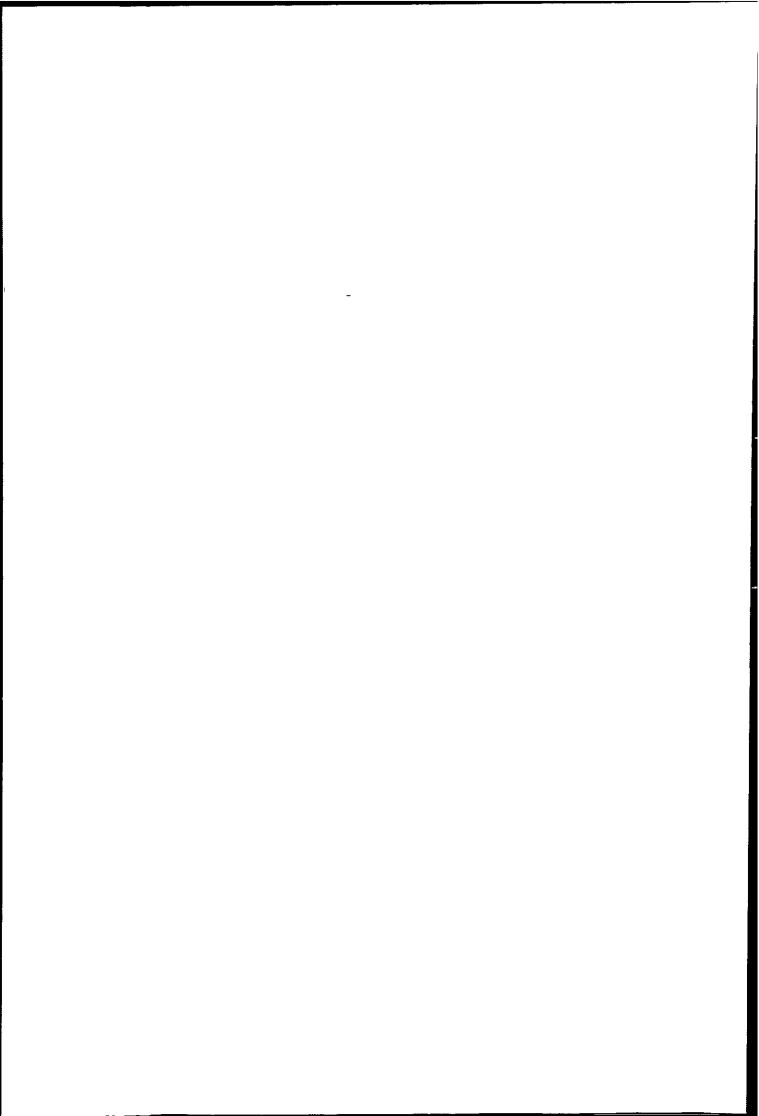### 12.3.2.2 Developing a critical perspective

A concern from a previous study (Wooldridge and Yeomans 1994) had been that trainees, particularly those on a course as short as a one year PGCE programme, might, through gaining membership, become 'acculturated' to an unquestioning acceptance of the practices and value systems of a persuasive host staff's culture. But, with the exceptions of those I have characterised as compliant, in the present study this tends not to happen. The majority develops teacher-like perspectives which reflect and build on their personal qualities and value systems and incorporate critical and reflexive dimensions. The latter help trainees to achieve learning which has long-term implications, by generalising from solutions to short-term professional situations.

The development of trainees' critical perspectives appears to build on several factors. First, these are mature adults, some of whom already have had rich life experiences and in several instances have been participants in quasi-teaching contexts. Consequently, many have already developed value systems which frame the ways they interpret professional actions in their placements, and are reference points which they use to evaluate professional actions there. Second, the differences between placements often raise questions about the practices of each. Attitudes and practices in the final placement are shaped by experiences in earlier ones, judgements about previous experiences are sometimes revised, and practices whose worth has been taken for granted are questioned. Third, the small but influential reference groups outside their placements help to sustain value systems which may be temporarily vulnerable. These contacts help trainees draw on

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the value systems (and sometimes the practices) of *'latent cultures'* (Lacey op.cit. - see Section 2.4), which they bring with them. They can be refreshed by telephone, and help trainees retain an objective view of the community of practice in which they are located, rather than being absorbed by it. Fourth, when trainees experience values dissonance, the strategies adopted by many enable them to either cope or respond constructively, rather than become compliant and acculturated. Finally, although staffs may want to protect the practices through which their communities' value systems are expressed, the temporary nature of trainees' stay has dual implications. First, there may not be time for acculturation to become deeply-rooted. Second, staff may also have little interest vested in influencing trainees to engage with the subtle meanings conveyed by their community's practice (which may be seldom articulated). Although the impact of time trainees spend analysing professional practice when they are in their higher education institution is beyond the scope of this study, it would be surprising if it had not also contributed to trainees' capacities to remain engaged rather than compliant.

My analysis of how trainees learn shows that the development of their critical perspectives helps them to learn from both positive and negative experiences, particularly when they operate as observing participants. In this mode, trainees are able to escape from the affective reactions of participant mode, when they may partly rely on *'memories-in-action'* from past schooling as the source of ideas. Rather, their developing capacities to frame professional situations in the ways teachers do, helps trainees to rapidly analyse the requirements of such situations and engage in critical decision-making.

When discussing trainees as observing participants, I have suggested that learning in this mode depends on them being able to experience central rather than merely peripheral involvement in the job of teacher, both in its classroom and interadult dimensions. But it is clear that trainees can become centrally involved too rapidly, and that phases of peripheral involvement are as important for the development of trainees' insights as is the capacity to adopt a peripheral perspective at will. In workplaces where trainees' presence is perceived to be legitimate, peripherality enables them to retain an observer's perspective when they are participants (in that they experience the full range of the classroom job and are treated as members, or at least quasi-members of the community of practice). Observing participant mode provides the ideal learners' stance of being able to participate centrally, yet observe peripherally (where observing incorporates a critical, and sometimes reflexive, perspective).

In summary, it seems that trainees are most likely to develop and benefit from a critical perspective when they have an attitude of *'engagement'*, which facilitates the development of learning in *'observing participant'* mode, through a process which retains the elements of legitimacy and peripherality of perspective, coupled with extensive participation in both classroom and interadult school professional life.

12.3.3 Facilitating learning to teach

This study of trainees' workplace learning has also been concerned with the ways in which its development is influenced by the direct interventions of primary school staff with whom trainees work, particularly those who are formally involved in their day to day learning. In the light of the discussion in Section 12.3.2, I now reframe the issue as being concerned with how staff ensure learning by facilitating in trainees attitudes of engagement, learning in observing participant mode, and their access to legitimate peripheral participation in all aspect of a teacher's job.

Where classroom learning is concerned, it is clear that mentors and host class teachers in particular are an important influence on trainees' self-development. They make arrangements to provide trainees with regulated opportunities to move from limited to extensive classroom participation. When teachers and mentors adopt a learner model of trainee support, they can have a cognitive impact on trainees' teaching skills by facilitating the growth of trainees' critical perspectives through the nature of their interventions (including feedback). The manner in which interventions occur can also provide affective support, which maintains trainees' self-esteem and feelings of being comfortable in their placements. This last point is crucial to encouraging the development of engaged, observing participants. Teachers' and mentors' support for trainees' self-esteem helps reduce the affective impact of participation, can accelerate progress towards observing participant learning mode and, by emphasising a constructively critical perspective, can encourage engagement. Equally importantly, mentors and host teachers can use questioning and challenge to promote critical thinking in trainees who tend towards compliance.

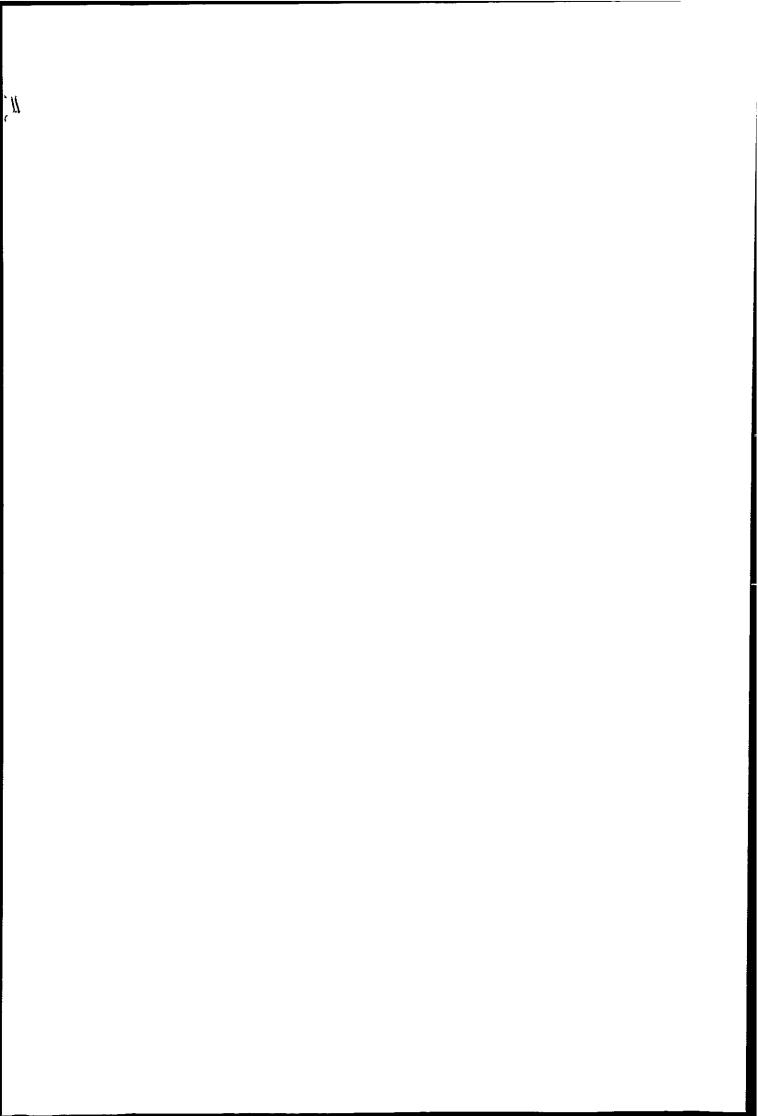It is tempting to speculate that mentors' and host teachers' influence could be important for nonconformists and strategic compromisers too. Data suggest that trainees who respond in either of these two ways do not necessarily sustain them in each placement. There is limited indication that when staff show they are willing to accept diversity, be open themselves, and demonstrate their own critical perspectives, they may help such

trainees develop similar attitudes (which appear to be like those of *'engagement'*) so that they begin to respond constructively to perceived dissonant value systems.

Learning about the interadult dimensions of the job remains problematic. Since, unlike classroom learning, its significance for trainees' professional learning, and responsibility for its development, are not made explicit in initial teacher training arrangements, learning about interadult teacher skills remains a haphazard process. Whole staffs are only involved informally and when they choose, even though its focus is individuals' interactions as part of whole staffs. Of course, a reason for neglecting learning about this aspect of the job may be that it is one with which staff themselves do not feel at ease nor fully understand.

But I have also made the point that the development of trainees' interadult learning, especially through membership of communities of practice, has the capacity to promote trainees' classroom learning too, because it can have a positive influence on their affective states and extends their access to sources of, and specific support for, learning about classrooms. As with the development of staff cultures, staffs' capacities to influence trainees' learning seem to be dependent on the nature of interaction (in the first case within staffs, in the second within staffs and between staffs and trainees). Trainees' learning benefits from interaction which is extensive and frequent, focused on understanding teaching, sustained in being both continuing and regular, and structured insofar as it has a flexible and changing agenda which responds to trainees' needs. A staff culture which is both supportive and open is able to respond to trainees' affective needs and, to some extent, their cognitive ones too. The alternative scientific meaning of *'culture'*, as a medium which nurtures growth, aptly describes the conditions which can support trainees' learning in a supportive community of practice. It provides the ideal medium in which the structured and sustained interventions of learning-oriented interactions between trainees and mentors / host class teachers can stimulate sustained development in trainees - particularly when both the structure the latter provide and their agendas for trainees' learning are directed by each trainee's specific developmental needs. Issues of values and power are relevant to this last point.

A case might be constructed for socialising trainees into the value systems of teacher cultures by requiring them to fit in with placements' value systems as a way of refining their own, and so directing them towards appropriate ones for teaching. Certainly, individual teachers, as culture bearers, are likely to express the value systems of their staff cultures through their professional actions. But the evidence of trainees' responses to the
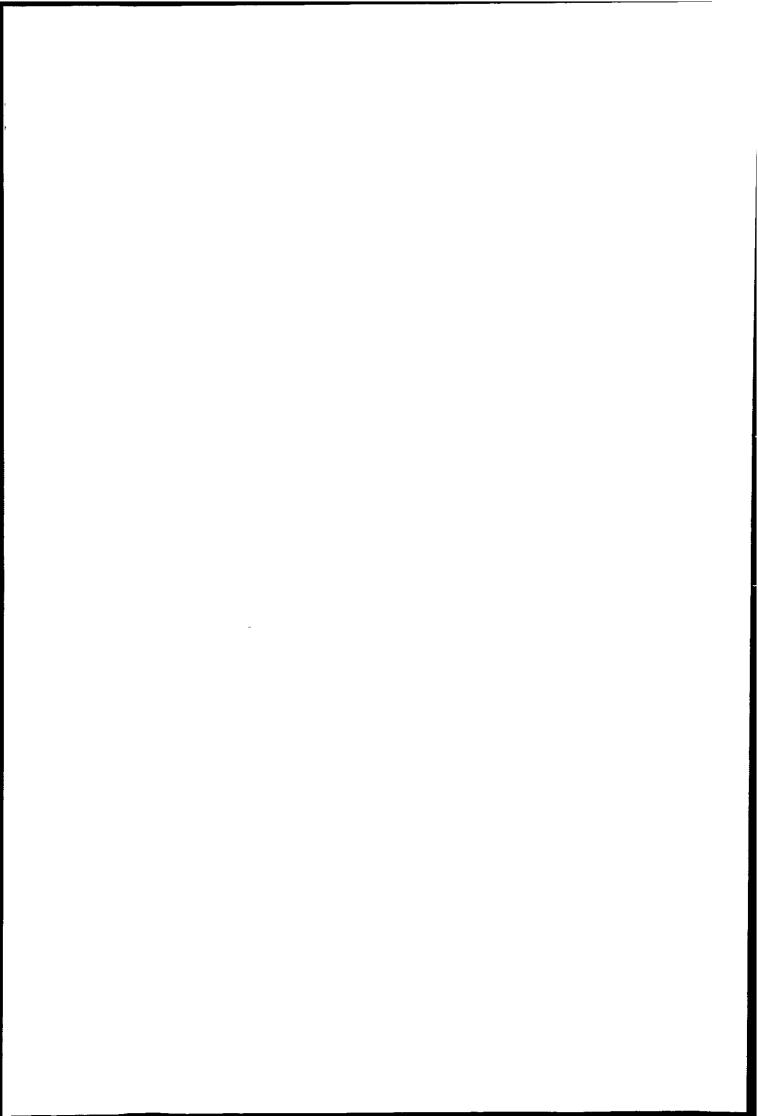
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exercise of power over them suggests that there are several reasons why such an intention can be counter-productive for their learning and in particular for the development of their critical perspectives.

First, since the relationship between practices and value systems is often tacit, sometimes trainees may adopt practices without understanding the values implications of what they do. Second, in observer, participating observer, and participating modes, trainees as novices may be predisposed to accept what they see, experience, and are told. Third, trainees' limited resources for resisting teachers' power over their actions, coupled with their affective needs for security, may prompt them to collude with teachers' perspectives without questioning the bases from which they are derived. None of these responses is likely to promote trainees' long-term learning or encourage them to become critical practitioners.

I suggest it is better that trainees are encouraged to recognise, acknowledge openly, and scrutinise, the value systems which shape professional decision-making, rather than that they base their professional actions on pragmatic judgements, derived from predictions about how staff may use their power to require conformity. Moreover, a staff's willingness to open their value systems to debate and scrutiny might be a significant indicator of their development towards becoming a community where learning is the paramount motive for action.

My argument then is that the crucial influence on learning to teach in placements is that of the placement cultures within which learning happens. Staff cultures shape trainees' interactions with their placement staffs, including mentors and host class teachers and are themselves a focus for learning (since they are crucial parts of the experience of doing the job). I have discussed the ways in which staffs' own cultures, which shape their professional behaviour and their relationships with one another, also become a powerful influence on trainees' workplace learning. This is, first, because they provide the social and professional parameters within which trainees have to work and to which they have to adjust their personal and professional behaviour in the school. Second, they influence trainees' learning directly, by determining the extent and quality of affective and professional support they receive, and the extent of their access to legitimate peripheral participation in all aspects of the job - particularly its interadult dimensions. Third, by influencing the support and opportunities for learning to which trainees have access, staff cultures affect trainees' modes of learning, particularly by influencing their opportunities to become participants and observing participants. Fourth, the influence of staff cultures also

shapes the nature of personal and professional interactions between trainees and the mentors and host class teachers with whom they work most closely. These interactions determine the extent and quality of professional facilitation that trainees experience, the extent to which they are or are not constrained in classrooms, are expected to act in ways which are consistent with hosts' professional value systems and, ultimately, how trainees themselves respond.

12.3.4 Conclusions

This has been a study of a limited number of instances of PGCE primary teacher trainees' learning within one British higher education institution. Whilst it is possible to draw some general conclusions about the influence of placement staffs on trainees' professional learning, I recognise that there may be limitations on the generalisabilty of this study to the professional learning of other primary trainee teachers. Generalisations apply to the cases studied. They represent attempts to identify important aspects of the complexity of trainees' learning processes, rather than to propose a simple recipe for improvement with few ingredients. They may not fully generalise to groups such as B Ed trainees, whose learning may be differently affected by the greater length of their course and greater number of placements, and possibly by the age profiles of B Ed groups, which may include significant numbers of school leavers. Nevertheless, several issues deserve emphasis.

First, this study suggests that the premises on which school-based teacher training builds underestimate the complexity of the processes of workplace learning. The current teacher training system represents a framework for learning to teach which depends on a process of socialisation into teaching through placement learning. It has a limited capacity to encourage the development of critical thinking in trainees, partly because of the largely superficial nature of the insights they gain into how professional practices develop and are shaped by tacit influences, including value systems.

Second, the system is inequitable, in that it is based on the premise that, because primary schools adopt a similar curriculum for similar age groups, they are different instances of the same community of practice, when in reality, they represent a range of forms of communities of practices, shaped by the different parameters of each placement and the teachers who are staff members there. Consequently trainees can have different experiences from which different learning arises. Attempts to apply a single set of criteria to assess different trainees' learning in different placements therefore become problematic.

Third, staff cultures can be powerful influences on trainees, who experience pressures to become socialised into the particular professional culture of each school, a process widely identified as *'fitting in'*. *'Fitting in'* is a powerful influence on trainees, because conformity with staff expectations of trainees' personal and professional behaviour can be the price they pay for staff support, approval, and even for their professional futures.
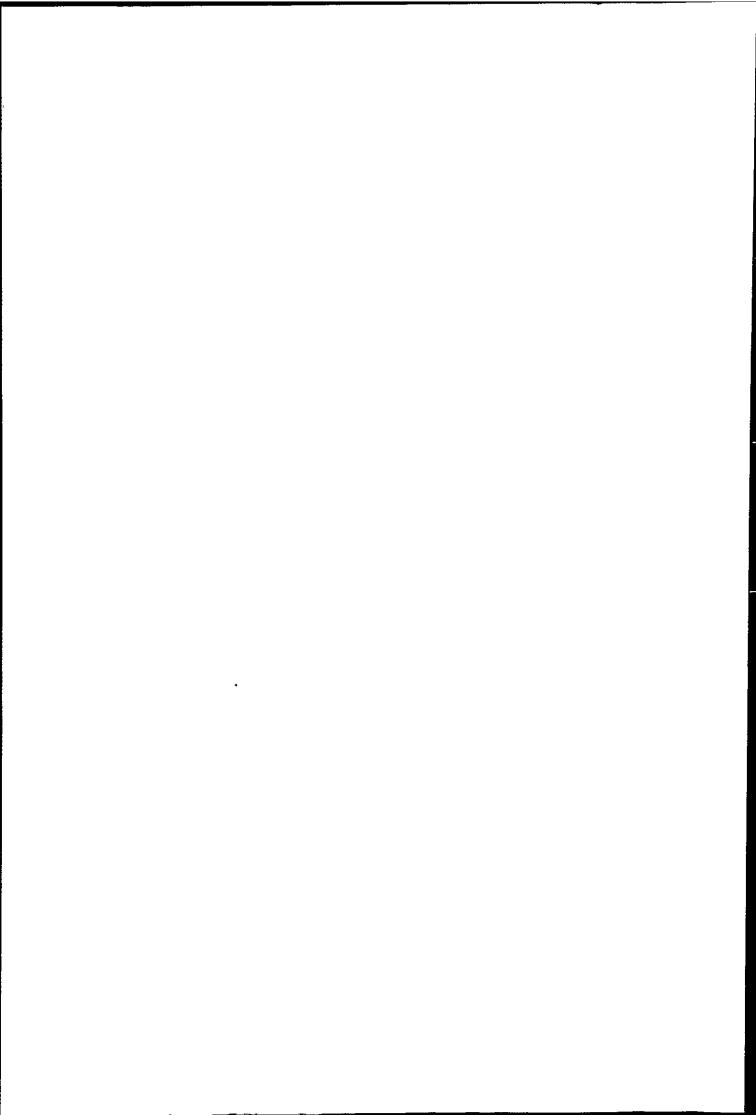
Although experience of and insights into different forms of staff culture may enhance trainees' understanding of teaching as a job working with adults, only some forms provide them with supportive conditions for their learning. Staffs are more likely to ensure that trainees fit in with their professional practices than that they experience the range and quality of participation in the life of staffs which is akin to membership. Staffs have understandable interests vested in ensuring the former (in order to sustain the practices and value systems which define their professional community) rather than the latter. Consequently trainees are more often supported by a placement community in developing its practices, than in developing their own teacher identities and critical perspectives.

A few trainees achieve membership of communities of practice at some point during their placements, but because the majority continue to be treated as trainees (a status which differs from that of teacher), they learn to adopt that status in their relationships with their hosts. Such trainees are disadvantaged by their limited opportunities to participate fully in interadult dimensions of teachers' jobs.

When there is a mismatch between trainees' personal qualities and value systems and those of which placement staff approve, there is a danger that judgements about trainees' professional skills may be adversely affected, even though they are not so much weak learners as learners whose perspectives fit uneasily with those of the professional cultures of their placements.

Fourth, nevertheless, trainees tend not to become acculturated, partly because in many instances they do not gain staff membership, and partly because they develop their own strategies for dealing with pressures to fit in, including reliance on external reference groups,

Fifth, official curricula for teacher training largely ignore explicit learning about the interadult dimension of teachers' jobs. The latter receives only limited explicit recognition within the workplace arrangements for trainees' learning. A consequence of this omission is that classroom work tends to be isolated from an understanding of its relationships to interadult aspects of the job.

Sixth, the potential benefits of the unplanned contributions of a whole staff to trainees' learning to teach are underestimated. Trainees who gain acceptance as staff members benefit both from enhanced affective security and from the specific and widespread staff professional support which membership generates. Further, they gain both in enhanced access to means of professional learning about classroom teaching and in insights into interadult side of teachers' jobs.
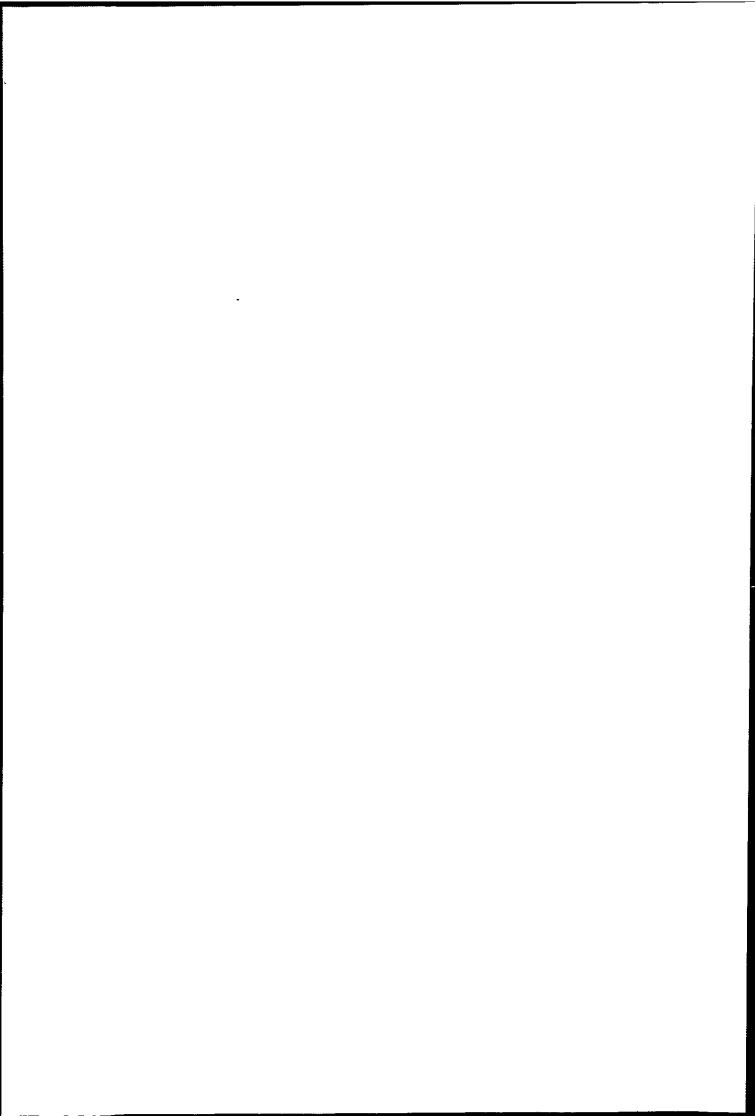
Finally, however, trainees' learning remains in their own hands. Staff can facilitate its growth, but what they facilitate is trainees' capacities for self-development in the long term. Some trainees remain compliant and unreflexive learners.

