“I definitely felt an exception”

Discourse analysis:

A father talks about his son’s transition to school

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CHILD AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

A single case study was conducted to explore how schools might better engage fathers in their children's education. Women traditionally mediate early years education, and communication from schools to parents is directed to mothers. Some fathers are more involved in the day-to-day care of their children than others, but the predominant culture, both in the reception class and at home, is feminine. Where fathers are involved in education, irrespective of mothers’ involvement, children achieve better educational outcomes. There is no existing research on what fathers say about transition to school. Fatherhood and masculinities literature using discourse analysis reveal a theoretical, functional psychoanalytic discourse in Western culture. The research question posed here is: ‘What might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school?’ A qualitative research design from a relativist ontological stance and social construction epistemology was used to explore what one father said on this topic, and to emancipate his voice. Willig’s (2013) stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis provided the framework for the analysis of a researcher-transcribed interview. Transition to school was discursively constructed: constructions were compared, contrasted and located in the masculinities, feminist, psychoanalytic, educational and economic discourses. Actions and subject positions available to challenge gender roles and stereotypes in early years education and to promote fathers’ involvement were noted. The findings revealed a complex subjectivity in the father’s many ways of seeing and being in relation to transition to school and the theoretical collective unconscious in functional psychoanalysis. The role of educational psychologists is discussed in influencing policy to include fathers in their children’s education.
Acknowledgements

My thanks go to Tom, the participant in this research and the men who took part in the early pilot work; Hass Yilmaz, posthumously, for professional support; Mark Fox, Carol Greenway and the M5 team for supervisory guidance; Dylis Cranwell for peer support. I give thanks to my children and grandchildren. Special thanks are given to my in vivo supervisor Jenifer Wills and husband Clive.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

In this research, what a father says about his son’s transition from preschool to reception class is explored. The education of children, including their transition to school, has traditionally been the domain of females. If fathers are encouraged to become more involved, perhaps they will play a larger role in their children’s education, and positively influence their educational outcomes. This study explores and promotes the involvement of fathers in their children’s education.

The online Fatherhood Institute notes that, since 1975, research on how fathers contribute positively to their children’s development has increased. Fathers are becoming more involved in the day-to-day care of their children. Parenting tasks formerly undertaken by mothers are increasingly the responsibility of fathers (Fatherhood Institute, 2007). However, the online magazine, Working Mothers, reported in June 2011 that financial strain ‘could put breaks on shared parenting’ (Henwood, Shirani, & Coltart, 2011). Research demonstrates that fathers play a critical role in the social, emotional, psychological and education development of their children (Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000) and that they may exert an especially significant impact on their readiness to begin school, and on negotiating such a transition (Downer, 2007).

The traditional and historical preference and expectation for mothers to dominate
childcare domains, including education, is reflected in the paucity of literature on how fathers impact their children’s education. The majority of research on parents in early years education focuses on mothers; recent research, however, has shown that fathers also play a significant role (Featherstone, 2004; Foster, Reese-Weber, & Kahn, 2007; Cox et al., 2004; Page, Whitting, & Mclean, 2008). Educational difficulties in boys are less likely to be detected than in girls (Fox 2015). The aim of this dissertation is to inform integrated practice amongst pre-school, school, and community mental health settings, by explicitly including fathers in the transition processes. The study is influenced by the development of the concept of masculinities in social psychology. Investigating what a father says about his son’s transition to school might present ways in which fathers could be more effectively involved in their sons’ education.

Miller, Billington, Lewis and DeSouza (2013) note that, in the field of educational psychology, ‘the boundaries between expert knowledge and client experience are being renegotiated’ (p. 484) and that new professional-client relationships are emerging under the influence of qualitative research.

**1.1.1 National position**

The DfEs (2007) publication, *Every Parent Matters*, recommends that schools take account of the different needs of fathers and mothers. However, in the Children and Families Act (2014) fathers are not mentioned, rather a gender-neutral stance is adopted. Indeed even the pronouns ‘he’ and ‘she’ are used only under sections 52-54 (regarding mediation) when referring to parents.

As Page et al. (2008) argue in their review of how fathers can be better recognised and supported through DCSF policies, in order for fathers to be recognised and supported

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1 M. Cox is the correspondence author for the NICHD Early Care Research Network. There are 26 participating investigators in alphabetical order starting with Allhusen, V.
through policy they need to be specifically named in documents. The significance of
gender-specific language is that it more clearly marks the inclusion of fathers. Specifically
recognising fathers in this way would be supportive to them.

1.1.2 Local position

*Children and Young People’s Plan 2009 – 2012*

The importance of working with fathers is emphasised in the Local Authority Children and
Young People’s Plan (2012), where the research is located. There is a ‘working with
fathers’ multidisciplinary network, which meets on a monthly basis to address the support
of fathers’ involvement in education, and a drop-in fathers’ group facilitated by an assistant
social worker. This was part of a drive to meet the vision statement that by age five all
children should be ready to start school, with any special educational needs identified and
supported. The draft Code of Practice (October, 2013) offered a potential platform for local
authorities to use a fathering discourse in their response to consultations around special
educational needs at transition to school, but the gender neutral stance persists in the 2014
Act. However, more positively for fathers, at the local level there are a number of
initiatives that are designed to recognise them. There have been events such as *Men
Behaving Dadly* on Father’s Day, which involved a dedicated group of professionals
working with volunteers and the local library. Building on the goodwill of such events is
an important local task. More attention to the positive inclusion of fathers is emerging in
Children’s Centres, where positive images of fathers and fathering are displayed as posters,
flyers and other literature aimed at parents. This needs to be extended to schools.

*Ofsted (2013)*, reporting on parents’ responses to early years provision, did not
make special reference to fathers or to transition to school. Various LAs provide
information for fathers online, including Blackpool and Luton. Luton has produced an
impressive booklet and offers a dads’ group on Saturdays for fathers of children up to five years old and their siblings. Information from the Fatherhood Institute is readily available on Google. The Brighton and Hove website (2013) includes a link to the Helping Men Consultancy.

1.2 Researcher’s position

I am a student of the M5 doctorate programme for experienced educational psychologists at the Tavistock Centre and accredited by the University of Essex. I left school at the age of fifteen in 1960 with no qualifications and retired as an educational psychologist for a south coast LA in 2011. I worked for a different south coast educational psychology service in February and March 2015, as an associate educational psychologist.

In 1982, I was drawn to discourse analysis in social psychology following cognitive dissonance, attribution and social identity theories. This was coupled with ambivalence at the cursory introduction to psychoanalytic theory in my undergraduate course. I worked for five years in a secondary school, teaching English, Drama and Media Studies and I took a Communication Studies diploma, which fed an interest in discourse analysis and semiotics. I qualified as an educational psychologist in 1989.

1.3 Ontological, epistemological and theoretical positions

In this thesis, a relativist ontological stance and social construction epistemology are adopted. The theoretical position is discourse analysis as theory and method (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002), including a functional psychoanalytical discourse approach to subjectivity (Billig, 1999; Parker, 2015a, 2015b).

The object (transition to school) and subject (father) of the research are discursively constructed. What the father said during a topic-led interview with the researcher has been
documented (reproduction), and recommendations for change based on this data are presented (transformation). The reproduction-transformation concept is borrowed from the critical realist theorist, Bhasker (1986). The idea of using this reproduction-transformation concept in a relativist context was suggested by Parker (2015a).


1.4 Thesis plan

In Chapter 2, the literature on fathers and transition to school, and discourse analysis within masculinities and fatherhood research is reviewed. Some functional psychoanalytic theory is addressed. Chapter 3 considers ontological, epistemological and purpose issues of the research. Willig’s (2013) framework is used to analyse the data generated by the interview and the way in which the research question will be addressed. The methodology contains a section on discourse analysis as theory and method. Chapter 4 is devoted to the research findings and details the analysis of my interview with Tom in the context of Willig’s (2013) staged model. Transcription data is used to illuminate some aspect of my analysis. Appendix 4 contains 21 extracts from the transcript and Appendix 5 contains the entire interview. In Chapter 5, the findings and their efficacy in addressing the research question are discussed.

1.5 Research rationale

A rationale for how my work could be viewed is provided by the characteristics for good qualitative research (Table 1, below). The validity of my qualitative research study can be evaluated by taking account of the criteria of quality using the principles of sensitivity to
context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence, impact and importance (Yardley, 2000, p. 215). Radical methodologies like discourse analysis may be rejected by the discipline of psychology for not using established research methods, and thus need to be evaluated by accepted criteria (Yardley, op cit. p. 218). Qualitative research methods now take equal place with quantitative methods in psychology (Yardley, 2008 p. 251).

Qualitative research methods are gaining momentum in the social sciences (Tullie, 2010; Tubey et al., 2015). Educational psychology has tackled a diverse number of topics using qualitative methodology (Miller et al., 2013). UK government funding for large-scale longitudinal qualitative social psychology studies has been achieved (Neale, 2012).

Table 1: Characteristics of good quality research (adapted from Yardley, 2000, p. 219)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity to context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical; relevant literature; empirical data;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sociocultural setting; participant’s perspective; ethical issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment and rigour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-depth engagement with topic; methodological competence/skill;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thorough data collection; depth/breadth of analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transparency and coherence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity and power of description/argument; Transparent methods and data presentation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fit between theory and method; reflexivity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact and importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical (enriching understanding); socio-cultural;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical (for community, policy makers, education workers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Yardley (2000), diversity in qualitative research methods involves different methodologies and epistemologies:

> [E]ach of the different modes of qualitative research has quite different traditions and procedures and…a pluralistic ethos is central to the non-realist traditions underpinning most qualitative research. (p. 217)

Discourse analysis can use qualitative research methods from a relativist ontological stance (Parker, 2015a). Indeed, Yardley (2000) notes that truth, knowledge and reality are communally-constructed negotiations of meaning, with no fixed criteria for establishing truth and knowledge, which do not privilege a particular social group. I apply Yardley’s (2000) criteria to my research (see Table 1), which avoids the coding frames and large samples that are similar to quantitative research. The socially-constructed meanings of the researcher and one participant are used. Reliability and replicability are inappropriate criteria for evaluating my research, because I offer one of many possible interpretations of the data; discourse analysis is inherently inconsistent. Sensitivity to the context in my research is addressed, by linking abstract discourse analysis theory and functional psychoanalytic discourse to the particular context of father subjectivity and a son’s transition to school, allowing vertical generalisations, rather than the horizontal generalisations made in quantitative research (Yardley, 2000). Unexpected findings, which conflict with my understanding of transition to school from a male perspective, are actively sought, examined and accounted for. In-depth engagement with the topic is achieved by reading widely and methodological skill is demonstrated in the research strategy and the attention to philosophical arguments of ontology, epistemology, truth, reality and the nature of man. The data collection is thorough: digital aural data is meticulously transcribed and analysed with depth and breath.

The clarity and power of my argument is supported by the transparency of my
empirical methods, data presentation and reflexivity, and is open to debate. My research enriches the theoretical understanding of discourse analysis as theory and method as it relates to functional psychoanalysis. The practical application of my research for the community, policy-makers and education workers is presented in Chapter 6.

1.6 Reflexivity

According to Parker (2005), ‘reflexivity is a way of attending to the institutional location of historical and personal aspects of the research relationship’ (p. 25). As a researcher, my relationships with the M5 course, research participant(s), and readers of the research thesis are important. Historically, my relationship with the M5 course has involved a taught element in the first two years of the course (2006-7) that was oriented to real world research and mixed methods methodology (Robson, 2002; Creswell, 2003). I was convinced of the efficacy of the teaching and intended to use mixed methods and critical realism for my research protocol. My supervisor suggested that I attend a discourse analysis summer school at the University of Essex. The 2009 summer school altered my orientation from a critical realist perspective back to the relativist position I have espoused since my first-year undergraduate subsidiary philosophy course at the University of Bristol. This was difficult because it felt inconsistent with what I thought of as the institutional critical realist M5 discourse. Yardley (2000), however, is a recommended text for M5.

During my career, the disproportionate number of referrals of boys has struck me. I have wondered why the world of education appears more difficult for boys than for girls. As a mother and grandmother of females, after 40 years, my grandson was born. Motivated to find out what it is like to be male, and writing about my father from a psychoanalytic perspective (Shorthouse, 2012), coupled with group work for mothers and later for children, led to my wanting to explore the involvement of fathers in education through
group work (Shorthouse, 1989, 2010). If fathers allowed themselves time and space to talk about their sons’ transition to school, I thought they might be more likely to engage with the largely feminine reception class environment. I was, however, unable to recruit a viable group.

My relationship with the research participants in both the pilot work and the main body of the research involved trying to relate to them as partners in the research endeavour with equal status with the researcher and being mindful of the ethical nature of the relationship. My relationship with my readers is important for the supervision, examination and distribution of my work, which I hope will lead to action in the field. Personal aspects of the research as they relate to theory, methodology, my interaction and engagement with the data, and supervision are recorded in my research diary.

1.7 Conclusion to Chapter 1

The topic of my thesis has been introduced as an exploration of what a father says about his son’s transition to school, in order to determine how educational psychologists might advise schools on how to engage fathers in their sons’ education. The national and local positions, as well as the position of the researcher, have been presented. The ontological, epistemological and theoretical positions of the research have been stated, followed by the thesis plan, the research rationale and reflexivity.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Overview of chapter

Chapter 2 introduces the empirical research relevant to the thesis topic: namely, exploring a father’s perspective on his son’s transition to school. The literature on school transition and on fathers is reviewed in order to identify ways in which educational psychologists and educators might involve fathers in their sons’ education.

The review reveals the influence of feminist literature, which foregrounds discourse analysis, masculinity and fatherhood studies. The review considers discourse analysis in relation to systemic and psychoanalytical thinking, and as a new paradigm in psychology (Parker, 2015a). Five research papers were selected for systematic critical review.

2.2 Literature search

Details of search terms and searches can be found in Appendix 1.

An initial search of the British and American literature was conducted using the search terms ‘fathers’ and ‘transition to school’, followed by searches for ‘masculinity’ and ‘discourse analysis’. The literature on masculinity led to the feminist literature via references; similarly, work on discourse analysis led to positioning theory. Both the masculinities and discourse analysis literature provided references to psychoanalytical and fatherhood literature.
2.2.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were included in the search criteria.

The search terms included ‘fathers’; the term ‘mothers’ was excluded, except where fathers were also specifically named. As the research is about fathers of boys, girls were excluded, except where the research included both girls and boys. ‘Starting school’ and ‘transition to fatherhood’ were included. Other education transitions were excluded. Discourse analysis, psychoanalytical, positioning theory, feminist, masculinities and gender references were included, references to sexuality were excluded.

Table 2: Search term inclusion and exclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Included</th>
<th>Excluded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative and qualitative research methods</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>No (unless fathers also)</td>
<td>Yes (except where fathers were specifically named)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>No (unless boys also)</td>
<td>Yes (if the research included girls only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational transitions</td>
<td>Yes (starting school)</td>
<td>No (other transitions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to fatherhood</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical approaches</td>
<td>Yes (discourse analysis, psychoanalytical, positioning theory, feminist, masculinities and gender studies)</td>
<td>No (sexuality)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Literature review

Five articles are systematically reviewed using resources from the critical appraisal skills programme (CASP, 2013). The first article (NICHD, 2004) is reviewed with the help of the randomised controlled trial checklist for reviewing quantitative research. Duffy’s (2005) list for critically appraising quantitative research was also helpful. The second paper (Page et al. 2008) is reviewed using CASP to appraise mixed methods methodology. The last three papers (Wetherell & Edley, 1999; Gough, 2009; Coltart & Henwood, 2012) are reviewed using the questions pertinent to qualitative methodology (CASP, 2013).

2.4 Fathers and transition to school: British and American contexts

2.4.1 The British context

The British context includes articles by Page, Whiting and Mclean (2008), the Fatherhood Institute (Alexander, 2013) and Sure Start. From 2001 to 2012, the National Evaluation of Sure Start team produced 57 reports (for example, Schneider, Ramsay & Lowerson, 2006; Lloyd, O’Brien & Lewis, 2003). The Sure Start reports include information on children up to the age of seven-years as well as quantitative and qualitative research on children’s centres and schools, but not on school transition. Local Sure Start programmes report on three-year-olds (2008) and five-year-olds (2010) and their families, but not on four-year-olds. Four years of age is the most appropriate time to examine school transition issues in the UK (Hughes, 2015). Legally, children are not obliged to start school until the September after their fifth birthday, but most children start school at four years of age (Sylva, 2010). However, it has become legal for parents to elect to defer transition to school for their summer-born children (AEP, Whitehouse report, 2015).

The article selected for critical review from the British context is by Page et al. (2008). It describes how DCSF policies provide recognition and support for fathers.
2.4.2 The American context

Although fathers play a critical role in a child’s development, parenting research has traditionally focused on mothers (Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000). The American literature conceptualises paternal involvement largely within the realm of school readiness (Downer, 2007); given the relationship between school readiness and later educational outcomes, researchers should encourage better transitions to school by determining what predicts school readiness (DeRouse & Durham, 2008; Yoshikawa & Godfrey, 2008). The quality of father-child interactions accounts for significant variation in children’s school readiness (Campbell & von Stauffenberg, 2008, p. 248). In their study of communication between schools and the fathers of 75 preschool and kindergarten children, Rimm-Kaufman and Zhang (2005) found that fathers communicated with the school only 10% as much as other caregivers.

The American home environment literature focuses on easing a child’s transition to school. It promotes the study of transition practices for understanding how connections between families and schools shape the future academic achievement and social competence of children (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004, p. 168).

Foster, Reese-Weber, and Kahn (2007) report that the socialisation practices of fathers contribute significantly to how children handle the transition to school – more so than those of mothers. These authors report that the positive expressiveness of fathers rather than mothers appears more reliably to predict the positive expressiveness of children. Positive and negative emotional expressiveness of fathers contribute to the development of socioemotional competence in boys. When positive, their emotional expressiveness engenders prosocial behaviour, less disruptiveness and less shyness in children; when negative, it engenders antisocial behaviour, aggression and withdrawal.
The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Care Research Network (NICHD, 2004) found that the children whom teachers perceive as most competent and least problematic are those whose fathers are sensitive and supportive of their children’s autonomy. This paper from the American context has been selected for critical review, owing to its focus on father sensitivity and transition to school.

### 2.5 Transition to school: UK and US articles for critical review

**Table 3: Transition to school: UK and US articles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/s</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Theoretical perspective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fathers’ and Mothers’ Parenting Behaviour and Beliefs as Predictors of Children’s Social Adjustment in the Transition to School</td>
<td>NICHD. Cox. M. et al.</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Journal article</td>
<td>Psychoanalytic/Attachment theory</td>
<td>Longitudinal quantitative</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A review of how fathers can be better recognised and supported through DCSF policies.</td>
<td>Page, J., Whiting, G. &amp; McLean C.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Report: Department for Children Schools and Families</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Qualitative and quantitative mixed method</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5.1 Critical review of Paper 1

Parenting behaviour and beliefs as predictors of the social adjustment of children to the transition to school (NICHD, 2004)

Transition to school is defined as children moving from pre-school to school. The NICHD (2004) paper is the first of five articles selected for critical review. Although written more than a decade ago, no recent studies have been conducted on the same scale. It is also statistically robust. It thus compliments the small-scale, qualitative nature of the present study.

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of fathers and mothers on their children’s potential for later educational success. Measures of social adjustment were made before and after children transitioned to school. There were 26 participating academics: one from Birkbeck College, University of London, the remainder from 16 US universities. A psychoanalytical perspective was adopted, which recognised the distinct role of fathers, including play, mentorship and encouragement of the child when challenged (Bowlby, 1969).

The sample consisted of 648 children, whose fathers completed an interaction task at home when the children were 54 months of age and again when they were in the first grade. Marital status, income and parental education were controlled for. Data on father-child interactions were collected using home video recording, before and after transition to school. The parenting tasks involved mediating situations that presented a challenge to the child.