12.3.5 The study and relevant research literature

In Chapter Two I linked the theme of this study with literature on adult learning, experiential learning, learning facilitation, the influence of past cultural experiences on learning, and situated learning. I examined models of professional learning, including specific models of learning to teach, within which I discussed literature on school cultures, including primary schools. I now revisit the most significant issues in the relationship between this study and the literature relevant to trainee teachers' learning.

I suggest that this study contributes to an understanding of trainee teachers' placement learning in three main respects. First, I offer a new analysis of their learning about the interadult dimensions of the teacher's job. Second, I add new perspectives to existing analyses of staffs' contributions to trainees' learning, by exploring the impact of whole staffs, as well as confirming (and in some respects adding to) analyses of individuals' contributions, including those of mentoring staff. Third, I confirm the analyses of several existing perspectives on learning, but apply them specifically to teacher training, and so am able to propose a framework of placement learning which brings a fresh perspective to discussions of school-based teacher training.

The framework of four modes of trainee learning (observer, participating observer, participant, observing participant), which emphasises the ways in which trainees develop insights into their placement experiences, shares with Kolb a concern with learners' capacities to use and build from experiences. With Mezirow, I emphasise the ways in which learners use the processes in which they engage to transform their understanding of situations. The analysis of experience becomes learning when it transforms learners' perspectives, so that they 'see anew' (Nias 1987a) , and so are prompted to respond in new ways. In this respect, the framework also reflects Edwards and Ogden's (1998) and

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Furlong and Maynard's emphasis on developing teacher-like insights as a crucial part of trainees' development - the latter are able *'to "frame" what is happening around them; to interpret the significance or insignificance of events or behaviours; and to know what to expect'* (Furlong and Maynard 1995 p. 71).

Unlike Schon's 'reflective practitioner' model, I derive the framework from the perspectives of novices, rather than seeking to build a model of novice learning from a *'post hoc'* rational deconstruction of how experts seek to teach. Expert practitioners may .indeed engage in *'knowing-in-action'*, and *'reflection-in-action'*, and novices may benefit from being encouraged to engage in *'reflection-on-action'*. But these terms indicate targets for novices to aspire to rather than describe the processes in which they need to engage.

The influence of affective responses is a theme which distinguishes this analysis of trainee learning from some other models of professional learning, although the theme is shared with Nias and her colleagues' analyses of the influences of school cultures on their members, on which I have built. The possible exception is Furlong and Maynard, who recognise the contributions of affect to *'feeling vulnerable'* within the *'personal survival'* second stage of their five-stage model of trainee development (op.cit). But affect is largely omitted from the adult learner models of writers such as Knowles and Tennant.

Affect is, by implication at least, also a permeating theme in Lave and Wenger's analyses of their interlocking central ideas of situated learning, legitimate peripheral participation, and communities of practice (in that they are concerned with the <u>experience</u> of doing a job). Since their analyses are concerned with workplace learning in general, though not specifically with learning to be a teacher in a school, it is important to consider their relevance to this study.

Trainees' evidence about learning to teach tends to confirm Lave and Wenger's contention that learning to do a job requires learning within the work context to which it relates, because learning and its context are inextricably linked. In some respects the contributions of specific locations seem to be even more important in learning to be a primary teacher than is represented in Lave and Wenger's analysis. There are real possibilities of acculturation, which sometimes are prevented only by the influences of reference groups and latent cultures. Further, the influence of the conditions of specific placements helps explain why trainees sometimes have difficulty in translating the short-term lessons from one placement into long-term ones with relevance for subsequent ones. This is because

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> *we may still talk about truth statements and effective actions, but only within a frame... when we think of truth or effectiveness across frames, however, things become much more difficult* (Schon 1987 p. 218).

For trainee teachers, the *'frame'* of practice which meets the needs of one placement does not inevitably transfer to others. In Lave and Wenger's terms, such difficulties inevitably arise because the experience of doing a job is inextricable from the *'community of practice'* in which it is situated.

But *'legitimate peripheral participation'* is only partially an apt description of the processes by which trainee teachers learn. Lave and Wenger's analysis incorporates the premise that peripherality will, over time, provide *'access to a nexus of relations otherwise not perceived as connected'* (1991 p. 36). Opportunities for peripheral access to interadult dimensions of the job, in particular to that of staff membership, were restricted to a few trainees. On this point my data diverges from that of Biott and Easen's trainees (1994). The explanation may be in the complexity of meaning I have ascribed to *'membership'*. I have suggested that belonging to a staff culture (or community of practice) implies far more than being treated as an unthreatening visiting novice. Membership requires active engagement with the subtle meanings conveyed by day to day behaviours in their most fleeting sense. Only a few trainees had the opportunity to engage with their host staffs in such complex and comprehensive ways.

Data about trainees' access to peripheral participation in classroom teaching tends to confirm Edwards and Ogden's contention that some trainees suffer from too much rather than too little access (1998). Trainees did participate peripherally, insofar as they engaged in restricted professional action within frameworks set by their teachers and observed them at work. But sometimes they did so without the benefits of commentary and/or intervention from teachers. They were supported professionally mainly through feedback on their classroom performance after the event. Consequently, they had restricted opportunities to interpret classroom situations with the perspectives of experienced teachers through *'coach-like'* interventions during collaborative teaching, in the manner of Schon's *'practicum'*. However, data on mentors' and host teachers' interventions in trainees' learning confirm the link between affect and learning. Trainees are unequivocal that the facilitative teacher-learner relationships advocated by Rogers (1983) are more influential on their development than are those implicit in deficit models of feedback, because the former take account of learners' affective and cognitive needs. Trainees further confirm the learning value of a Rogerian approach when they suggest that the presence of both support and constructive

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focused critique in the *'learner'* model of feedback helps trainees respond positively to analyses which might otherwise be perceived as negative criticisms.

I note the connections between my analysis of trainees' patterns of response to fitting in expectations and Lacey's analysis of new teachers' responses to joining staffs (1977). Lacey's analysis has some similarities with the patterns of compliance, strategic compromise, and engagement. Compliance appears to be a form of *'internalised adjustment'* by which trainees align themselves to staffs' expectations. Strategic compromise is related to Lacey's *'strategic compliance'*. Engagement is a strategy through which, by their own responsiveness to placement staff, trainees are able *to 'strategically redefine'* what constitute acceptable practices, so that these align more closely with their own. However, nonconformity does not seem to be an option for Lacey.

Finally, this study also confirms Calderhead and Shorrocks' suggestion that

learning in the professional development of teachers, however, is frequently content-, context-, and person-specific (1997 p. 193).

Trainees had different experiences because of who they were, the unique experiences and past influences they brought to placements, the different conditions in each placement and the particular staffs with whom they interacted there (both individually and collectively). In short, although the study suggests that trainees are often supported well, it highlights the complexities and occasional inequities which are created (in some respects unavoidably), when different trainees learn in different placements. Indeed, the greater the proportion of their course spent in placements, the greater the differences in the nature of their access to learning seem to become.

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Chapter 13
Improving Learning To Teach In Placements: Recommendations For Action

13.1 Introduction

In this study I have attempted to analyse trainee teachers' learning from school staffs with whom they are placed. Part of this analysis has been concerned with ways in which trainees deal with and attempt to learn from situations they cannot change, but which inhibit their professional development. In the light of this study, I make some recommendations which may respond to some of the difficulties trainees meet, though it would be naive to suggest that I am able to suggest changes which make essentially complex processes into simple ones.

I have separated my recommendations into those relevant to the different sources of influence on trainees' placement learning, because each contributes differently, although some work within constraints over which others have control, and so determine the possible courses of action that can be taken. But I emphasise that the whole process of learning to teach in placements is a consequence of the interaction between trainees, schools, universities, and government through its policy frameworks.

13.2 Recommendations for trainees

Ultimately trainees are responsible for their own placement learning. Although they must respond to the conditions they find, the ways they do so are crucial determinants of their capacities to learn. First, a deliberate decision to adopt a stance of engagement will enhance their capacities to learn from any placement and increase the likelihood that staff will respond to them positively and constructively. Trainees can achieve engagement by recognising that, although they are adults with degree qualifications, their presence is legitimated only by their position as learners. To define themselves as learners can be liberating for trainees because, in doing so, they render their own assumptions problematic, and so can become open to challenge and to change. They can then learn from both positive and negative examples of teachers' work, and from practices and value systems which they do not share, as well as those they do. The alternatives of retreat into strategic compromise or nonconformity tend to inhibit learning, whilst compliance inhibits self-development.

But, second, unlike compliers, engagers are learners who retain and use their critical perspectives to help them evaluate their own and others' practices. Trainees should expect to have to fit in to their hosts' practices, and indeed should perceive doing so as an important means of learning, provided that their critical perspective is retained. But they should seek to retain the peripheral cognitive perspective of an observer, whilst participating extensively in all aspects of the work of the staff. By doing so they are most likely to enhance their capacities to learn in observing participant mode. However, over-rapid exposure to extensive participation can be unproductive, since it inhibits trainees' critical perspectives by intensifying affective responses, particularly because it can increase the likelihood of avoidable difficulties in both classroom and interadult terms.

Third, trainees need to be sensitive to the importance of interadult relationships as a major influence on staffs' capacities to become coherent and interdependent work groups. In particular, they need to be aware of the ways interaction between colleagues contributes to the coherence of schools' practices, and of the important contributions staff communities can make to their members' affective well-being. It follows that trainees should give adequate time and attention to their own contributions to and learning about the interadult dimension of teachers' jobs. Further, trainees should be sensitive to the significance of the nuances of everyday and apparently trivial events and actions for the cultures of communities of practice. They need to be aware that, given the nature of interadult relationships and their implications for staff cultures and value systems, trainees' own actions and interactions with their hosts will affect staffs' attitudes towards them and the extent to which staff are predisposed to be supportive (including mentors and host class teachers).

But trainees' opportunities to learn as peripheral participants in all aspects of teachers' work in their placements are enhanced by the ways in which schools respond to their needs as learners.

13.3 Recommendations for placement schools

The likelihood that trainees are able to become engaged learners is partly dependent on the nature of the contributions of their mentors, host teachers, and those of the staff as a whole.

First, for trainees to respond as learners, mentors and host teachers should treat them as such. A *'learner model'* of intervention in trainees' development provides a means of responding to affective and cognitive needs which recognises their interdependence, and

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so responds to the former as a prerequisite for meeting the latter. Such intervention develops affectively secure trainees, who respond constructively to challenge from staff and continue to value a critical perspective as a means of enhancing their learning.

But mentors are part of, rather than apart from staffs. Trainees' learning happens in an environment whose nature is largely determined by the staff as a whole. The second recommendation is that schools should recognise that working with trainees is a commitment which involves the whole staff. In particular, it is the whole staff which provides the conditions for legitimate peripheral participation in the interadult life of the staff, as well as in the classroom, and access to the benefits of and an understanding of staff membership. The experiences of those trainees who are able to share in staff membership give some indication of how teacher training might be transformed if all trainees were accepted as legitimate peripheral staff members, helped to understand the implications of membership, and were given access to the range of professional and affective support which membership of supportive staff cultures can provide. Access to staff membership offers opportunities to understand the complexities of the interadult dimensions of the job and access to extensive means of professional support for its classroom dimensions.

Third, however, whole staff commitment to trainees' learning requires more than offering informal support. There should be explicit arrangements for trainees to participate in and learn about a wide range of staff interactions (including meetings of all kinds), so that they can understand the connections between whole staff and classroom processes, and begin to develop the relevant interadult skills.

Fourth, staffs need to accept that their interaction and its relationship to their separate activities in individual classrooms is a legitimate focus for study. By implication, staffs would need to begin to understand and articulate their own interadult workings to trainees. Such a development might offer a remarkable opportunity to transform primary schools as workplaces. Mentors frequently claim that mentoring trainees enhances the understanding and quality of their own teaching (e.g. Stephenson and Sampson 1994). A similar impact on whole staffs' understanding of their own relationships, frequently an area of learning carefully avoided, might help primary schools become different places, where pupil learning was more coherent, and interadult life a more productive source of professional and affective reward for adults.

Fifth, the development of staffs who are collectively self-aware is dependent on a climate in which openness is possible, in conditions where individual members (include trainees) can feel secure and where critical perspectives are accepted as means to achieve

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enhanced insights, rather than as threats to the stability of staff practices, value systems, or cultures. In Wenger's terms

'it is almost a theorem of love that we can open our practices and communities to others (newcomers, outsiders), invite them into our own identities of participation, let them be what they are not, and thus start what cannot be started' (1998 p. 277).

Placements which offer such conditions for learning to teach will also be those which are likely to be most effective in developing their own learning. They will be learning schools in the sense of being those in which the culture
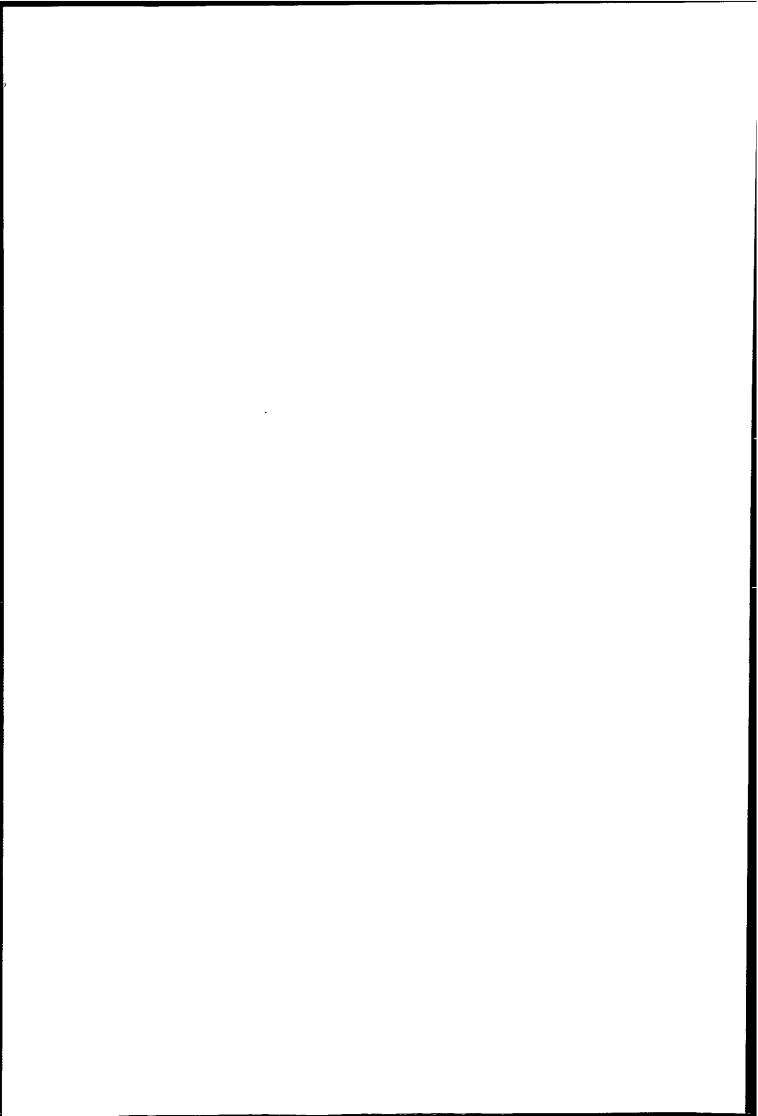
facilitates teacher collaboration, whilst at the same time, enabling teachers to learn from each other and from courses outside the school. The presence of both these factors will enable professional debate and challenge to occur in a climate of trust and openness, thereby ensuring that the risks and discomforts of learning are counterbalanced by mutual support and a concern for individuals
(Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992 p. 248).

Schools whose interadult relationships possess such qualities will be better able to resolve for themselves some of the difficulties which can hamper many trainees' learning. Two are of particular concern. First, trainees' needs are sometimes seen to be in conflict with and to have a lower priority than those of pupils. Yet the problems trainees meet can become sources of insight for staffs, because they can help staffs refine their own solutions for pupils' needs too. A further concern is the inappropriate exercise of power over trainees by a few staff. Members of staff cultures which are characterised by openness, debate and challenge, and in which trainees are treated as members, choose to waive their power to require that trainees adopt practices whose justifications are not open to scrutiny, though they may ask trainees to fit in with these in the short term, in order to engage with the value systems from which they are derived.

13.4 Recommendations for universities

Although a direct concern with universities' contribution to teacher training has been peripheral to this study, their responsibility for the outcomes of school-based learning require them to ensure that trainees learn within optimum conditions and make effective use of their opportunities to learn from placements.

I have suggested that engagement is a valuable way for trainees to respond to placement learning opportunities. First, therefore, university tutors should seek to develop

and sustain in trainees the open, constructive yet critical perspective of engagement. Tutors should encourage trainees to recognise that they will not always agree with practices they meet, but that these can be used to develop their own insights, rather than merely being rejected. Further, they should help trainees to discern the relationships between practices and value systems, recognise their own value systems, yet see them as problematic, so that practices which stimulate cognitive dissonance in placements can become sources of insight rather than of discomfort.

Second, increasingly universities' contribution to teacher training has become identified with the acquisition of subject knowledge and transmission of the detailed prescriptions of DfEE Standards for teaching, rather than the inculcation of critical professional perspectives. Tutors need to provide the latter as antidotes to acculturation into one school culture, by developing trainees' understanding of primary school staff cultures as sources of influence on teachers' jobs. Further, they should help trainees to sustain an objective perspective, so that they can frame their placement communities' practices in terms of broad definitions of effective practice, and so build for themselves their own secure model of teaching and learning which can inform their long-term learning.

Third, in their relationships with placement staffs, tutors' facilitative role should be tempered by that of professional sceptic. It is important that tutors' observations of trainees in placements should be used to encourage trainees to critique both their own and others' practices, rather than that tutors should seek to emphasise harmony by ignoring dissonance. Indeed, where placements are themselves learning schools, a constructively critical stance will be mutually beneficial to schools, tutors and trainees.

Fourth, the study confirms the importance of careful selection of trainees for their courses by universities. Trainees who begin their courses with extensive insights into the nature of teaching as a job, including those derived from other kinds of work with adults, are able to draw extensively on these resources. Conversely, those with limited relevant insights tend to struggle until they learn to frame situations in ways which informed their professional activities. One feature of the current proposal for a direct graduate route into teaching is the intention to assess the differing needs of individuals at the start of their placement - a development which may help improve the match between trainees and placements - provided that staffs are willing to acknowledge that many trainees can contribute to as well as learn from a learning community.

Fifth, since this study suggests that it is inappropriate to assume that being located in one training placement is always broadly equivalent to training in another, and suggests

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that experience of several placements helps develop trainees' critical perspectives, it might be helpful if all training courses were required to locate trainees in at least three placements.

Finally, the tacit assumption that trainees' learning develops in a smooth and linear manner has tended to mean that assessment has been weighted towards 'final' placements, in which performance is often used as the sole criterion for professional competence. The evidence from these trainees leads me to recommend that judgements about trainees should be more broadly-based across a range of placements, which can reflect the ways in which they respond to different teaching conditions.

But trainees, schools, and universities have to work within a framework determined by national policy decisions. These have the greatest influence, because they shape the practices of schools and universities, and hence the experiences of trainees, by creating structures which are intended to ensure effective teacher training and so direct the individual efforts of mentors, school staff members and university tutors.

13.5 Recommendations for national policies

Recent policy changes have further emphasised the influence of school placement learning in the training of primary teachers, so that a review of the ways the systems function is timely. Changes include the re-introduction in 1999 of a supported induction year for newly-qualified teachers, at the end of which professional competence is assessed by the school, and which, in effect, creates a two year training period; in 2000, the re-introduction of a direct entry route into teaching for graduates, who are paid; and the introduction of bursaries for graduate trainees, a change likely to enhance the popularity of one-year school-based teacher training.

There are specific respects in which policy frameworks should take account of the findings of this study, as well as general concerns which might be addressed by a rethink of aspects of its overall structure.

First, the limited attention given to trainees' learning about the interadult dimensions of job is a major deficiency in teacher training, particularly in view of politically-initiated emphases on collective accountability and whole school development planning which staffs currently experience. It is an inadequate job preparation for trainees to begin to intuitively understand the complexities of interadult processes by falling foul of them, or having to negotiate them sensitively. Such circumstances are particularly unacceptable when they can impinge on trainees' capacities to learn about classroom

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teaching, and may even deter them from teaching as a career. The skills and knowledge relevant to whole staff membership and responsibilities should be an explicit and extensive section of the Standards for Initial Teacher Training. One reaction to this recommendation might be to suggest that such concerns can be safely delayed until the induction year. But it is particularly important that trainees should begin their induction year with an understanding of interadult issues and with their critical perspectives established. Both are needed to help trainees respond constructively rather than compliantly to the intensified acculturation pressures of a paid job situation, in which their professional suitability is assessed by colleagues, and where judgements about professional competence will be influenced by the conditions of the specific community of practice to which assessors and the trainee belong.

The second issue is that of selection of schools as placements for trainees. At one level, this is a concern for universities, who are accrediting institutions for their courses. They already deal with the selection constraints that may arise from having insufficient volunteer schools from which to select, and from the DfEE requirement that universities should not reject schools' offers of placements without clear reasons (DfEE 14/93). But this study suggests that a school's effectiveness in promoting pupil learning is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for its effectiveness as a placement for teacher training. In order to identify placements which would be suitable locations for training teachers, it is important to understand the nature of the staff community, and of the practices which it promotes (although the two are of course interdependent). In short, in order to promote trainees' learning, placements' staff cultures need the qualities indicated by Nias, Southworth and Campbell (1992 op.cit.). Further, it is inappropriate for schools to make judgements about their own suitability, although they might reasonably show why they should be suitable locations in which trainees can learn.

But the issue is primarily one for national policy, which needs to establish clear criteria by which schools can be chosen rather than be largely self-selecting. These should specifically identify sources of evidence of schools' capacities to work effectively with adults as well as with pupils. Yet current DfEE policy encourages schools to be self-nominating as suitable locations for School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) schemes. In SCITT schemes, schools take the lead teacher training role as locations for and assessors and accreditors of professional competence. Even the identification of an 'Outstanding Schools' SCITT on the basis of Ofsted performance, although a step forward, uses an insufficient criterion.

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The mention of SCITT schemes suggests a third implication, that these arrangements for preparing teachers are likely to compound the possible acculturation dangers in placement learning. They may do so by exposing trainees to the sustained influence of one staff's dominant practices and value systems over an extended period, whilst restricting their access to a wider range of perspectives from several placements (unless SCITT scheme schools are characterised by the openness, and supportive challenge, which are features of collaborative cultures and learning schools). Therefore the development of SCITT schemes in their present form might be reconsidered. Recent press publicity claiming success for them in comparison with traditional university routes only confirms this view (O'Leary 2000). The claim that *'a group of inner London primary schools has outperformed the University of Cambridge in teacher training tables published today'* (p. 6) is partly based on statistics for employment records of trainees within a Wandsworth primary schools SCITT. Yet information that *'more than two thirds of those completing the on-the-job scheme .... take jobs in Wandsworth schools'* (ibid.) appears to confirm that this is an example of socialisation taken to an extreme. An alternative interpretation of that statistic is that trainees acculturated to the ways of working of one group of schools are first assessed by those schools, according to their capacities to do so, then rewarded with jobs in the same schools for their abilities to fit in with that community of practice.

However, there is limited benefit in indicating weaknesses in the current school-based system without suggesting some of the ways in which they might be remedied.

The problem of identifying schools which can be effective locations for trainees to learn is linked to that of access to a sufficient supply of schools which have the appropriate qualities and time to make them centres of excellence for teacher training. One of the difficulties with primary schools being the locations for training teachers is that this is not their dominant purpose. Trainees' needs in placements tend to be met only insofar as they do not compete with priorities of pupil learning and the interests of the community of practice. Further, mentors and teacher hosts support trainees in addition to their other responsibilities, often in the overcrowded gaps between teaching provided by playtimes, lunchtimes and when pupils have left the premises.

Where pupil learning is concerned, it is appropriate that each staff seeks to develop coherent approaches to which they all subscribe, and which they advocate, and seek to promote. Yet a model of learning to teach which predominantly depends on socialisation and fitting in can only be perceived to be effective if its intention is to create a teaching
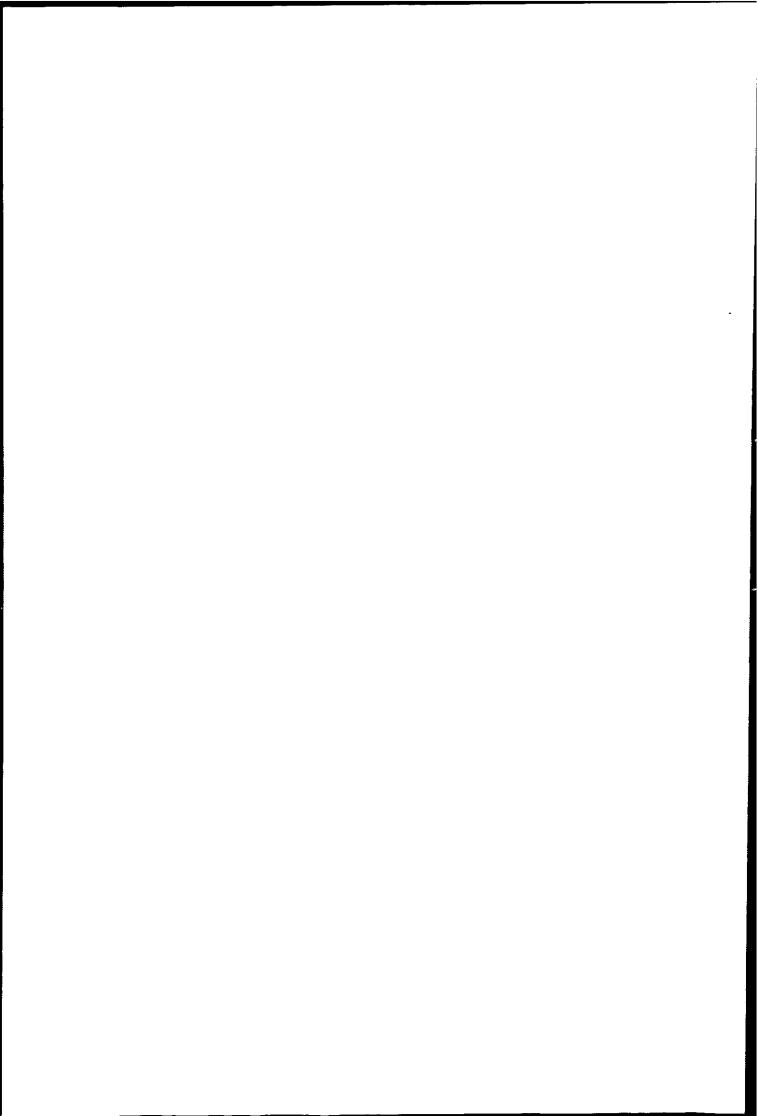
force whose role is to efficiently translate into action detailed national policy prescriptions for both what and how pupils are taught. Even then, one (sometimes redeeming) feature of 'cascade' approaches to training is that communities of practice can transform the impacts and meanings of policies by the ways they implement them. If a teaching force is needed which has well-developed critical perspectives, so that it is able to transform policies into living, organic effective practice, then acculturation is dangerous.

The problem for schools as locations for training teachers seems to be how to reconcile the needs of teacher training and pupils without compromising either. Therefore the fourth recommendation for action is that teacher training should be redefined as an explicit part of the core activities of many schools, supported by appropriate resourcing, so that training is not largely dependent on limited payments to schools, and supported by staffs' goodwill.

There might then need to be specific safeguards for trainees, incorporated into training arrangements, including detailed written plans which identify the needs of trainees in that placement and the arrangements by which these will be met. Specific policies would need to identify principles and practices which indicated how the needs of both adult and child learners would be reconciled without harm to either. It is an issue for debate whether such a development might, following the logic of Edwards and Collison's discussion of Professional Development Schools in the USA (1996 op.cit.), mean designating 'Training Schools', identified for their professional qualities as educators of adults as well as of child learners

Further, in order to protect trainees from the possibilities of power over them being misused, albeit unwittingly, a restructured system might need to retain the role of universities as accreditors of training and establish separation between schools' responsibilities for placement training/support and universities' for assessment/accreditation. This would have specific implications for SCITT arrangements (if retained), in that a lead school might have accreditation and assessment responsibility, but would not also provide the training of those it assessed .

An amended system may require an amended training role for specific staff, responsible for and actively involved in trainees' learning in school, yet accountable to the accrediting body and have some measure of independence from schools. In order for such 'teacher-tutors' to remain close to school practices and in touch with processes of adult learning and teacher accreditation, they might perhaps be jointly appointed to a school and

a university, teaching children perhaps for half their time and working with trainees in school for the rest of it. Such teacher tutors might work with trainees in several schools.

I emphasise that these are speculative suggestions for ways in which the implications for action derived from this study might be implemented. My intention is to acknowledge the importance of placement learning as a means of developing the skills needed for such complex professional activity as being a school teacher. But I suggest that it is in the nature of close-knit professional communities, which develop their own versions of practice, that to learn by becoming peripheral participants in them is similarly complex and also problematic. As Wenger suggests, *'there are few more urgent tasks than to design special infrastructures that foster learning'* (op.cit. p. 225). The challenge is to capitalise on the benefits of placement learning, without endangering trainees' capacities to become self-developing teachers, who have critical perspectives which enable them to use training experiences to respond to professional needs as yet unanticipated.

Appendices

APPENDIX A 1

Table A1: The trainees

Trainee	age group	gender/family status	previous relevant experience and background
1	21-25	F single	One year out after degree completion, doing part-time voluntary help in primary school
2	21-25	F single	Management skills within degree. Mother a school secretary
3	26-30	M single	4 years as instructor in US Air Force
4	21-25	F single	Music degree. Year voluntary work in special school. 4 months refugee work. Further year alongside music teacher in special school
5	26-30	F single	Mother and brother primary teachers. Qualified riding instructor
6	31-40	F married 3 children	Parent helper in two primary schools. Several year in office work and as dental receptionist
7	26-30	F married	Mother -in-law primary teacher. TEFL qualified. 5 years in commerce.
8	21-25	F single	Half year working in residential social work in Barnardo's school.
9	26-30	F single	4 years shopfloor manager in retail industry. Year helping in nursery school half weeks
10	31-40	M married 3 children	Computing career - lecturer, analyst, programmer 15 years. Working in church children's clubs for 2 years
11	26-30	M single	Office work, part-time leisure attendant, then water treatment work. Mother a primary teacher
12	31-40	F married 2 children	Voluntary work in schools for a year part-time.
13	21-25	F single	Straight from university, regular short experiences in primary schools
14	31-40	F married 2 child	Career as fashion lecturer and designer parent helper in primary school
15	31-40	F divorced 1 child	Work as buyer, trade and horticultural manager. Parent helper in primary school

APPENDIX A2

Table A2: Placement schools within the cluster.

School	type	staff size	characteristics
A	5-9 lower	head and 7 teachers	urban multicultural all-female staff including head
B	5-9 lower	head and 6 teachers	rural village urban dormitory all-female staff including head
C	9-13 middle	head and 13 teachers	urban mixed staff male head
D	5-9 lower	head and 5 teachers	rural village middle class all-female teaching staff, male head
E	9-13 middle	head and 9 teachers	rural village socially mixed intake mixed staff, male head
F	7-11 junior	head and 12 teachers	urban multicultural mixed staff male head

APPENDIX A3

Table A3: Where trainees were placed

School Trainee	A	B	C	D	E	F	Other
1	pl1		pl2				
2	pl1						pl2
3	pl1					pl2	
4		pl1				pl2	
5			pl1				pl2
6			pl1			pl2	
7				pl1		pl2	
8		pl2				pl1	
9			pl2			pl1	
10					pl2	pl1	
11	pl2	pl1					
12	pl2	pl1					
13		pl2		pl1			
14		pl2					pl1
15				pl2			pl1

Note. Entries in 'Other' column represent trainees who had one placement in a school outside the cluster where observations were not made.

TRAINEE BIOGRAPHIES

Trainee 1

Trainee One was a 22-year-old single female trainee, who had joined the PGCE course a year after completing her American Studies and Philosophy degree. During that year she had worked in primary schools on a voluntary basis. These experiences had prompted her to want to teach, because she enjoyed working with children, with whom (in the opinion of friends) she had a good rapport. She was concerned to have a career rather than 'just a job'.

Her placements were in Key Stage Two, firstly in an urban multicultural lower school, then in an urban middle school.

Trainee 2

Trainee Two was a 22-year-old single female trainee, who joined the course on completing her degree in Clothing Studies. Her degree had included an industrial placement year, but she had also spent some vacation time helping in primary schools, including residential trips. Her contact with and knowledge of schools was facilitated by her mother's job as a school secretary. She felt that her industrial placement had given her management skills which would be useful in teaching, as well as curriculum skills such as computing - but it had also taught her how enjoyable a school environment and interaction with children were in contrast. She regarded herself as an easy-going person, and was a committed Christian and vegetarian.

Her placements were in Key Stage Two, first in an urban multicultural lower school, then in a middle school in a small town in a rural area.

Trainee 3

Trainee 3 was a 26 year old single male trainee, who had joined the course from a four year career as a trainer in the United States Air Force in England and abroad (he had Irish, American and British nationality). Part of that time had been spent working in drugs education, and in the elementary school on the base where he was stationed. That time had convinced him of he importance of including welfare issues within the primary teacher's role. His own experiences of school as a pupil in Eire had been formal and corporal punishment had been a feature. His degree had been in Production Management.

His placements were in Key Stage Two classes, initially in an urban multicultural lower school, and then in an urban multicultural junior school in a different town.

Trainee 4

Trainee 4 was a female 23 year old single trainee with a degree in Music. She was herself a skilled musician. During her final degree year she had spent a brief time running music workshops in a primary school, and this experience had stimulated her interest in teaching. She had then spent two years exploring aspects of this possible career direction. First she had spent a year working voluntarily in a special school. Then there were four months working with child refugees in Eastern Europe, before she joined a careers training scheme at special needs school. All these experiences had contributed to her strong commitment to becoming a teacher.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two, first in a rural lower school, followed by an urban multicultural junior school.

Trainee 5

Trainee Five was a single female trainee, aged 27, with a degree in Geography, gained immediately before joining the PGCE course. She came from a family which included several teachers. She was a qualified horse-riding instructor, and had worked with primary aged children herself at pony clubs, as well as spending time as a voluntary helper at her local primary school. She had spent a year travelling and working in Australasia as a nanny and horse breaker - an experience which she felt had made her resourceful and imaginative. Her enjoyment of teaching riding and swimming had made teacher training a natural choice.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two pupils in an urban middle school in a large town, followed by a middle school placement in a small town in a rural area.

Trainee 6

Trainee Six was a female trainee, aged 34, married with three children of school age, and living at home during the course. She had left school and had worked in a variety of office posts, including having had a commercial apprenticeship and being a dental receptionist before finishing work to raise her family. Whilst her family was young she had spent time as a voluntary helper in primary schools for eight years. She had run a school chess club, helped with 'paired' reading, and accompanied pupils on school outings

regularly. It had been he lifelong ambition to work with children. Once her children started school she had gone to university as a mature student, with the intention of taking a PGCE course once she had completed her degree. Having gained a BA degree in History at her local university, she was accepted on the PGCE course there. She lived at home during her PGCE year.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two pupils, in an urban middle school, followed by one in a multicultural urban junior school where she obtained a full-time post on completing her course.

Trainee 7

Trainee 7 was a married 28-year-old female trainee with no children. After completing her degree in Humanities she had worked in administrative office jobs for five years. But she had also spent a half-year working voluntarily in a primary school, as well as with children on leisure and holiday schemes. She had successfully completed a qualification in teaching English as a Foreign Language. She was a vegan. She saw herself as someone with a strong sense of injustice, and her concern to ensure that children loved learning was partly prompted by memories of her own chaotic primary school experience. She had family connections with teaching through her mother-in-law, who was a teacher. Although not always prominent in group interaction, she could be passionate about issues which concerned her.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two pupils. The first was in a village school with predominantly middle class pupils, and the second was in an urban multicultural junior school.

Trainee 8

Trainee 8 was female single trainee aged 22. After gaining her degree in History and Politics she had spent a year during which she had been in paid employment working with children in a residential Barnardo's Home, as well as shadowing a special needs teacher. Previously she had worked voluntarily on holiday play schemes with disabled children. These experiences had confirmed her enjoyment of being with children and her long-term interests in teaching primary age pupils. She tended to be reticent in adult group settings.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two in a large urban multicultural junior school, followed by a village lower school with a predominantly middle class population.

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Trainee 9

Trainee 9 was a female single trainee aged 27. Having gained a Geography degree, she had become a management trainee with a large department store, where she had been a shopfloor manager for six year as before deciding she wanted to go into teaching. She had then spent two half day per week for a year as a voluntary helper in nursery schools, before applying for and gaining a place on the PGCE course. She enjoyed being with children and considered herself someone who could bring enthusiasm and excitement to her work with pupils.

Her placements were with Key Stage Two pupils, first in a multicultural urban junior school, followed by an urban middle school.

Trainee 10

Trainee 10 was a married male trainee aged 38, with a family of three children. After gaining both first and higher degrees in Computer Science, he had had a fifteen-year career in computing and computer training, before being made redundant. In addition to being involved with his own children, through his church children's club interests he had been involved in working with children for many years, as well as contributing to hospital radio. These experiences had prompted him to take the enforced opportunity of a change of career. He had gained further experience of several primary schools, which confirmed his decision to take a primary PGCE course. He presented as an articulate, serious, yet cheerful person.

His first placement was in a large urban multicultural school, followed by his final placement in a middle school in a large village.

Trainee 11

Trainee 11 was a male single mature trainee aged 27. Having gained his History degree, he had worked in a variety of temporary office jobs in accounts departments. He had then spent two and a half years in the water treatment industry on work which had included unpleasant manual work. This was followed by a period travelling the world.

A keen sportsman, he had decided to go into teaching as a result of part-time work with children as a leisure attendant and lifeguard. He had also worked voluntarily in primary schools helping with sports activities. He came from a teaching family. His mother

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was a deputy head. His decision to come into teaching was shaped by the belief that he needed a profession which could give him satisfaction.

His placements were with Key Stage Two pupils in a rural lower school, followed by an urban lower school with a multicultural population.

Trainee 12

Trainee 12 was a 31-year-old married female trainee with a family of a husband and two children of primary school age. She had gained a degree in Fine Art, and then was intermittently employed in short-term creative jobs, as well as working in a record store. She was then at home for several years whilst her children were young. During the year before applying for and joining the course she spent two mornings weekly helping as a volunteer in her children's primary school. In course group sessions she tended to appear a confident person who was willing to question and express her opinions.

Her placements were with Key Stage One in a village lower school with a largely middle class catchment, followed by an urban multicultural lower school.

Trainee 13

Trainee 13 was a 25-year-old single female trainee (who married shortly after the course ended). She joined the course immediately on completing a degree in English and History, but had a long-standing strong commitment to primary school teaching. Throughout her degree she had spent short bursts of a few weeks as a volunteer in primary schools, and during two vacations had been a holiday playscheme team leader. Consequently she felt she had a wide understanding of the demands of different age groups and of the age groups to which she was best suited. She appeared a cheerful person with a ready smile.

Her placements were with Key Stage One, first, in a village lower school with a largely middle class catchment, followed by a second placement in a different village lower school.

Trainee 14

Trainee 14 was a married female trainee, aged 40, with two children of her own. She had a degree in Fashion and Design, and had had a full career as a polytechnic lecturer in fashion and textiles, followed by one as a designer with an international company. After a break whilst her children were very young, she had returned to lecturing part time. Her

involvement and interest in primary teaching had been stimulated by work with pre-school playgroups, followed by volunteer help in her own children's school. She was an articulate and confident person.

Trainee 14's placements were in Key Stage One. She was a member of a different cluster group from that of Trainees 1 to 13, so that although in her second placement she had contact with the link tutor, she was not a regular part of this trainee group. Her first placement was in a new town first school, and her second in a small rural lower school.

Trainee 15

Trainee 15 was a 37-year-old divorced single parent with one child. She had a degree in English. After leaving university she lived for a time on an Israeli kibbutz had worked in commerce as a foodstuff buyer and a machinery trader, before working as a horticultural manager for a landscaping company. During her daughter's early primary schooling she had been a parent helper in school for several years. Her decision to enter teaching followed a period of change in her personal life.

Trainee 15's placements were in Key Stage One. She too was a member of a different cluster group from that of Trainees 1 to 13, so that although in her second placement she had contact with the link tutor, she was not regularly part of this trainee group. He first placement was in a new town first school, her second being in a rural lower school.

APPENDIX A5

PLACEMENT SCHOOLS

School A

School A was a 5-9 lower school situated in a multicultural area of a large town. Most of its pupils came from the Indian sub-continent, though there were minorities of Afro-Caribbean and British children and a few children from other ethnic groups. Some children arrived at the school speaking no English, and others would leave for up to six months on visits to Pakistan. There was no school uniform and some girls work ethnic dress

Its main building had the high ceilings characteristic of a school built in the late nineteenth century, but its age meant that some classrooms were relatively spacious. This building was where the staffroom, three classrooms, and a library were located There was a second block across a playground, built in the 1970s, containing a pre-school nursery, two classrooms, kitchens, and the school hall. It had been intended that this would be the first phase of a redevelopment of the whole school. But money was not available for its completion. All rooms were on the ground floor, with the exception of the head's and school secretary's offices, which were up a flight of stairs.

The all-female teaching staff was white, except for one teacher of Indian origin. There were two staff employed under Section Eleven funding arrangements, which provided additional staffing for schools with large multiethnic populations. The majority of teachers had been on the staff for many years. Parents were encouraged to come into the school, which had a reputation in the town for the quality of its work with multiethnic pupils. Most adults who visited the school tended to find the pupils friendly and keen to make contact with them. But their friendliness could lead to classroom management problems for inexperienced practitioners.

School B

School B was the larger of two lower schools serving a large, growing village, which served as a dormitory for the large town in which School A was located. The village had a scattering of ancient buildings, some thatched, but new estates had been built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The staff described the majority of the village population as 'middle class'.

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The school itself had been built in the 1970s to accommodate the growing population and was on two storeys, with offices, staffroom and tow classrooms being upstairs. There were six classes. There was a simple school uniform, which was worn virtually without exception.

The school population was all white. The children were not considered difficult to work with, though at home many were used to being allowed to express their views. The parents had a reputation of having high expectations of the school.

The all-female staff (with he exception of a male caretaker) had been at the school for varying lengths of time, but the majority (including the head and deputy head) had joined the staff during the previous five years.

School C

School C was a large middle school dealing with pupils aged 9-13 in the same town as School A, though in a different catchment area. It had a single storey set of buildings, built during the 1980s. Its pupil intake was predominantly white, but with a significant minority of pupils from other ethnic groups. Its pupils came from a mix of working and lower middle class families.

Visitors were likely to receive the impression of a clean, bright and ordered school. Pupils all tended to wear the school uniform. They were organised in year groups, with parallel age classes. In Years Five and Six, where trainees were located, pupils were taught mainly by a class teacher in their classroom , although a minority of lessons were taught by specialist teachers and in specialist areas. Each year group was located in one physical area of the school. The staffroom tended to be a busy place of transit, with individuals constantly moving in and out. The staff was, in the main, under 35, but tended to stay at the school for several years.

The curriculum was planned and led by subject co-ordinators, who provided outline schemes of work. Lesson were taught in discrete units of time within a specified subject timetable.

School D

School D served a small, quiet village, situated equidistantly between the two large towns in which Schools A and C, and E were situated. In some respects it had an idyllic setting slightly off the main village street, with a hill and ancient church behind, and fields in front. The school had grown piecemeal over the decades. The original small Victorian

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school still housed the hall, small library, and school kitchens. A new, separate building had been added in the 1970s, with offices, a two classrooms, and a staffroom, which could only be reached by using an outside door or going through the school office. At two separate later times a double and a separate single temporary classroom had been added. Hence there were four buildings on a sloping site, with pathways between. On a cold, windy or wet day, staff might be deterred from making the journey from their classrooms to the staffroom.

This was a middle class catchment. There was a school uniform, and pupils tended to be well behaved. Pressure on places at the school led to some classes of thirty pupils.

Three of the staff, including the male head teacher, had been at the school for over ten years. But there were also three younger teachers who had been there less than three years (including the deputy head).

School E

School E was a middle school in a large village about five miles from School D. It drew its pupils from several surrounding villages and small rural lower schools, as well as from the large rural school in its own village. Its catchment included pupils from both small and prosperous rural housing.

Its buildings were those of a former secondary modern school which had been remodelled. Most classrooms were on the ground floor, but there was a staffroom and offices on an upper floor. The curriculum for all classes was within a timetabled subject structure. Pupils had the majority of lessons with a class teacher n their class base, but some subjects were taught by subject specialists in other rooms. Trainees placed in the school usually moved with their pupils and taught the in specialist rooms where appropriate.

There was a subject co-ordinator staff structure, but the pupils and staff were also in year groups which were located in separate year areas. There was a gender mix on the staff, with female staff in the majority. Many had worked in the school for over five years, although its head had recently arrived.

School F

School F was a large urban junior school in a large town, seven miles to the south of the village where School E stood. Its pupils were almost exclusively from a Pakistani community. It had been built shortly before World War Two, in the shape of a hollow square, and with a similarly large infant school on the same site. Pupil number had grown

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to the point where there were six temporary classrooms. But pupils and staff housed in some of these had to walk past the infant school and across a playground to reach their classrooms. Its mixed staff of head and twelve teachers included two non-white staff, as well as several Pakistani classroom and language assistants. Most pupils wore a school uniform, which, in the case of girls, allowed them to retain traditional dress in school colours.

The curriculum was planned in outline by subject co-ordinators, but staff worked in year teams to plan the details of their curricula, so as to ensure parity of coverage amongst parallel classes within age groups. Lessons were timetabled in detail and taught so that all pupils of the same age group kept broadly in step.

The majority of the staff had worked at the school for over five years.

APPENDIX B 1

ETHICS PROTOCOL

> **How school staffs influence primary PGCE students' professional learning within mentored contexts.**

Robin Yeomans. De Montfort University Bedford.

Ethics Protocol.

1. Informed consent.

1.1 The headteacher and staff of any schools visited as part of data collection will be given full details of the nature of the research study, and of its implications for the researcher's roles whilst in school.

1.2 The permission of headteacher, mentor and staff will be sought for access to any school or any situation therein which is being visited for data collection purposes beyond the professional purposes already agreed in school-University partnership arrangements for student supervision.

1.3 Students will be fully informed of the nature of the research study, and their permission will be sought for use of data from situations which concern them individually.

1.4 Permission will be sought for all interviews. Interview data will only be used with the agreement of the interviewee.

1.5 All participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the research study at any time. Students will be informed that no data will be made available to any party within De Montfort University for any purpose relating to the assessment processes of their PGCE course .

1.6 Students will be assured that if they choose not to participate, or withdraw at any stage, they will be in no way be disadvantaged within their PGCE course.

2 Confidentiality

2.1 All data will be anonymised by the use of pseudonyms for people and places. Where pseudonyms may not adequately prevent individuals from being identified, no names will be used .

3. Observation

3.1 The researcher will initially seek permission from school staffs for access to defined kinds of situation for purposes of observation. Participants will be informed that they can request subsequently that the researcher withdraws from a specific situation at the request of the participants.

3.2 Students will be informed that the researcher's professional relationship with them as tutor will not be used to require access to situations or data which the student wishes kept confidential.

3.3 Students will be informed that where the researcher has access to situations other than those where he is performing his professional role as tutor, his observations and analyses of those situations will not be used to provide data for assessing students' competence as a teacher.

4. Debriefing

4.1 A summary of the outcomes of the final study will be made available to participating students and schools.

APPENDIX B2

Information to schools

> **How school staffs influence primary PGCE students' professional learning within mentored contexts.**

A proposal for a PhD. study by Robin Yeomans. De Montfort University Bedford.

Dear Colleagues,

As part of this study I have asked if I might spend additional time in your school during the academic year 1994-5 trying to understand how the school works, and what the PGCE students who work in the school learn from the experience of being there. I am interested in the whole range of their learning about being a teacher - such as classroom skills, how schools function, the implications of working as a staff member, the obligations of the job - in fact any ways in which being in your school may affect their professional development.

I shall keep track of and interview students in my tutorial group. The final study will be of issues raised from these sources. The final outcome will take at least 3 years to present.