The results are considered valid, as they addressed clearly-focused issues. The issues were formulated as hypotheses about a) the degree of parental sensitivity in interactions with the child, b) parenting beliefs, and c) emotional intimacy between
parents. Data on more than 600 families was collected, yielding significant statistical power. Means and standard deviations were calculated for predictors and covariates, between the age of 54 months and second grade. The predictors and covariates were parental education, income-to-needs ratio, marital intimacy and child behaviour outcomes. The parenting measures predicting teacher ratings of child behaviour were statistically significant for 12 measures ($p < .01$) and eight measures ($p < 0.5$). These results indicate that parental intimacy did predict the behaviour and relationships of children with teachers during the first three years of public school, that ‘[f]athers may play an important role in fostering the skills and behaviours children need to be successful…in schools’ (p. 636). These results support the rationale for the current research, in that it will be instructive to examine what a father says about his son’s transition to school.

The authors discuss the implications of their findings for professional practice with families and for pre-school interventions promoting smooth transition to school. The authors suggest therapeutic intervention, including fostering the sensitive support of autonomous efforts by children as well as recognition of the importance of these efforts, but do not propose other options. No suggestions are provided concerning what fathers might say, in a conversation aimed at promoting equality between fathers and researchers, which might assist them in improving the transition to school for their sons.

The study is conducted within a positivist framework. Traditionally, the positivist approach implies that professionals have disproportionate power in the research relationship, and use parents and children as subjects to collect data, rather than involving participants as partners in a shared research endeavour. They claim that interventions to assist families in understanding and supporting their children during transition to school might significantly impact children’s progress. This claim does not respect the possibility that fathers may have ideas and strategies for supporting the school in the transition
process. However, their psychoanalytical approach to intervention is helpful. Linking the NICHD (2004) research with both the bottom-up advantages of discourse analysis and the top-down advantages of psychotherapy (Mandill & Barkham, 1997), as well as with psychoanalytic concepts (Gough, 2009; Parker, 2015b), may provide a theoretical perspective for addressing the gap in the literature on what a father says about his son’s transition to school.

2.5.2 Critical review of Paper 2

A review of how fathers can be better recognised and supported through DCSF policies (Page et al., 2008)

The second paper selected for critical review (Page et al., 2008) uses mixed research methods in its policies review. There is a clear statement of the purpose of the study: to review how fathers can be better recognised and supported by policy-making in the Department for Children Schools and Families. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were employed. The research design is appropriate for the purpose of the research and the recruitment strategy, despite the reluctance of some fathers to contribute to the study.

The authors report that, of 163 policy documents, fewer than one in four (40) mention fathers and fewer than one in five (32) define parents as including fathers. The two consistent findings are that fathers’ engagement is associated with positive outcomes for children’s educational achievements and that services need to take into account the needs and motivations of fathers.

The authors emphasise issues including how to engage fathers in the life of the school, how to promote links between home and school and how to engage fathers in improving the achievements of children DfES (2004). There is no recognition of fathers in
funding services and little recognition in legislation. The results of surveys with eight local authorities are presented in this paper. Findings indicate that primary schools vary in their degree of engagement with fathers, and that they consistently engage more with mothers. A wide variety of work is conducted with fathers, although many local authorities are gender neutral. The main barriers to fathers’ engagement include the predominantly female workforce, policy overload and lack of informal male activities. Fathers are typically excluded in letters and other communications from the school (consolidating barriers for non-resident fathers). Fathers who work full-time may find it difficult or impossible to attend meetings during the school day. Language and ethnic minority cultural barriers also prevail. Special schools report that the attitude of fathers to disability is a barrier (Page et al., 2008).

Ofsted generally does not require reports on father involvement as part of its inspections. Interviewees report that funding for parent liaison staff and national policy, rather than inspections, would improve practice. The national position is characterised by an increased interest in fathers, but initiatives to engage the fathers of young children about to start school are lacking. The Think Families toolkit is a step in this direction (DfES, 2007).

Recognition was highest in top-level and workforce delivery documents, including non-statutory guidance and standards, training and good practice documents. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, this intention has not been realised in the 2014 Code of Practice for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Nevertheless, the recognition and support for the role of fathers in such delivery documents supports the need for the current research on a father’s sensitivity to his son’s transition to school.
2.6 Masculinities literature

Masculinities [sic] as a concept has evolved from the feminist literature, to describe the complexity of male identity and position in the world. It includes how men see the world and how they are in the world, from their own perspective and from the perspective of others (de Visser, 2009). Simone de Beauvoir (1997) writes that, following the Second World War, women have constituted ‘the other’ in relation to the ‘male self’, and describes women as trying to attain ‘full membership of the human race’ (p. 29), rather than to spend a lifetime anticipating male needs. Where does this leave men?

According to Henwood, Shirani and Coltart (op.cit.), the emotionally-charged dimensions of masculinity are worked through when men talk about their memories of being fathered. They worry that they may not be seen as manly if they move outside of what is expected of them and investments in masculinity pull men back to traditional fathering models. In his paper, ‘I’m not a very manly man’, de Visser (2009a) uses discourse analysis to explore qualitative insights into the non-hegemonic masculinities subjectivity of two young men. He claims that his results ‘give hope to young men who reject hegemonic masculinity but still desire a clear sense of being a man’ (p.371). De Visser, Smith and McDonnell (2009b) emphasis the plurality of masculinity: ‘Hegemonic masculinity exists not only in opposition to femininity, but also in relation to other masculinities’ (p. 1048); if men reject hegemonic masculinity, they have to create a way of living with their own masculine identity, which has social consequences.

The masculinities literature has a history of several decades; interest in the subject has grown over the last twenty years (de Visser, 2009). The study of masculinities covers a wide range of topics including sexuality, sexual identity, gender, and positioning (de Visser, Smith & McDonnell, 2009; Henwood & Procter, 2003; Henwood, 2011, 2013; Henwood, Finn & Shirani, 2008; Henwood, Shirani & Coltart, 2011; Gough, 2009; Edley...
An article by Wetherell and Edley (1999) has been selected for critical review, as it provides excellent background to the subject of masculinities and its interface with discourse analysis and psychology. Parker (2015a) uses the term discourse ‘primarily in critical hermeneutic and structuralist senses to include inquiries influenced by feminism and psychoanalysis’ (p. x). This has implications for my research as an overarching focus for masculinities, fathers and meaning.

Edley (2006) considers the combination of the discursive, psychological version of discourse analysis with psychoanalysis to explore homophobia within the masculinity studies tradition. He asserts that staying within the theoretical boundaries of discursive psychology will result in better progress being made in studies of masculinity in his dismissal of psychoanalytical thinking. ‘Men… all lie at the heart of a complex set of language-games that is the process of self-production’ (Edley, 2006, p.60 ). This view is not shared by Gough (2009), who considers subjectivity an important psychoanalytical element for understanding masculinity, or by Parker (2015b), who ‘treats psychoanalysis as a conceptual resource that also should be treated as a form of discourse’ – a view influenced by the writings of Lacan (p. 44). Psychoanalytic theory is a powerful framework, structuring the dominant culture in the West; a Foucauldian justification for this is seen in terms of the power of the truth claims of therapeutic institutions (Parker, 2015, p. 51). The third paper selected for critical review, by Wetherell and Edley (1999), locates studies of masculinities within a psycho-discursive approach.
2.6.1 Critical review of Paper 3

Negotiating hegemonic masculinity: Imaginary positions and psycho-discursive practices (Wetherell and Edley 1999)

Table 4: Masculinities paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Theoretical perspective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating hegemonic masculinity: Imaginary</td>
<td>Wetherell, M.,</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>psycho-social</td>
<td>discursive psychology</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positions and psycho-discursive practices</td>
<td>Edley, N.</td>
<td>article</td>
<td>article</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The article by Wetherell and Edley (1999) was selected to illustrate the psycho-discursive theoretical stance on masculinity of the late 1990s. The aim of the article is to provide a critical analysis of hegemonic masculinity and show how men variably position themselves as gendered beings. Using an appropriate qualitative methodology, from a psychosocial perspective, the discursive strategies that men use to negotiate membership of gendered categories are investigated. The aim was achieved. Since the article was written, the theoretical development of the concept of masculinity has advanced considerably; the plurality of masculine identities is now assumed (de Visser, 2009). The authors claim to do more than bolt a micro-psychological analysis on to the macro-sociological picture from their psychosocial perspective. Comparing Rambo with Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, they juxtapose the fantasy and social reality of powerful men.

The authors examine the actions and routes by which hegemonic masculinity is
conveyed, both with complicity and resistance. Their paper unites discursive psychology with Foucauldian discourse analysis: discursive psychology with poststructural influences, an intellectual contribution that foregrounds the work of Parker (2015a). They delineate three psycho-discursive practices used by men to construct themselves as masculine within a political arena. Men were asked specific questions about being masculine. Wetherell and Edley (1999) argue that the traditional traits of hegemonic macho masculinity, such as winning styles and the subordination of women and gay men, are insufficient to explain how conformity to hegemonic masculinity might appear in practice. They were interested in how discursive practices relate to subjectivity.

From discursive psychology, they draw a focus on action orientation. From the Foucauldian-influenced discourse analysis tradition, they draw the idea of discourse as institutionally-organised understandings based on power relations over time.

They use a male interviewer to obtain transcribed interview data from 61 male OU students aged 20 to 64, with one interviewee or with groups of two or three, in an informal setting where the men could direct the conversation about sexuality, relationships, images of men in popular culture, feminism and social change, and using photographs as a basis for discussion. Representative data was selected to develop three imaginary positions: namely, heroic (three men), ordinary (five men), and rebellious (three men). Their conclusion that hegemony is relative in a taken-for-granted sense rather than a fixed definition of positioning is consistent with the relative nature of discursive constructions and discourses. Their concept of the psycho-discursive as a particular class of discursive practice infuses the psychological with the social.

Wetherell and Edley (1999) comment on the power dynamic between a male researcher and the OU staff conducting interviews with OU male students. This may have been detrimental to the recruitment strategy and thus the findings. Students may have been
pressed into taking part because of wanting to please staff members, a limitation noted by the researchers.

Edley (2006) argues against a psycho-discursive practice, and advocates remaining within the theoretical boundaries of discursive psychology to promote progress for masculinity studies. It is argued here that FDA can provide both. It makes more sense to take the holistic relativist stance, consistent with Gough (2009), who employs psychoanalytic thinking. A psychoanalytic approach to discourse analysis is used by Mandill and Barkam (1997), who demonstrate how discourse analysis contributed to the success of a case of brief psychodynamic-interpersonal psychotherapy. Billig (1999) has shown how Freudian repression may be observed in the dialogic unconscious, defined as uncovering meaning by close attention to the text in the original material available to scholars about Freud’s case studies. For example, he showed that a discourse analysis of the reports from the father of Little Hans to Freud uncovered references that undermine some of the Oedipal complex theory defined as the father's rather than the child’s preoccupation with the ‘widdler’ (p. 166). Psychoanalytic discourse is becoming recognised in mainstream psychology (Parker, 2015b).

Wetherell and Edley (1999) contributed usefully to the masculinities literature, as they explain the possibility of simultaneous hegemony and non-hegemony.

2.7 Fatherhood literature

Fatherhood is concerned with the intergenerational relationship and transfer between a father, his own father and his son (Gough, 2009). Fathers have complex roles, which directly and indirectly influence their children (McNeil, 2004). Involved fathers improve the wellbeing, social functioning and cognitive development of their children, whilst the children of uninvolved fathers may be maladjusted (McNeil, 2004). Waite-Jones and
Madill (2008) note that more needs to be known about the experience of fathers. Table 5 presents the fatherhood literature.

Table 5: Fatherhood papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/s</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Theoretical perspective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A psycho-discursive approach to analysing qualitative interview data, with reference to a father-son relationship</td>
<td>Gough, B.</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Journal article</td>
<td>Psychoanalytical Discourse analysis Psychosocial</td>
<td>Qualitative Small scale</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On paternal subjectivity: a qualitative longitudinal and psychosocial case analysis of men’s classed positions and transitions to first time fatherhood</td>
<td>Coltart &amp; Henwood</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Journal article</td>
<td>Psychosocial</td>
<td>Qualitative Longitudinal</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7.1 Critical review of Paper 4

A psycho-discursive approach to analysing qualitative interview data with reference to a father-son relationship (Gough, 2009)

Gough (2009) argues that psychoanalytic concepts should inform qualitative interviewing and analysis of data. From the psychoanalytic perspective of understanding father-son relationships, Gough (2009) describes the concept of ambivalence from the Oedipus complex as follows:

The relationship to the father…and masculinity is one of…oscillating between feelings of resentment and admiration. The pursuit of the masculine and the repression of the feminine is…culturally sanctioned, so that men’s identities become fixed by both defensive and discursive forces. (p. 531)
Gough makes a case for using psychoanalytical concepts to inform interviewing in addition to analysing data. He uses a psycho-discursive approach to analyse the transcript of a young adult male talking about his relationship with his father. The article is pertinent to the present research because it shares an interest in masculinities in terms of the father-son relationship. Gough (2009) uses both discursive and psychoanalytic perspectives in his analysis, which:

...cuts across sociology, psychology and social psychology to forge an interdisciplinary space for understanding contemporary subjectivity within socio-cultural, discursive and psychological contexts. (p. 528)

Gough argues that psychoanalytically-informed studies on masculine subjectivity have erred in their reliance on a macro-understanding of discourse; he seeks to trace discursive and defensive patterns in his data from discourse and psychoanalytic perspectives. He refers to the imaginary positions and psycho-discursive practices reported by Wetherell and Edley (1999) in their masculinities research without implying essentialist selves as a form of functional psychoanalytic thinking.

Consistent with Gough (2009), Parker (2005) employs the psychoanalytic concept of free association in his second step of discourse analysis, but differs from Gough in his use of a discourse analysis unconstrained by the parameters of discursive psychology. The fixing of identity is incongruous with Foucauldian insights. Gough himself, in his efforts to unite the psychoanalytic and discursive domains, has missed an opportunity to appeal directly to Foucault rather than to follow a line of reasoning that has missed the importance of not fixing meaning in the development of discursive psychology. However, he argues for the relevance of meanings from past events, which influence the subject positions that people adopt in the present and with defensiveness seen as a relation between the speaker and another: ‘[t]he focus is…on the speaker’s activity, talk performance and its orientation
to current social context and relevant past contexts’ (Gough, 2009, p. 533). He follows Hollway and Jefferson, 2000/2013 in their understanding of the complexity of meanings: ‘meanings are…common and unique, social and biographical, discursive and defended’ (p. 99). However, in responding to their critics about whether attention to psychoanalysis and the individual obscures the social, Hollway and Jefferson (2013) provide a good account of the importance of rejecting the idea of the individual being about psychology and the social about sociology. Theoretical generalisability in using individuals is different from typicality (Hollway & Jefferson, op. cit., p. 147). Indeed, Smart (2007), as a sociologist, has much to contribute to personal lives research.

Gough (2009) also fails to appreciate the ability of a Foucauldian approach to account for the inner, hidden voice (with or without the insights of psychoanalytic thinking), as well as the outer, societal voice. Billig (1999) reframes the inner and outer in his dialogic unconsciousness, in which the hidden becomes revealed and can be seen in the transcript of texts, a notion shared by Parker (2015).

The fifth review paper also concerns fatherhood and is part of the large-scale new millennium Timescapes Project. The project is unique in its radical approach to qualitative longitudinal research by its innovation of making interview recordings of raw data available on its website, www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/. This paper affords further insights into father sensitivity.

2.7.2 Critical review of Paper 5

On paternal subjectivity: A qualitative longitudinal and psychosocial case analysis of men’s classed positions and transitions to first-time fatherhood (Coltart & Henwood, 2012)

As part of the Men as Fathers project (Shirani & Henwood, 2011b), and in their
contribution to the *Timescapes Project* (Neale, 2013), Coltart and Henwood (2012) have conducted qualitative longitudinal research on paternal subjectivity. The *Men as Fathers* project follows two groups of fathers through their transition to and beyond first-time fatherhood. In the year 2000, 30 expectant fathers were interviewed; they underwent second, and in some cases, third, interviews in the year following their child’s birth. In 2008, the study was reactivated as part of the *Timescapes Network* and 19 of the original participants were re-interviewed. In the second phase of the study, 16 expectant fathers were interviewed three times during 2008 and 2009. The total sample consisted of 46 men aged between 15 and 46 years.

Like Gough (2009), Coltart and Henwood (2012) write from a psychosocial perspective. They explore intersubjectivity and relationality over time in terms of masculine identity, paternal subjectivity and transmissions between generations through the narratives of two men. They use qualitative-longitudinal and psychosocial case study approaches to study the making of paternal subjectivity in and through time. A working-class and a middle-class man give accounts that are:

…explored, focusing on how…paternal subjects are shaped by tensions between a push towards new subjectivities and the pull of old discourses. The men’s…inheritance of classed versions of masculinity…[leads to]…shifting investments in and affectionate models of fathering. (Coltart & Henwood, 2012, p. 35).

There is a clear aim to this research and the authors use appropriate qualitative methodology to address their research goal. The research illuminates the actions and subjective experience of the participants with an appropriate research design and recruitment strategy. Data collection methods address men’s classed positions and transitions to first-time fatherhood with adequate consideration of the relationship between the researchers and the participants. Ethical considerations address archiving of raw audio
data for future secondary analysis. The benefits of this outweigh the potential for harm, and have been sensitively considered as part of the overall aim of the project. The data was analysed sufficiently rigorously. The findings are clearly stated.

Coltart and Henwood (op.cit.) highlight a complex mix of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities in men’s paternal imaginings, and challenge the celebration of new fatherhood. They explore the influence of the past on the present (classed masculine transmissions and inherited paternal hegemonic identities) and the ways the present mediates the past (for example, focusing on the ways novel experiences – such as caring for a new baby – and ‘new’ socio-cultural and relational contexts may prompt a recasting of inherited paternal identities as a means of seizing new opportunities or to accommodate change). The longitudinal approach allowed researchers to a) track how fathers attempted to reconcile ‘old’ and ‘new’ discourses and identities as they responded to specific circumstances, and b) describe the dynamics of continuity and change in the experiences and subjectivities of fathers. Both fathers adopted a settlement that resolved old views of masculinity with their developing lives, observed in four interviews over the course of eight years.

This paper is pertinent to the current research because of its focus on transition, fatherhood, masculinities and subjectivity. It resonates with the hypothesis of the current study: a motherly, affectionate model of fathering resonates with father sensitivity and the involvement of fathers in transition to school.

2.8 Theoretical perspectives linking research with therapy

These five papers provide theoretical support for the argument that fathers should be involved in their sons’ educations. The first paper highlights the importance of therapy from a psychoanalytic perspective (NICHD, 2004), appealing to Bowlby’s (1969) view of
the father. In the second, the need to recognise and support fathers through policy is assumed without appealing to theory (Page, Whitting & McLean, 2008). The third paper references a psycho-discursive theoretical stance on masculinity from the late 1990s (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). The fourth (Gough, 2009) also employs a psycho-discursive approach, emphasising psychoanalytic concepts in his study of father-son relationships. The fifth (Coltart & Henwood, 2012) provides thick ethnographic description and produces analytically-rich insights by synthesising theory, data and methods. Transitions are explored via the perspective on new subjectivities.

Coltart and Henwood (2012) point out that theoretically-informed, qualitative research in studies of gender, parenting and generation is increasingly focused on the production of new subjectivities. They challenge Gough’s (op cit.) perspective, emphasising the unconscious significance of negotiating discursively available subject positions. They claim that emphasising the unconscious entails listening beyond what is said about changing gendered relationships. Rather, they focus on men’s accounts of tensions, inconsistencies and shifts as they relate to men’s affective investments in inherited masculine and paternal subject positions (p. 37).

This reluctance by Coltart and Henwood (2012) to embrace the unconscious in their research constitutes blank subjectivity (Parker 2015a) and is at odds with Billig’s (1999) aim to make the unconscious visible through discourse analysis. Gough’s (2009) psychoanalytic approach is helpful in developing psychoanalytic thinking about what a father says about his son’s transition to school, in terms of fatherhood, gender and generation.

2.8.1 Psychoanalytic discourse and masculinities theory

Psychoanalytic discourse has been introduced above as it applies to discourse analysis in
masculinities and fatherhood research (Wetherell & Edley, 1999; Gough, 2009). According to Parker (2015b), psychoanalytical discourse shapes the subjectivity of people who embrace it as well as some who loathe it but who still refer to their unconscious and worry about the effects of early childhood events on their personalities:

…[We]…treat psychoanalytic discourse as a structuring feature of subjectivity in contemporary culture rather than a universally correct underlying account of human psychology and as a social construction peculiar to capitalist society (p.1 )

Parker defends his position on functional psychoanalytic discourse by appealing to Lacan’s (2006) writings, which do not offer a biological interpretation of Freud but emphasise language processes and symbolic phenomena. He offers psychoanalysis as a conceptual resource alongside discourse, to describe a complex subjectivity and present a theory of the subject. His approach respects social construction and experiential insight. The powerful influence of psychoanalytic theory in Western culture can enrich discourse analysis by uncovering the functions language serves, and account for agency (Parker, 2015a):

Discursive forms in contemporary Western culture are patterns of meaning that systematically form objects and subjects, and their internal structure often derives from psychoanalytic discourse. Notions of childhood, ‘complex’, the ‘ego’ and the ‘unconscious’…circulate as elements of self-understanding (Parker 2015a, p. 51-52).

Parker proposes eight transformations to connect psychoanalysis with discourse analysis, which are shown below in Table 6:
Table 6: Eight transformations of psychoanalytic discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human science:</td>
<td>shift from natural to human science; reflexivity as collective activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective phenomena:</td>
<td>‘collective unconscious’ as a historically-constituted symbolic resource to account for tacit assumptions, unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences and contradictory ways they mesh with structures of power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychoanalysis as a form of reading:</td>
<td>Subjects are positioned in texts, contradictory patterns of text and life narrative provide space for emotional investment; death of the author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory and history as textuality:</td>
<td>Locates micro-processes of memory construction in the context of wider symbolic systems of cultural memory and explores ways in which symbolic systems are interwoven with, constitute and are constituted by historical events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher subjectivity:</td>
<td>The ‘objective’ position seen as subjective; ‘counter-transference’ as researcher interest and involvement; death of the author becomes birth of the reader; analyst not the ‘expert’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The text as ‘other’:</td>
<td>Defences and symptoms seen as part of the structure of the text rather than what is hidden underneath; text may be structured around Oedipal structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychoanalysis as language:</td>
<td>Standard mistranslations of Freud transform poetic writings into statements of ‘fact’; theoretical work needed to locate text in historical context and structures of power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural specificity:</td>
<td>Notice contradiction; talk in terms of understanding rather than explanation in discursive research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cooper (2001) notes in his introduction to Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization* that psychoanalysis manages to enable some people to achieve a workable conformism – defined as normality, maturity, developedness – but sees the synthesis of social practicality and its secret antithesis, the self, as a truer goal. In the present study, the truer goal might be approximated by attending to the synthesis of the social practicality of transition to
school with subjectivity in what the father says. There is a move towards using a new approach in therapy by engaging a functional psychoanalytic discourse and masculinities.

Heuer (2010) links feminism with masculinity, in a move away from a patriarchal analyst-patient relationship and towards a relational concept in theory and practice. Masculine values are replaced by feminine values, such as relatedness, feeling, subjectivity and tolerance of not knowing. Relativity and uncertainty leave the door open for traditional feminine values, rather than for an objective view of reality that equates with an authoritarian patriarchal masculine view. Heuer (2010) underestimates the masculine sensitivity emerging from the British Psychosocial Studies (for example, Wetherell & Edly, 1999; Gough, 2009) by seeing theory and practice as adopting feminine attributes as an alternative rather than part of a masculinities subjectivity. Simultaneously, ‘psychoanalysis…raises questions about the subjectivity of the researcher’ (Parker, 2015b, p. 36).

Key concepts from masculinities theory, namely feminisation, patriarchy and hegemony, are defined as follows in the current study research:

Feminisation refers to adopting traditionally feminine characteristics without choice: this can happen to both men and women and resounds with connotations of the Other, the weak, the emotional, and the body rather than the mind.

Patriarchy refers to the super ego, the father in the Oedipal triangle, the moral arbiter, and the legitimate holder of power: the male, the head of the house, and the head of the family who holds authority over family members.

Hegemonic masculinity refers to the tough, strong man, who loves sport and who is at the opposite pole to being feminised. He is defined in opposition to femininity and to gay men.
Masculinities theory provides some understanding of the world as seen through a male lens. Its emergence from feminist theory led to consideration of the history of feminism from the first Wollstonecraft (1792) and second (de Beauvoir 1947/1997) waves of feminism, to current ideas of connectedness, care and democracy (Gilligan, 2011) and departs from notions of gender troubles (Butler, 1990). Billig (1999), in connecting psychoanalytic theory with discursive psychology through the concept of repression, led the way in considering the Oedipal complex as a product of a dialogic unconsciousness, unearthed by his discursive analysis of the psychoanalytic reports from the father of Little Hans to Freud. Boys of approximately five years of age are considered particularly vulnerable (Gilligan, 2011). Gough’s (2005) interpretation of ambivalence taken from the Oedipus complex describes the relationship of the son to the father, oscillating between feelings of resentment and admiration. The pursuit of the masculine and the repression of the feminine are culturally sanctioned, by ‘both defensive and discursive forces’ (Gough, op.cit.). Functional psychoanalytic discourse (Parker 2015b) prioritises the mother object, consistent with Winnicott’s (1964) concept of the good enough mother, Bowlby’s (1969) attachment theory and Klein’s (1946) concepts of splitting and projective identification (good breast, bad breast). This interest in the mother is seen as the death of the father object; more recently, the importance of the father has become a subject of interest (Kalinich & Taylor, 2009; Heuer, 2010). Indeed, Freud himself prioritised the father (Richards, 2009; Laqueur, 2009).

2.8.2 Positioning theory

Positioning theory attempts to replace the concept of role with the more fluid concept of position (Luberda, 2000). In describing positioning theory, Langenhove and Harré (1999) note that people position themselves and take up positions, like the subject and object of a sentence, so that people are placed in relation to one another through the meaning of what
is said. Unlike relatively fixed roles, positions change and are used by people to cope with situations. Langenhove and Harré (1999) explain the distinction between what is achieved in saying something (for example, praising) and what is achieved by saying something (for example, pleasing the praised person) and point out that the content of a position is defined by rights, duties and respect to social forces.

Positioning concerns how people dynamically produce and explain their own and others’ everyday behaviour. People differ psychologically in how they position and in their will to position or be positioned. Their power to do so is socially determined. According to role theory, what is said is dictated by the role; in positioning theory, the way people say things reveals who they are and how they want to be seen by others (Langenhove & Harré, op. cit.). Positioning theory compliments discourse analysis theory in the current research.

2.8.3 Foucauldian discourse analysis and theory

Willig (2013) describes qualitative research as an adventure, and prioritises method over theory. This is congruent with the turn to method advocated by Henwood (2005). However, Willig (2013) addresses theory by posing the question: ‘Can subjectivity be theorized on the basis of discourse alone?’ (p. 137). Willig (2012) notes that all discourse analysis is interested in the ‘effects’ of discourse and how constructing meaning through language enables or prevents, empowers or constrains action. She argues for interpretation in discourse analysis as it is based on a particular understanding of the role of language (p. 39). Willig (2008b) observes that discourse analysis: was inspired by Foucault and poststructuralism; is concerned with discursive resources; explores discourse, subjectivity and power; links discourse with institutions and social practices; and enquires how discourse constructs objects and subjects (2008a). Willig (ibid.) refers to psychologists Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) and sociologists Kendall and Wickham (1999), who
provide more detailed theoretical approaches to Foucauldian discourse analysis from psychology and sociology.

Discourse analysis requires historical inquiry (genealogy), mechanisms of power, and subjectification (practices in which subjects are made up; Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 91). The French debates between humanism and Marxism led to the Foucauldian concept of discourse. After May 1968, Foucault argued for a model of power that operates locally and according to historical conditions, providing for a new relationship between theory and practice in social change. Practice was no longer considered the application of theory but interactive and open-ended. Changing the subject in psychology was achieved by discourse, in linking the production of the subject with technologies of power. Because ‘discourse is not really a theory of the subject’ (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 94), it explains how subjects are positioned in relation to power. Power acts on possible actions; thus there is the possibility of acting differently. The absence of a theory of subjectivity allows the concept of normalisation to show how pedagogic practices become the norm over time as the prevention of crime and surveillance in the nineteenth century notions of affection, understanding and realising potential. By the twentieth century, child study and mental measurement discourses informed government reports that resulted in the current tripartite education system of today. ‘By today’s standards good…teaching is the ability to observe, monitor and intervene in the development of a child by accurately reading their actions’ (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 97). Foucault further informs the current theoretical position in terms of discourse analysis theory and practice.

2.8.4 Discourse analysis and educational psychology practice

Interest in discourse analysis is growing in educational psychology (EP) practice as a tool
for exploring understanding and meaning (Billington, 1995; Bozic, Leadbetter & Stringer, 1998; Bozic & Ledbetter, 1990; Shabal, 2009). The influence of Foucauldian insights are important in the discourse analysis of secondary pupils’ constructions of bullying (Side, 2011) and bullying policy-making for schools (Side & Johnson, 2014). Pomerantz (2008) links Willig’s (2001) Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) and EP practice in the context of social psychology. Educational psychologists can develop as reflexive practitioners and critical social psychologists by applying FDA (Pomerantz, 2008). Foucauldian discourse analysis has been used to explore constructions of inclusion with special educational needs coordinators (Walker, 2015) and conjoint-work between EPs and social workers (Apter, 2014).

Counselling psychologists have found that combining discourse analysis and psychoanalytic thinking was helpful for brief therapeutic intervention. Paying attention to the words in a therapeutic conversation, they used discourse analysis to provide a grounded and rigorous complimentary method to the psychoanalytic thinking of metaphor and free association (Mandill & Barkham, 1997).

The current research employs psychoanalytic and systemic thinking in FDA to identify ways to inform educational psychology practice by exploring what a father says about his son’s transition to school.

2.9 Summary of the literature review

In this chapter, the literature on fathers and transition to school in the context of discourse analysis, masculinities, feminism, and fatherhood, psychoanalytic discourse and positioning theory, has been reviewed. Five articles have been reviewed in depth, and related to issues in the wider literature. The review has deepened knowledge about a father’s possible subjectivity in the historical, cultural, political context of what he might
say about his son’s transition to school.

Review of the five papers revealed that the question of how a father might talk about his son’s transition to school is not often addressed. The psychoanalytic view that fathering involves an emphasis on play, mentorship and encouraging the child in the face of challenges, rather than nurturing him like a mother, is espoused by NICHD (2004). Wetherell and Edley (1999), however, proclaim nurturing as one of many masculine attributes. Coltart and Henwood (2012) observe barriers to describing fathers as nurturing in particular circumstances. Page et al. (2008) clearly include fathers and mothers in their definition of parents, which foregrounds two consistent findings of their research. First, the involvement of fathers in education is associated with positive outcomes in their children, and services need to take into account of the needs and motivations of fathers. Second, they encourage schools to take account of the different needs of fathers and mothers.

Gough (2009) argues for psychoanalytic concepts to inform interviewing, and for analysis of the transcript of a young adult male talking about his relationship with his father. Gough uses both discursive and psychoanalytic perspectives. Applying Foucault’s insights (Side, 2011), the everyday orientation of fathers to what they can contribute and how they can conduct themselves at the time of their child’s transition to school becomes a key focus for consideration in the current research. A descriptive emancipatory analysis of how discourses emerge when discussing transition (McCumber, 2000) would help determine what might improve transition to school.

Transition to school is currently featured in *The Psychologist*, in an article that does not single out fathers (Hughes, 2015). Educational psychology has not traditionally focused on the gender issues associated with transition to school. The current research addresses this gap.
2.10 Conclusion to Chapter 2

There is a gap in the research literature regarding what a father might say about his son’s transition to school. There is as yet no literature on what fathers can contribute to the transition process, on how LAs might include fathers in the Code of Practice (2014) as a common sense discourse, or on how schools, at a systemic level and through their communications to parents, position fathers though discourse. Discourse analysis is not employed to study fathers and transitions in education. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology employed in this study.

Research question

In order to address the gap in the current knowledge, the following research question was formulated:

‘What might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school?’
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Overview of chapter

In Chapter 3, the methodology used to address the research question is described. Issues of ontology and epistemology are discussed. Discourse analysis is presented as a paradigm, as method and theory in psychology. The purpose of my research is addressed using Willig’s (2013) stages of FDA, which provide the framework within which to analyse the data generated by the interview. The validity of the research and ethical concerns are addressed.

3.2 Research question

What might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school?

3.3 Methodological / epistemological considerations

Researchers make claims about what knowledge is (ontology), how we know it (epistemology) and the procedures for studying it (methodology) (Creswell, 2003). Practitioner researchers describe ontology as the nature of the world (Fox, Martin & Green, 2007, p. 9). The current research adopts a relativist ontological stance and a social constructionist epistemology.

The nature of the world is difficult to describe: ‘[H]ow can any words accurately picture the world?’ (Gergen, 1999, p. 31). According to Gergen (1999), ‘[t]he central epistemological challenge is to understand how individual consciousness comes to have knowledge of the external world’ (p. 9). The rejection of the idea of external reality (rather
than socially-constructed reality) requires a need to establish other knowledge by the coherence of a relativist argument (Speed, 2009). Reflecting on his own 1992 writings that a realist approach in discursive research was a progressive alternative to relativism, Parker (2015) states, ‘I was wrong…thorough-going relativism in psychology [is] the best way of dismantling the scientific truth claims and managerial ambitions of psychology’ (p. 4).

Social construction, a term first used by Berger and Luckman (1966), is employed almost exclusively by psychologists (Burr, 2003). It follows Gergen’s (1985) assumptions: a critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge, historical and cultural specificity, recognition that knowledge is sustained by social processes, and recognition that knowledge and social action are interrelated (Burr, 2003).

The current research is conducted from a relativist ontological stance and social constructionist epistemology, producing qualitative knowledge that is open to debate.

3.4 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to explore what a father says about his son’s transition to school in order to inform others how to take steps to improve father involvement in child education. The purpose of the research is also emancipatory (Parker 2015a, p. 90), taking account of the father’s voice.

3.5 Pilot study

The original intention of the research was to recruit a group of difficult-to-reach fathers in an area of deprivation in a South Coast urban community. Informal group meetings were held weekly over six weeks. Poor group attendances lead to the decision to conduct one-to-one interviews with five men. Following the pilot study, an individual father became the focus of the study.
3.6 Strategy

Research strategy converts ontology and epistemology into how research is conducted and constructed (Tuli, 2010; Tubey, Rotich & Bengat, 2015). The epistemological approach adopted here is social constructionism with a relativist ontological stance.

3.6.1 Social construction epistemology

Social construction advocates a plurality of knowledge (Burr, 2003). Social construction discourse has two key parts: it is the vehicle through which self and the world are articulated and the way in which such talk functions in social relationships (Gergen, 1999). Phillips and Jorgensen (2002) note that what one says through one’s research can make a difference to the world and one should take responsibility for this. The social field is rule-bound and regulative. Knowledge and identities are contingent; however they are relatively inflexible in specific situations, placing restrictions on the identities an individual can assume and on statements that can be accepted as meaningful (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

Relativism does not reduce the academic value or political significance of research (Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Edwards et al, 1995; Speed, 2009). Willig (2013) unites social constructionism (Gergen, 1999; Burr, 2003) and critical realism (Bhaskar, 1986) in her view of knowledge gained through historical, cultural and linguistic mediation of perception and experience. Figure 1 positions qualitative methodologies on a direct realist to radical relativist continuum. Others dispute the view that social constructionism and critical realism can be amalgamated, categorising all the methodologies in Figure 1 as discourse analysis (Parker, 2015a; see Table 7). Discourse analysis focuses ‘attention on…the many competing structures of language…[enabling]…speakers to engage in the “social construction” of reality’, (Parker, 2015a, p. 1). He declares a ‘thorough going relativist’ stance (Parker op cit., p. 4).
3.6.2 Discourse Analysis

Parker (2015a) proposes discourse analysis as a new paradigm in psychology. He names eight forms of discourse analysis and locates them in a time or space dimension at four levels of approach from micro-interpersonal to historical-political (see Table 7). FDA is located in the space dimension because, although concerned with history and power/knowledge, Foucault developed a more detailed approach towards a theory of the body (Speed, 2006; Parker, 2015).
Table 7: Discourse analysis: order of the new paradigm in psychology compiled after Parker (2015)

| Discourse analysis: Order of the new paradigm in psychology, after Parker (2015) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| **Little things in context**                  |                                               |                                               |
| Conversational analysis CA                    | Time/form (influenced by feminism)            | Empiricist                                    | Sacks (1972)                                 | Micro-interpersonal |
| Ethnomethodology EM                           | Space/content (influenced by feminism)        | Phenomenological                              | Garfinkel (1967)                             | Micro-sociology     |
| **Grounds of experience**                    |                                               |                                               |                                               |                   |
| Narrative Analysis NA                         | Time/content                                  | FANI Life Story                               | Hollway & Jefferson (2013)                   | Interpretation     |
| Thematic Analysis TA                          | Space/content                                 | Grounded theory IPA                           | Smith                                        | Interpretation     |
| **Beyond interpretation**                    |                                               |                                               |                                               |                   |
| Critical Discourse Analysis CAD              | Time/content                                  | Power of discourse                            | Van Dijk (1993)                              | Power              |
| Foucauldian Discourse Analysis FDA           | Space (e.g. the human body) /content          | Critical                                      | Willig (2008)                                | Power/knowledge    |
|                                               |                                               |                                               | Parker                                       | Time of phenomena, how they come into being, maintain themselves and what forces lead to their disintegration |
| **Production of analytic phenomena**         |                                               |                                               |                                               |                   |
| Semiotic Analysis SA                          | Time/content                                  | Critical, Freudian and Lacanian (from cultural studies decoding visual images) | Parker (2015) | Hidden persuaders in advertising |
| Political Discourse Theory PDT                | Space/content                                 | Critical Ideology                             | Butler (1998)                                | Gender danger postmodernism |
Most recent forms of discourse analysis have been influenced by the philosophy of Foucault (Speed, 2006). Different traditions have evolved from linguistics (Chomsky 1979), ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967), and conversational analysis (Sacks, 1972; Atkinson & Heritage, 1984).

Critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1993) has focused on power in organisations. Discursive psychology was inspired by Potter and Wetherell (1987) and was developed by Edwards and Potter (1992). Discourse analysis is a qualitative methodology.

3.6.3 Qualitative methodology

Qualitative methodology emerges from feminist psychology research (Hepburn, 2003) and paradigm shifts (Kuhn, 1970; Reason & Rowen, 1981; Chalmers, 1999). Qualitative methodology rejects positivism, empiricism and the hypothetico-deductive method of scientific enquiry (Popper, 1969). Discourse analysis is the psychological paradigm used in the current research. ‘Discourse analysis marks a conceptual break from behavioural and cognitive models of language as expression of response to stimuli or as communication of ideas from inside the head of an individual to others’ (Parker, 2015a, p. 3). Following Tuli (2010), my methodology is ‘qualitative…inductive…oriented towards discovery and process, [has] high validity, and [is]…concerned with deep understanding of the research problem in its unique context’ (p. 100). The qualitative methodology here is guided by discourse analysis as paradigm, theory and method from a relativist ontological stance and a social constructionist epistemological approach to the production of knowledge.

3.6.4 Discourse analysis theory and methodology

Discourse analysis should not be used as a method without reference to its theoretical and methodological underpinnings (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). Psychoanalysis can be used as a conceptual resource, treated as discourse (Parker, 2015a, p. 44). There is an argument for
using interpretation in discourse analysis Willig (2012, p. 39). My research considers psychoanalytic and systemic thinking as tools for interpretation, as well as the five Foucauldian Concepts.