In asking for your help, you need to know that there are particular safeguards.

1. Permission will be sought for all interviews. Interview data will only be used in the study with your agreement.

2 You may withdraw from the study at any time.

3. Students will be assured that if they choose not to participate, or withdraw at any stage, they will be in no way be disadvantaged within their PGCE course.

4. You can ask me to withdraw from a specific situation which you consider sensitive or inappropriate for me to be present at.

5. Ever effort will be made to make the study anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used for people and places. Where pseudonyms may not adequately prevent individuals from being identified, no names at all will be used. The study will be available to the examiners at Plymouth University. I may want to write articles which refer to it in anonymous form.

6 A summary of the outcomes of the final study will be made available to participating schools.

If there are any other questions about the research, I will be very happy to answer them.

With thanks.

Robin Yeomans October 1994

ETHICAL SAFEGUARDS: INFORMATION FOR TRAINEES

How school staffs influence primary PGCE students' professional learning within mentored contexts.

A proposal for a PhD. study by Robin Yeomans. De Montfort University Bedford.

As part of this study I have asked spend additional time in your school placements during the academic year 1994-5 trying to understand how the school works, and what the PGCE students who work in the school learn from the experience of being there. I am interested in the whole range of their learning about being a teacher - such as classroom skills, how schools function, the implications of working as a staff member, the obligations of the job - in fact any ways in which being in school may affect your professional development.

I shall keep track of and interview students in my tutorial group. The final study will be of issues raised from these sources. The final outcome will take at least 3 years to present.

In asking for your help, you need to know that there are particular safeguards.

1. Where I observe you in situations other than when I am acting as your professional tutor, my observations and analyses of those situations will not be used to provide data for assessing your competence as a teacher.

2. Permission will be sought for all interviews. Interview data will only be used in the study with your agreement .

3. No data will be made available to anyone within De Montfort University or within the schools for any purpose relating to the assessment processes of your PGCE course .

4. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

5. You are be assured that if you choose not to participate, or withdraw at any stage, you will be in no way be disadvantaged within their PGCE course.

6. You can ask me to withdraw from a specific situation which you consider sensitive or inappropriate for me to be present at.

7. Ever effort will be made to make studies anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used for people and places. Where pseudonyms may not adequately prevent individuals from being identified, no names at all will be used The study will be available to the examiners at Plymouth University. I may want to write articles which refer to it in anonymous form.

8. A summary of the outcomes of the final study will be made available to you.

If there are any other questions about the research, I will be very happy to answer them.

With thanks.   Robin Yeomans October 1994

TRAINEE INTERVIEW AGENDAS

AGENDA ITEMS

- Influence of past experiences of schools and work
  (Phase One interviews only)

- Influences on learning of host class teachers

- Influences on learning of mentors.

- Influences on learning of other staff

- Relationships with individuals

- Relationships with staff group(s)

- Extent of freedom/control over access to learning

- Judgements about the school and staff as a place to work and learn

- Judgements about own development over a block

- Specific issues relevant to each trainee and placement

- Retrospective comparison of experiences on two placements
  (Phase Two interviews only)

NOTES ON INTERVIEW AGENDAS

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured, exploratory style.

- This agenda constitutes a broad set of issues to be explored rather than specific
  questions being asked in a particular order.

- The order in which issues are raised is guided by each trainee's responses.

- Agenda issues may not be raised by the interviewer if they have already been raised by the interviewee without prompting.

- The agenda and process of specific interviews is shaped by knowledge of a trainee's experiences in placements, and, where appropriate, by previous interviews.

- In keeping with the grounded theory stance of this research, supplementary prompts and questions stimulated by issues interviewees raise are an important part of each interview process.

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF CODED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

NOTES:
- For categories represented by codes see Appendix E.
- Where more than one code is used for a unit of data, the unit appears in all the Hyperqual data stacks to which the codes refer.

STACK: "PhD Ints Block 1 end (student)"

PROJECT: Ph D

PROJECT NOTES: Interviews with students at end of block one in University

FACE CARD ID: 8988 Researcher: R Y Date: Feb 95
Maulden

SITE/INTERVIEW NO.: ST7/17Feb Researcher: RY Card ID: 9879

Data:

INTERVIEWER::
I'd start from an observation , which is that in fact, it seems to me, you'd actually, when you realised it, you'd actually brought a lot with you. You started with a great deal, and I'm really interested in - never mind where you've moved to -but where you started from. What you reckon are the important things in the past that affected the way you thought the job was going to be.

PE-T
STUD: Well, I think a lot of it was to do with my own education, I was obviously successful at school, but I was very friendly with a lot of people who weren't academic. We were in a steamed school and it was a lot to do with the teachers. I didn't agree with the way it was done. They weren't sort of included. They were sort of in a hut across the field , with the same teacher for everything they did at secondary school.

Also my boyfriend's mother's a teacher and I'm very close to her and used to go into her school a lot and I was talking to her about what it all involved.

VABS
29 I'm a very sort of people person. it's just caring about the people that influences the way I do things. I think I have a very human approach to things. Perhaps I shouldn't say that.

INT: I am asking what you feel really?

VABS

STUD: 38 I was desperate for them to enjoy what they were doing. I didn't ever think 'we've got to do this'. I used to anguish long and hard about how to do things that I needed to do. If I just do some aspect of some thing a bit wrong and it happened to be boring, then it's going to put them off for ever because of me. What a responsibility. I felt very responsible to keep their minds open, to keep them interested in everything they did. It's a very ridiculously idealistic approach, But if I don't start out being an idealist, what am I going to be like in 30 years time? I'll probably be hating children after a year.

51 I think it makes it more difficult. It takes a long time to think things through. I felt sometimes I should just get on with it, but I can't.

PE-C

59 (Talks about using children's interests to decide how to motivate them)

60 I spend a lot of time talking to the children, which may be a mistake, because in my new school she says I shouldn't be friendly with the children. I think some people fear that if they're friendly with the children then they're going to lose control of them . But I disagree.

67 I did a lot of work with children in youth clubs and disadvantaged children on holiday. we didn't spend our time shouting at them. You could be friendly. They still respect you , they'll obey you.

VABCLASH

73 I'm genuinely interested in what they think and where they're coming from, because unless you know that how can you possibly get through to them?
I think my teacher was astounded because I went through the whole thing of where are they from, what are their beliefs, what language do they speak? She didn't know, and I was horrified.

I learnt all their names on the first day. I think it's really important to put that effort in. But then I've very strong views about things

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90 INT: One thing you mentioned way back was that you went to school in a small primary school. That you gave an impression was a waste of time.

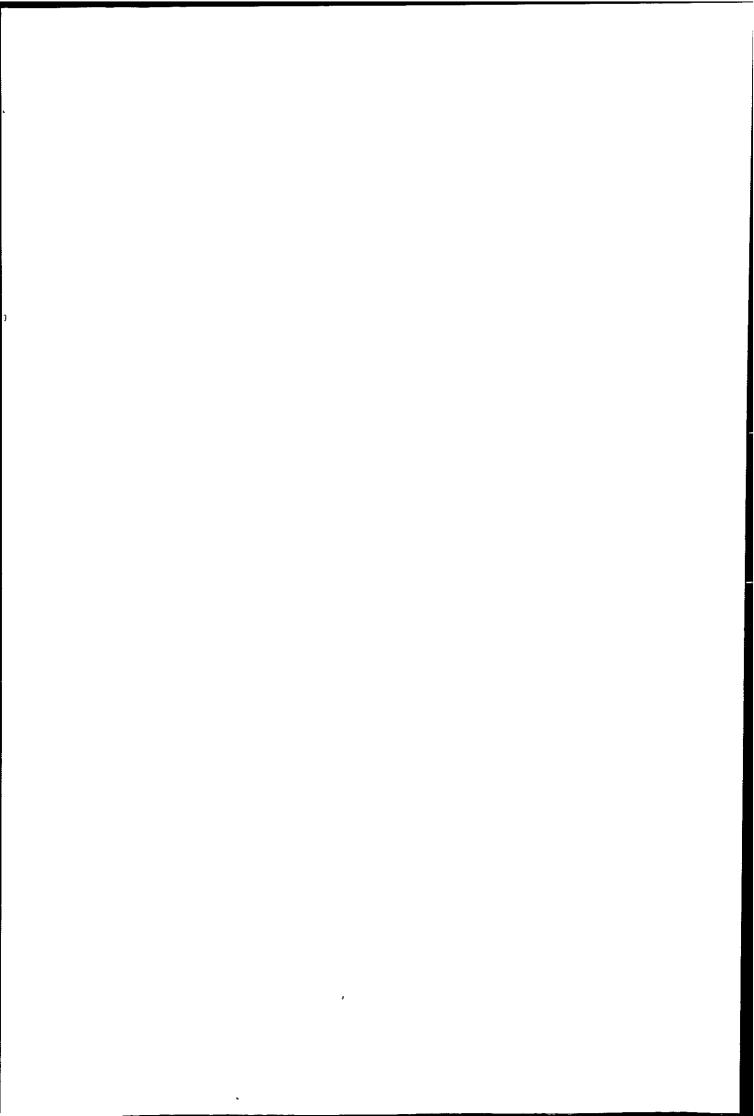STUD:
(Student describes experiences of an ineffective 'integrated day')

112 That's about other aspects of life since, I mean work for example. You've done an interesting range of other things as well.

(Student discusses ideas about not coming straight from school to school.
job experiences in other contexts and value in understanding other people's experiences).

PE-AP

140 You could talk about your washing machine or football, full stop. And that's what the people are gonna be like who you are gonna be teaching. And that's what their parents are gonna be like. And you've got to realise that and respect that that is their world - and their world is just as good as your world . Just because they can't see beyond their home decoration or whatever. It doesn't mean that just because they don't read the Guardian that they're not very good people.

PE-T
170 INT: Another thing you referred to was inspirational social workers.
TEFL was another one. Because in school I asked you about he organisation of a particular session you did - and you said 'TEFL definitely'.

STUD: (Student describes influence of TEFL style)
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220 INT: Moving into School B. You said you learnt a lot, but you definitely give the impression that of a seamless robe of learning. I didn't get the impression that you learnt a lot from 'here' or 'there', but that you just learnt a lot over the time being there. Can you locate where it came from?

TS-L
STUD: 227 That's just it, I don't really know. You just sort of assimilate it.

INT: Who from? Who are the main candidates

STUD: Well I felt. This annoyed me, but in the end I learnt to appreciate it, I felt that I did get a lot of support there, but it wasn't overt. I was given far too much freedom, perhaps, for me. I felt lost to start with , and then I really enjoyed it.
There were people there to support you. If you wanted to talk to someone about something they were there. They would come up with ideas. But no one suggested anything I should do. When I did my planning I didn't talk to anybody about anything that I did. I just did it. They were all my own ideas. I looked at books and stuff. But it wasn't a joint thing. It was , well here's the class, you can do what you like. I did take this up with H. at one time and she said it was because she thought I had the ability to do that, and she had had students that she couldn't have let do that.

262 I was looking for some sort of help that I was going on the right lines.

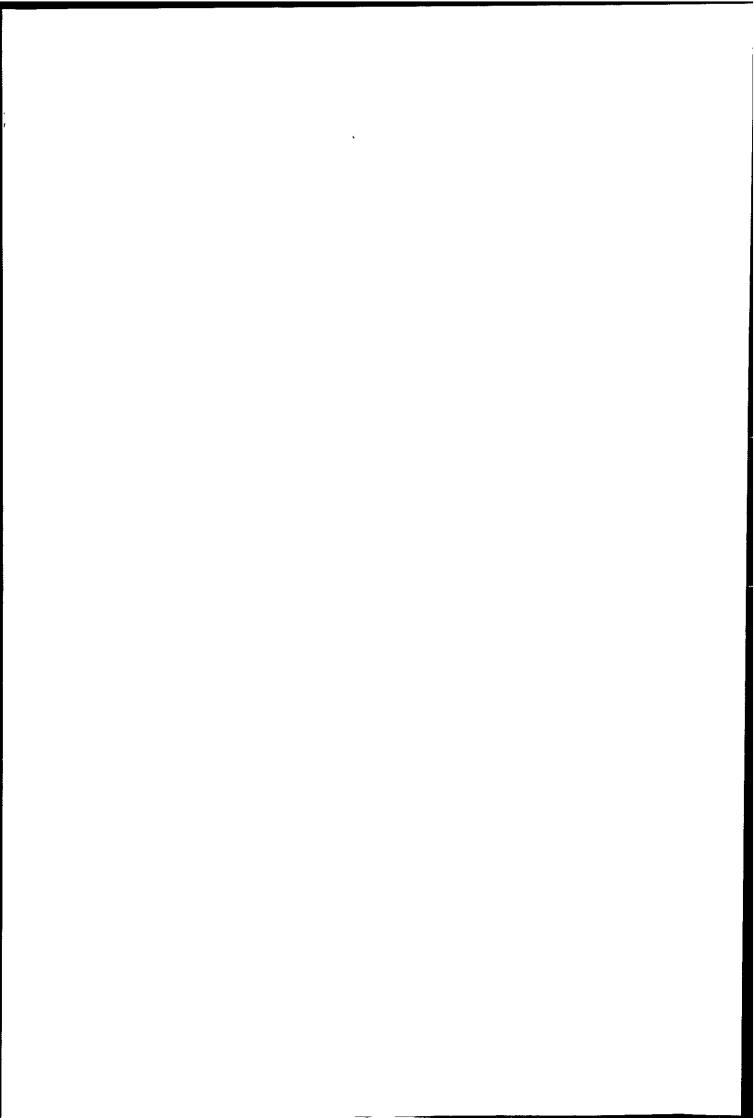**TS-T**
Which is completely different from where I am now where everything is planned in a year group and you haven't got any flexibility at all.

TS-L / F
I did feel a bit lost, that was all. I think I was doing the right thing, because if I wasn't, then she would have stepped in.

275 I would have liked more (feedback). I didn't get any.

I didn't want to be pulled part. It was my first experience, and surely it should have been a positive one - and I had a brilliant time. But on the other hand the feedback was all very general - I was prompt and I was suitably dressed. Come on, I want to know if I'm doing alright.

I want to know about the detail in my plans, which were fairly detailed, or the content of my lesson, or control over the children. I would have liked some more detailed feedback rather than generalisations all the time.

302 INT: What about the mentor? Were you getting observations from the mentor?

STUD: She wrote slightly more detail.

QSE-P
Perhaps the thing is, without sounding very vain it was a great success and they didn't have a lot to pick up and pull apart.
It went really well, and I had a really nice school and a really nice class and it went like a dream.

INT: It's not a problem. It did go really well.

STUD: It's the first I've been very successful at doing anything. People were coming in and taking pictures of my Chinese display.

TS-L / ST
321(Of class teacher) I thought perhaps she feels embarrassed that I rushed in. I said of course I'm going to rush in and do this and do that and put you to shame and be wonderful because I've only got to do it for four weeks.
You're there to prove yourself, so you are going to go over the top. I know when I'm doing it every day all of the day I probably won't do a tenth of the things I've tried here. That was good, that she let me do what I wanted to do.

INT: actually you had a very tentative start. We had a conversation, here -you backing off kinds of conversation here where there was a discussion about what you ought to be doing.

SP
342
STUD: I'm like that at my new school. I hate it , I hate everybody there. I'm always like that wherever I go. I'm just impossible to begin with. I just can't get going. The suddenly it happens to me. It's always disastrous, it's always very slow, I'm always very tentative. And then suddenly I'm there . I'm a bit of an all or nothing. I don't gradually build up to things. That's not School B, it's me.

365 And also it was the start of the course. I'd just given up my job. It's quite hard to get back into studying.
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370 INT: Let's talk about the school a bit, because, again, the early talk about school was not particularly positive.

TS-L

STUD: That's because we were very inexperienced and we didn't know what to expect and we were hearing things about other people's schools and it always seemed better for them . In fact we were lucky about the restriction thing. Other people had more support and had more focus. Their teachers got a lot more involved in what they were doing . Which at the beginning seemed like a brilliant thing. I was thinking I wish I had that. But when it comes to it, if you've got more freedom it's better , but at the beginning you don't realise that and it is harder.

I don't think I would necessarily want to work in a school like that

I really liked the teachers there.

I just had a problem with the head.

SC

395 INT: What about the staff as a staff, the ways things were done.

STUD: It was very easy really. I found it a bit odd that the staff. There was quite lot of friction between the staff I thought, and they didn't really get together in the staffroom. Most of the time, whenever you went in the staffroom it was empty. everyone was in their own room.

Part of that is your own room's a lovely room, and there was quite a lot going on at lunchtime that they did. A lot of people resented the deputy head.

TS-T

(comments on why DH had become mentor.)

A lot of the time we'd go and talk to her and she did all of the talking. It was as if she wanted to be mentor because it was extra responsibility and status to put on her C.V. I'm glad she wasn't my class teacher. She was so inflexible in her approach. It was 'do this, do this, do this'.

No big broad flexible outlook. Just teaching the class. I know that's not possible. You've got to fit in with routines. But it was possible there, so why not take advantage of it.

LOS

430 The rest of the staff were wonderful. H. taught me to write properly.

INT: How did that arise, because in fact, directly you had no contact with her....

STUD: She was one of the people who would go in the staffroom. She was always so approachable - I've hear the other Lisa say how friendly she was. - like a second mother to her. I thought. of all the people. she seemed to have a bit of time and also she is one of the people who is starting to do the children's handwriting, whereas most of the staff up the school don't say from the very basics 'you go round like this and up like this ' in quite the same way. They write on the board in the proper style, but they are not actually tracing the letters. But I thought she probably would be as she's got reception.

449 I was looking through some things in the staffroom and I said I was having a problem and she said she'd help me.

267

ASO

458

INT: That's very interesting, because it's an example of the way in which support doesn't actually come from where it's planned to come form. It just comes from somebody who's a supportive person.

Another thing I missed was the assembly. I'm interested in whether the assembly was one time when you showed off what you could do.

STUD: 470 Assemblies were a semi-religious get together.
Instead of the staffroom rota , it was a small school, it should be the whole school coming together. It was neither one thing or another. It was so boring.
There was nothing to make the children think, there was nothing interesting. There was this farce of a birthday assembly where the children came out to the front and told what cards they got and what presents they got.
(Continues)............

INT: What about the class assembly? That was a time when all the school came together. Everybody was there.

STUD: When there was a class assembly, it was once a month I think, then that was more focused, and all the members of staff did tend to support the member of staff who was doing it. It could be just the member of staff doing the assembly. I did see the other teacher do one which was very good.
I did think they had got into a nice sort of little rut there, and they never do anything that is very challenging or different.

ASS

522 INT: Did doing the assembly do anything for you?

STUD: It was a big achievement to be honest. I used to produce a lot of plays when I was at school. It was a bit of a last minute thing and I didn't quite know if it was gonna...... and I had never done anything like that with the children. I could see it, but we only had one and a half rehearsals, but it did come off.

540 (Talks through details of what happened in assembly on Chinese New Year. Includes).....
I told them the story about the Chinese New Year, and because they were so keen, I thought, right.

So they all wrote the story of the animals race in their books as a writing exercise. . I took that story- it took me all night one night- and the narration was bits of the children's own stories. None of it was my own writing. If the children can do it, then why me write it?

I did pick some of the children who I knew had artistic ability to do some of the more difficult animals, because I wanted it to be a success - that was my own personal vanity.

Then they made the dragon, they did all that themselves.

The class teacher helped me make the lanterns.

It was very dramatic.

I was jolly proud of it, to be honest. I thought it was 'a success'. The work they did , I thought it was quite high quality. But I was lucky with my class.

SC / SCF
638 INT: One more question. Was going to the pub an event or was it an example of the way things were done?

STUD: It was a ritual. It's Friday, D and H go to the pub. L and I thought, should we go, shouldn't we go? We felt obliged to go. We were trying to fit in. All they did was talk about the children anyway, and slag off the head.
It wasn't my idea of going to the pub. It could have been in the staffroom, apart from the fact that the Head could have walked in, and I think the only reason they went to the pub was because they could let off steam and bitch on about other members of staff who didn't go to the pub. - and that's why other people didn't go.
R got involved with it. As a new person I don't know if I would have wanted to get involved with it, because it's really hard, all that bit about sub-cultures in schools. I think I'd have stuck with L. She was the best person there.

Notes:

almost prophetic comment on kind of teacher meets as next class teacher?

VABCLASH

60 onwards culture clash and of beliefs in relation to School F c t from very early days.
321 also student as threat?

SC

?Lack of pressure on teachers translates into lack of pressure on students?

430 She encapsulates the culture of the school in terms of how you can operate - laissez-faire? except that you are not allowed to annoy the parents -
Yet if this is true of School D also, what is the difference between the two?

ASS
460 Assembly as an opportunity to develop confidence by showing what capable of achieving.
Assembly clearly a success, and beyond what usually done, but seemed not to be resented by staff.
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male student, part of year group in school dominated by year-group sub-groups. End final block.

SITE/INTERVIEW NO.: ST3/July 95   Researcher: RY
Card ID: 2502

Data:
INT: I want to talk about you in relation to School F. The issue is how or what and from whom you who learnt anything at all about being a teacher from the process of being at School F. It almost doesn't matter where you begin, where you jump in .

LCT

STUD: 006 Well definitely straight away my class teacher. A huge influence on me. The very minute I walked in there she decided to accept me as a teacher, and she let me have full rein of the children and the class, which is an opportunity I never had in my last school, as you know.

LCT / LN / LSA
It was her positive attitude towards me that allowed me to be creative with the displays , allowed me to develop. I mean I just made a pile of mistakes that I never had had the opportunity to make, but made them by myself in the class with nobody watching . And you could say ' Oh, that didn't work, I'd better try that again next time. And there was no embarrassment, there was no negative feedback from anybody, and that helped a lot to get me feeling OK.

INT: It may sound a pathetic question, but how did she do that? What was going on in the early contacts?

LCT / LRM
17 Well, we got on brilliantly. I new I'd like her straight away, because she had such a great attitude within the class towards the kids. She had a quiet manner as well. She never shouted, and I like that attitude in the classroom. She was very positive. She loved kids. It went through in everything she did, in the way she talked about kids, even though he was probably a punk or something, she still found something nice in him. I like doing that as well.

LCT / LRM / SUPCT
 So in that respect we got on great. She just let me take the lesson, and then she'd never say anything negative, or if it was negative it would be in a positive way. It would be 'Oh by the way, maybe next time....' - that sort of thing.

INT: Did she do some observation?

LCT / LF
STUD: She did . At the beginning she was in every lesson watching, and then it was once a week mainly.

270

INT: Was that oral feedback, written feedback?

STUD: Oral mostly, but she did write some stuff.
She had some good ideas, she gave me tips from all her experience, hints on what to do - how to set up this. She just never made me feel like I was failing or doing bad. She always kept things really positive, and I liked that. So in that sense she was probably the best thing that ever happened to me.

LM/SUPM
INT: That's partly to do with the mentor. Because we'd talked about your experience at the previous school. She'd said 'Right, I therefore know who he should be with.' This is for you to know that about her.

STUD: 40 But she would be the second one I'd pick that had an influence on me as well. She was really positive as well. She said she'd always give out three positive things in each evaluation and she always did. And again even though she had something critical to say, you never felt browbeaten.

RSM
46 INT: There was the episode of the meetings you missed.

STUD: Well obviously it should never have happened and I should have been organised enough to know that. But she knows that I was in the classroom working on displays or correcting stuff. So she knew I wasn't having a leisurely lunch in the staffroom. I upset the applecart. It should never have happened.

INT: What about the process by which she dealt with it? Was that a problem?

STUD: The first time I missed it I was effusively apologetic and it worked, because she met me later the same day. The second time the way I tried to deal with it was to try to push it to the side to make little of it, and it didn't work. And she got really upset over that. She told me in no uncertain terms. That was the way I liked it as well. She was very forthright. She didn't hide anything under the carpet. We met again, and that was no problem. But she didn't like the way I missed apologising to her and seemed blasé about it - which I wasn't really inside, I was thinking, Oh God, I've missed it again. But she didn't see that.

INT Was there any difference in the kind of feedback or ideas or support you were getting from the two?

F
STUD: 70 They were broadly similar, but the differences were that the mentor was more lesson-oriented tips, how to introduce a lesson. whereas the class teacher was more organisational ideas. She never really discussed introducing a lesson, how long an introduction should be. She talked about how the lesson went - did the children learn anything. Whereas the mentor was more the beginning, middle and end type of organisation rather than general tips.

INT: Two of the key building blocks you had were your relationships with the children and the look of the room. Why do I say that? I suppose because they were particularly visible, audible ones. How did those develop?

LCT

STUD: I didn't really see displays as making an atmosphere. And again that didn't come across at my last school. I wasn't thought of as being an atmosphere-making tool. I think the class teacher brought that out of me. She likes an atmosphere in the room too, which was good. I realised the colour of the paper was important. It's got to be bright.

SP

The kids, that's just my way of doing it. I just like a quiet working atmosphere. Again I was lucky with that school. I just walked in on it.

LN

Maybe it wasn't the best thing, because I don't have that trouble-shooting ability like (Trainee 7) had to have, or (Trainee 4) , because I didn't have the kids in the class that gave me that problem. So I don't know if I have strategies to deal with that.

LSTUD

INT: How would you deal with that?

STUD: 109 Well I've been listening to everyone that has had problems and I've picked up sort of tips, like the red chalk tip, and rules on the board. I have strategies in my head, but I've never actually put them into practice.

INT: It has been interesting, particularly at School F, that both had control issues to address. Though your restrained manner with the children is quite an important strategy as well. I don't think a strategy that says 'Right, I'm now going to bawl my head off would....'

LRM / LOB

STUD: No it wouldn't have worked. But again I model myself on the class teacher in a way. I watch the way she handled the class, handled the situation. I would maybe have bawled at them , but she handled it quietly, and I picked up on that and I developed that as well.

INT: How? When? Under what circumstances?

STUD: Within the first week or two in the serial practice I'd sit down in the class observing then. I had ample opportunity to watch her strategies and watch how the kids react to her. It's just something I internalised.
I didn't want to upset the class either. I didn't want to come in with a totally different ideas or strategies for handing them . If she had been a loud person, I probably would have copied that.

SCFT / LN

136 INT: How was the class different , if at all, from if she had been there all the time? When she's walked in today, are there any things she will need to change if she wants to make it as it was before? I'm interested in how much you made it your own.

STUD: 141 I didn't make it my own. I would have moved a few things around, but I didn't feel it was my classroom to do that in. I felt that it was still hers. I liked the way she did most things, but I would have moved furniture around, make it more central to the kids - to

get up from their desks and go to the centre of the room to get scissors and bits and bobs-be more independent. Because the stapler was on her desk. I didn't like them coming to me and asking can they have the stapler. And the same with sellotape was in the bottom drawer and I would have liked it to be out there.

SCFT
152 INT: What about organisation? Organisationally the pattern was largely hers?

STUD: Yes, I left things the way they were. Even though I would have had her permission to change things, I didn't really feel it was my job to do that.

LMULTIC / LMA
166 INT: Were there any aspect of being in that particular school that affected what you learnt which were to do with it being a multicultural school? Or almost a mono-cultural school?

STUD: Apart from the language aspect of things, I can't really think of any.
The language issue is a big thing. Two of us got together and made worksheets. I remember once I had done the work sheets I had to amend it again and make the language much more simple.
If I was doing comprehension I would have to simplify it and then ask the questions in such an easy way , make sure there was no ambiguity whatsoever. Because then I would have half the class up to me asking me what this meant.
They didn't know words like what 'permission' meant - words you would take for granted. You just had to explain all these things to them. It was a good learning experience as far as language was concerned. There was a huge language barrier that they all experienced.
Apart from lack of parental involvement whatsoever. The only time the parents were involved was when the child was in trouble and the parents had to come to the school. There was a lot of problems getting sick notes. There was a lot of absences, especially when they go to Pakistan for six months and then come back.

SCMS/SC
216 INT: One way of looking at it is that being a male teacher in that context might have been of significance.

STUD: It was. Three or four of the women in the year group that I would have been in had I got the job, they really wanted me in the year group. For more reasons than I found out. But one of the reasons was that the male head of that year he was a bad communicator with the rest of the staff apparently. He was never in the staffroom at lunchtimes, and very moody, and they expected me to sort of meld with him and get him, drag him back into the staffroom and go to football matches with him. That was what I was being used for. I think a lot of them wanted me in. They actually said to me that they need a young man in the school because there was too much bitchiness going on.

SC / SCBALK
237 INT: They are not only saying a man, they are also saying this man. They wanted you. How important was the staff year group as an influence on you?
Was it a close knit group in the staff and how far were you part of it?

STUD: It was. As far as year staff meetings were concerned I was always there having a small input. I never pushed myself in because I never felt like a real teacher. But I needed those teachers. I needed them to ask questions about lesson plans, where I was going, where they wanted it to go - people that actually - the geography boss, I went to her a couple of times saying 'where do you want me to go with this?' or 'whereabouts are you going with this?' Loads of questions for her all the time. I was always trying to get something or give some thing if I found anything on say 'bananas' which was a sub-topic we did - swapping information all the time.
Year meetings were every Thursday during assembly.

INT: How far were you part of this Year Five group?

STUD: 258 I went to them for information. They came to me with ideas. I wasn't really involved in the planning as such.

275 INT: Am I right that planning done in the year group and that each person within it took responsibility for a curriculum section, although there were also curriculum co-ordinators for the whole school?

STUD It was. We had very little input in the planning . The only one we did was the technology one. That was a disaster. It was very difficult.

LSA
285 In the technology there weren't enough cog templates to go round for all the groups , so that was when I started integrating lessons because of that. Because one going round each table wasn't good enough - all the kids were grabbing for it. So I had to integrate the technology with science because of that. And it actually stuck - I did that throughout the block practice, because I got used to it and I liked it.

SC
296 There was a theme -the human body - it could come in wherever you wanted , science mainly, English, maths - links to the theme - it was still subject led. I liked that I liked that big school where the year get together to plan things. There were so many ideas from other people it's amazing.

INT: How much freedom was there for you within the structure? What was there left for you to plan?

314 Absolutely nothing apart from lesson plans. Just get resources - like they'd have a sort of thing like the climate, and it's up to you to go and get resources on climate and then get the lesson together. That's where I would have gone to the geography co-ordinator in year five and asked her for whatever she had on it, and go to the University library, brought the two together and made up the lesson plans.

340 INT: I'm trying to think about what tour experience at School F, with hindsight does for your experiences at School A. Your experience at School F seems to have been a more enjoyable one that at School A. I'd be interested for you to look back on the School A experience and take it apart. I don't know, that's why ask, I'm trying to get inside your brain, not impose my meaning on you.

CS / SC / SCMS

342 STUD: One of the main things was that the class teacher again was a huge influence. I don't think she took to me at all. I think she wanted a female- that's the impression I got. This male-female thing raises its head again. Even in the staffroom at School A , it was 'What my kids did last night, what's this restaurant like, this wedding at the weekend. Whereas the staffroom conversations at School F was all about school, about the kids at the school. Something interesting- something where I could actually take part in. It was about what we were doing at the weekend - they were actually interested in what I was doing. It was less 'themselves' orientated and more reaching out and talking to you. whereas at School A it was more cliquey - maybe it was because it was a smaller school. Even in School F 1 they had cliques where certain groups sat in certain areas of the staffroom - not always, but that's usually how it was.

360 But I liked the bigger school, I liked the way you could mill around and talk to a lot of different people. At School A it just didn't happen at all.

The fact that the class teacher would never give me ideas about resources - she always left it completely up to me, even though I had only been in the job for two months. I was really clueless at that stage - you know what I was like.

SC / CS / SCMS / SUPCT

Whereas the School F class teacher sort of said 'Oh by the way we did this last year. Do you want to have a look at this for your lessons coming up next week. She just took me under her wing practically, and let me do as I should have been doing at School A - making mistakes, on my own, without the teacher in the classroom all the time.

SI

The way the class teacher would sit in the class if they were doing a science lesson, and I would be up at the board, the kids would be looking at me`, and I might have missed something out, and the class teacher would just swing around and interrupt the lesson and tell the kid 'oh by the way, Mr S you forgot to mention d.d.d.d.' and that's my authority completely gone then, washed away. The kids have been focused on her again, and I'd have to try and get their attention back and say, 'Hey I'm in charge here, listen to me'. There was always that kind of -I hated that conflict that we were having in the classroom . But again that was my fault -I didn't pick up on that - didn't say to her after the lesson ' I don't like this situation. What are we going to do about it?'

SAT

Whereas when the School F class teacher was in the classroom watching, initially when the kids started going to her for things as was only natural. But she would say 'I'm invisible, you can't see me. Mr S is in charge. You ask him' And eventually kids coming in the door would come straight to me. That was again a positive aspect of this teaching experience.

CS

411 I felt completely on my own at School A, having no input from the class teacher at all didn't help the situation at all. Whereas at School F I could go to any number of people for advice.

LOS

The only person at School A I could ask for advice was the maths co-ordinator. She was very helpful. I actually wished at times that she was my class teacher.

275

SC / LMICROP

INT: Presumably at School F there were staff there you'd hardly know at all.

STUD: 426 Of yes. There were people there I still don't know their names - that I never actually met. Plus the fact that my classroom was in a hut out on the field. You didn't get that meeting in the hall. I was way out there. That didn't help in meeting people. There were one or two that, even though we didn't know them, they still made themselves known - especially the technology co-ordinator. If you wanted wheels or timber it was like getting blood out of a stone. You just had to crawl to her to get stuff. She just wouldn't give you anything unless you said 'Oh I'll bring it back today.' You had to handle her very carefully. I learnt that from the mentor .

She said you have to be over enthusiastic and generous with your words. So I did that. It worked, but I didn't like having to do that. I had four years of that in the military. I thought I'd never have to do that again having left the military, but it doesn't work. So I've learnt from that, from my mistakes. About subtle things that, if you think about it, can get up somebody's nose. If you wanted something way down in the huts, used by a student you'd get upset as well I think. So if you look at it from the other person's point of view then you can actually say, yes, I was ... disrespectful or whatever. You live and learn.

CONF / LSUP / FC

484 INT: How do you reckon you are different having been at School F?

STUD: I think my confidence as a teacher has just zoomed.

I've noted this mentally. The last class I had on that Monday before we finished on the Wednesday, that last science class, that was probably the best lesson I ever had. And the reason was, I was always sort of wary about conversing with the class. I was worried about there being a disaster, the lesson just going down the pan, and on Monday I was talking about drugs and tobacco - it was just a one hour lesson. I had my usual photocopied worksheets ready to hand out after a ten minute introduction. This started at eleven o'clock. At five past twelve I went 'Oh it's time to go, sorry, you have to go now. Hands down now. We were just chatting, chatting, chatting . Kids asking me questions, I was answering. I was asking them questions. It was brilliant. I really enjoyed that lesson. I stood up there and we just talked. We were honest, we were open, and they had so many questions for me. It was the best lesson I have ever done. Because there were no worksheets, it was all impromptu, I had no idea this was going to happen, and yet I coped with it. I thought this is it.   I've come to the stage where I feel comfortable chatting, and if anyone walked in I'd still continue with it, no problem.

INT: Do you see that as a stage in your development?

STUD: 514 Oh yes, there's no way I could have done that at the beginning of my teaching practice at School F and definitely couldn't have done that at School A. That was the culmination of my year.
522 You go back to the days at School A when you actually needed a lesson plan in front of you to guide you. To go from that to the last lesson where you could just stand up there and just talk impromptu.
532 You see I knew what I was talking about. Maybe that was it. I was comfortable with the subject. It felt really comfortable.

276

SE-PROC
INT: Did you get access to other classrooms?

STUD: I observed two lessons with the mentor, they were maths lessons, and then I had a special needs class I sat in on.
I'd had a range already. I had Year 2 in my two week experience, then 3 and 4 at School A and then 5 here. I wanted to see Year 6, so I saw those lessons with the mentor.

SCF

Overall School F was a very good experience, organisationally, I remember the meetings, know what to say to people, how to butter them up if you need things, I think those two aspects were important for me to learn.
Culminating in that lesson.

INT: Nobody claims that after a year you've got it all sussed.

STUD: It sayings like 'Well, you've passed your driving test. Now you've got to learn to drive.'

Notes:

LRM
17 meeting someone like I would like to be

57 openness as an admired quality
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109 learning at second hand from other students

SCFT
129 trying to be a version of the teacher

LRM
141 fitting in in an extreme way -cloning.
But note he picks on very basic things

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216 alludes to interviews for job in school that he didn't get.

SCMS
230 Male issue -perception of another male role in a culture which female dominated - and of a student who can fit that role.

SCSTM
235 student staff group member as different from full staff membership some students - and makes a student acceptable as a potential full staff group member - evidence is that they wanted him to get the job.
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285 a useful instance of curriculum organisation insight developing in response to e problem encountered.

SSC

Sub-cultures compared with very unified culture - which is a strain if you cannot qualify as an insider. - and related to size because of likely connection between size and sub/unified cultures.

SI

School A - not wanting to let go again.

SCEM

382

Important issue - School A seems to be dual factor - not fitting with the teacher and not fitting with the staff -does that mean there are two factors to consider generally - though do affect one another - one can be antidote to the other if a problem, or both can operate in the same direction for good or ill - and may often do so given that teacher is part of and may express the cultural attitudes.

385 See Trainee 12 at School B also - but the problem is that the student is on another's territory there is a pecking order, and to behave as if student and class teacher are equals is often to question an implicit teacher assumption that they are not - especially if teacher's behaviour pattern is derived from that assumption.

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426 size and geographical location in the school as inhibitors to unified culture and getting access through interaction.

LMICROP

481 You live and learn is a useful category/term

Lower school in large middle class village. mature student, single parent with one child, recently moved house and finding travel and child care arrangements an added complication. Reception class

SITE/INTERVIEW NO.: ST15/JUL 95   Researcher: RY   Card ID: 8763

Data:

INT: What I'm interested in is trying to make sense of your experience of that school, particularly in terms of your development as a teacher in every aspect, not just in the classroom. I'm clearly interested in the influence of the whole staff or particular staff. Positively, negatively or whatever. That's the agenda, and its sort of working round it. There are particular things I can raise, because I know the school. But I'm interested in your perspective not my perspective.

QSE-N / LAFF /SOS
STUD: This is going to be very difficult because I like the class teacher and I like the teacher next door. Whatever I say is not going to be disrespectful to them.

INT: And I'm not interested in individuals. I'm interested in the process, the learning of....

STUD: The problem is the learning of a student teacher is subjective as well as objective. So if subjectively you're not comfortable to begin with it does affect you objectively. And at the very beginning in that school , no I just used to go home and think I don't know what the hell I'm doing.

SUPCT / LINH / SOS
 It was no problem of the class teacher, It was just the situation as it was. And she was quite aware of the situation. But basically from the day I went in I was supply. It was this is the class, no feedback, no help, no support. The class teacher was quite aware of this and at one time last week said "I'm really sorry about this, I'm really sorry that I have just not been here. ' One week I actually had five minutes conversation in the whole week. When I first started that really threw me.

LAFF /SOS
I had that virus which I apparently found out afterwards just knocks you out . So I wasn't capable enough to start to do it at the beginning. So I used to just get in the car and think 'I'm not going there.' One day I thought 'I'm just not going back. All I'm doing is trying to find out if I'm doing right, trying to find out if I'm swimming or sinking.' And even if I was sinking, there was nobody around to notice or to tell me. I'd had a bad one the time before, and I thought well you've had a bad one, you might have a good one.

SOS
 So that was at the beginning. Then when we started the block I thought 'well obviously I'm not going to get any support. The situation is such that I can't, and there's no point even thinking about it'.

SCSPACT

INT: Did you feel you were able to ask for it or did you feel you didn't really...

STUD: The time wasn't there. I used to walk in, do my job, walk out. You'd go into the staffroom and be pretty well ignored. But I think it's because it's the type of staff where they have to suss you out and work out whether they like you or not anyway. If you play the game and you're OK - by playing the game, don't push forward, take a sit back and suss it all out yourself.

CS / LMICROP

It takes you a little while, you have to work that one out, because the one I was in before , because we were under such emotional stress, it would be all laughter, joking, and release was in the staffroom. This one, because they don't have that the emotional stress was outside the classroom, the politics if you like in the school with this merger and everything else that was going on -it wasn't quite so necessary to have a release. It was more a case of women just moaning because there were various things wrong -which happens in the situation - it's got nothing to do with the individuals. It's just the situation.

INT Was it the particular situation of that particular time in the school's development?

STUD: Yes, the merger was the issue.

INT: How might the merge have an effect on the staff and the way they were reacting?

STUD Tense, stressed-out. One person saying one thing, the other doing this - should we do this, should we do that? The organisation of the merger, a lot of people weren't happy with that. There was open day in the middle of it all, so that caused quite a bit of stress.

LPR

So I felt my main aim was (a) to help my class teacher out, just get on with it, don't make a fuss, and make sure that those children in those five weeks didn't lose out. As soon as I decided that - your aim is these children, nothing else -you just get on and make sure that they learn something from you. As soon as I did that I was OK, because I got all my grim determination back. Once I'd worked out what the matter was , then fine, and they were absolute diamonds the class.

And also taking the pressure off the class teacher. So with the open day around I actually worked a hundred per cent of the time to give her more time, and take the pressure off her. So that's basically my experience.

LTR

Now what I learnt from that was that I can swim. But I don't know whether I can swim well. The mentor came in and observed three times, which was no more than I had in the other. So I feel the whole of this course I have done on my own.

(Comments on how far has been able to complete the paperwork in the course)

I think it was a case of I had to survive. Because I nearly gave up twice and once I'd reached a point when I was not going to give up - blow this - then it was a case of just surviving it. As I say the major aim was those children.

LCT

INT: How did anyone decide at the end of one week what was going to happen next week in the light of the previous week?

STUD: She didn't have the time Robin. She really didn't have the time.
 Partly she wasn't there. I actually kept a record of when she was there, and then I thought that was a bit petty so I stopped. She helped to do the reading three times and after that she was being whisked off by the head to do this. She felt awful about it. But she had enough trust in me to actually leave me to do it. What I tended to do was give feedback to her about the children. It was an awful situation because I know how she felt, and it wasn't her fault.

LM
INT: What about the mentor's contribution?

STUD She did come in and observe, written feedback, that was about it.

SUPOT
INT: What about other Key Stage One staff?

STUD: There was the lady next door who I got on really well with because she 's like somebody I know . But that was totally informal, totally social - we would chat in the morning for two or three minutes. That was good. She used to come and say 'what are you going to do today then ? Oh I'm going to nick that idea.' I quite enjoyed that because I do like socialising and I found that really difficult the fact that.. .. I have had a lot going on in the block anyway - the fact that I moved house. All in all it's been quite a stressful block.

LSA
INT You're saying that, apart from specific feedback, which you may have got something from...

STUD: I looked it up and I had five things. One was tidy up the classroom, make sure it's tidy, three minor and two major points. The rest of it was just me - lessons, planning, ideas for lessons.

INT: I've been there on the odd occasion when you've had informal comments from the class teacher.

STUD: They're the only two occasions when I have.

INT: I'm checking up whether I've experienced a typical situation, or just happened to be there ....

VABCLASH
STUD: You didn't experience a typical situation. I got so annoyed one day when you were there one lunchtime, because then we were actually spoken to - this is at the beginning. I thought this is what drives me insane, this is what I cannot handle. Because as far a I'm concerned you're straight down the line. I'm naturally a friendly sort of person. Being spoken to , and knowing that the very next day I would not be. And that was exactly what happened. It just got me speechless. I could not understand it.

VABCLASH / SCF / SCSST

So It was part of all that when I started thinking, right, we are going to play the game here, because my sense of humour is probably quite wicked.

INT: What's the game called?

STUD The game is fitting in and adapting, and I'm not very good at it. It's priming down your character to fit the character that is needed - a lot more formal than I am. You have to do things which are totally petty, To put these labels in my file - that was one of my feedbacks. The next one was abbreviations. I was putting ch for children and V for very good. I was told that this was not on. The evaluation was in a different way ,you had to give in a photocopy and I was giving in the original. A big fuss was made about this, and I just thought I will do it and I'll play the game, but inside I was just thinking, hang on a minute there's 26 children down there. They are far more important than me abbreviating, giving photocopies or originals of evaluations. Do you get what I'm trying to say?

INT: I'm fascinated by what you're saying.

STUD: And I don't think that is totally related to that particular school. That's the bit of teaching that I can't handle. Because I've always worked with men and you can say exactly what you want to men. You take it and you give it. Whereas men tend to be wide horizons. I cannot handle it. I really find it so - I can't think of a word. There's' far more important things.

INT: What are the implications of that?

STUD: Women should have at least two men on their staff in every school. Because I think that when you get women all together it's just not a good idea.

SCSTM

INT: I'm just reclarifying. What would be the equivalent of you as a person coming to fit in as a part of this staff ? Now it may be that being a student you have to behave differently than a teacher coming in would have to behave..

STUD I was thinking that the other day. if I had come in as a teacher would it have been different? I suppose in a way it would because I wouldn't have expected the support therefore would not have been disappointed to begin with. I would have just come and thought. Right I'm just doing the job.. Whereas when you go in as a student you tend to think you are going to get the support. When that doesn't come you think well come, on hang on a minute, I don't really know what to do. The responsibility of all this , the children, it all starts crowding in on you. If I'd gone in as a teacher... By the end I was 75 percent normal and natural because I just got to the stage of thinking well you can like it or lump it, because I'm going in two weeks. And there were some people I have fondness for and I do like. As a teacher, I probably would have accepted it and then after I got my foot in I would probably have made a ???? .They did actually say to me they wished I had applied for the job, because they wanted me to get the job. They didn't ask me. I don't know whether I would have applied anyway, Robin.

INT: Why wouldn't you have applied for a job there?

STUD: I don't think I could play the game that long.

INT: I'm just wondering whether knowing your place was part of the game

STUD Definitely. You are not - I don't think that is different in any school. It's very rare you will meet a staff who will take you on as not just a student, as just an individual. I think the other school did, looking back, I'm sure they did - not just a student.
280 But I think in my case it was seen that I could cope and I could handle it so therefore I was used.

CEFF
INT: What was the ceiling on how effective you could become?

STUD: It's totally gauged to the individual. You either crumble or you just carry on - the individual student. Say if I went and did this again, and I went into two fantastic schools, and the kids were fantastic, there were no pressures, no problems. The support was there, lots of feedback, I don't know whether I'd have been any different.

INT: I'm trying to make sense of a complicated situation. It may be that there are different kinds of contexts and that they are more or less effective for different kinds of people actually, not just students.

STUD: In a way being thrown into the deep end is the way I've coped with things anyway. I'm fiercely independent anyway.

INT: Given that you performed very effectively - and that was what the school was saying to me - it might be that a supportive interventionist approach might have enabled you to go through rather than hit the ceiling. The ceiling would have been whatever you were able to do by your own bootstraps.

STUD: I was surviving.

INT: You were doing more than surviving. You were learning from yourself and the children perhaps.

STUD: I gained quite a bit of competence, but I don't think I've learnt enough to feel 100 per cent confident. Because my children were a fantastic group, and I know I can handle that.

CEFF / SP
But I do know that controlwise I work on gentle steel, which works in the long run but not in the short run. Now I don't think I'll ever change from that, Robin.

VABS / VABSLASH
INT: You said to me you have these attitudes to the children and you don't want to lose them.

320 STUD But I don't think I could do teaching without losing them. That's the conclusion I've come to. I think on the way you start getting harder, and more cynical and getting that edge. And I don't want that edge, not at all.

283

That's probably what has changed my character in this last year. I've started to be a lot more sensible, a lot more responsible. And I'm not really happy with myself. I don't like myself at the end of this year, whereas at the beginning of this year -which is the first time for ever I think- I actually liked myself. So as far as I can see in my personal life I have gone back four or five years. whereas I had built up in those four or five years 'Yes I'm OK, I'm alright.' Now I've gone into the "well I've done it, and I've gritted my teeth and I did it. But I don't really like me any more'. Which is crazy.

SCFT / VABS

INT: Were you fitting in in the classroom? What do I mean by that? What I mean ...we talked about how you developed yourself, through your own hard work. You did that within a framework more or less which existed . So you said 'this framework exists, I'm going to use this framework'. You did say to me that the reason I'm doing this is because I actually find it works very nicely thank you. I'm wondering Whether this was just a fitting in becoming a straitjacket or..

STUD: 348 You've got to remember that the thing that kept me going all along was that these children weren't going to suffer. So looking at the rotational system that they had - they are only year one/reception - for me to go in as a different teacher, to then go and change her system altogether is not actually going to help them. So the major reason for keeping that was, it worked well -I liked the system - but basically the children knew it, they were happy with it. It was a consistency where there was an inconsistency coming in. So to give them two inconsistencies - not just change their teacher, but change their whole day framework that they were used to - is not a good idea.
So it wasn't fitting in with the school, it was fitting in with the children's needs. Choosing to fit in with the onus not being on the school but being on the children - which is a big distinction.
Now if I'd have thought that the children didn't like that system or there was a better system, and they were capable of taking that change, then I would have done another system. But I didn't think there was. At the other school I did actually try two systems.

Having said that, there was one day when I decided to do technology for the whole day . So I thought, whole class, individual work, make a display. Brilliant, loved it. But that was two-thirds into the block so I felt I could do that, because there was confidence in the class. Do you know what I mean?
I think if you had started at the beginning of the year and the school had said' This is the system you use,' you'd probably use that system, then you'd get to know your children, then if you could change that system you would. But any system has to be related to the child. Otherwise you've lost it before you start.