**Discourse**

For Foucault (2002), statements (or ‘references’, Willig 2013) are the smallest units of material for analysis, which he understood as producing discourses by constructive formulations (or ‘constructions and wider discourses’, Willig, 2013). Discourses are ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault, 2002, p.54). Parker (1994) notes that discourses are sets of statements that construct objects and an array of subject positions. Objects carry meaning. Meaning is systematically produced over time. People use discourses to get what they want or explain what they mean by force of argument and discourses provide opportunities for counter arguments. The discourse concept contributes to epistemology by providing a means to generate knowledge (ways of seeing) through talk and contributes to ontology in terms of everyday practices (ways of being) that people talk about. Discourses, therefore, are relative in time and space, and they are socially constructed (Parker, 2015a).

**Problematization**

The concept of problematization involves critical thinking. Foucault observed that looking for problems is a way of freeing thought processes in order to come up with new ideas (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). By detaching oneself from an object of thought, such as transition to school, in order to reflect on it as a problem, new knowledge is possible. Problematization is necessary for critical analysis and ‘problematizations never stop’ (Kendall & Wickham, op. cit., p. 4). ‘It is important...to turn [our] position of uncertainty into a virtue… [as] it is crucial that we allow our investigations of a problem to surprise us’
Normalisation

The concept of normalisation or normative judgements is developed in Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Normalisation assesses and monitors people’s actions and ways of being according to a generally-accepted idea of what constitutes normality, including the statistical norm. Normalisation works through institutions such as schools and ensures compliance (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000).

Technologies of the self

Technologies of the self, describes the ‘ability of individuals to effect operations on their bodies, souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being so as to transform themselves and to attain perfection, happiness, purity and wisdom’ (Foucault, 1997, p. 225). Foucault describes the hermeneutics of the self in the Greek and the Christian contexts. The Greek hermeneutic was concerned with care of the self, care for political life, education and knowing oneself. The Christian hermeneutic of confession has been reinstated by the social sciences; for example, in therapy (Foucault, op. cit.). A way of being that does not take care of the self is considered a kind of madness (Ljungdalh, 2013).

Subjectification

Edley (2001) developed ‘critical discursive psychology’ in his analysis of masculinity, using the term ‘interpretive repertoires’ in place of the term ‘discourses’, and arguing that the terms have been used differently because of disciplinary ring-fencing. He argues that his critical discursive analysis emphasises agency, whereas the Foucauldian approach is more concerned with being subjectified. This is to misunderstand Foucault’s concept of subjectification by splitting it: from being both subject to *and* subject by, to being subject to *or* (the exclusive or) subject. It is argued here that making a judgement about what can
and cannot be termed part of a Foucauldian approach falls into the trap of second order judgements explained by Kendall and Wickham (1999) as ‘…largely about suspending judgements other than those you happen to recognise as your own’ (p. 13). They point out that the attempt to escape the grip of second-order judgements must be genuine but is rarely achieved (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). In the current research, discourse includes being subjectified in addition to agency and stake. Foucault (1977) describes mode of subjectification as the way the subject freely relates to himself and the way in which people recognise their moral obligations. In this way, we can see how the idea of subjectification relates to Foucault’s two meanings of the subject. Foucault sees the person as being subject to and subject by events. In this way, power works through the discursive actions of people to change and maintain the status quo (Foucault, 1977). Subjects’ actions take place in a discourse and subjects themselves are produced through discourse (Kendall & Wickham, 1999, p. 53). Kendell and Wickham (op cit. p. 52) note that Foucault’s: ‘…objective…has been to create a history of [how]…human beings are made subjects’ (Foucault, 1982, p. 208). Power is central to the concept of subjectification, because ‘power relations differentially position subjects in discourse even when…[it is] contradictory’ (Kendell & Wickham, op cit. p. 54). For them, the triad of power, knowledge and the subject is systematic (ibid.)

According to Gordon (1980), Foucault favours a conception of domination, which can assume forms of subjectification and objectification. Foucault rejects the humanist assumption that domination falsifies the essence of human subjectivity. Foucault asserts that power regularly promotes and utilises a ‘true’ knowledge of subjects. The key to Foucault’s position is his methodological scepticism about both the ontological claims and the ethical values that humanist systems of thought invest in the notion of subjectivity. Foucault does not judge these values, but investigates how they became possible (Gordon,
1980, p. 239). Conversation analysis, ethnography of communication, discursive psychology and critical discourse analysis are not as important to the macro-analytic emphasis afforded by the unique contribution of FDA (Pomerantz, 2008). Discursive psychology is concerned with psychological phenomena, such as memory or identity (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Edwards & Potter, 1992). These phenomena are conceptualised as discursive actions rather than cognitive processes and are used by people to achieve social and interpersonal objectives (Willig, 2008). FDA focuses on the kinds of objects and subjects constructed through discourse, in terms of what kinds of ways of being and ways of seeing are available to people (Pomeranz, 2008). Willig (2013) illustrates both discursive psychology and FDA transcript analysis using extracts from Potter and Wetherell (1987) and her own research. In my opinion, Willig’s stage 3 of FDA includes the scope of discursive psychology and is congruent with the idea of one method rather than two (Willig, 2013). ‘Discourses are ways of creating knowledge that people position themselves by’ (Side, 2011, p. 141).

Positioning theory (Davis & Harrè, 1999) influences Willig’s FDA; indeed, positioning constitutes stage 4 of her analytical framework. ‘[P]osition is a dynamic alternative to the static concept of role’ (Boxer, 2003, p. 255).

Parker (1992) identifies seven conditions for a discourse:

1) a discourse is realised in text, whether that is written, social or any other kind of text
2) a discourse is about objects, the discourse has to be objectified to be analysed
3) a discourse contains subjects
4) a discourse is a coherent system of meanings
5) a discourse refers to other discourses
6) a discourse reflects on its own way of speaking
7) a discourse is historically-located.

### 3.6.5 FDA theory and method

FDA is ‘social constructionist in orientation’ (Willig, 2013, p.138). It is a methodology specific to the field of psychology, and is allied with critical psychology (Parker, 2015a). FDA is defined as both theory and method (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2002; Burr, 2003), and centres on language and its role in social and psychological life (Willig, 2013). From an FDA perspective, discourses facilitate and limit who can say what, where and when (Parker, 1992). The focus of FDA includes available discursive resources in a culture, including social and individual implications for people (Willig, 2008; Parker, 2015a) and their personal life (Smart, 2007).

Foucault defines discourses as ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault, 2002 p.54). Parker (2015a) notes that discourses are statements that construct objects and subject positions (p.75). Objects carry meaning, which is systematically produced over time. People use discourses to get what they want or explain what they mean by force of argument; discourses provide opportunities for counter arguments. Discourses, therefore, are relative in time and space, and are socially constructed (Parker, 2015a; Gergen, 1999).

Foucault (1972, 2002) was concerned with language and text in the broadest sense: works of art, films, newspapers and advertisements have all been used as FDA subject matter. Ways of understanding and categorising the world are not universal. They are historically and socially specific, and consequently contingent (Philips & Jorgensen, 2002). FDA provides insights into subjectivity, selfhood and power relations. According to Gergen (1999), Foucault considered ‘power…an open, more or less coordinated…cluster of relationships’ (p. 3). FDA is based on the principles of post-structuralism and is justified
by underpinning relativist ontology; it generates knowledge according to a social constructionism epistemology (Gergen, 1973; Harré & Secord, 1972). Social constructionism can be micro (discursive psychology) and macro (FDA), with the possibility of arguing from a relativist stance when addressing issues of ideology and power (Burr, 2003). The methodology used in the current research is appropriate for a small-scale, qualitative case study, owing to the rich nature of the research data and its coherence with a common knowledge of the world at a particular moment in time (Gergen, 2007).

3.7 Data collection techniques

3.7.1 Single-participant study

My research is an exploratory, single-participant study, using the transcript of a conversation with the father of a boy about to start school. It shares many of the implications of a single case study, without including all the criteria needed for a full case study (Gough, 2009): the data is from an interview transcript with no corroborative data from other family members or teachers. As with all qualitative studies, my research relies on depth of data, evidenced in a) the ability to elicit deep feelings in the researcher and the participant, b) the resonance this has with the reader, and c) the social implications for fathers and schools.

Both quantitative and qualitative researchers are interested in the individual’s perspective. Qualitative researchers aim to gain insight into individuals’ experiences through detailed interviewing. Quantitative researchers, however, may regard data produced by interpretive methods as unreliable, impressionistic, and subjective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The current study is qualitative, and aspires to a valid, useful contribution. Psychoanalytic and systemic thinking are used to interpret the findings. FDA will be used
with an individual case. Potter and Wetherell note:

[T]he value or generalizability of results depends on the reader assessing the importance and interest of the effect described and deciding whether it has vital consequences for the area of social life in which it emerges…one can analyse… one-off representative instances of…commonplace phenomena. (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 161)

Sample size is not a concern: the research strives simply to identify patterns using dialectic and inductive reasoning that is context-dependent and interpretive, with multiple realities (Tubey et al., 2015).

### 3.7.2 Data capture

The original intention of my research was to obtain data from a group of difficult-to-reach fathers in an area of deprivation in a South Coast urban community. Some data was obtained from the group, but recruitment difficulties and poor attendance led to the decision to use interview data. Six men were interviewed and data from five interviews was transcribed. One set of data was lost owing to digital recorder malfunction. One of the transcriptions was selected for analysis since it contained rich data. The data captured for analysis was obtained from an interview with Tom during the summer term before his son was due to start school in the following September. Tom signed a consent form (Appendix 6) having read the participant information sheet (Appendix 7). The interview was based on topic headings, with a loose structure to enable free flow of information. The topic headings were:

- What is it like to be a man?
- What is it like to be the father of a son about to start school?
- What was it like when you started school?
- What involvement did your father have?
- How do you think schools could involve fathers?
3.7.3 The participant

According to Willig (2013), biographical information is unnecessary for discourse analysis research and may be detrimental to confidentiality. The results of my analysis can only describe potential individual and social effects for Tom and others. The knowledge gained by the research is not grounded in the person, but rather in what the person said. Tom offered to grant me an interview as one of a number of potential participants from varying backgrounds. His transcript was selected for analysis, as it provided rich data to analyse.

3.7.4 Transcription

Initially, the method of transcription was to follow that of Jefferson (1984), with modifications for ease of use as advocated by Pomerantz (2008). However, following conversations with colleagues, I decided to try a professional company. Eventually, I rejected their transcript as it contained too many errors and subjective liberties with punctuation when compared with the audio data. I transcribed the data myself, following the method used by Speed (2006) after Gilbert and Mulkay (1984). The method provides easy reading of an account of worthwhile quality, with minimal punctuation and short lines to aid readability. Commas and full stops are not used, but the apostrophe is used to denote possession and contraction. Capital letters are used for proper nouns only. The transcript reflects the fact that, in ordinary speech, people do not necessarily speak in sentences. Both Pomeranz (2010) and Speed (2009) emphasise the importance of researcher-transcribed data as an initial noticing device in analysing discourse.

The computer program F4 provided a good way of listening to the audiotape and typing what was heard in small bursts. A spooling function made it possible to replay the sound in small chunks that could be measured in seconds. The optimum spooling time was three seconds for replay of the text, and difficult-to-hear items were slowed in order to aid
hearing words that were unclear. Subjectively there was an optimum speed at which the clearest sound was heard; generally, this was 100 percent slowing to 75 percent for some words; slower than this, words became distorted. The F4 software automatically triggered a time record in tenths of a second, on hitting the return key. If it became pertinent to refer to time, it would be possible to access the complete transcript of the whole interview (Appendix 5). Transcribing was time-consuming; it was often necessary to listen several times to hear what was said, in order to produce a transcript that: tells a good, clear story; is internally coherent; is sufficiently differentiated; generates new insights for readers; and is convincing (Willig, 2008). Finally, I decided to use first names for the interviewer and participant (with a false name for the participant), following the example of Hollway and Jefferson (2013). A more recent version of F4, including a foot pedal, might have been helpful and new voice recognition software might have speeded the transcription process. Close engagement with the text contributed to the trustworthiness of the findings.

3.8 Data analysis

Willig’s six-stage model was selected as a manageable tool with which to analyse data in this study. The model does not account for genealogy, governmentality and subjectification (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). Willig’s (2001, 2008) model is adapted and includes contributions from positioning theory (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999) and discursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The approach used here was influenced by Parker (1992, 2005, 2015a, 2015b) and Hollway and Jefferson (2013) and uses both psychoanalytic and systemic thinking as cultural lenses for subjectivity. A summary of the stage-by-stage analysis is presented below.
3.8.1 The process model of Willig’s six stages of FDA

Stage One: Discursive constructions

The different ways that transition to school is constructed in the text are identified. How transition to school (the object) is talked about, alluded to or identified in multiple and possibly conflicting ways elucidates the discursive constructions of the object. A search is made for obvious, as well as hidden or implied, references to transition to school. The indirect or absence of direct reference to the object provides information about the discursive construction of transition to school. An omission or oblique reference (to transition to school) may point to some unspeakable or hidden features thereof (Willig, 2013).

Stage Two: Discourses

This stage examines differences and similarities in discursive constructions of transition to school and locates them in wider discourses.

Stage Three: Action orientation

Examination of the discursive contexts in which the constructions of transition to school are deployed is conducted at Stage Three of the analysis. What does the father gain in constructing transition to school in a particular way at a particular point in the text? What
is the function of his construction and how does it relate to his other constructions of transition to school in other extracts of the transcript? These questions are concerned with what discursive psychology calls the action orientation of talk and text (Willig, 2008). Focus on action orientation and agency provides a clearer understanding of the different constructions of transition to school.

**Stage Four: Positioning**

The father’s subject positions are offered by his constructions and discourses of his son’s transition to school. His subject positions in discourses identify his ‘location for persons within the structure of rights and duties for those who use that repertoire’ (Davies & Harré 1999, p. 35). In this sense, discourses construct subjects as well as objects; they also construct the positions that subjects take, and their positioning of others (Willig, 2008). Willig (2008) uses the example by Hollway (1989) of a ‘discourse of male sexual drive’, which contains the subject position of the instinct-driven male sexual predator and positions men and women as highly-socialised moral actors. This conceptualisation offers discursive locations from which to speak and act subjectively (Willig, 2008). The father is expected to speak about his son’s transition to school with the interviewer within the social structure in which his rights and duties are taken-for-granted understandings of ordinary ways of speaking, in an interview designed to allow free flow of conversation.

**Stage Five: Practice**

This stage is concerned with practice. It explores ways in which discursive constructions of transition to school and the subject positions (of the father and of others) contained within them provide or obstruct opportunities for action. Discourses limit what can be said and done because of the way objects and subjects are constructed in a discursive formulation (for example, adults touching children in school, in an educational discourse). The
construction of particular views of the world and positioning subjects in them create discourses that limit what can be said and done. ‘Such practices, in turn, reproduce the discourses which legitimate them in the first place. In this way, “speaking” and “doing”, support one another in the construction of subjects and objects’ (Willig, 2008, p.117). This stage maps the possibilities for the father to take action by saying and doing more about his son’s transition to school.

**Stage Six: Subjectivity**

This stage is the exploration of discourse and subjectivity. The father’s ways of seeing the world, and being in the world, are made available for analysis. Social as well as psychological versions of truth are constructed, with positioning playing an important part in the process:

> Once having taken up a particular position as one’s own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts that are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned (Davies & Harré 1999, p. 35).

The consequences of taking up various subject positions are analysed in terms of what is felt, thought and experienced in these positions (Willig, 2001, 2008). The contribution of Billig (1999) is pertinent in this regard, in his compelling case for seeing repression in discourse analytic terms. Rather than the hidden unconscious “I”, repression is linked to the use of language. As children learn to talk, they learn how to change the subject and to repress (Billig, 1999). The social mind is found in psychoanalytic discourse analysis (Parker, 2015a, b.).
3.8.2 Critique of Willig’s stages

Staged approaches to discourse analysis are contentious. Speed (2009) proposes that the analytic process should rather be open-ended, like diving into a swimming pool of data, surfacing at the point of having exhausted all the researcher’s breath and energy for analysis, and deciding on the optimum time to surface with a set of results for sharing and debate. Discourse analysis is conducted in vastly varying ways; following a set number of steps to completion does not constitute the completion of the analysis (Speed, 2009). Willig (2008) agrees that a stepped approach to FDA should be regarded only as a guideline and not as a complete package. Willig’s stages are less detailed than those of Parker (1992), reducing 20 steps to six. Guidelines and steps are nevertheless helpful. Parker’s (1994) suggestion that FDA involves the contradiction, constitution and power of discourses has been noted here, together with Willig’s (2001, 2008) six-stage version of FDA.

The stages proposed by Willig (2013) require less extensive conceptual knowledge than those described by Kendell and Wickham (1999). Willig (2013) avoids the Foucauldian term ‘statement’, preferring ‘references’ to create discursive constructions, which can impede clarity as the term references has a specific meaning for the APA system of referencing used here. Willig does not enter into the realms of genealogy or governmentality, which might be considered unsatisfactory from a FDA standpoint. Genealogy is beyond the scope of her staged approach (Willig, 2013) and also beyond the scope of the analysis here, although it is discussed in the research diary.

Data triangulation using, for example, press cuttings, fiction and non-fiction literature, pictures, films and advertisements would lend weight to the trustworthiness of her staged approach by providing contemporary cultural evidence. Triangulation of data is beyond the scope of the current analysis, although contemporary press cuttings were
collected and discussed in the research diary. The strength of her staged approach is in its structure, within which analytic thinking, in manageable steps, is possible.

3.8.3 Data analysis questions

Willig’s version of FDA is used to analyse the data generated here. Implicit in the six-stage analysis are the following subsidiary data analysis questions:

1) How does Tom discursively construct transition to school?

2) What are the similarities and differences in Tom’s constructions and the wider discourses in which they are located?

3) What does Tom gain in the context of his constructions within wider discourses?

4) What are the subject positions in Tom’s constructions within a repertoire of rights and duties?

5) How do his constructions open up or close down opportunities for action?

6) What are Tom’s possible ways of seeing and being in relation to transition to school?

3.9 Trustworthiness and validity

The validity of this research depends upon its acceptance by the relevant people, including practitioners, policy-makers, examiners, publishers and lay people. It involves judging how well the research has been conducted and how trustworthy and useful the findings are for practical application, and/or theoretical insights as perspectives on reality depend upon context culture and peoples’ activities (Yardley, 2008, pp. 235-256). How trustworthiness is addressed in my research pertains to my sensitivity to the context, commitment and rigour, the coherence and transparency of the study as well as its impact and importance (Yardley, op. cit., pp. 246-250).
The complete transcript of the researcher-transcribed interview is available in Appendix 5 and is cross-referenced with quotations presented in the findings chapter. Transcription skills were honed by many hours of practice transcribing the audio data of the pilot participants. The complexity of data analysis requires a wide socio-cultural interpretation of the interview data. Findings are discussed in relation to discourse analysis theory and functional psychoanalytic discourse practice in light of the importance and impact of the research.

3.9.1 Investigator bias and fore structure

The researcher should consider the impact of their perspective and position on the research outcomes (Willig, 2001). As researcher, I tried to remain curious and engaged with the participant whilst attempting to manage the interview from the perspective and position of an equal participant in the exploration. In order to maintain a personal record of the research process, I kept a record of my thoughts and feelings about the research process in the research diary. The impact of the process upon both the participant and the researcher was considered the creation of an interview as a negotiated accomplishment (Fontana & Frey, 2003). I considered how the interview affected me, my interaction with the literature and with FDA, issues of masculinity and transition to school, and how supervision brought up issues from my own childhood, resonating with Hollway’s (2013) work on psychoanalytic thinking about the interview process and supervision. The research diary helped to document the procedural gap between the original intention of the research protocol to investigate a group of fathers over a six-week period and the final decision to opt for a single participant study over five interviews.

3.9.2 Explication of social and cultural contexts of researcher and participant(s)

The original idea for the research centred on a desire to work with a group of men in a
children’s centre located in a housing estate in a deprived area of my LA. Problems with participant recruitment and commitment to six group sessions with the three men who were recruited led to a decision to switch to interviewing five men. Four of the five interviews were transcribed: data from one of the interviews was lost through malfunction of the digital recording device.

Taking inspiration from my new supervisor and confidence from Potter and Wetherell (1987), the research data collection then focused on a single participant. There were concerns that the single participant did not represent hard-to-reach fathers, but, as Willig (2013) noted, the biographical details of the participant are irrelevant to FDA, as the application of findings have broad social and psychological implications. A second concern was the problem of educational bias in selecting the transcript of one participant. However, all four interviews were with educated men. The choice was based on the richness of the transcript during early reading and transcription.

The research was conducted in a unitary authority on the South Coast of England with a mixed socio-economic population. The richness of the findings are generalisable beyond the local context, as predicted by my research protocol supervisor, Mark Fox, on December 13, 2008. He noted that my research was located in an appropriate theoretical context with a clear purpose in terms of examining the way men create a discourse about their role in education, leading to clear research questions. This should allow a new and deep understanding of the dis/empowerment of men in Early Years education (p. 1). The change from plural to singular in terms of participant numbers does not detract from the power of Mark Fox’s comments regarding the worth of my research using a single participant. Single participant discourse analysis is considered valid in qualitative research (Yardley, 2000, 2008).
3.9.3 Testimonial validity

Four of the five participants interviewed (three for the pilot work and Tom for the main research project) were contacted by email when the research was completed with a summary of the research findings. One of the men (Participant 1) met with the researcher on September 28, 2014. He stated that:

It’s great relates clearly a useful exercise
to think about my role also general roles
and state of play with regards to parenting
males and females…quick
changes in social and cultural habits and priorities where
fathers are encouraged to be more involved in up-bringing…very helpful for me

The fifth participant could not be located. The participant for the main study replied by email, wishing the researcher well in her work.

3.9.4 Catalytic validity

The participant was encouraged by taking part in the research to think about his roles as a parent and the wider social and cultural influences on his habits and priorities, specifically his involvement in his son’s transition to school. He was encouraged to be energised to reorient and focus on himself as a father.

3.9.5 Consensus replication

Feedback to the M5 course in Child and Educational Psychology at the Tavistock Centre was conducted on July 1st 2014. The group was appreciative of the introduction to discourse analysis. The general consensus in the group of students and tutors was that the presentation was useful. One student reported difficulty with course members bringing this type of presentation to the group, because as the researcher I had spent many hours
thinking about the dialogue, whilst the group had only had 15 minutes. He recommended that this sort of audit should be with a peer who has had considerable time to get onto my wavelength. Subsequently, and taking on board this comment, I have spent time with a course member who is happy with my interpretation of the data. Three other course tutors have read my analysis and are comfortable with my interpretation.

3.9.6 Reflexive validity

Did the observations change my understanding? Getting to grips with the theory of methodology and my research findings changed my understanding of the complexities of subjectivity as a culturally-determined phenomenon. The sociologists Kendall and Wickham (1999) note that, theoretically, we do not need to depend upon the individual but to think of the single figure in different sites taking up positions that may be contradictory (pp. 53-54).

3.10 Ethical issues

3.10.1 Ethical approval

Ethical approval was granted from the Departmental Director of Research of the School of Health and Human Sciences at the University of Essex (Appendix 5). No potential risks (physical, psychological, social, legal or economic) to participants were anticipated. The researcher was deemed by the Departmental Director of Research to have the ‘necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research…and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise’.

The research complied with the British Psychological Society Code of Human Research Ethics (2010) in its intention to respect the autonomy and dignity of people, have value and be socially responsible, as well as to maximise benefit and minimise harm.
3.10.2 Valid consent

An Information Sheet (Appendix 5) and an Informed Consent Form were provided by the researcher and signed by the participants who agreed to take part in the research. It was made clear that, at any time during the research process, the participants were free to withdraw from the research project without giving a reason.

3.10.3 Confidentiality

All data was anonymised and participants were assured that all details of the research would be confidential, with their individual identity protected at all times. Electronic data was protected by password and all other data kept under lock and key.

3.10.4 Risk

As the focus of the research is on a father’s views about his son’s transition to school, there were no direct safeguarding issues to be addressed in this research. If any disclosure of risk factors had taken place, normal LA procedures would have been activated.

3.10.5 Giving advice

Explicit advice was given in the information sheet, and carefully addressed during the interviews as relevant to the conversation.

3.10.6 Deception


3.11 Conclusion to Chapter 3

The choice of methodology has been explained in comparative terms as it related to the
research question and the purpose of the research, pilot study and research strategy. Social construction epistemology and a relativist ontological stance have been established as the chosen approaches for my research. Discourse analysis as a qualitative methodology and paradigm has been introduced in this chapter and treated as theory and methodology, while FDA was introduced as theory and method. The section on data collection techniques covered single participant study; data capture; a note about the participant and interview transcription. Willig’s stages of FDA were introduced as the framework for data analysis. Issues of trustworthiness and validity for qualitative research have been addressed, followed by ethical issues of approval, consent, confidentiality, risk and deception.
Chapter 4

Findings, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Overview

Chapter 4 presents the findings: analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the interview with the father (Tom) and the researcher (Mary) are discussed. As the research is about a father and his son (Raj) at the time of the son’s transition to school, the focus of the analysis is on the discursive object (the son’s transition to school) and the subject (the father). Mary’s contribution (as researcher and interviewer) is part of the analysis. The chapter begins by restating the research question and purpose. Aspects and structure of the data analysis are presented. The data is analysed systemically using Willig’s FDA stages. A functional psychoanalytic discursive lens is used to view some of Tom’s possible ways of being and seeing.

4.2 Research question, purpose and data analysis questions

The research question is: What might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school? The purpose is to explore what a father says about his son’s transition to school in order to inform others about how to take steps to improve father involvement in child education. The purpose of the research is also emancipatory, taking account of the father’s voice. The data is analysed using the following questions:

1. How does Tom discursively construct Raj’s transition to school?
2. What are the similarities and differences in Tom’s constructions and the wider discourses in which they are located?
3. What does Tom gain in the context of his constructions within wider discourses?
4. What are the subject positions in Tom’s constructions within a repertoire of rights and duties?

5. How do Tom’s constructions open up or close down opportunities for action?

6. What are Tom’s possible ways of seeing and being in relation to Raj’s transition to school?

The research data comprises the following elements:

1. References to transition to school, the father and the researcher, noticed whilst conducting and transcribing the interview, and readings of the transcript (Appendix 2).

2. 21 extracts from the transcript with consecutive line numbers cross-referenced with line numbers of the whole interview, and quotations in this chapter (Appendix 3).

3. Interview transcript with time-generated by F4 software (Appendix 4).

4. Quotations in the text selected from the extracts (Appendix 3) and cross-referenced with the transcript of the audio data (Appendix 4).

The data is analysed using Willig’s FDA. Following the convention used for the complete transcription of the whole interview, the quotations in this chapter use minimal punctuation. Square brackets [ ] denote the researcher’s (Mary) or participant’s (Tom) words in the interruption of the flow of each other’s talk, and the ellipsis (…) denotes omitted words.

The first steps in the analysis took place during the interview, the process of transcribing the interview, and multiple readings of the transcript. The first attempt to make sense of the data resulted in the table of explicit and implied references (see Appendix 2). The overall impression of Tom’s references to Raj’s transition to school was influenced by Mary’s contribution to the interview. How Mary set topics for the

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2 One exception to this format is where there is a direct quote from Appendix 5 on page 90.
conversation and asked Tom questions inductively influenced his replies, socially constructing his reality.

Subsequent steps are guided by the Willig stages (see Figure 1). Further analysis and interpretation of the data is structured in Table 8. The Willig stage numbers (1 to 6) and discursive constructions (Stage One) structure a matrix for Stages Two to Six.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
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<th>Stage 6</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Positioning</td>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Subjectivity</td>
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<td>Male/female behaviour</td>
<td>Fathers-disengaged</td>
<td>Paedophilia-opening up talk. Support from</td>
<td>a) projective identification</td>
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<td>(gender/role/identity) stereotyping</td>
<td>Tom &amp; Ann exceptions to stereotypes,</td>
<td>Tom’s parents-closed down</td>
<td>b) managing social setting</td>
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<td>Tom-multiple identities, cf., own father</td>
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<td>Feminist (17 refs.)</td>
<td>Surrendering control/judging teachers</td>
<td>Protectiveness</td>
<td>Tom vigilant-compromising -independent</td>
<td>Rejection of hegemonic masculinity</td>
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<td>(patriarchy vs., cf., judgemental process)</td>
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<td>Strongest role model/rebellion</td>
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<td>a) repression of patriarchal super ego</td>
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<td>b) balance/taking care of self/family/work</td>
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<td>b) information gathering/research</td>
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<td>(separation event vs. cf., division of</td>
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<td>labour)</td>
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<td>Intention to leave</td>
<td>Attachment issues</td>
<td>Tears Unspeakable fear</td>
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<td>a) Power knowledge-managing feelings</td>
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<td>b) manage current societal convention re</td>
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<td>early years education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic (division of labour vs., cf.,</td>
<td>Gains recognition as reliable</td>
<td>Husband and wife equal partners</td>
<td>Juggling work and child care</td>
<td></td>
<td>a)Democratic parenting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision-making (2 refs)</td>
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<td>Unspeakable effect of (missing grandfather)</td>
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<td>b)Employment issues, parental leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judgemental process (3 refs)</td>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Compromise-less</td>
<td>Capable of making</td>
<td>Parent/teacher meetings</td>
<td>a) Anxiety re. teacher competence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discourse</td>
<td>than perfect school</td>
<td>compromise</td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Attend meetings, fit into system</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(judgemental process vs., cf., communication)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication (8 refs)</td>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Intention to be prepared for</td>
<td>Responsible/proactive</td>
<td>Letter from school to new parents,</td>
<td>a) Anxiety re.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(communication vs., cf., judgemental</td>
<td>tricky conversations</td>
<td>parents</td>
<td>Saturday club</td>
<td>teacher relationship with school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>process)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>b) Managing home-school system</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Structure of the data analysis
The first stage is to notice how Raj’s transition to school is referenced (see Appendix 3) and discursively constructed. Next, the similarities and differences in the discursive constructions are examined and located in wider discourses. This is followed by considering how context contributes to understanding Tom’s discursive constructions, and what he achieves by constructing Raj’s transition to school in this way. Next, the subject positions that Tom adopts, within the societal structure of rights and duties, are considered. How Tom positions himself and others, as subjects, opens up or closes down opportunities to take action or to talk more about Raj’s transition to school. Finally, speculation about what thoughts, feelings and subjective experiences the action orientation and subject positions open up or close down Tom’s ways of seeing and ways of being in subjectively managing the psychological and social elements of Raj’s transition to school. The data is systemically interpreted through a Foucauldian lens; Tom’s ways of being and ways of seeing are also interpreted through a psychoanalytic discursive lens.³

4.3 Stage One: Discursive constructions

How does Tom discursively construct Raj’s transition to school?

Discursive constructions identify the ways Tom talks about Raj’s transition to school. Both implicit and explicit references (see Appendix 3) from the complete transcript of the whole interview form Tom’s discursive constructions. The extracts, selected for closer analysis from the transcript and cross referenced with the quotations in this chapter, are in Appendix 4.

Fatherhood/motherhood

Tom constructs transition to school as something to do with himself as ‘an exception’ (line 7, lines 7-18, 50-56) to other fathers (implicitly more like a mother), something to do with

³Foucault (1972, 1977, 1990), Billig (1999) and Parker (2015a,b); see Chapters 2, 3 and 5.
being ‘actively involved’ (line 20) and ‘trying to settle Raj’ (line 21 and lines 53-55) and to do with Tom and Ann’s ‘support’ (lines 25-27) for Raj. Tom refers to valuing a dad (lines 28-32), ‘particularly for boys’ (line 30; implicitly also for girls), in terms of ‘a positive message about encouraging dads and about the value of dads’ (lines 80-81). Tom refers to being ‘fairly confident at engaging…in a classroom’ (lines 35-36; implicitly, like a confident woman). He refers to being observed by others in his interactions with children (lines 48-77): ‘observing other people’s reactions to you as a man in that close proximity to kids’ (lines 37-38 and line 49). He refers to ‘the stuff about paedophilia’ (lines 38-39) and the media influence (lines 42-45). Tom also refers to ‘rules’ (line 46) and ‘physical contact’ (line 47) as they apply to men in general, as well as, himself in terms of ‘others’ perception of me’ (line 68) and ‘stereotypical images about men’ (line 63) and ‘their risk to children’ (line 64). Tom refers to the PTA (lines 309-320) and his wife being introduced ‘as very good solid PTA material’ (lines 313-314) and a ‘gender sex kind of bias’ (lines 317-318) in helping to ‘share the workload’ (line 320). Tom refers to moving forward with dads’ involvement (lines 96- 97) as ‘more of the norm’ (line 98). These 27 references construct transition to school as being something to do with fatherhood/motherhood.

Patriarchy
Tom refers to his move from primary school to preparatory school (lines 124-130) in his response to a question about his dad looking over him: ‘oh yes yeah very much so’ (line 130). He refers to his father as a role model (lines 135-140), as being ‘your strongest as a man’ (line 135) and playing sport (lines 131-134); ‘that was somewhat shaped by my father’ (line 134). He refers to his move to university (lines 143-147) and his ‘rebellion’ (line 144) after leaving the school where his parents worked. He refers to the ‘sacrifices’ (line 153) his parents made (153-167) and the ‘constraining and claustrophobic’ (line 165) effect of ‘dependence’ (line 166) on his parents. Tom refers to Raj’s ‘vulnerability’ (line
204) and age ‘he’s not four yet’ (line 205), as well as to a ‘higher than average number of kids with special needs’ (line 199) and ‘quite a few kids who English isn’t their first language’ (line 198) and ‘three or four quite physical boys one of whom apparently has no English’ (lines 263-264). Tom refers to the length of the ‘school day’ (line 350) as Raj ‘…has an hour and a half’s nap at lunchtime which obviously he won’t do at school’ (lines 247-248). Tom’s references to his parents, to his own educational transitions, to the other children in Raj’s class, and to the length of the school day discursively construct transition to school as something to do with patriarchy.

The unknown

Tom refers to his own early school experiences (lines 99-119) and to ‘looking slightly terrified’ (line 103) in a photograph on his own ‘first day’ (line 99) and to Raj’s ‘first settle’ (line 100 and 15-27). He refers to his ‘shock’ (line 194) at meeting the ‘anxious and worried and shy’ (line 193) teacher. He refers to transition to school as something ‘emotional’ (lines 218-226) and ‘scary’ (line 214), with Raj moving from a ‘small gold fish bowl…to a bigger tank’ (line 213), taking Raj ‘brutally back’ (line 209) to his first experience of starting preschool. He refers to doing something ‘a bit alternative’ (line 234) rather than Raj starting school at this time. Tom refers to Raj being ‘ready certainly academically’ (line 237) for school, but ‘whether he’s ready emotionally I think is a bit more difficult’ (line 244). Tom refers to his ‘protectiveness’ (line 263) and ‘surrendering control’ (line 272) in managing what might happen (lines 273-286). These 17 references discursively construct transition to school as something to do with the unknown.

Separation event

Tom refers to being ‘quite clear we’d stay for a little bit um but we did want to leave him’ (line 207) and to Raj being ‘quite tearful’ (line 206) and to leaving him for ‘only 15 minutes’ (line 208). Tom’s references to his own move from home to university resulting
in his ‘rebellion’ (line 144). These four references construct transition as something to do with a separation event.

**Division of labour**

Tom refers to it being ‘easier for Ann to be involved’ (line 327) in school, helping for example with ‘reading’ (328) as Ann works ‘two and a half days’ (line 331) and he will work ‘full time’ (line 331). Tom refers to after school care: ‘yeah we’re going to juggle things’ (line 250) and the implications of ‘parental’ (line 338) leave (lines 334-346) rather than ‘maternity and paternity leave’ (line 337) so that ‘dad could take more of that if mum was going to go back to work’ (lines 340-341). He refers to ‘choice’ (line 344) ‘that you don’t [yes] prescribe what’s right for a family’ (line 343). He refers to ‘employers being more open and accepting [ahmm] that there are going to be some dads who are going to want to be actively involved’ (lines 348-349). He refers to requesting an employer’s permission to attend sports day and refers to it being ‘easier for a a mum’ (line 350). With these 13 references, Tom constructs transition to school as something to do with the division of labour.

**Decision-making**

Tom refers to the possibility of Raj not starting school at this time: ‘What would it be like for him if he stayed at the nursery?’ (line 229) and ‘well, what if we just postpone going to school and do something a bit alternative and go travelling for a year?’ (lines 233-235) Transition to school is constructed as a time of decision-making about educational options for Raj in the context of the family’s economic status.

**Judgemental process**

Tom refers to the demeanour of the class teacher (lines 251-261): ‘she was pretty anxious’
(line 251) and finding fault ‘judging certain things that weren’t quite perfect’ (lines 259-260). Here, transition to school is constructed as a judgemental process.

**Communication**

Tom refers to ‘readiness’ (line 286) and ‘tricky discussions’ (line 281) about the management of Raj’s safety (lines 272-289). He refers to ‘pulling in the same direction’ (line 288), ‘being curious with Raj about what’s going on at school’ (lines 294-295), and being ‘actively involved in the classroom’ (line 297). He refers to ‘the letter’ (line 299) from the school to new parents (lines 298-307). In these eight references, Tom constructs transition to school as something to do with keeping lines of communication open with Raj and the school.

### 4.4 Stage Two: Discourses

**What are the wider discourses in which Tom’s constructions are located?**

**What are the similarities and differences in Tom’s constructions of Raj’s transition to school?**

Transition to school is constructed in at least eight different ways, as something to do with fatherhood-motherhood, paternalism, the unknown, separation event, division of labour, decision-making, a judgemental process, and communication. At Stage two, the similarities and differences in Tom’s constructions are compared, contrasted and located within wider discourses.

**Wider discourses**

Five wider discourses resonate with the discursive constructions and make sense in everyday understandings. They constitute the macro focus of the analysis and are as follows:

**Masculinities**
Discourse-changing ideas of what is manly, for example, showing feelings, sport not being the only defining leisure activity for men, multiple identities and the influence of feminism.

**Feminism**

The feminism discourse is concerned with the general understanding of how class structure and power influence role, gender, stereotyping, attitudes and beliefs.

**Psychoanalytic**

The functional psychoanalytic discourse concerns what is generally said and understood about feelings and emotions. It appeals to childhood experiences/influences and worries about, for example, new beginnings.

**Economic**

The economic discourse is concerned with the current economic climate, for example, the need for two incomes in order to raise a family, and how childcare and work are managed within the constraints of supply and demand and the distribution of resources.

**Educational**

In the widest sense, the educational discourse concerns teaching and learning as well as ideas such as inclusion and diversity.

**4.4.1 Similarities and differences in constructions**

**Fatherhood-motherhood and paternalism**

Fatherhood-motherhood and paternalism are compared, contrasted and placed within the wider masculinities discourse. Tom’s constructions of fatherhood and paternalism contain references to himself and his own father in terms of how men behave. They differ in terms of what Tom says about himself. Tom refers to himself and his father in the
paternalism construction, but the fatherhood-motherhood construction is more relevant to Tom himself and, by implication, to his feminine side. An example is his reference to how men behave by leaving the main role of settling a child to schools to women and to mothers. Tom refers to himself as an exception in this regard, and goes to the book corner in his attempt to settle Raj:

I found myself at one point sort of I was trying to attract Raj to books

they had a nice book corner and he didn’t want to come over

and see me so I sat there looking at a book for a minute [mm mm mm]

and three little girls came up and basically I read them a story [mm mm]

it was entirely kind of natural thing [mm] and one of them came and

sat on my lap and I thought what are other people making of this (lines 69-76).