SP / VABS

The problem with me is that I'd spend every single minute, I'm single -minded. It's all the rest that I can't handle. I think it has affected me to the point where I think if I could have my own school with my own children then I would do it. But then you'd probably start off nice and radical and really good and then adults would come along. Bureaucracy. I'm very idealistic and utopian. But I think all of that comes in too much and it just dampens . And we are supposed to project enthusiasm to the children, being already dampened. I suppose I have a great - vision - if you want , and I think I'd be so bitterly disappointed that I'd be squashed, because I can't really see how it would work.

LCH

INT: You haven't seen a vision at work anywhere you've worked this year?

STUD: No ,not really. The nearest is at the other school. There was one child there. I thought this little lad has got problems. He's going to be hard. He's going to hate me or really fall for me.
And in the end he did. I thought if I could have him now as he is he could blossom.

SP / VABS

Then you have them for a year, you give them up for a year. I don't think I agree with that either.

INT: The Jean Brodie bit.

STUD: It is. I'm not realistic or practical enough for it I don't think. I'd want to save every single one of those children. It would beat me up that I couldn't. So basically I think I should have been born a St Teresa and then I probably would have been alright.
end 455

Notes:
SCF
46 Playing the game as a construct akin to fitting in - observing the rules which govern behaviour deemed appropriate for newcomers who are students - so 2 limitations - 1 newcomer, 2 student

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A section looking at student responses to unhelpful situations would make good use of this one.
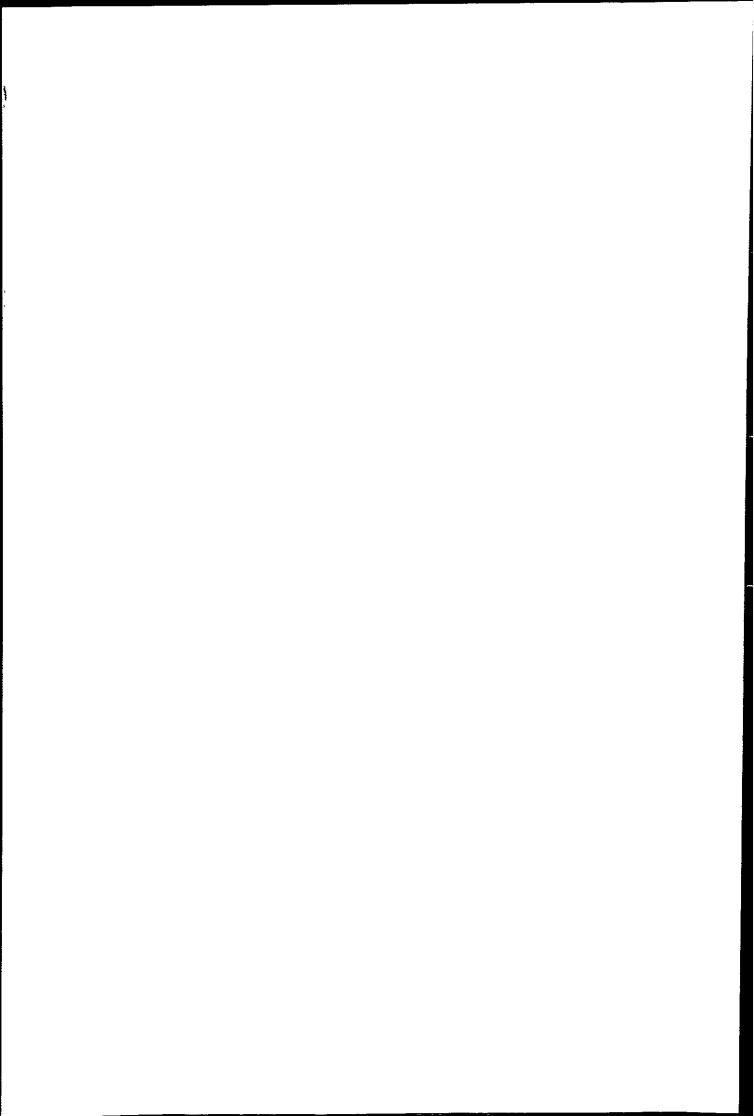

SP
182 She's just like Trainee 12 , but responds strategically.

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211 not only are comparisons made with previous schools, but with earlier work experiences , as basis for evaluating teaching.

A positive instance of a deficit model?

VABS
320 Values shouting and uncompromising -that teaching may not be for me because of the values cost.

APPENDIX E

DATA ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

Key
End block one students only : plain
End block one and two students: bold
End block two students only: bold italic

A: LEARNING
A1   LEARNING FROM PEOPLE

LAS   **learning from people away from school**

LCH   **learning from children**

LCT   **learning from class teacher**

LM   **learning from mentor**

LOS   **learning - from other staff**

LRM   **learning from role models**

LSUB   **learning from sub-group(s)**

LWS   **learning from the whole staff**

A2   LEARNING PROCESSES
ASO   **assembly -other than by student**

F   **feedback**

FDM   **feedback deficit model**

LA   learning from access

LCOMP   **learning complexity described**

LE   learning from explanation.

LN   **learning from negative experiences/processes**

LOB   **learning from observing**

LP   learning from participation

LPR   **learning from the process of doing**

LSA   **learning from self-analysis**

286

LTR	learning through trauma, including negative experiences
LTIP	learning from tips

A3   LEARNING ASPECTS

LS	learning about self
AL -PL	areas of learning -planning
LCM	learning about classroom management
LF/L	learning frames - understandings which help to interpret a situation and its meaning inc teacher lore
LM	learning about match
LO	learning about organisation
LR	learning about and from performing the role of the teacher

B   CULTURE

ASS	assembly - done by student
SC	staff culture
SCBM	school/staff culture belonging and membership positive
SCCH	school culture and challenge from student
SCEM	school/staff culture exclusion from membership negative
SCF	staff /school culture - fitting in, including impression management, explicit/implicit expectations
SCFT	staff /school culture - fitting in with teacher inc. classroom
SSC	school size and culture
SCH	staff culture and head's influence
SCMSR	staff culture, membership and student reciprocity
SCMS	staff culture and male students

SCOPS school/staff culture	opportunities for learning arising from the nature of the
SCPS	participating in the staff/school culture socially
SCRP	participation in the staff culture required, even if only means conforming to meetings schedules, admin.
SCSPACT	staff culture and student active/passive stance
SCSTM	staff culture – student form of membership

C   SUPPORT

SUPCT	support from class teacher, positive and negative
SUPA	support away from school
SUPM	support from mentor
SUPOT	support other teachers

D   TEACHING CONTEXTS

TC	teaching culture
TNE	teacher as non-expert
TS- F	teaching structure - flexible
TS -L	teaching structure - loose
TS -T	teaching structure - tight

E   VALUES, ATTITUDES, BELIEFS

FE	student feelings
FC	student feelings change
8 9 SD	student deficit model
10 VAB clash	mismatch between student and teacher values/attitudes/ beliefs
9 VABS	student values/attitudes/ beliefs
9 10 VABSCH	student values/attitudes/ beliefs changes

F DEVELOPMENT SPIRALS

CS	**comparing schools**
ID	indices/symbols of successful development
OS	**order of schools**
QSE -P	**quality of school experience - plus**
QSE-N	**quality of school experience -negative**
VICS	vicious spiral
VIRS	virtuous spiral

G PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

PE -AS	previous experience as influence on relationships with adult staff
PE- AP	previous experience as influence on relationships with adults - parents
PE - C	previous experience as influence on relationships with children
PE-N	previous experience not preparing for school in.
PE-T	previous experience as an influence on teaching

H STUDENTS AS PEOPLE

MSE	**mature student experience**
SA	**student assertiveness**
SACT	**student as active learner**
SP	**student personality**
ST	**student as threat**

I RELATIONSHIPS

MTR	**mentor and class teacher relationships**
RST	**relationships between student and class teacher**
RSM	**relationships between student and mentor**
SI	**student as intruder**

J   STRUCTURAL ISSUES

MCT   mentor as class teacher

SEPROC   school experience processes

SS   school size

SST   school structures

H   headteacher

PUZZLES

BLOCK TWO ADDITIONAL CODES

cat   *changes in attitude to nature of teaching*

ceff   *ceiling effect*

chps   *changed view of previous experience*

conf   *confidence*

flm   *feedback learner model*

fok   *feedback OK model*

laff   *affective issues and learning*

lcoll   *learning from college*

linh   *inhibitors to learning*

lmicrop   *learning about micropolitics*

lmultic   *learning and multicultural issues*

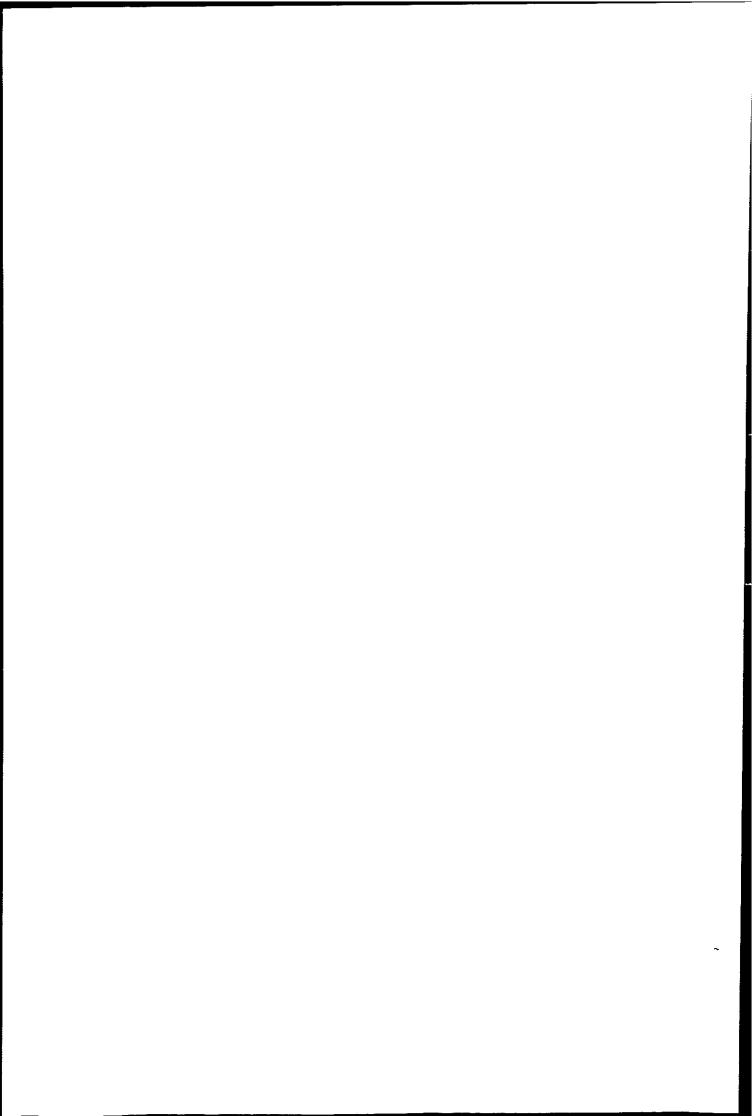*lpsex*   *learning from previous school experience in relation to next*

lsacp   *learning and student action active/passive stance*

lstud   *learning from students*

lsup   *supplantive learning*

masct   *mentor as class seacher*

nst   *norms in teaching*

sat	*student as teacher*
scbalk	*balkanised staff cultures*
scn	*staff cultures - norms*
scss	*staff culture student strategies*
scvab	*staff culture and vabs*
sos	*sink or swim*
supst	*support from students*
time	*time*
vabshare	*shared student -staff vabs*
vabst	*vabs-teaching*

APPENDIX F

Examples of analysed data stacks using Hyperqual.

Trainee Interviews: Block One

Stack 1SCBM   Created 20/4/96

(School/staff culture, belonging and membership)

CARD 1 ST12/FEB95 ANALYTIC NOTE   4533
221 'Taking me under their wing' as important conceptual issue - does it encapsulate the idea of what 'student membership' is in practice? - you still have to be a particular sort of student/person before are taken on fully as part of obligation. Male a subset of this in all female staff - so there are some sub-expectations too.

CARD 2 ST15/APRIL 95   2986

STUDENT: The culture is very important, because if they make you feel welcome, then you are actually being respected not as a student but as a prospective teacher. If you're thought of as a student then you behave as a student I can remember with the block I was so worried about it, and I went in the first day and I thought, right, you're not a student, you're a teacher. If you go in with that attitude you might stand a chance. If you go in as a student you won't stand a chance. You get the backup of the staff who want to talk to you about children - ask if you've noticed something about a child - and they respect your opinion. Perhaps even act on it. That actually makes you feel ...

INT: asks about other examples.

STUD Confidentiality- they talk about the children, the parents. Will ask you - we've got a problem with this little lad, what do you think we could do about it.

There was wonderful occasion when I could have hugged them all, when we'd had a really bad session. The children were totally crazy, and I walked in there and they said and are you OK? They sat there and said' Oh I remember when something like that happened to me.' And they weren't actually saying 'don't worry, it happens to everybody.' They were just being totally supportive without being patronising. They were saying don't worry, it happened to me, I've been teaching for twelve years, it happened to me last year.

502 INT: checks that picture given in survey responses are accurate representation. student says "YES"
except that not clear why put that similar classroom practices.

528 STUDENT If you've got that backup you feel comfortable. Otherwise you just feel as if you are in the class, door shut. And that's the same as any job. It's not just teaching. The reason why I had only a brief interlude Into the leather industry was that it was much one- one - one -one . I though t there's no way I could work here. I

think you need to have the interaction with adults. To be able to support them in return as well. Not just the taking- the giving. Its two-way.

To be totally honest, if I went into a school and the staff were not as a one I really would find that difficult. If you enjoy it, carry on. If you don't, then what's the point really. Because if you don't enjoy it you don't put anything into it.

It's exactly what we're learning about children -that if they don't enjoy it they won't put anything into it.

CARD 3 ST1/FEB95   2555

543 I didn't feel in my own relationship with the teachers that they treated me differently because I was a student. They were all perfectly nice to me. I didn't feel like if the staffroom was full I should leave in order to supply a seat for someone else. I'd forgotten about all those rules actually. I looked at them when I first got them and they didn't seem to apply when we'd settled in.

CARD 4 ST2/MARCH95   · 4744

STUDENT: I think it's just by doing, by co-operating with your teacher and your class. I was very much thrown in at the deep end. As soon as I went there I was in charge of the whole class. I didn't get much introduction through little groups. I was only there a month (of 2 days) before I had the whole class for a day. The teacher was absent and they didn't get a supply in. And that makes you part of the team really, because they know you've been with that class all day on your own - people occasionally popped in - they know that you're taking that responsibility, the fact that you play the role of the teacher from quite early on is a big thing in it.

CARD 5 ST2/MARCH95   5013

STUDENT: Being in there and being with the class all day - she's alright then. The head said to me if you can cope with it here you can cope with it anywhere . Which is what they said at my new school as well. Where I am, my confidence is built up now, because that was knocked.

CARD 6 ST11/FEB95   5328

I couldn't have been with a nicer staff. They were all helpful to me, they gave me lifts to and from school on occasions, they gave me articles, collected tapes from the library for me, they've phoned me at home and made me dinner in their own house. It was the whole wide range of the staff. I went out socially with them twice. I went to two staff homes and been driven home by two others.

CARD 7 ST11/FEB95   5497

In terms of becoming a staff member I felt thoroughly at home and was sorry to leave.

CARD 8 ST11/FEB95   5814

You always feel as a student you are on the periphery of the staff anyway at certain times.

But I didn't feel at any time it was because I was a man.

CARD 9 ST 11/FEB95   6085

And also I know a lot of people in the profession. I was never under the impression that it was easy.

INT: raises how know are accepted.

STUDENT: 600 It happened on the last day. I don't teach on Friday and my class teacher and decided she was going to pretend that she was away. And the rest of the staff, knowing that I was going out on the Thursday evening prior, took it upon themselves to go along with it, and told me in the staffroom that the teacher was away with a throat complaint and I was teaching the class for the day - and this was basically what she had prepared- which was very little. And the head even got involved it, condoling with me, including two or three members of staff who I wouldn't have dreamed would do that, conspired to do that. So at that point I did feel a member of staff - you had to be not just a student to do that.

618 Another time was when part of my lesson was described to the whole staff, who took enjoyment out of it. That showed..
It was fun one more than anything. when a girl stuck a ball under her arm and tried to throw it when I asked her to do it underarm.
The whole staff shared that at my expense, but it meant , to me it was quite nice. Unless the staff had felt comfortable with me that they could have done that. I'm sure of that.

CARD 10 ST10/FEB95   6317
INT: wonders about link between feeling comfortable personally and learning professionally.

367 I think that being able to fit in and to feel welcome - and also I worked quite closely with the section 11 teacher who worked close with my class in the class teacher's absence - So I suppose there was this feeling of being quite well-knit with that year four team and discussing lots of ideas with them. At the end of last term a lot of it began to get set up more, because I had a lot of discussion with people who had done the plans for different curriculum areas. Talking about what were their ideas. And A lot of them were quite apologetic - you don't have to do this if you don't want to. I made one or two comments - 'what if I tried something like this? Do you think that would work?'. 'Oh that 's a good idea, and then you could do this' ...and we developed some thoughts together. The when I came back in January (block) I felt like a regular member of the team quite soon.

CARD 11 ST4/MARCH95   6606
170 INT: moves agenda to School B in relation to survey responses.
You referred to a positive feel in terms of feeling accepted. What was the nature of this positive feel?

184 STUDENT: It's so difficult to describe these feels, it's just a general thing . It's a whole variety of things. It's the staff, it's the way they communicate with you, especially on the first day. The way they receive you, welcome you, treat you. The way they treat you in front of the children is quite important. There were times when I felt used, but that's bound to happen because staff are under pressure as well. But basically I felt accepted.

Moreso in the block because we were there more often. I felt more accepted as part of the staff during the block. You're just more involved, and it's very hard to be involved when you're only there two days a week. And being at staff meetings and all the other meetings. Just being in the staffroom at breaktime or whatever.

219 Obviously if I'd just sat in the staffroom and they were talking away to themselves - this happened the first couple of days, because they didn't know us and we didn't know them - and we were all frightened and they were all busy. We'd huddle in the corner and feel very self-conscious. But once they got to know us and vice versa we joined in.

CARD12 ST4/MARCH95   6837
421 I was actually told by the head that I fitted in well. - it wasn't all feelings. She actually half-offered me a job. If there was going to be a vacancy

CARD 13 ST6/FEB95   7123
227 You do relate to everybody in the staff, moreso within your year.
The head of year was in the next classroom and was very good and supportive. It was in the classroom, in the staffroom and after school.

248 But I didn't think staff commented to me as a student but as a member of the year six team.

CARD 14 ST5/FEB95   7281
INT: Did you start feeling like a teacher?

STUDENT: More or less, yes.
It was really good the way they never introduced us as students - basically it was this is a teacher come to help us , to start with.
If a child asked. After the first couple of weeks they talked to you as a teacher or talked about children in front of you once they got to know us. They talked to me about them and ask me about various children, which was nice - especially because I had parents evening several year five staff asked what do you think about so and so.
I'd ask why is this child behaving like this- and they'd get his file out for me.

276 I felt part of the school by the time I left it. It was quite a wrench to leave it.

CARD 15 ST6/FEB95   7440
INT: How do you know you were part of the school?

STUDENT: It's just attitudes of people.

INT: It must be possible to be not part of it.

STUDENT: I think so. I've heard from others(in other schools) that they just get frozen out in the staffroom and are treated as students. But I think D has got a very good attitude that we can help the students and the students can help us. And in that way they get you involved in school life and you feel, Oh yes, They helped me here and there. So last week - you're not supposed to do it - but they said 'Would you

cover for year seven ?' and I said yes, fine, because I had marking to do and I felt I'd like to see year seven anyway - and I thought I wonder how I'll get on? If they're going to ask me they must think I can do it. My class teacher went out for the day and I took the class for the day , and at the end of the day the deputy head said' You survived then, so you can do it!' - like that. It was just nice , the little comments they make on the way through.

INT: The idea of being treated as a 'supply teacher' - is it positive or negative ?

STUDENT: 297 Well, just for individual lessons it's a fairly positive thing because they must therefore see me more as a teacher than a student. Little things like, can you just keep an eye on my class. You think, they can't think I'm all that bad if they'll trust it that far.
I'd rather feel part of it. You've had your grab at it for four weeks, now you'd like to go and be a teacher there. You're on the starting blocks there.

Trainee Interviews Block Two

Stack: 2FLM Created 21/4/96
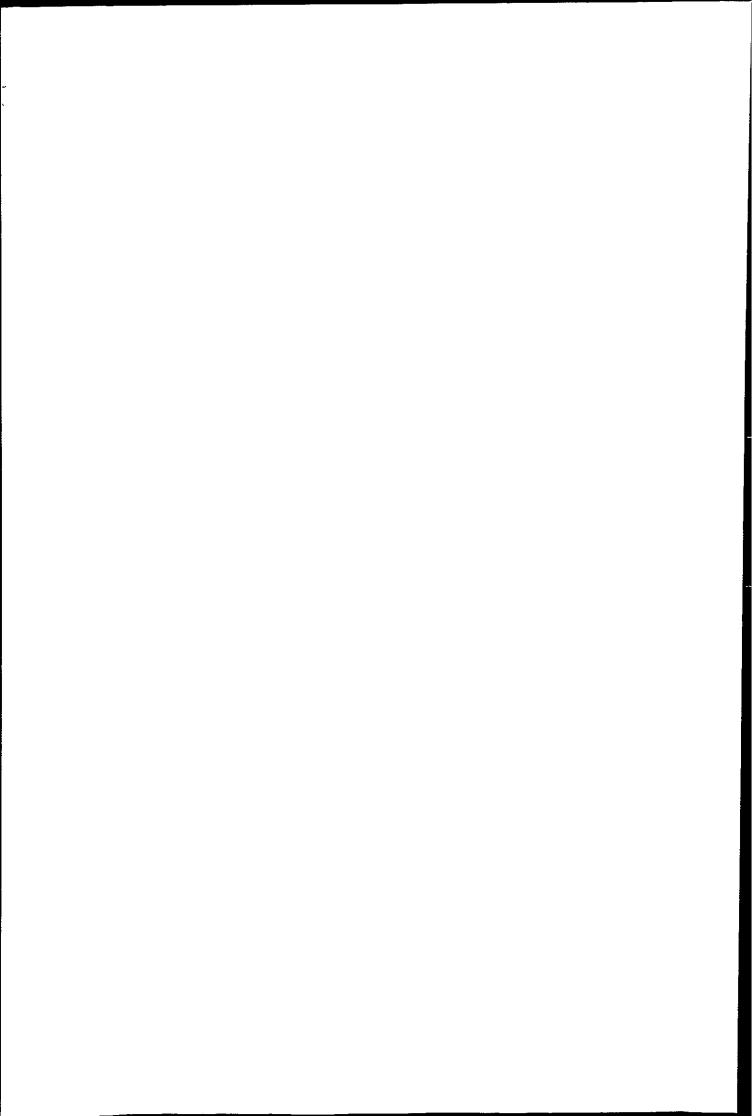
(Feedback learner model)

Card 1 ST12/ JULY 95
But she never criticised anything really. whether you just assume from that that you are progressing in the right direction. Her attitude is that you can't be expected to be a 'teacher'. 290 You've got to be seen as at the stage you are going to be at - so she didn't expect you to be perfect
I said I think my control is a lot worse. She said, no, it's fine. They're awful . They've had it, they've got no chance. All you can do is contain them. Don't even try and change them, because you won't, you can't. You've just got to try and stop them disrupting as much as you can.

Card 2 ST12/JULY 95
I said I think my control is a lot worse. She said, no, it's fine. They're awful . They've had it, they've got no chance. All you can do is contain them. Don't even try and change them, because you won't, you can't. You've just got to try and stop them disrupting as much as you can.

301 I think it's very sad, but it's probably right. People have been trying with X ever since she started school, but she's the same at home. I don't know why she's so bad. Apparently her brother's pretty much that way. She'd be in a special unit in another day and age. You can't get through to her at all. So I think she's probably right. I think you've got to keep trying to some extent, but you've got to distance yourself. Don't let them get to you, don't get emotionally involved, which is very hard. She gave me good advice about that kind of thing. They are going to be like that with everybody, and it's not you, there's nothing you can do, so just do what you can but don't worry about it.

Card 3 ST12/ JULY 95

She was very good at keeping out of it and letting me get on with it. That's what was good about that school. They let you learn . The whole atmosphere and the ethos and everything. It was relaxed enough and you could be independent enough. You could try things and make mistakes and no one bothered. That was what you were there for. Other schools expect you to be able to 'do it', rather than to be there to learn how to do it.

Card 4 ST6/JULY 95

INT: asks about learning from mentor.