Tom’s references to ‘paedophilia’ (line 39), to being an ‘exception’ (lines 7, 8, 50) and to the ‘perception’ (line 68) of others in terms of his behaviour contrast with his reference to his role as a parent and husband in school with his wife to ‘support’ (line 25) Raj. It draws on the masculinities discourse.

The unknown constructs transition as a time to discuss past and future events, such as the ‘shock’ (line 194), during the first settle, that the teacher might not be competent. The references to the reactions – of Ann and Tom – to Raj not knowing the other children: ‘Ann’s quite emotional reaction…bit more of an emotional reaction to it than me’ (lines 218-219), and to Raj’s reaction at being left by his parents:

it was only 15 minutes that we left him for but he was

brutally back to I guess what it had been like almost two
years ago really kind of what it had been like when we left him for the first time at nursery and you know it’s a similar jump isn’t it its going from a small gold fish bowl [mm mm] to a bigger tank [mm mm] (lines 208-213).

References to ‘protectiveness’ (line 263) and ‘surrendering control’ (line 272) of Raj’s wellbeing to others also contribute to evidence for the unknown. The unknown construction is located within the psychoanalytic discourse, with its connotations of early childhood experiences and metaphor. Paternalism and a separation event are similar in terms of attachment and power issues: control-taking and surrendering control. The separation event –‘we did want to leave him’ (line 207) – resonates with issues of attachment and is different from the unknown, indicating a pre-planned intention that Raj stand on his own feet for a period of time in the classroom. It is also placed within a psychoanalytic discourse, with connotations of repression, projection and intentional forgetting.

The unknown is different from paternalism, since paternalism is defined by references to strength (line 135) surveillance (lines 128-130) being ‘shaped’ (line 134) and making ‘sacrifices’ (line 153) in terms of the influence of his parents, as well as Tom’s ‘rebellion’ (line 144) from the ‘dependence’ (line 166) on the ‘constraining and claustrophobic’ (line 165) parental influence when he went to university. His reference to being ‘surprised’ (line 203), at Raj’s ‘vulnerability’ (line 204), invokes Tom’s paternalism: ‘he’s going to have to cope with being thumped’ (line 268). Tom’s move to university, where he was bound by his father’s influence during neither home nor school time, when linked with Raj’s vulnerability locates paternalism in a wider masculinities discourse with implications for different ways of being a man, a father, a son and a partner. Tom refers to
his father ‘as a worker and as a dad [yeah] those were the two dominant roles’ (lines 186-187). However, Tom invokes ‘multiple other kinds of identities’ (line 185) for himself.

**Decision-making, paternalism and judgemental process**

**Decision-making** about when to start school involves an alternative option, which fits within a wider *educational discourse*, with connotations for education being more than about what goes on in school. **Decision-making** is a very different construction to **paternalism**. **Paternalism** has connotations of doing the right, conventional and safe thing. A different construction of transition is that of a **judgemental process**: ‘we both had to stop ourselves at times from making comments about things, judging certain things that weren’t quite perfect…and of course you’re not going to find a perfect school’ (lines 259-261). This resonates with the **Decision-making** construction, as it provides reasons for doing something alternative and, as such, also resonates with the wider *educational discourse*.

**Decision-making, judgemental process and communication**

Another construction of transition, as distinct from the **Decision-making** and **judgemental process** constructions is the **communication** construction referred to in the text as ‘I think for him it’s obviously gonna be most effective if people in both the school and home are pulling in the same direction’ (lines 287-288), and a reference concerning the introductory letter to parents:

> well I think it would have been good actually you know in the letter…

> I think there could have been a statement about you know it would be
great to meet with both parents stroke child carers [mm] and if you
could both get to the event [mm mm] it would be really nice
Decision-making, judgemental process and communication discursive constructions of transition all resonate with the wider education discourse.

Division of labour and decision-making

Division of labour is located in the wider economic discourse and is pertinent in terms of work commitments and childcare with issues related to gender and finance. There is a similarity to the reference to ‘doing something a bit alternative’ (234) in the Decision-making construction, as this also pertains to issues around income and work.

The implications of what is gained by Tom’s various constructions of transition, is the basis of Stage 3 of the analysis.

4.5 Stage Three: Action orientation

What does Tom gain in the context of his discursive constructions within wider discourses?

A clearer understanding of Tom’s eight different constructions of transition to school is gained by examining the discursive context in which he uses them. The eight constructions include: fatherhood, the unknown, paternalism, separation event, division of labour, decision-making, judgemental process and communication. Stage 3 of the analysis is concerned with what Tom gains by constructing transition in the way he does, in the particular context of the text. His stake, or what he wants to get out of the conversation with Mary, becomes apparent in what he says and how he talks about an event as the text unfolds. Stage 3 involves an element of interpretation. Whilst staying with the text, in terms of the actual words used by Tom (as in Stage 1), a wider discursive perspective is taken, using the five wider discourses identified in Stage 2: masculinities, feminism,
psychoanalytic, educational and economic discourses. The implications of Tom’s priorities and interests, in the interaction and their functional power to assign responsibility or favour certain versions of events over alternative versions are considered. The researcher also begins to flag how Tom’s constructions of transition position him within the repertoire of rights and duties, or moral order, in preparation for Stage four.

**Fatherhood-motherhood construction**

Two examples of references that contribute to the fatherhood-motherhood construction are examined below. They are: an exception and PTA.

**An exception**

Time is used here to pinpoint how meaning changes over time.²

A portion of text (lines 2-32) 50 minutes into the 78 minute-long interview, starts with a comment by Mary:

but in this particular area of children starting school there’s this

you know I keep hearing men saying that they don’t feel as though

they’ve got the same status [Tom: no that’s right] as a woman (lines 2-6).

Followed by:

you definitely I definitely felt an exception (line7).

Tom describes both, an evening for new parents and the occasion of Raj’s first settle in his classroom, as dominated by women. Two other fathers ‘stood near the door and chatted’ (lines 17-18) while Tom and Ann actively tried to settle Raj, although Tom was ‘more involved than Ann’ (line 21) in the settling process. Tom concludes this portion of text

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² Meaning is not fixed but constructed moment-to-moment in the context of the interview e.g. what Tom said before and after the first reference to being ‘an exception’ is selected for analysis in stage. 3. N.B. the line numbers of the extracts are not timed (354 lines Appendix 4) and do not follow the chronology of the complete, timed transcript of the whole interview (1,830 lines Appendix 5).
with a comment about empowering fathers:

I don’t know really maybe there could particularly for boys [mm]

the value of a dad being involved [yes] in their kind of education

[yes] right from the outset (lines 28-32).

Tom replies to Mary’s comment with the idea of being an exception, but finishes the portion of text with an implied statement about the school needing to be more proactive in supporting fathers and sons. He moves, within the context of the portion of text, from being the exception to being the one able to articulate the need for change in the way new fathers are received by the school organisation. Tom’s reference to himself as an exception is understood at a deeper level. By considering his comment in terms of the responsibility of the school as an institution, if they had been tuned into the wider needs of fathers he would not have needed to feel an exception. The researcher’s initial comment, however, might have made Tom emphatic about being an exception. He retrieves himself as a powerful male who is able to comment analytically on his own initial description of himself later in the text. He does this by pointing out that if the school had done an optimum job then he would not be positioned as an exception. This version of events puts Tom in a powerful position to protest. A different version of events might have portrayed Tom as a man disempowered in a female-dominated environment. The masculinities discourse makes credible the complexity of male identities within which Tom’s version of events is located.

Another portion of text (lines 33-98), ten minutes later in the interview, begins with Mary’s question: ‘I mean, is there anything that that jumps out at you that you’d want to just round off with’ (line 33).

Tom further describes an episode during the first settle, setting the scene by referring to being ‘fairly confident with kids and fairly confident…at…engaging…in the
classroom environment still at the back of your mind…there is also a sense of…observing other people’s reactions to you as a man in that close proximity to kids’ (lines 35-38). He refers to ‘paedophilia’ (line 39) and to ‘male offenders…the media…sex offenders…always male…far more prolific…prevalent than they actually are…rules…physical contact’ (40-47) adding:

…I think all of those things mean as as as a man for me you’re kind of aware of other people’s reactions to you I was today anyway [mm] in terms of a) being a little bit in an exception in that there weren’t many other dads there b) being the only man down there talking to the kids and trying to engage with them and trying [mm] to introduce yourself settle my son basically [mm mm mm] by making him feel comfortable but nobody else was doing that as a dad (lines 47-56).

Tom’s construction of transition to school as fatherhood-motherhood with its connotations of gender, role and how men are supposed to behave draws the researcher’s (in her role as interviewer) attention to his awareness of his knowledge about how the ‘media’ (line 42) can influence perceptions of male behaviour ‘by the way it manages to stoke up a sense of sex offenders’ (line 43). He demonstrates his stake in prioritising his version of the event in the way he positions himself as an intelligent, aware father who, despite the female-dominated environment, asserts himself to do the best he can for his child. Tom goes further by referring to the ‘three little girls’ (line 73), one of whom ‘sat on my lap’ (line 75) and how he ‘thought, what are other people making of this?’ (line 76) Tom uses his
knowledge of the hegemonic male gender role to proffer his version of events, gaining credibility as he does so. Tom refers to his father’s lack of choice in his gender role, and refers to his own lack of choice, which emerges when Tom talks about ‘negative images’, ‘stereotypical images about men’, ‘and …their risk to children’. Tom’s version of events allows him to refer to his own behaviour in the book corner as natural and contingent on his focused agenda to settle Raj in school to the best of his ability. His reference to the perceptions of others positions Tom as capable of seeing things from the point of view of others, who might be influenced by the media. Ten minutes later in the interview, Tom says:

…if we moved forward with more parents dads being more involved presumably would seem less of an exception and more of the norm

(1 hour 10 minutes and 40- 46 seconds into the interview, Appendix 5.)

Over a period of 20 minutes, Tom repositions himself from ‘an exception’ to ‘more of the norm’.

**Parent Teacher Association**

Another example of the fatherhood construction located in the masculinities discourse is referenced in the text (lines 308-333) and in Tom’s comment about how the PTA chair introduced his wife to the reception teacher:

…very good solid PTA material [ha ha ha] it was a throw away comment [yes yeah] but I don’t think she would have said or this is Tom he he is very solid PTA material so it was there was a real bit of gender sex bias in terms of the judgement she was making who she could ’cause she was thinking as the chair who else could we involve to share the workload. (lines 313-320).

Tom refers to ‘standing there’, and not being introduced. Rather, he:

said hello then afterwards…my response was oh goodness
that’s interesting[mm] and and then so yes there is a part
of me that thinks it’s probably going to be easier for Ann to get
involved with some of these things (lines 323-328)

This version of events positions Tom as subservient to his wife and to the chair of the PTA, at this point in the text. His following reference to time tempers his version of events by invoking his availability:

   It’s partly time of course that’s time it’s the way Ann works
   [mm mm] two and a half days and I work [mm mm]
   become full time but just vary my hours so maybe there’s
   a bit more of a challenge there for me (lines 330-332)

What does Tom gain from this version of events rather than another? He openly presents himself as willing to take a back seat in the interaction between the two women and may gain positive affirmation from his ability to observe, reflect and share with Mary. This is followed by an intention to meet the gender and time challenges to be actively involved with Raj’s education. As a man with multiple identities, this is a complex stance.

**Patriarchy-paternalism construction**

The paternalism construction has been compared and contrasted with the fatherhood construct in Stage 2. At Stage 3, four portions of text are selected as Tom’s references to the strongest role model, rebellion, constraining and claustrophobic, and the vulnerability of Raj.

**Strongest role model**

Tom responds to two questions from Mary:

   when you went to your second school [yeah] was that the school
that your father was teaching at [father taught at the um senior school]

mm [tt and I went to the prep school] so did you have any sense

while you were there that your dad was kind of [tat yeah]

looking over (lines 124-129)

Tom replies:

oh yes very much so um I was reasonably talented at sport

but not that that playing as much as I did I enjoyed it of course I did

but I think that was somewhat shaped by my father…I think think

fathers are your strongest as a man your father is your strongest

kind of male role model and um he was a really good dad but

he was very dedicated to his job as a teacher…

I guess our upbringing was left to my mum (lines 130-140)

In his version of events, Tom acknowledges the contribution of his father from a paternalistic stance. He refers to the sacrifices his parents made, which lend weight to the paternalistic description of a strong male role model:

they made an awful lot of sacrifices…priorities were

for us to go on school trips pay for the school fees and those kind of things

I think there’s something about being a dad and putting your kids first

that I’d like to to to you know live up to that

um but I think there’s something about probably balancing at the same time

your own your own needs as an adult (lines 153-160)

Rebellion
Tom does not want to be like his father and rebels at university.

I rebelled a bit later on I think Mary [did you]

think my rebellion was more at university

[yeah ha ha] it went down a bit longer then

[yeah ha ha when you were out of arm’s reach]

well yeah quite yeah [mm] quite possibly (lines 143-147)

*Constraining/claustrophobic*

Tom refers to a constraining/claustrophobic circumstance:

you picked it up in words we used a few minutes ago

something about it feeling slightly claustrophobic in a way

[yeah constraining] constraining and claustrophobic

[mm mm] that came a bit from the degree of of
dependence sort of um sense in lots of ways but they did
make an awful lot of sacrifices (yes yeah) I I wondered
whether some of them were a bit too much in a way

[ahmm] and maybe as a dad and as a parent I I still
got in mind something about trying to achieve a little

bit of a balance [mm] where goodness your kids [mm]
and my role as a parent is um the most important one to me

[mm] but there are also I want to also want to maintain roles

as you know somebody who’s got friends and and we
see people as a couple and we you know have hobbies and interests outside of the kids…to be a healthy dad or in my mind something that was perhaps a bit missing was to have a balance between a dad who is a dad but you also observe and you see as somebody who’s got multiple other kinds of identities (lines 162-185)

The discursive context is that of Tom thinking back to his childhood and constructing his father as a strong male gender role model, both as a father and as a dedicated teacher. However, the power invested in his father as the hegemonic male is diminished as Tom refers to himself as having multiple other identities. The paternalism discourse is superseded by the masculinities discourse with its connotations of choice and diversity.

**Vulnerability**

so quite a few kids who English isn’t their first language [mm] quite a higher than average number of kids with special needs and there was very much a feel to it which we weren’t surprised about at all in terms of kind of the other kids that were there and ah I I guess what I was surprised about though was about his vulnerability really and he is young his birthday’s in July so he’s not four yet (lines 198-205)

Here, Tom implies knowledge of what he expected from the catchment area, but his paternalistic concern with its similarity to references within the fatherhood construction provides a deeper understanding of the complexities of Tom’s reference to the vulnerability of Raj. Tom does not mentioned race, which may represent an unspoken
vulnerability he cannot name because it is too painful to talk about.

In the versions of events contributing to the paternalism construction of transition to school, Tom’s stake is demonstrated as his intent to persuade Mary that he is aware of the complexities of settling a child into school. At the same, he refers to his situation as a man with multiple identities located in the wider masculinities discourse, which has connotations of a wide range of gender dispositions, unconstrained by gender roles.

**Unknown construction**

The unknown construction is considered more deeply at Stage 3 in terms of references to looking slightly terrified, the small goldfish bowl compared to the bigger tank, and surrendering control and protectiveness.

**Looking slightly terrified**

Tom talks about his own first day at school and about a photograph of Tom ‘looking slightly terrified’ when he was a little boy:

…a sort of archetypal photo with a sort of brown satchel

and shorts blue sort of little jumper and me looking slightly terrified

um I can’t remember it to be honest’ (lines 101-105).

**Small goldfish bowl to bigger tank**

…he was brutally back to I guess what it had been like

when we left him for the first time at nursery and

you know again it’s a similar jump isn’t it going

from a small gold fish bowl [mm mm] to a bigger tank

[mm mm] how scary is that’ (lines 209-213).

**Surrendering control/protectiveness**
Tom refers to surrendering control/protectiveness, talking further about Raj’s vulnerability in terms that construct paternalism by extending the similarities with the fatherhood construction discussed at Stage two and in contrast to the paternalism constructed with reference to his own father:

I think I think another thing I did as I was coming over was a bit about my protectiveness of Raj …he’s going to have to cope with being thumped at some point… you got a little bit more control over it when they’re just at nursery a couple of days a week [mm mm] surrendering control of those kinds of situations and management to the adults involved… (lines 262-273).

**Separation event construction**

One reference, selected from the separation event construction for deeper analysis at Stage three is ‘want to leave him’. The reference follows from the vulnerability reference in the paternalism construct and pertains to Raj’s first settle into school.

**Want to leave him**

so he’s not four yet [ahmm] four in a couple of weeks and he was quite tearful

Ann and I were quite clear we’d stay for a little bit but we did want to leave him as it was

it was only 15 minutes that we left him for (lines 205-209).

**Division of labour construction**

References to the division of labour construction are: ‘juggle things’ and ‘parental leave’
and are located within the wider economic discourse.

**Parental leave**

... the idea was that you could split that time [mm mm mm]

you know dad could take more of that time if mum was

going to back to work [yes yeah yes]...you don’t...

prescribe what’s right for a family [absolutely] (339-343).

**Juggle things**

[so will Ann be around to] yeah [look after him in the afternoon]

yeah we’re going to juggle things (lines249-250)

...there is part of me that thinks it’s probably going

to be easier for Ann to be involved with some of those

things whether it’s going in and reading [mm] …

it’s partly time of course… Ann works [mm mm]

two and a half days and I work [mm mm] become full time

… but just vary my hours um so maybe there’s a

bit more of a challenge there for me [yes] and

how I stay involved (326-333).

The first quotation relates to the economics of parenting and childcare from the birth of a child, and is couched in terms of choice for individual families. Here, the implications for Tom’s interactional concern are to convey to Mary (the researcher) his support for the proposal that parental leave should supersede maternity/paternity leave in order to give families the flexibility for fathers to be involved, from the outset, with their children’s
development.

The second quotation includes two portions of text. It relates specifically to the time of Raj’s transition to school, his parents’ work commitments and Tom helping Raj to learn to read. Tom promotes a version of events that assigns him responsibility to stay involved and attempts to fulfil the function of persuading Mary of his commitment. In this, Tom positions himself as an informed and responsible father who intends to remain practically involved with Raj’s education.

**Decision-making construction**

**Stayed at nursery/Travelling**

What would it be like for him if he stayed at the nursery he is at

we both think he would get quite bored and quite silly

if he stayed [mm] where he was [mm mm] um so I think

that’s the right option and then we thought well what if

we just postpone going to school and do something

a bit alternative and go off travelling for a year (lines 229-235).

**Academic/emotional**

I think I think he’s he’s ready certainly academically I think

it’s a different question than academic but intellectually

I think [mm] he’s he’s curious about learning and [yes]

and he’s kind of knows half of the alphabet (237-241).

…whether he’s ready emotionally I think is is a bit

more difficult (line 244).
it’s a bit of a worry of mine I guess he’s still at the moment

most days has an hour and a half’s nap at lunch time, which

obviously he won’t do at school (lines 246-248).

*Judgemental process construction*

*Pretty anxious-Perfect school*

Tom refers to the class teacher at a new parents’ meeting and on the day of the first settle:

yeah she was rea’ she was pretty anxious I felt

a bit sorry for her in a way…to meet all these parents

who were turning up to check her out [ha ha ha]

‘cause she was calmer today actually um and then I guess

‘cause I’d been grown up in an educational environment

and Ann works…I guess we both had to stop ourselves

from making comments about things judging certain

things that weren’t quite perfect…and of course you’re

not going to find a perfect school (lines 251-256 ).

In this version of events, Tom attempts to point out to the researcher that, although he is concerned about the class teacher, he is prepared to suspend judgement and try to compromise in his desire for a perfect school. Tom thus positions himself in his interaction with Mary as a reasonable man, one who is prepared to notice that his first impression of an anxious teacher could change in a different setting in which she was calmer. Tom assigns responsibility to himself and to Ann to suspend judgement and yet to be vigilant in
his monitoring of Raj’s education within an educational discourse, in which Tom does his parental duty.