STUDENT: 489 When she came ion and evaluated a lesson she would only give you three things to look at . So even if you did a really bad lesson she would not say this was really bad. She'd pick up on the good points and then say now this is what you need to work on - and give you three areas. So there was nothing really negative there and you were still feeling positive and it made you more positive about looking ahead to see what you could change

Card 5 ST4/JULY 95

203 INT: returns focus to mentor.

STUD: She's wonderful. Amazing. A brilliant mentor and class teacher as well.
Her main feature was that she was so positive about everything you did. But not in the way of just saying 'Oh that was really good.' She highlighted the things you did that were good. But she didn't leave it at that. Whenever she evaluated anything she'd always give you points to consider that would stretch you further. Which I think is really important. That's something I didn't get at RT. There because my class teacher didn't have much confidence in herself, for some reason she seemed to think that everything I did was wonderful. Which I think was also unrealistic, Because I know everything wasn't wonderful. Whereas with my last mentor there were always things to think about . Half the time I would pick up on them because I'm quite critical of myself anyway.

Card 6 ST4/JULY 95

I'd pick up on the places I went wrong. But then there were things I didn't notice that she would pick upon that I found really helpful. She really made you think about them and try and consider them for next time - how would you do it differently and what would you change? Obviously that's how you learn isn't it?
Not by getting told you're wonderful but by having constructive criticism. But she'd always start off by praising you and encouraging you. A bit too positive sometimes - but that's just me, because I don't think I deserve half the things she says. But that's only because I can't accept compliments.

250 INT: What did she do?

Stud: She'd write evaluations, then just talking informally afterwards when we got the time. When I had time with her it was quality time.

Card 7 ST8/JULY 95

Also she was able to see she did written feedbacks and that helped to build my confidence after my last placement. Because as long as I know where I'm going wrong and how I can improve it , or what I'm doing right and that I am actually doing something right, then I can help myself then.

 Whereas before I felt everything I was doing was completely wrong and I didn't stand any chance of getting any better ever.

Card 8 ST8/JULY 95

STUD: Whenever she came in she'd always say how did you think that went? and say if she agreed with what I'd said, or advise me about a problem I'd asked her about. she'd give me a few idea or ask me how I thought I could change it -and then say if she thought that would work or not. So there was a lot of talk, which was really good.
It was encouraging me to look at what I was doing, and to work out for myself what I was doing ,and to be able to pick out the good things I was doing as well. And being left on my own to actually put into practice what we talked about.

Like one RE lesson I did she came in and observed it. We were doing a role play in weddings and I was going to get them to do the written work afterwards. She said I would get them to do it the other way round. Get them doing the written work first and tell them if you do this properly then we'll do some role-play at the end - because they really enjoy doing it. So the following week I did it the other way round and it worked really well.
That was part of doing topic work We were doing a different religion. Whereas doing subject-based approach you have just that one opportunity a week and then you have to go on to the next thing the next week - And there 's no chance in between to follow things through.

Card 9 ST9/JULY 95

Towards the end my class teacher wasn't talking to me about my lessons or my lesson content, because they were fine. He was going on to assessment and things like classroom administration concentrating more on those. It turned my mind to thinking about other things.
Also they brought more things out. My mentor for example would pick on small points which might have been ignored during my first teaching practice - looking more in depth.

Card 10 ST14/JULY 95
INT: Asks how

STUD: If the class teacher had left me on my own completely and hadn't said a word, I think I would have got to the same conclusion, but it would have been a lot harder. I would have made a lot of mistakes, but I did anyway, but she just made it easier for me by making suggestions. But she never ever said 'You must do it this way.' I had the freedom to do as I wanted really

Card 11 ST11/JULY 95
I think it came from both the mentor and the class teacher. The class teacher was prepared to stand back and let you have the class and also to criticise you and help you.

she was watching regularly and made written and oral criticisms of my style, strategies I used for organisation. She was one person who went out of her way to help me.

Card 12 ST1/JULY 95
What my mentor tried to do was move me on each time. So once she'd found out I could stand in front of the kids and do the teaching, get them quiet, she then started focusing on other things - like why don't you try next time moving around the classroom, to pick up on ones who are not concentrating? So I started to do that.
I got a lot of verbal feedback that you couldn't write down - very important really. The towards the end of the block we started focusing on pupils' learning - because as far as she was concerned she'd evaluated everything she could about my teaching. So I would do a history lesson one week and then purposely if she was evaluating the next history lesson I'd go back to what we had done to make sure that they had understood. So she moved me on quite a long way.

Card 13 ST/2JULY 95 ANALYTICAL NOTE
School structure demonstrating positive aspects of balkanised cultures.

132 Note that class teacher defines evaluation as negative and so contributes to ceiling effect - whereas mentor sees it as learning process and so positive - links with learner and deficit model? - deficit model implies that when you're doing OK then you stop analysing, learner model that learning as continuing process. (doing OK probably means achieving what is normally acceptable in the school).

Card 14 ST5/JULY 95
At D with our mentor sat the end she was fine, but at the beginning she used to make our life a nightmare. Whereas at A they didn't. You know you're not teaching as well at the beginning as you're going to do at the end. But they didn't make a fuss about it. They didn't rip you apart in their evaluations- they gave you a gentle little nudge. It was that ripping apart at D over little things.
With their evaluations at A it was always positive until towards the end there was 'it would be better if you did this. But you got bang bang bang positive . It was not negative negative negative, 'oh by the way that bit wasn't bad' - which it was at D.

Trainee Interviews Block Two

Stack: 2SCBALK   Created 23/4/96
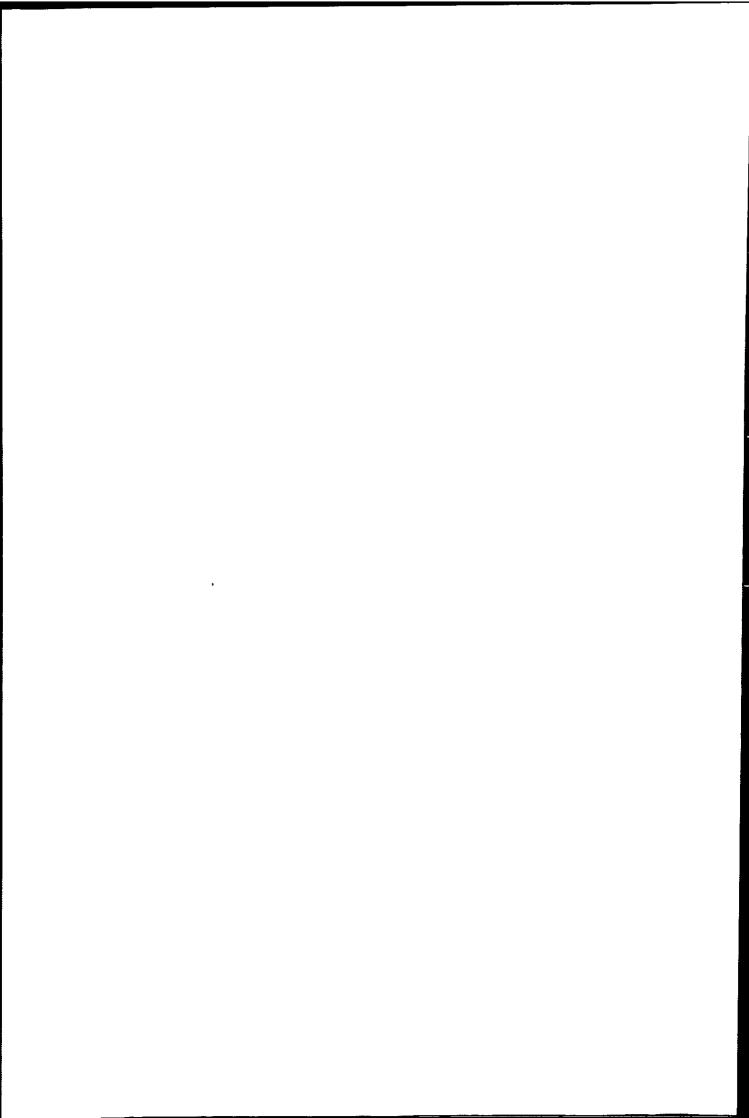
(Balkanised staff cultures)

CARD1 ST3/JULY95   4604
237 INT: They are not only saying a man, they are also saying this man. They wanted you. How important was the staff year group as an influence on you?
Was it a close knit group in the staff and how far were you part of it?

STUD: It was. As far as year staff meetings were concerned I was always there having a small input. I never pushed myself in because I never felt like a real teacher. But I needed those teachers. I needed them to ask questions about lesson

plans, where I was going, where they wanted it to go - people that actually - the geography boss, I went to her a couple of times saying 'where do you want me to go with this?' or 'whereabouts are you going with this?' Loads of questions for her all the time. I was always trying to get something or give some thing if I found anything on say 'bananas' which was a sub-topic we did - swapping information all the time.

Year meetings were every Thursday during assembly.

INT: How far were you part of this Year Five group?

STUD: 258 I went to them for information. They came to me with ideas. I wasn't really involved in the planning as such.

275 INT: Am I right that planning done in the year group and that each person within it took responsibility for a curriculum section, although there were also curriculum co-ordinators for the whole school?

STUD It was. We had very little input in the planning . The only one we did was the technology one. That was a disaster. It was very difficult.

CARD 2 ST 7/JULY 95   2211
They just had this - the better, the more superior 'I think I'm good' staff just sat in that square in the middle . whereas the other staff sat on that row at the back, especially the section 11 teachers, who were never spoken to by many of the other staff.
There were some teachers that never sat in that square. That said loads to me. And teachers that sat in that square never turned round and talked to those other teachers. It was always those section 11 teachers who sat there, including Mr R.

And other people just come in and go on about all the wonderful things they were doing.

CARD 3 ST 6/JULY 95   3059
I did Science for the whole term for the whole year group. Which I didn't mind. Because to me that made me part of them.
We met once a week each Tuesday. We went through the process of what was coming up in the planning. Then it was the trips out and what was needed. The maths assessment, we went through all the assessments , and general administration.

CARD 4 ST4/JULY 95   2544
21 STUDENT: I wouldn't say it was a group. I'd say it was lots of little groups. I got more out of the year group. I didn't really have a lot to do with others, particularly as it's such a massive staff. It's very difficult to have one big happy staff that all get on well. So the only ones I had anything to do with were in my year group. They were incredibly supportive and helpful.
That particular year group was renowned for its closeness and they did work particularly well together. The staff in the rest of the school knew that and were perhaps a bit jealous of that fact . We did things like year six didn't eat their lunch in the staffroom. They ate over in my class teacher's hut together.

We'd all go out to the pub together every Thursday, just the year six and one other from year three. I don't think any other year group was like that .

INT: suggest that all physically together
(all in huts except one y 6 class)

48 There were odd other ones that seemed nice enough but I didn't have any direct contact with them -the technology lady I went to get bits from, she was a bit funny.
INT: asks where getting subject support

56 STUD: From year six . I went to A for arts and Re, to B for science, to C for English and Geography, and D for history, and my class teacher for maths. PE we stumbled along together. I got all my support from the year.

CARD 5 ST4/JULY 95   4769
INT: mentions students contribution as skilled in music.
78 I must admit I had the rest of them asking me for advice. It was all quite embarrassing really, because I was the student teacher.

I helped George with his music lessons, because he did the music before. I sat in on one of his music lessons and it was just sit and listen to this tape. He knew it wasn't satisfactory and that you needed to get some composition, performance and stuff in there. So I wrote the music plans for the term, which everybody used - George did- he did the music for all of year six. But when I was there I did my class and two others. So he'd come and watch mine and nick my ideas basically, which was great. Then he'd do the other two classes with the same lesson.

CARD 6 ST4/JULY 95   5105
INT: Why did they accept you so apparently readily?

STUD: I think they did. I don't know why. I'm such a wonderful person.
I must admit for a start, because they were very close knit I did feel a bit (outside) - on my serial. It wasn't really until my block that I felt much more accepted . It was being there five days a week that made a difference. Joining in things like going to the pub, those social things make a difference. And in the staffroom at break they have a year six corner. They just sat together and talk together. I would have sat with them in the staffroom, but there wasn't often room to sit with them.

CARD 7 ST9/JULY95   5344
INT: asks about year six group. Was it a group in a social sense?

STUD: Pretty much so. They certainly did all their planning together and had meetings on a regular basis. They were all very supportive and very helpful to me. I could go to anyone in the year group and say I need something. They would do their best. The year head was very helpful as well. I had a problem one lesson with one of her class who was in my maths group. He had been going off the rails slightly. I went to speak to the year head about it. she said 'What I'll do is speak to him and then you come and speak to him in my classroom and then we'll both speak to him together.' It was really good because she went through exactly what I needed to do

to discipline this boy but have her input as well. That was a very helpful experience as well- hearing what she was going to do.

I really enjoyed being there. It was a really good school to do a teaching practice in.

CARD 8 ST10/JULY 95   5554

I think it's the stratification of the staff with subject teachers and a general push towards secondary school feeling.

CARD 9 ST1/JULY 95   5861

STUD: The year group stuck together. I was very much assimilated into the Year 5 team - and my final report does actually say that I became a part of the Year 5 team. SO I felt a part of that. I swapped ideas with them. They would actually come to me and say what are you doing? Because I had fresh schemes of work that I devised myself. The I felt free to go and ask them as well. But there wasn't much of a cross-over between years 5 and 6.
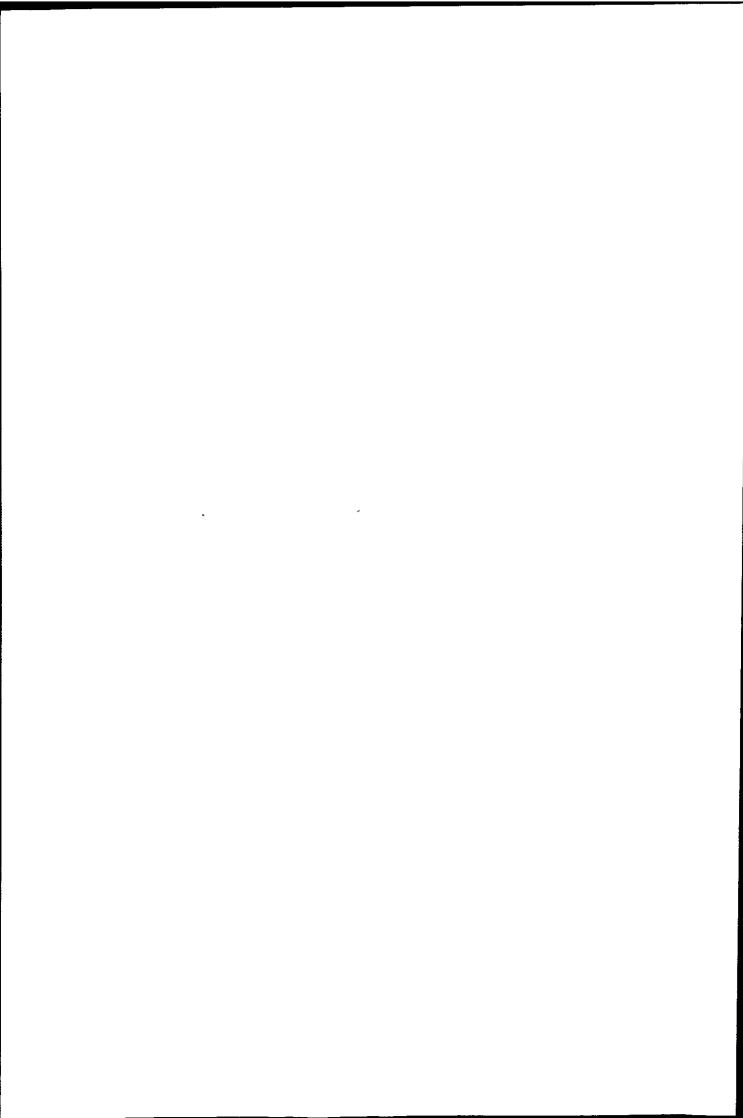
INT: Was that mirrored by different spaces as well?

STUD They were in home bases and they had a block - it says welcome to the year 5 home base. You are separated as a year group. But they were all friends in the staffroom - year five and year six. The way the building's set up I would always have to go into year six on the way up to the staffroom, whereas L would have to go down the corridor to Year five on the way to the staffroom. I did mix with year six staff personally but not in a teaching situation.

INT: So in terms of the learning in the short term - the day to day - you have curriculum co-ordinators, and then what? Colleagues? Is that the right word - colleagues in the other year five classes? An equal relationship?

STUD I think so towards the end, because we had a very bonding experience on a school trip. We went to Kentwell. We dressed. 180 kids as Tudors . 9.30 - year five were going. Year five head of year goes up to see where the coaches are. Coaches haven't been booked - they're not coming -at 9.30 -and we've got all these kids dressed as Tudors. So I learnt very quickly how to entertain 30 kids when they haven't got any books, they're dressed as Tudors and they're really high. So I did I don't know how many quizzes I pulled out of the air - maths quizzes, English quizzes, I was going mad. 11.30 still no coaches. We got these coaches - they couldn't pick us up on the way back until 7.30 and we'd told the parents we would be back by 6. So all the parents had to be phones up to say we'd be late. We got to Kentwell late, it was so hot, they were terrified of the people. Kentwell closes at 5.30. We all have tea on the grass, and a child falls over and breaks her arm . So the Head of Year goes off in the ambulance effectively leaving me in charge of her class. She takes the phone number of the coach company with her, and its name. 7.30 no coaches had arrived . They didn't arrive until 8.30 and we didn't get in until 10 p.m.

During that experience I was really involved. I took on a teacher role. I was responsible for my class, I had to count them on the coach, make sure I didn't have any missing. I felt as though they were relying on me as much as I was relying on them to get this sorted out.

That was two weeks before the end.

CARD 10 ST2/JULY 95   5934
INT: How have learnt for the staff as a whole group and particular individuals within it?
Also to look back at Marl in the light of it.

STUD As a staff it's quite bizarre really. There are five classes in each year group and the staff are hardly ever together. There's one meeting a week where the whole staff are together. The head and the deputy are never seen in the staffroom. The year teams seem to stick together really closely. So all the year five teachers help each other out, all the year six are an entity and so on up the school.
Whereas the year team itself is really supportive and I've really benefited from being in the year five team, the school as a whole doesn't come together that much socially. The staffroom is very rarely full. They meet in other places. They'll sit and have a chat, but it'll be in the year five area.
The curriculum specialises are quite strong . The technology teachers and the Art teachers get on together socially. And the sports teacher do. So there are those divisions as well.

CARD 11 ST3/JULY95   6352
STUD: The year 5 group was separate from the year 6 group. If they were going to the pub it would be the year 5 group going to the pub, or the year 6 group going to the pub, and never the twain shall meet.
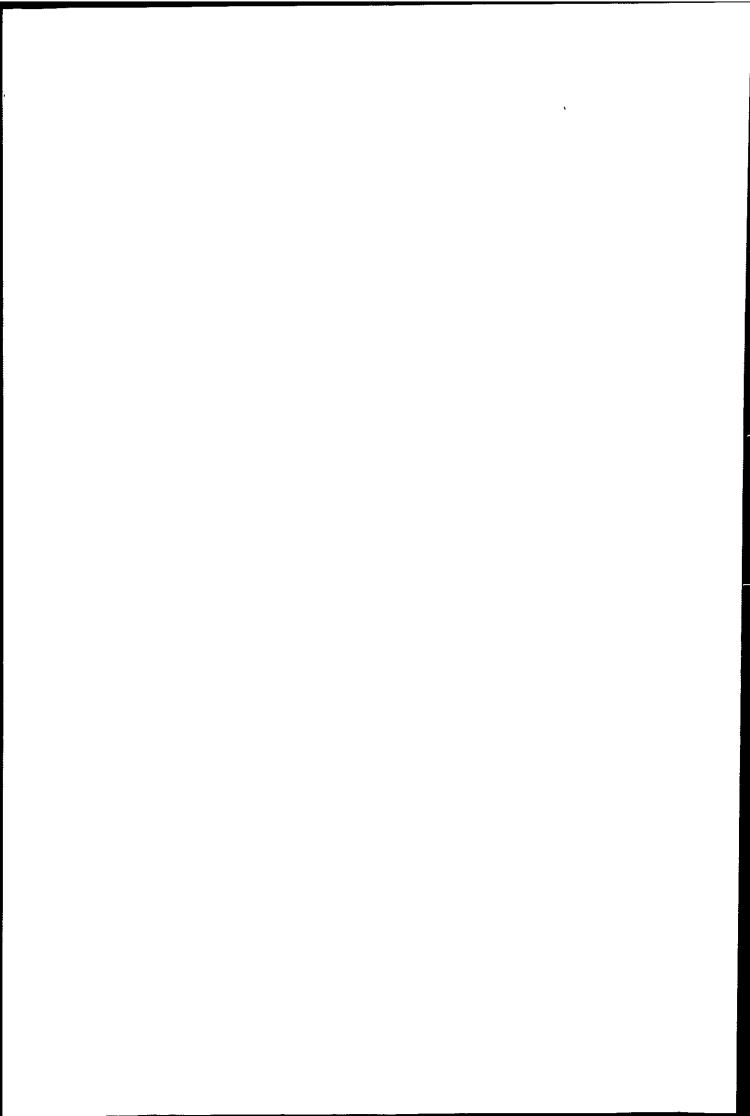
APPENDIX G

STAGES IN DATA ANALYSIS FOR INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS

1. Sort data into codes derived from reading and re-reading, using Hyperqual.

2. Chapter headings derived from themes which cluster initial data categories.

3. Read through list of categories to identify all which may be relevant to the chapter. Of course this process is informed by the weeks of initial analysis that had gone before. So I am not coming to the data at this level of analysis without a blank mind. I can anticipate what some of the issues are- and this is sometimes revealed by the comments section at the ends of each stack transcript.

4. Sift categories which link to each chapter heading to derive meta-themes in relation to the chapter theme. (sometimes there can be an identity between an original category and a meta-theme)

5. Re-read the sets of data which attach to each code. These are transcripts of the code heading for a Hyperqual stack, and so identify all the data in the stack and the order on which they appear. When you find a unit of data relating to the chapter decide what sub-issue it raises. Using a coloured marker pen (orange in this case) on an A3 sheet put a heading and number for the sub-issue which the unit indicates as an analytical idea. Beneath it start a list of the code with unit number. On the stack transcript mark in orange the number of the analysis sheet sub-unit by the side of the data unit.
Continue this process through a single code (stack transcript). When a new sub-issue emerges from the data, start a new heading on the data array sheet.

6. Using a fluorescent postit attach to the front of the stack transcript with a name for the main sub -sub-issue it contains and the number allocated to it. Add any other sub-issue numbers contained in the same stack. Move to the next stack transcript. Repeat the process. Continue with each relevant stack. Eventually the data array will show all the sub-headings relevant to the chapter with all the data units which relate to each sub-issue.

7. Create a data array which shows meta-themes and data items for each - denoted by code and Hyperqual number .

8. Using data array headings to create chapter structure whose logic is derived from the relationships of sub-issues to one another. Write down the chapter structure.

9. During the writing of each section select from the data for each sub-issue those units which clearly represent each aspect of each sub-issue. Use that set of data to decide the logical structure of ideas for each sub-section of the chapter. The sequence of ideas within each chapter is developed as a response to the question ' what is the order in which sub-themes can be presented which communicates most clearly the nature of the relationships between them?' As I write I cut and paste from a 'data in use' file to draft chapter as needed.

APPENDIX H

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DATA USED IN CONSTRUCTING CHAPTERS AND STACK SOURCES.

EXEMPLAR: Chapter 10 Interaction, Cultures and Trainees' Learning.

Letters indicate the data category, numbers indicate the Hyperqual stack card source. Those in **bold** are data used in the chapter. The remainder are relevant but not used.

10.2 Structures helping
10.2.1. Planned
se-proc9544
2lct8763

2sst4379	sst4563	sst2248	sst2973	sst4726	sst5010
sst5385					

10.2.2.1 physical contexts

2qsep4508
2sc2502   **2sc7510**
2supot5278   **2supm4982**   **2scbm5211**

buildings
2sc4645   2sc7510   2sc7809

place
2licrop4429   2scbalk5861   scspact4582

10.2.2.2 organisation of school

2scn5919   **1sc8592**   **2scft5196**   **1rsm4820**   **1lsub2987**   **1sst5385**
2dsk8262

teaching organisation
2tsf4530   2tsf2845   2tsf2445   2tsf4625   2tsf4935
tsf5297   tsf5404   tsf5662   tsl4389tsl2844tsl4590

organisation
2scn5544   2scn5919   2scops4444
10.3.1 affective conditions

2scbm5211   **2scbm6131**   **2scbm4509**
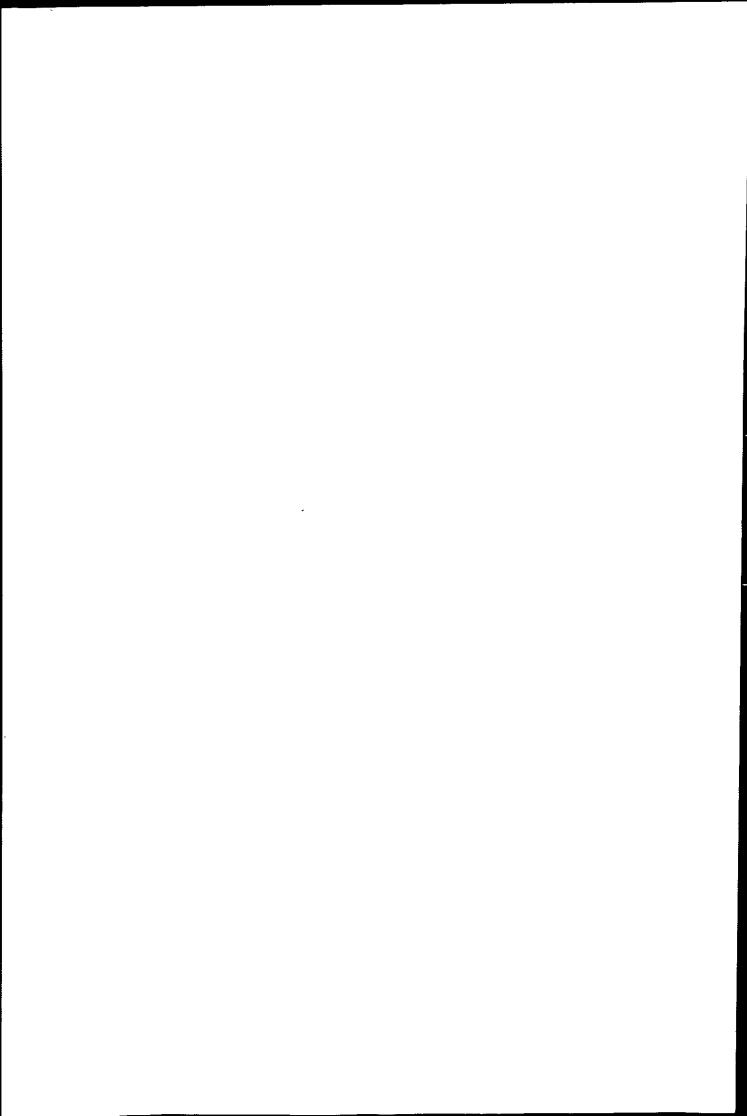
unwanted /welcomed trainees
2fdm2054   2si2383   2si4648   2si5075   2st2166   2lct4660
2ln4907   2qsep4873   2sat4507   2scbm4509

10.3.2 individual relationships

2qsen2073   **2lct2502**   **2rst5848**   **2rst6682**   **2si46482 linh2963**
      1rst2923   **2tc5318**   **1rst8347**

2lct4846   rts2923   rst6421   rst6799   vabsclash4530

10.3.3 networks groups and cultures

2scn2402   **1sc6265**   **2sc6286**

cultures supportive
sc11358	sc13569	sc13852	sc14647	sc6574
scbm2973	scbm5424	scbm5878	2supct2412	
scbm4533	scbm2555	scbm5814	scbm2986	scbm5328
scbm5497				

including trainees
sc5103 sc5295

balkanised cultures
2scbalk2211 2scbalk4604   2scbalk3059   2scbalk2544 2scbalk5344
     2scbalk5934   2scbalk5861   2scbalk

1scms6265   **2scscem**

APPENDIX I

The Researcher's Curriculum Vitae

Qualifications

1962	BA (Hons) Class 2 Division 1, History, Birmingham University
1969	Graduate Certificate in Education, London University
1977	Advanced Diploma in Education, Cambridge Institute of Education
1988	MEd, by research. University of East Anglia.

Previous Relevant Experience

1963/5 & 1972/8 Primary School Teacher

1965/72   Secondary School history teacher (including head of department)

1978/86   Primary School Head Teacher

1986/88   Research Fellow, Cambridge Inst. of Education (ESRC Project on Primary School Staff Relationships).

1988   Senior Lecturer in Primary Education, Bedford College of Higher Education

1991/3   Leader, Teacher Education and Mentorship research project. Funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation

1994-8 OFSTED trained team inspector engaged in primary school inspections

Professional roles

Co-leader MA in Educational Studies

Professional tutor, Primary PGCE

Tutor, Primary B Ed

Research products

1986   'Hearing secret harmonies' Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association annual conference, Bristol

1987a   'Are primary teachers primarily people?' in Southworth, G. Readings in Primary School Management. Lewes, Falmer

1987b 'Leading the team, belonging to the group?' in Southworth, G., Readings in Primary School Management. Lewes, Falmer

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1987c, d, e. Case studies of primary schools, Cambridge Institute of Education, mimeo

1987f 'Checking the lense: case study clearance' in Cambridge Journal of Education volume 17, number 2

1987g 'Making the large group feel small', Cambridge Journal of Education volume 17, number 3

1987h 'Primary School Staff Cultures'. Paper presented at British Educational Research Association Conference, Manchester

1988   'The Staff Group in the Primary School' Research thesis for degree of M Ed University of East Anglia

1989a 'Primary School Staff Relationships' in Forum, volume 31, number 3, pages 67-68

1989b (with Nias, J., Southworth, G.) 'Staff Relationships in Primary Schools', London: Cassell

1989c 'A Partnership of unequals?' in Early Years (Journal of TACTYC) Vol. 1, No. 2

1992   'Preparing for School Staff Membership: Students in primary teacher education' in Biott and Nias (eds), Working and Learning Together or Change O U Press

1992   (with Wooldridge, I.) 'School-based Teacher Training: Induction, Modelling, Acculturation on Education' Paper presented at British Educational Research Association Conference

1993   'Are Effective Mentors Selected or Trained?' Paper presented at British Educational Research Association Conference.

1993   Review article on Tann, S. Language in the Primary School, in Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol 23 No2

1994a (with Sampson, J. (Eds)) Mentorship in the Primary School. London, Falmer Press.

1994b 'How do primary school mentors learn to mentor student teachers?'
Paper delivered at BERA Annual Conference, Oxford

1994c (with Stephenson J.) 'Exploring opportunities in work clothes. Lessons from students' negative experiences of being mentored'. Paper delivered at BERA Annual Conference

1994d   'How do Primary students and their mentors learn to see?'
Paper delivered at Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference, York

1995 'Student teachers' school-based learning in English Primary Schools and the cultures of primary school staffs'. Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research, Bath, September.

1996 'Fitting in as a concept in School-based Initial Teacher Education'.
Paper presented at British Research Association Annual Conference, Lancaster, September

1999 'Male student teachers' experience of primary school placements',
Paper delivered at BERA Annual Conference, Sussex, September

APPENDIX J

TIMETABLE OF RESEARCH PROCESSES

Trainees' professional studies course
September 1994- July 1995

September	2 week pre-course 'Home-based' orientation school placement.
September -December	Serial 1: Trainees in school 2 days per week
January-Feb. 1995	Block 1: Trainees in school 5 days per week for 4 weeks
Feb.-May 1995	Serial 2: Trainees in school 2 days per week
May-June 1995	Block 2: Trainees in school 5 days per week for 6 weeks
September -July	Weekly professional studies lecture (except for block placement weeks) Group sessions with professional tutor, fortnightly on average

Data-related processes

September 94-June 95	Visits to trainees in placements - observation and informal discussions with trainees and placement staff
March 95	Interviews with trainees end Block 1
July 95	Interviews with trainees end Block 2
Aug. 95-July 96	Data transcription, coding and analysis
September 96-September 2000	Reviewing literature, writing text, continued analysis

APPENDIX K

A NOTE ON

MODES OF TRAINEES' LEARNING : THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GROUNDED ORGANISING FRAMEWORK

The organising framework of four modes of learning has been used to characterise the development of trainees' learning. The four modes of observer, participating observer, participant and observing participant describe four points on the continuum of trainees' changing perceptual awareness of their placement experiences rather than the specific activities in which they engage (although observing and participating are also terms which can be used to describe trainees' placement activities).

That framework is derived from trainees' interview data. Appendix E shows the initial analysis categories derived from the data.

The sets of categories within the A2 cluster ('Learning Processes') include those which contain the data from which the framework is predominantly derived. In particular these are:

LOB: learning from observing
LP: learning from participation
LPR: learning from the process of doing
LSA: learning from self-analysis
LA: learning from access
LN: learning from negative experiences/processes
LTR: learning through trauma, including negative experiences

Some data relevant to the framework also come from categories cluster B (Culture) in respect of the dimension of trainees' learning concerned with interadult processes, notably:

SC (staff culture)
SCBMB (school/staff culture belonging and membership)
SCMSR (staff culture, membership and student reciprocity)
SCOPS (opportunities for learning arising from the nature of the school/staff culture)
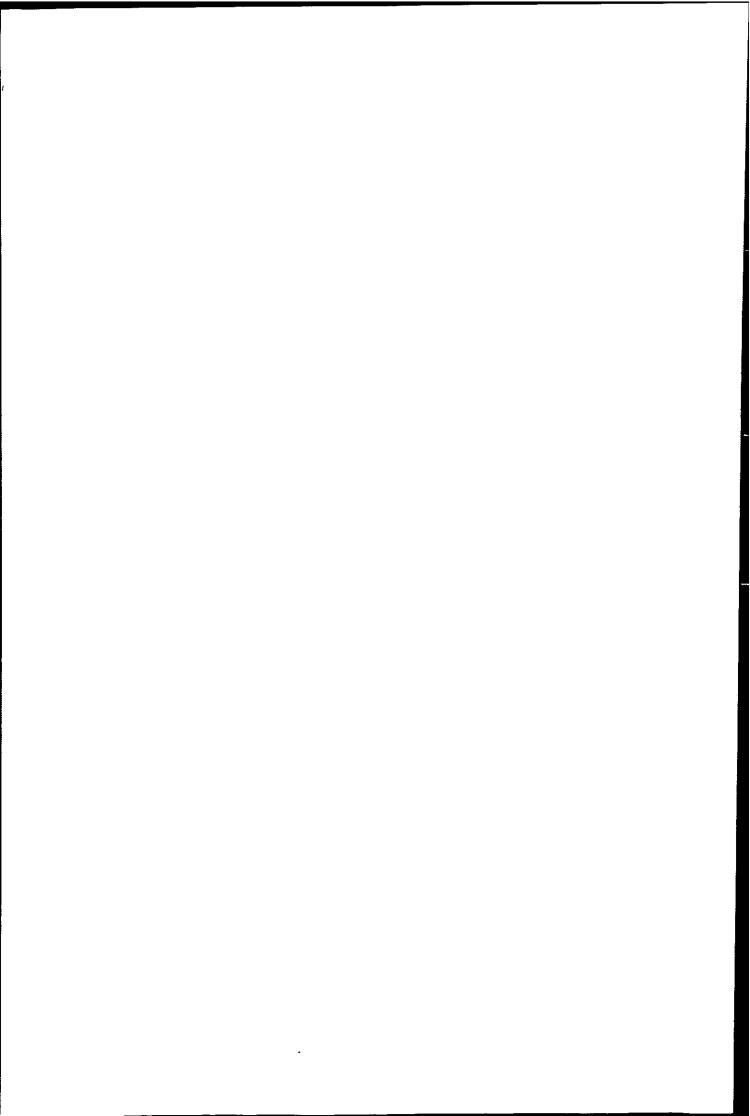SCPS (participating in the staff/school culture socially)
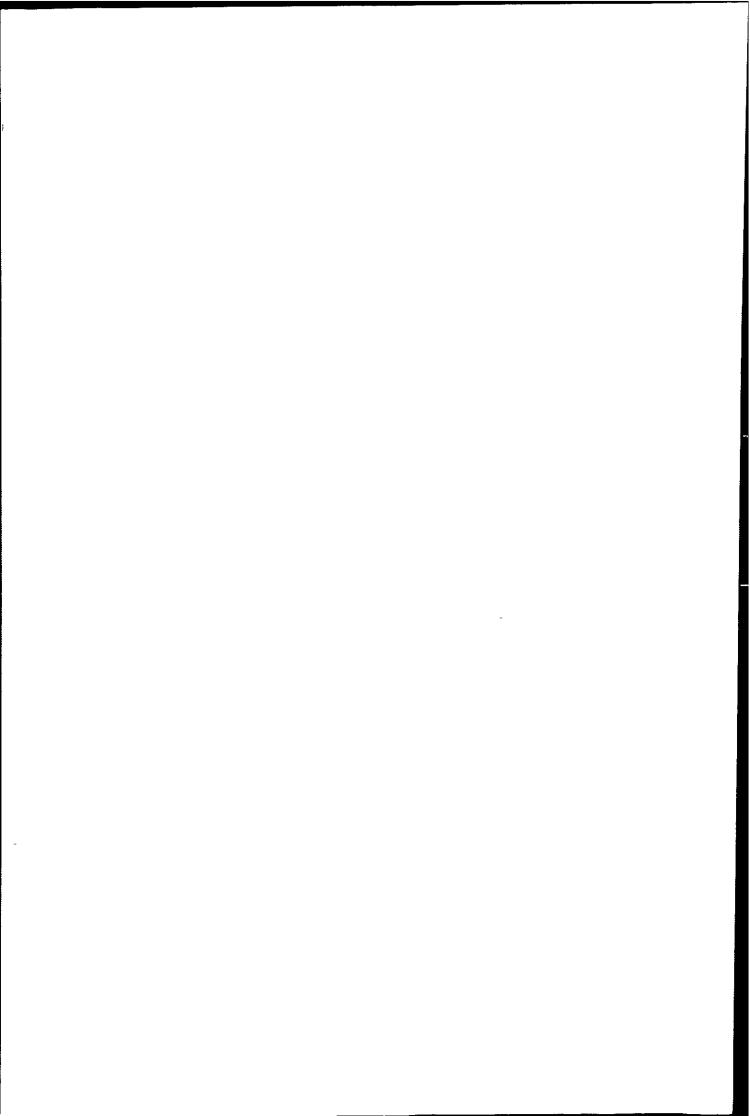SCRP (participating in the staff culture required)

Within BLOCK TWO ADDITIONAL CODES the code 'laff' (affective issues and learning) was also a source.

Data from all the above codes were revisited, using the relevant data analysis stages described in Appendix G. That process of reanalysis revealed patterns within the data which indicated the changes in trainees' understanding of their placements and their activities within them. These were associated partly with changes in the nature of their activity (observing, participating), but consequently and primarily with their developing perceptual understanding (influenced by the affective impact of participation). These patterns indicated links with Lave and Wenger's suggestions that changing peripherality is

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associated with developing insight (1991). Consequently, the particular terms used to conceptualise the modes of learning (or key points in the perceptual continuum) were chosen because they reflected both what trainees said and encapsulated their perceptual moves from peripheral to more central activity in, engagement with and insight into being teachers within their placements.

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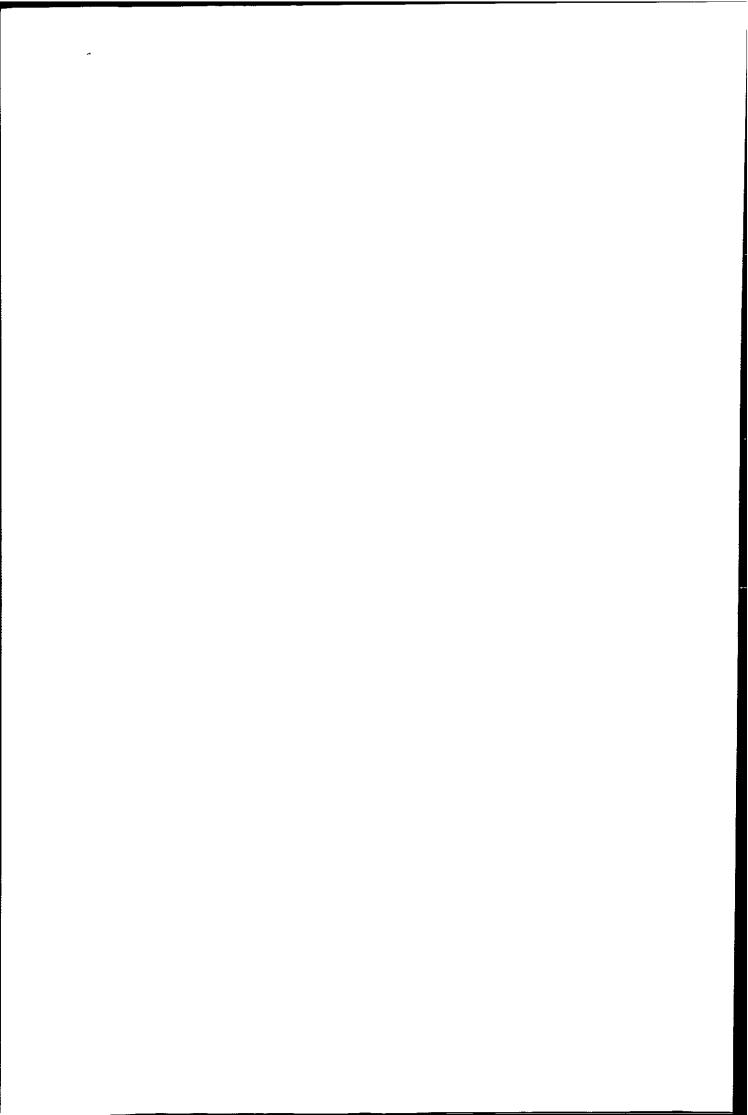
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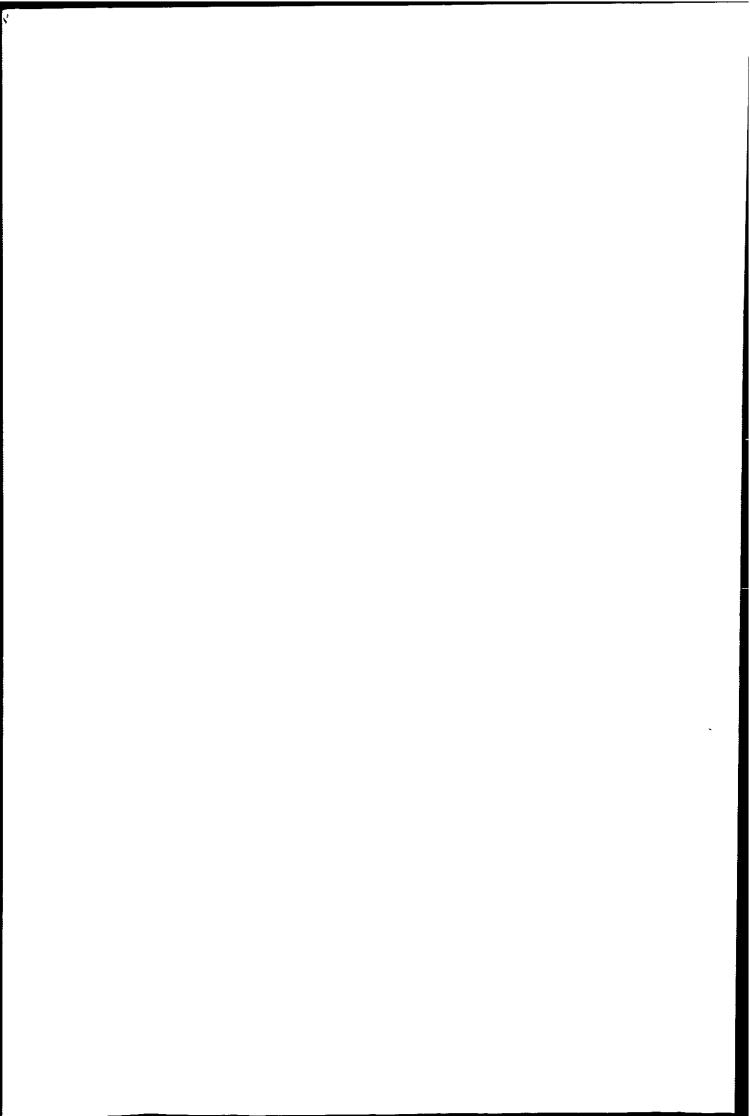
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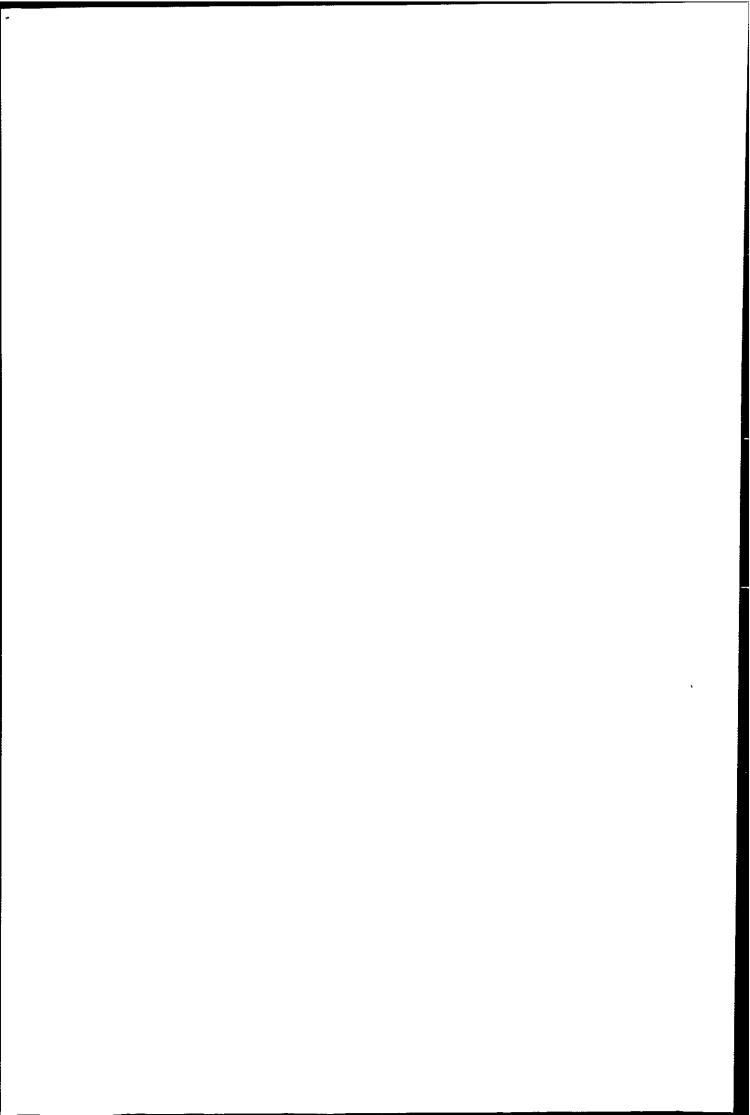
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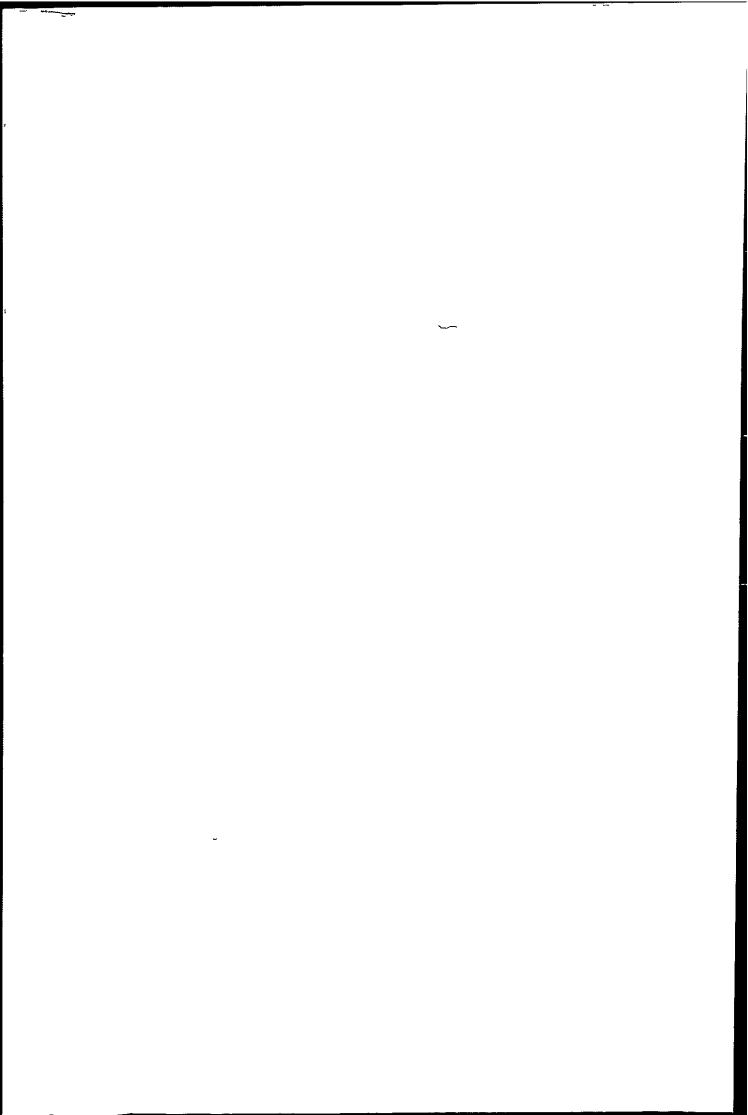Tesch, R (1990<u>) Qualitative Research: Analysis Types and Software Tools.</u> London: Falmer Press.

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