*Communication construction*

Three references from the construction of transition to school as communication are selected for deeper analysis at Stage three. The references are tricky discussions, being curious and letter to new parents.

*Tricky discussions*

Tom refers to:

- surrendering control of those kind of situations and management
- [mm] to the adults involved and if I can see how we’ll cope
- with those first few times when he comes back in tears…
- how we will resolve those decisions about when we say
- get on with it…when we say well we’ll talk to … his teacher
- …and whether there could be a way of managing it
- [mm mm] differently [mm] and those being
- quite tricky discussions to have as parents and
- when to intervene really and when to just [mm]
- be there in the background in a less active way sort of
- helping your child to deal with situations himself (272-285).

*Being curious*

- um and you know I think for him it’s obviously gonna
- be most effective if people in both the school and home are
pulling in the same direction [exactly] I know that

involves communication [yes exactly] I think if

that’s not there then I think we’ll find that quite difficult

I don’t think we’ll be very happy with that

[but how can you make that happen

how do you think you can make that happen]

yeah it’s I think it’s about lots of things isn’t it

I think it’s a little bit about how involved we are

in being curious with Raj about what’s going on at school

and that’s kind of communication with him [mm]

I think it’s about other opportunities to go into the school

and be actively involved in the classroom (lines 287-297).

In an earlier portion of text Tom described the possibility of harm (line 268) to Raj and in a later portion of text he refers to the letter from school to new parents:

I think there could have been a statement about you know

it would be great to meet with both parents stroke child carers

[mm] and if you could both get to the event [mm mm]

it would be really nice [mm mm] introduce you to the school

because we value working with mums and dads (lines 303-307).

The context of Tom’s account provides information about the organisation and function of his version of events. The construction of transition to school as communication in the first quotation makes sense in the context of the possibility of harm to Raj, followed by his
suggestion that the school should name dads in the introductory letter to new parents.

Communication and judgemental processes are different constructions of transition to school that evidence the variability in Tom’s accounts within the wider educational discourse, with its connotations of parental choice and inclusion.

The unknown and a separation event are constructions of transition to school that bring together Tom’s own transition to school with that of his son. They are located within psychoanalytic and educational discourses. The unknown construction of transition to school comprises references to his own transitions. Tom describes himself in an archetypal photo taken on his first day at school, saying, ‘I can’t remember it, to be honest’ (line 166). Six minutes into the interview, he answers the researcher’s enquiry about his earliest associations or memories of school and attributes his associations to stories told by his parents and ‘reconstructed through them’ (line 186). 64 minutes later, Tom provides a different version of events, describing his position on the evening of Raj’s first settle as a time when ‘[i]t is interesting it hasn’t particularly raised I haven’t thought about my experience of being at school I don’t know why that is ’cause you’d have thought that would be fairly logical’ (lines 187-90). By constructing Raj’s transition as a logical time to reflect upon his own memories of school at this later point in the text, Tom gains recognition from the researcher of his ability to link his experiences of transition to school with those of his son. Here, action orientation of talk and text is observed in Tom’s use of psychological discourse, invoking his own childhood to attribute his reference to the logic of thinking about his own transition to school.

Reference to a separation event construction of transition to school includes Tom’s description of leaving Raj in the classroom:

what I was surprised about though was about his vulnerability
really and he is young his birthday’s in July so he’s not four yet [ahmm]…and he was quite tearful Ann and I were quite clear we’d stay for a little bit um but we did want to leave him…
it was only fifteen minutes that we left him for but he was brutally back to I guess what it had been like when we left him for the first time at nursery and you know it’s a similar jump isn’t it its going from a small gold fish pond [mm mm] to a bigger tank [mm mm] how scary is that (lines 203-214).

Tom’s interactional concerns change from surprise at the beginning of the quotation to empathy at the end. He assigns responsibility to Ann and himself for leaving Raj in a premeditated intention, but clearly needed to communicate to the researcher that the brutality of the experience for Raj was surprising. Tom positions himself as a person who may not have acted to hurt his child in this way, if he had predicted the consequences of leaving Raj. Tom justifies his action from within educational and economic discourses: children need an education and parents need to work. He also communicates his concern within a psychoanalytic discourse, with developmental and emotional connotations. The educational discourse thus consists in a judgemental process and communication.

Tom’s discursive constructions of transition to school as something to with decision making, a judgemental process, and communication which fit within a wider educational discourse with connotations of inclusion, diversity, learning and teaching, community and multiagency communication where parents could act as agents in multiagency meetings.
4.6 Stage Four: Positioning

What are the subject positions in Tom’s discursive constructions of Raj’s transition to school?

How do the subject positions make sense within the repertoire of rights and duties?

The eight discursive constructions of transition to school (fatherhood, paternalism, and the unknown, and separation event, division of labour, decision making, judgemental process, and communication) offer a variety of subject positions in terms of the repertoire of rights and duties, which are drawn from the five wider discourses of, masculinities, feminist, psychoanalytic educational and economic.

The fatherhood construction positions other fathers as disengaged with their children by not being involved in actively settling their children into school. Tom makes a strong statement about himself as a man in relation to other men and to his wife:

um and then today there were two other dads…

stood near the door and chatted…they weren’t actively involved

[no] I was more involved than Ann trying to settle Raj (lines15-21).

Tom positions himself as different from other men in the room (and from Ann), by being more involved in settling Raj. The paternalism construction absolves blame from fathers who are not involved (transition to school is women’s work) and draws on the wider social discourse with connotations of traditional and stereotypical gender roles. The fatherhood construction inhabits the masculinities discourse, positioning fathers as sharing responsibility with mothers for the wellbeing of their children on transition to school.

Reference to the PTA positions Tom, as viewed by others, as less eligible for membership, but Tom invokes his right to be equal in his version of events (Stage 3).
Reference to sharing ‘workload’ positions Tom’s status with Mary by not being a worker for the chair of the PTA.

Tom positions himself as vulnerable to accusations of paedophilia (fatherhood construction) in reference to ‘confidence’ around children and being observed:

…still in the back of your mind…there is also

a sense of you are most observing other people’s

reactions to you as a man in that close proximity

to kids almost as if you know all that stuff

that’s been in the stuff about paedophilia… (lines 36-39).

His vulnerability to a charge of paedophilia fits with current messages in the media but the repertoire of rights and duties drawing on the masculinities discourse absolves him of blame.

The communication construction positions fathers in terms of gender differences (within and between gender roles), drawing on the masculinities discourse. Tom positions himself as capable of pointing out that the school could have been more proactive in empowering fathers of boys, drawing on the wider educational discourse:

…maybe there could have been something else

emphasising particularly for boys [mm]

the value of a dad being involved [yes]

in kind of their education [yes] from the outset (lines 39-47).

Here, Tom implies that the moral duty to include fathers lies with the school. Talking about a dad’s involvement in education right from the start of the interview, and emphasising that it is particularly valuable for boys, positions Tom for action to achieve
change in the system. Tom positions himself alongside Mary who (from the introductory letter to participants at the beginning of the research) made clear her intention to promote the involvement of fathers in their sons’ education.

The fluidity in his choice of subject positions include Tom as a father who is prepared to give up on trying to settle his son in school, at this time, in favour of travelling with his family for a year. This draws on a wider education discourse that recognises that education is more than what happens in school and absolves him from blame for not making Raj start school at the earliest possible time. He positions himself as a husband who juggles work and child care by drawing on the wider economic discourse in the division of labour construct. He positions himself as a dutiful son within the paternalism construct who did all that was required of him by his parents and school and who took the chance to rebel at university. He is positioned as a caring parent who attends the birth of his children and has ‘a hands-on’ relationship with child rearing.

Tom’s identified constructions and placing them within wider discourses provide the opportunity to examine subject positions within the structure of his rights and duties. Subjects as well the object of the research (transition to school) are constructed by Tom’s references, located by the researcher as part of the analytic process, within wider discourses. He refers to his multiple identities, which fit within a masculinities discourse and position him as a well-rounded, confident, intelligent subject. Tom asserts his right to settle Raj and to be the man that he wants to be in the context of the female-dominated classroom, in which he positions other men as disengaged, hegemonic stereotypes and his wife as less engaged with the process of getting down to their son’s level: he positions her as contrary to the stereotype as well.

Tom refers to his father’s two identities. He refers to others judging him in his close proximity to children and to concerns about paedophilia. This is juxtaposed with reference
to his own multiple identities, placing Tom in a risky position in comparison to his father. His reference to the media and to a culture of male sexual offending positions others who gaze at him and judge him: ‘…observing other people’s reactions to you as a man in that close proximity to kids’ (lines 37-38) and see Appendix 8. Further, he positions himself as a professional who judges the work and demeanour of others, a carer who worries about his son’s lunchtime nap and surrendering his responsibilities to others, and at the same time, protector and negotiator in his son’s education and wellbeing. By contrast, he positions himself as unable to prevent his son’s pain and unable to discuss his pain drawing on the wider psychoanalytic discourse.

Tom talks about Raj’s vulnerability. Positioning himself and Ann as concerned parents, intent on being aware of possible hazards, he is unable to mention racial issues. Tom demonstrates the right to discuss children from the catchment area, but his duty is to leave Raj alone for 15 minutes despite his being vulnerable.

Tom positions himself in the powerful state of being able to choose an alternative option for Raj and the rest of the family by simply leaving it all behind and travelling for a year. By positioning himself in this way, Tom gains an appreciation of his agency to act in the best interests of Raj as well as the rest of the family. Tom positions himself as capable of triggering his own memories of starting school. His description of the photograph implies his ability to feel empathy for Raj, as well as what might be too painful to remember. Tom positions himself as an active agent in communicating and working with the school; the specific suggestion of a proactive welcoming letter from the school aimed at fathers positions Tom as a champion of fathers. Tom positions himself as a committed father: this being the most important of his roles to him.
4.7 Stage Five: Practice

How do Tom’s discursive constructions present or obstruct opportunities for him to act or say more?

At this stage, the relationship between discourse and practice is considered. Tom’s discursive constructions and subject positions are explored to show the ways they present or obstruct opportunities for him to say and do things. Consequently, discourses can be limiting as well as provide opportunities to expand what Tom can say or do. For example, the construction of transition as the vulnerability of Raj contains Tom’s position as being responsible for monitoring his daily wellbeing, but Tom does not address differences in ethnic origin that may or may not impact Raj’s vulnerability. Tom avoids the painful subject of Ann and himself conforming to a perceived social norm in making Raj stay for 15 minutes without them. This process both affords and hinders opportunities for further talk about Tom’s constructions of transition and how consistent they are with a functional psychoanalytic discourse. The functional psychoanalytic discourse draws upon the masculinities discourse and resonates with hidden references, in the sense that Tom has not acknowledged conformity to social pressure in leaving Raj in class. Tom invokes a powerful metaphor, a large fish tank, as the ‘scary’ experience of Raj: the little fish, starting school. Tom looking ‘slightly terrified’ in the photograph of his first day at school is not discussed with Raj at the time of his distress. Tom shows Raj the photograph, invoking an unspoken rite of passage agenda, which might be interpreted as: I’ve been through it and survived, and so can you.

A new way of talking is opened about Raj’s transition, as more than what happens at school and doing something alternative by leaving their worries behind for a year. The possibility of talk about the school system and how it deals with issues of teacher competence is opened. This talk is, however, closed down when Tom calls himself and
Ann judgemental. The education discourse widens discursively, constructing Raj’s transition in terms of home and school, presenting the possibility of an education system finding proactive ways to include fathers in the process of children starting school.

Tom asserts his will to fight for his rights and duties, ‘so maybe there’s a bit more of a challenge there for me [yes] and how I stay involved’ (line 332). There is, however, an implication that he might also be comfortable not being an unpaid worker for the school.

Tom opens up talk about Raj’s experience by talking about his own experiences, and by so doing contributes further to the richness of his talk about transition. Here, action orientation of talk and text may be seen in Tom’s use of functional psychoanalytic discourse to attribute his reference to the ‘logic’ of thinking about his own transition to school at this time.

Tom takes the position as capable of advising the school how to write a letter to parents. The letter would specifically welcome all carers as valued partners in the education process, making fathers and sons central to his argument.

4.8 Stage Six: Subjectivity

What are Tom’s possible ways of seeing and being in relation to Raj’s transition to school?

This speculative stage examines the power of discourse analysis to construct the connection between Tom’s subjectivity and Raj’s transition to school. Ways of seeing and ways of being in the world are analysed in relation to Tom’s possible thoughts and feelings that reflect both social and psychological influences on his management of Raj’s transition.

Mary speculates on the possibilities for Tom’s ways of seeing and being and for the
consequences they may have for individuals and societies. The substance of this speculation is based upon what is possible rather than absolute, what is said rather than any appeal to underlying cognitive structures or mechanisms. This stage indicates the consequences of adopting various subject positions for possible subjective experience. For example, by positioning himself in an educational discourse, Tom’s criticism of the class teacher and learning support assistant justifies his protective feelings for Raj. This enables Tom to feel less guilty about negative thoughts towards the school.

Seeing himself as the scared schoolboy has implications for Tom’s management of Raj’s emotions. One possible way of seeing, using a psychoanalytic discursive lens, invokes the Oedipal triangle. The young Tom is forced by the patriarch to separate from his mother, and this memory is repressed. Tom does not see himself as repeating history, however, by leaving the crying Raj. Rather, Tom’s way of perceiving the situation is one of a man with multiple identities making a joint decision with Ann to leave Raj.

Seeing his multiple identities justifies Tom’s possible feminine, nurturing way of being in settling Raj. He worries that others perceive this differently. He sees himself as the concerned parent worried that the class teacher is not confident enough to do her job well. Not wanting to surrender control to people who may not be up to the job, the husband, whose wife is afforded higher status whilst he is ignored, who is actively attempting to reject his parents’ values, and whose own son is ignoring him, goes to the book corner and gets down to the level of the children in order to attract Raj. His tactic backfires, resulting in what is referred to as the paedophile episode. Tom sees himself as a father determined to be involved in his son’s education and as the person who will communicate his need to be acknowledged as man with multiple identities and roles with
the school. Tom sees himself as a male participant, in an interview, with a female researcher being on equal footing (influencing and being influenced by her).

By seeing the world from the perspective of his positions in terms of the images, metaphors, storylines and concepts made relevant by his discursive practice, Tom absolves himself from blame for his refusal to abide by stereotypical role models for men and women. Tom’s subject positions provide places from which to speak and ways to be that have a direct bearing on possible thoughts, feelings and experiences.

**Fear of paedophilia**

For Tom, the world can be a frightening place. He sees himself as vulnerable to accusations of inappropriate behaviour; specifically, being accused of paedophilia.

Seen through a psychoanalytic discursive lens, Tom may be projecting his judgement of other the actions of other people. He projects his own discomfort about what he might think if Raj were sitting on the lap of a stranger.

The social effect of the paedophilia reference might be to dissuade men from working in early years settings, escalating child protection to unreasonable vigilance and surveillance.

**Fathering**

Tom sees his role as a parent as the most important one to him. He sees himself as different from his father, having multiple identities, as opposed to his dad whom he saw only ‘as a worker and as a dad’. In his stated rejection of paternalistic values, Tom sees himself as a person who will take the time to be healthy and take care of himself. The social effects of this way of being include the promotion of life-work balance and taking care of workers, families and organisations within societal structures.

Applying a discursive psychoanalytic lens, Tom’s father can be seen as the
patriarchal superego of his childhood experience, an image Tom does not want for himself. The idea of multiple identities justifies Tom’s behaviour in the classroom; a nurturing female role is justified by his multiple other identities. The moral order is preserved in his positioning himself as one with the right to make nurturing warm advances. The idea that these advances might be seen as wrong by others, however, induces uncertainty in the appropriateness of his behaviour in the lap episode. This uncertainty leads to worry that he may be accused of paedophilia at a time when the cultural influence of the media represents paedophilia as the subject of a great deal of concern.

_Fear of the unknown_

Tom sees himself as achieving recognition from Mary that he is aware of fear as an issue in the transition process. His way of being is to distance himself from his own childhood fear of starting school, by being unable to remember it. He sees his young self in the photograph as the archetypal schoolboy who must conform to society’s pressure to attend school with all the trappings of the uniform and satchel, which set him up as well prepared on the surface of his physical appearance. He sees his face exposing his feelings in the photograph, which he may need to share with Mary despite not being able to remember them. The individual effect of subjectivity following from the unknown construct and the wider psychoanalytic discourse positions Tom as being capable of learning from his own experience as a child in order to empathise with Raj. The complexities of the social and educational discourses explore the pressure to conform in Tom’s way of being the patriarch, who leaves his crying son ‘for his own good’.

Tom describes himself as an empathetic dad, within the framework of psychoanalytic discourse. He sees transition as a logical time to reflect on his own memories of starting school. Tom sees himself as being able to think and talk openly about Raj’s experience, by reflecting on his own experiences, and thereby enriches the research.
4.9 Conclusion to Chapter 4

The findings of my research have been presented according to the framework provided by the stages proposed by Willig (fig.1) and structured according to the questions posed at each and every one of the Six Stages of the data analysis. Tom presents a complex, inconsistent subjectivity, whilst nevertheless offering possibilities for ‘real’ world application of his ways of being and ways of seeing for promoting the involvement of fathers in their children’s education.
Chapter 5:
Discussion

5.1 Overview

A discussion of my research findings, generated by analysing the interview transcript data, is presented in light of discourse analysis theory. Findings from five discourses that emerged during the interview are discussed: masculinities, feminist, psychoanalytical, educational and economic. Reflexivity and the research limitations are explored, as well as feedback to stakeholders and the implications of the research for educational psychology practice.

5.2 Commentary on findings

The findings address the research question: What might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school? Interview data was analysed using the questions: How does Tom discursively construct transition to school? What are the similarities and differences in Tom’s constructions and the wider discourses in which they are located? What does Tom gain in the context of his constructions within wider discourses? What are the subject positions in Tom’s constructions within a local repertoire of rights and duties? How do his constructions allow or obstruct opportunities for action? What are Tom’s possible ways of seeing and being in relation to transition to school?

The purpose of my research is restated as an exploration of what Tom says about Raj’s transition, in order to inform schools about how to involve fathers in transition to school and to emancipate Tom by paying attention to what he says.
The social and psychological effects of seeing and being (Willig, 2013) are subjective. Gough (2009) discusses subjectivity in discourse analysis and psychoanalytic thinking, noting that psycho-discursive practices need not imply essentialist selves in functional psychoanalytic thinking. Parker (2005) uses free association in his version of discourse analysis, without appealing to essentialist universal truths about the nature of mankind. This enables a theoretical view of subjectivity through a functional psychoanalytic lens. Willig’s (2012) theoretical statement about discourse analysis is consistent with her analytical FDA stages. She states that all discourse analysis concerns the effects of discourse, defined as possible ways of seeing and being at Stage Six of the analysis. The findings at Stage Six constitute what has been discovered about Tom’s subjectivity. This was achieved by showing how Tom constructed meaning through language at stage 1; how his constructions were located within wider discourses at Stage Two; how his constructions enabled or prevented, empowered or constrained action at Stages Three and Five; and examining positioning at Stage Four. Willig’s (2012) appeal to interpretation allows a functional psychoanalytic interpretation of the current findings.

The commentary on my research findings is made in light of the theory described in the literature review as well as the discussion on discourse analysis as theory and method. The contribution of this study to this field of research is discussed.
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Table 9: Theory and findings
Raj’s transition to school was objectified in order to analyse it. What Tom said was shaped by Mary’s contribution to the interview in terms of how she set the topics and how she asked subsequent questions. Tom’s and Mary’s references to Raj’s transition influenced Tom’s discursive constructions. The discursive constructions were compared and contrasted and set in five wider discourses: masculinities, feminist, psychoanalytical, educational and economic. Further analysis of Tom’s action orientation, positioning and discursive practices deepened the analysis. At Stage Six of the analysis, Mary interprets Tom’s subjectivity. His subjectivity is defined in the context of this research study as:

Tom’s ways of seeing himself and others in the world, and his ways of being in the world, both from individual and systemic perspectives which suggest the effects, both psychological and social, on Tom’s management of Raj’s transition to school.

Findings relating to the five discourses are discussed below.

5.2.1 Masculinities discourse

The masculinities discourse is located at Stage Two of Willig’s FDA (see Figure 2). The theoretical implications for the masculinities and fatherhood literature are discussed (see Tables 3, 4 and 5). Here, masculinities describes the complexities of male identities and positionings in the world from their own perspectives and the perspectives of others. The emotionally-charged dimensions of masculinities are worked through when men talk about their memories of being fathered (Coltart & Henwood, 2012). Models of fathering as motherly and affectionate are seen in relation to paternalistic fathering, using discourse analysis theory and positioning theory, to show how Tom is positioned by others and how he positions himself. This is an inherent conflict in the masculinities discourse, invoked by Tom as, ‘I definitely felt an exception’. Some of Tom’s fatherhood/motherhood and patriarchy constructions within the masculinities discourse addressed stereotypes of
gender, role, and identity, behaviour, surrendering control, making judgements and being protective.

Tom’s constructions within the masculinities discourse, analysed at Stage Three and focusing on action orientation, are viewed theoretically through a discursive psychology lens. Discursive psychology emerged from a focus on language as an alternative to cognitive social psychology and attribution theory. At Stage Three of analysis, Tom gains credibility by orienting himself to action in his descriptions of male and female behaviour in the reception classroom on the day of Raj’s ‘first settle’. He talks about gender role and identity with its associated stereotypes. He talks about surrendering control, judging teachers, being protective over Raj, his father as his strongest role model and his rebellion at university. The research findings show Tom demonstrating his stake in describing himself as someone who can talk about these things by orienting himself to being able to talk further.

At Stage Four, Tom’s positioning of himself and others is consistent both with Foucault’s concept of subjectification and positioning theory (Davies & Harrè, 1990, 1999; Foucault, 2002). Tom is being subject to and subject by the context of power and knowledge in the reception classroom in terms of local repertoires of rights and duties. He positions himself as strong and vulnerable, a man with multiple identities, including patriarch and new man.

Three papers, reviewed in Chapter 2 (see Tables 3 and 4), use a psychosocial perspective (Wetherell & Edley, 1999; Gough, 2009; Coltart & Henwood, 2012). The papers account for how Tom talks about himself being positioned by others and how he positions himself.

Wetherell and Edley (1999) are interested in male subjectivity. They demonstrate
how men variously position themselves as gendered beings, providing a theoretical framework according to which Tom’s multiple identities can be viewed. Their critical analysis of hegemonic masculinity focuses on action orientation from discursive psychology and discourse. They define discourse as institutionally organised understandings based on power relations over time. This definition theoretically links Foucauldian insights and discursive psychology within their psychosocial perspective and psycho-discursive practice.

Edley (2006) disputes the usefulness of psycho-discursive practice and favours discursive psychology in masculinities studies, consistent with Coltart and Henwood (2012). Coltart and Henwood (op cit.) used multi-theoretical lenses to show how models of fathering as motherly and affectionate can coexist with paternalistic positions.

Stage Four of the analysis produced the finding in which Tom positioned other fathers as disengaged from their children’s transition to school. He positioned himself and Ann as exceptions, because he was the only father actively trying to settle his child and because she was positioned in a stereotypically male role in relation to Tom while Tom positioned himself vulnerably as motherly and affectionate.

Paedophilia emerged as a finding at Stage Five of the analysis. Tom’s vulnerability allowed him to open up to talking about paedophilia, but resulted in his closing down talking about his own father. At this practice stage of analysis, an understanding of Tom’s constructions of Raj’s transition to school as motherhood/ fatherhood and patriarchy within the masculinities discourse is clarified. It demonstrates how, via action orientation and positioning, Tom opens up to the discursive practice of being able to talk more about a subject. He talks specifically about the issue of paedophilia.

Ways of seeing and being from individual and social perspectives from
psychoanalytic and systemic theoretical traditions illuminate Tom’s personal ontology and epistemology. Theoretically, using a psychoanalytic lens is used to illuminate Tom’s subjectivity at stage 6, Tom might be seen as using projective identification (Kline, 1946). His judgement of other peoples’ reactions to him could be interpreted as Tom making sense of his own discomfort at what is happening when a little girl sits on his lap to listen to a story. He might also be considering what he may think if his child were sitting on the lap of a stranger. Tom sees himself as an exception. He sees himself as managing the social situation. He sees himself as managing his own multiple identities. He sees others as reflecting the norm. He sees himself as influencing the norm consequently and systemically in his future dealings with the school. Tom sees himself managing the social situation in the reception class during Raj’s first settle. The ways Tom sees the world has consequences for what he will do. The consequences are both individual and social.

5.2.2 Feminist discourse

Stage One of the analysis is in relation to the feminist discourse construct of patriarchy in terms of Raj’s transition. For Stage Two, patriarchy and the judgemental process are compared and contrasted, and set within the feminist discourse.

There is a tension in the need to split or join masculinities and feminist discourses in my commentary on the research findings. The masculinities and feminist discourses are theoretically related. Theoretically, masculinities theory evolved from feminist approaches, providing the theoretical background for masculinities to become a discourse in its own right. Practically, masculinities historically has been the pertinent theory, but feminism foregrounds and relates to it (Gilligan, 2011). Tom’s ‘multiple identities’ can be explained by Gilligan’s (2011) concepts of democracy and humanity. Tom gains credibility by exploring his surrendering of control and talk about judging teachers, as well as his
protectiveness of Raj. He has a stake in describing his father as his strongest role model and his rebellion at university. His description of his father is a version of events that presents Tom as healthier than his father, by having more flexibility in his multiple identities.

Tom’s description of himself from the photograph of his first day at school positions him in a way that sees the scared archetypal schoolboy of his past. He cannot remember the occasion but dwells on it and sees it as logical that he should think about his first day on the day of Raj’s first settle. This has implications for how he manages Raj’s emotions. Tom empathises with Raj, but also feels the need to do the right thing by making Raj confront the challenge of spending a short time in school alone away from his mother and father. Applying the discursive complex rhetoric of Billig (1999) to the Oedipal complex of Freud (1910/1920), the young Tom was forced by the patriarch to separate from his first love object, his mother. The photograph is evidence of the slightly terrified Tom, on which the adult Tom reflects. Tom says that he is unable to remember his first day at school: his memory, as an adult, is repressed. Tom repeats history by leaving the crying Raj and, in doing so, acts as the patriarch himself. He belies his multiple identities by insisting that it was a joint agreement with Ann to leave Raj, despite showing Raj the photograph of himself as a frightened five-year-old. Raj was not yet four years old. Raj was approaching a vulnerable time, especially for boys (Gilligan 2011). This scenario may also be interpreted as Tom oscillating between his identity as patriarch and as a motherly, affectionate father in the sense described by Coltart and Henwood’s (2012) new subjectivity; between his ability to be simultaneously hegemonic and non-hegemonic (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Psychoanalytically-informed masculinities theory involves an oscillation between resentment and admiration in the relationship between father and son (Gough, 2009). This ambivalence resonates with the Oedipus complex, explaining the
pursuit of the masculine and repression of the feminine. Tom is inconsistent with this interpretation in the sense that he can be both masculine and feminine in a way that does not fix his identity (Gough, op. cit.), although he is still subject to discursive forces.

Tom’s talk about Raj’s transition theoretically traces his subjectivity as viewed in the light of both discursive concepts, at Stage Three, and of psychoanalytic concepts, at Stages Two and Five and 5 (see Table 8). Tom oscillates between expressions of admiration and resentment in his description of his father, who is limited to two main identities in life: father and teacher. Tom claims multiple identities that free him to be the person he wants to be.

Tom’s ways of seeing the world are interpreted through a psychoanalytic lens, in which repression of a patriarchal super ego and the power/knowledge involved in managing his feelings are explained theoretically by discursive theory of repression (Billig, 1999). Systemically, Tom sees himself managing the social situation in the reception class; balancing taking care of himself his family and his life-work balance, consistent with the Foucauldian concept of technologies of the self. The patriarchy and judgemental process constructions lead to ways of seeing and being that could be interpreted as individual repression of the patriarchal super ego, and at the systemic level of balancing taking care of himself, his family and his work-life balance.

Motherly and affectionate models of fathering (Coltart & Henwood, 2012) resonate with Tom being motherly and affectionate in his involvement during Raj’s first opportunity to settle in school. This contrasts with the paternalistic construct, which leaves the transition process to mothers. Tom says, ‘my role as a parent is um the most important one to me’, but refers to himself as different from his father and as ‘somebody who’s got multiple other kinds of identities in a way [mm mm] so yes my dad I saw him as a worker and as a dad’: a man with fewer identities than Tom. In his stated rejection of paternalistic
values, Tom may be regarded as an individual who takes the time to be healthy and take care of himself. The social effects of this way of being are the promotion of a life-work balance and taking care for workers, families and organisations within the structures of society.

Applying psychoanalytic thinking to this context, Tom’s father can be seen as the patriarchal superego of his childhood experience, an image that Tom does not want for himself. Multiple identities justify Tom’s behaviour in the classroom as a nurturing female role, which is justified by his multiple other identities. The moral order is preserved in his positioning himself as one with the right to make nurturing, warm advances. The idea that these advances might be seen by others as wrong, however, causes uncertainty about the appropriateness of his behaviour in the lap episode. This uncertainty leads to worry that he may be accused of paedophilia during a time when the cultural influence of the media identifies paedophilia as the subject of a great deal of concern. Applying Foucault’s concept of subjectification, Tom is subject to and subject by events in the classroom, by current cultural forces that have a history beyond the scope of the current research.

The schism between what is said and what is thought is apparent in terms of two different methodologies proposed by Willig (2013), which Billig (1999) unites in his formulation of the dialogic unconsciousness in a way that belies Ederley’s (2006) accusation of wild top-down interpretations and resonates with the present position. This view is shared by Parker (2015a, b) in his formulation of the new paradigm that sees a social unconsciousness in the detail of the text.

Similarly, Gilligan’s (2011) description of the voice as embodied in a language that is connected to biology and culture without reducing either provides a different interpretation of the self, based on her version of feminism that espouses care, love, the connectedness of humanity and the promotion of democracy. The picture of a man drawn
in the sand as the tide is coming in and the gentle washing away of the image by the wavelets provides a metaphor for the ever-changing gender identities of human beings over time and space (Foucault, 1972).

5.2.3 Psychoanalytic discourse

At Stage One, Tom’s constructions of unknown, separation event and patriarchy emerge from 37 references from the transcript. The psychoanalytic discourse is informed by functional psychoanalytic theory as an insight to subjectivity (Parker, 2015b; Billig, 1999; Gough, 2009). Parker notes that, rather than claiming truth, ‘psychoanalytic knowledge helps structure culture’ (2015b, p. 76). He warns against psychoanalytic claims being used selectively to defend subjects. As researcher, I am tempted to claim that Tom might be defended in not addressing race when he refers to Raj as a ‘small fish’, ‘being thumped’ and ‘surrendering control to others’ in a predominantly white setting. Tom described the class setting at the first settle as one in which ‘English isn’t their first language’, and Tom talked about Raj’s ‘vulnerability’ and age as ‘not yet four’. The researcher experienced intense feelings in response to this (Tubey et al., 2015; Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). The concerns about race may be the researcher’s projective identification on Tom, rather than Tom as a defended participant. Here, there is a danger of slipping into an individual description of Tom, when the main argument of my thesis is to make plain the social collective subjectivity, which constitutes Parker’s (2015a) complex subjectivity.

Tom’s stake in his action orientation within the psychoanalytic discourse changes over the course of the interview as he reflects on his childhood memories and talking about himself as looking slightly terrified and Raj being brutally back to where he was when he stated nursery as a two-year-old. The change relates to not remembering his first day at school, but saying that it was logical to reflect on his experience at this time, when Raj was starting school.
Billig (1999) addresses the Oedipal theory with its concomitant patriarchy. Billig’s psychoanalytic lens helps to explain Tom’s patriarchal decision to leave Raj. Tom’s subjectivity interpreted at Stage Six is complex, multiple and contradictory. He sees himself as empathetic and as a person who can be affectionate and motherly in his fathering. At the same time, he sees himself as doing the right thing by leaving Raj when he is crying. At the systemic level, Tom sees himself as managing a difficult social situation, in which others are influencing his ideas of what is ‘the norm’. He sees himself as a good and healthy father.

5.2.4 Educational discourse

Tom’s six constructions of Raj’s transition to school are set within the educational discourse at Stage Two. The constructions comprise 16 references and include: separation event, division of labour, decision-making, communication and judgemental process. The separation event and division of labour constructions were compared and contrasted. The division of labour and decision-making constructions were also compared and contrasted, as were the judgemental process and communications constructions. At Stage Three, Tom’s action orientation is concerned with his intention to leave Raj in school for a short period of time during the first settle. His version of events was such that he gained legitimacy for himself by the way he talked about separating from Raj and standing by his decision to do so. At Stage Four, Tom positions himself and Ann as doing the normal thing. This can be viewed in in the light of a theoretical application of Foucault’s normalisation. The masculinities discourse argues for psychoanalysis as functional rather than theoretical from an essentialist view of persons. Bowlby’s (1969) concept of attachment and Klein’s (1946) concept of projective identification can be treated as a structuring feature of subjectivity in contemporary culture rather than a universally underlying account of human psychology (Parker 2015b, p. 1). At Stage Five of the
analysis, Tom opens up to talk more about leaving the crying Raj, but closes down any reference that he might have made to racial bullying, which is left unsaid.

Tom suggests the letter from the school to fathers making the first invitation to parents in preparation for a child’s transition to school, as an example of how fathers can be recognised and supported:

"well I think it would have been good if actually you know in the letter...you know it would be great to meet with both parents stroke child carers [mm] and if you could both get to the event [mm mm] it would be really nice [mm mm] introduce you to the school because we value kind of working with mums and dads (lines 298-307)."

The findings are consistent with the aim of the research: Tom supports measures to facilitate men’s involvement in their sons’ education and sees himself as an ambassador. The engagement of fathers might be considered with the understanding that ‘there is a profound gender inequity in contemporary practices which results in women being focused upon and men being ignored’ (Featherstone, 2004, p. 317). Whilst this may be the case in contemporary practice, some researchers are making men the focus of their research, as is the case with the current study, which includes an element of emancipatory drive to support men’s involvement as fathers in the early years of their children’s education and beyond. The papers reviewed in Chapter 2 and the current research findings prioritise men. The additional element of psychoanalytic thinking espoused by Wetherell and Edley (op cit.) and Gough (op. cit.) is congruent with the findings of my research.

At Stage Six, educational discourse constructions are interpreted through a psychological lens, as Tom’s subjectivity, and repression of the Oedipal complex is interpreted at the systemic level of being as Tom working systemically by researching local schools on Raj’s behalf and supporting the wellbeing of his family. The separation event constructs a way of seeing that invokes Foucault’s concept of power/knowledge as
Tom’s knowledge of education motivates him to see himself as capable of challenging the
school system, managing conventions regarding the early years of Raj’s education.
Likewise, the division of labour construct provides a way of seeing that enables Tom’s
democratic parenting with Ann. Systemic issues such as employment and parental leave
have radical implications for the politics of parenting supported by the state. Tom sees
himself as positioned by the state but he also sees himself as having power to act. The
decision-making construct allows a way of being in which Tom’s feelings motivate him to
deal with the anxiety of not finding the perfect school. He also sees himself struggling with
the pressures of fitting into his notion of the conventional time to start school. The
judgemental process construct allows deeper analysis of Tom’s ways of seeing his anxiety
regarding the teacher’s competence and being prepared to attend meetings to fit into the
school system. This fits with the communication construct as Tom seeing the importance
of his relationships with the school. Managing the home/school system puts Tom in a
powerful position to protest.

5.2.5 Economic discourse

Tom’s division of labour and decision-making constructions are compared, contrasted and
located within the wider parameters of the economic discourse at Stage two of the analysis.
Theoretically, gender is implicated in the division of labour construction as the category
assigned by society can dictate what it is possible for individuals to do. Tom and Ann both
work, and economic considerations about how they conduct their lives are pertinent to their
decision-making as a family.

Potter and Wetherell (1987) are the founding fathers of discourse analysis in social
psychology. They use a theoretical approach to attitudes and beliefs in their discursive
theory, which can shed light on the changing attitudes in Tom’s division of labour and
decision-making constructs over time. Tom’s stake in the economic discourse portrays a
version of events that orients him to action, preparing him to take a political stand in terms of what he might do to ensure he gains agency for Raj’s transition to school and future involvement in his education.

Tom positions himself as gender neutral in the knowledge that he can appeal to his multiple identities in order to do the best for himself and his family. This position invokes Foucault’s power/knowledge concept. In the sense that knowledge is power, Tom takes control by positioning himself as capable at this time in his life of engaging with the school system to meet the challenge of being involved in Raj’s transition. Gender identity and economics inform the division of labour and decision-making constructions.

The politics of division of labour and decision-making for families such as Tom’s theoretically explains why Tom opens up to talk about the challenges of juggling things with Ann, as well as his meeting the challenge of being able to attend meetings during the working day, which he says might be easier for Ann as she works part-time. He suggests the idea of a Saturday club where fathers might go to the school to look at what is going on by observing wall displays in their own way and engaging with activities with their children. This has political implications for funding and staffing of school premises.

Tom’s division of labour and decision-making constructions can be interpreted at Stage Six and within the economic discourse as his way of seeing parenting as a democratic exercise, which has consequences for a way of being that takes into account employment issues, parental leave and opportunities for involvement in school events such as sports day. Coltart and Henwood (2012) explore intersubjectivity and relationality over time. The finding that Tom sees multiple identities for himself, in contrast to Tom seeing his father’s identities as merely father and teacher, is considered further in relation to the economic discourse.
Masculine identity, paternal subjectivity and transmissions between generations created new paternal subjectivity in and through time. The preoccupation of time as a subject for study provided the impetus for the *Timescapes* study, from which the Coltart and Henwood (op cit.) paper emerged.

Time is significant in Parker’s discourse analysis paradigm (see Table 7). A finding from discursive psychology is that a plurality of conflicting and changing attitudes can be seen over time in the transcript extracts. Willig (2013) uses the example from Potter and Wetherell’s (1987) commentary on a study of white, middle-class New Zealanders’ discourse about Maoris to illustrate change over time within an interview. This idea is contained in Stage Three of the FDA. Similarly, Tom changed his orientation to action in the light of phenomena he considered during the interview.

**What does time have to do with Tom’s economic discourse?**

The notion of time sits well in the economic discourse as economic considerations affect decision-making and division of labour in Tom’s view of himself and his father in their involvement in education. What is done in time and over time has political implications both systemically and psychologically for the ways Tom sees his and others’ involvement in managing transition to school. The involvement of fathers in child education has positive effects on outcomes for children, as evidenced by the authors in Table 3. Tom’s ways of being and seeing have political implications for what can, as well as what ought to, be done now to facilitate the involvement of fathers in their children’s education.

Foucault proposes an explanation for the legitimation of power in terms of the episteme or common-sense way of talking during a particular era in history. The wider discourse captures this idea in Willig’s (2013) formulation without going into the details of genealogy. Billig (1999), in his discursive psychology version of discourse analysis, links the social with the psychological.
Parker (2015a) considers the turn to discourse a mistake, as the focus on everyday conversation, interpersonal interaction, formal sequences, correct explications and disciplinary segregation of discursive psychology cannot account for the virtual world. In wondering what kind of discourse analysis can advance psychology, he suggests the issue is about the positions psychologists might adopt towards discourse analysis that challenge the power of academic institutions today. Similarly, the challenge for educational psychology lies in how educational psychologists position themselves (Fox 2015) in the strategies they adopt to influence the involvement of fathers in their sons’ education.

5.3 Reflexivity revisited

Theories about people’s inner worlds, from writers such as Freud, Piaget and Chomsky, led me to ideas of what goes on in systems of thought over time. I have used the writings of Foucault as a philosophical underpinning for the social constructionist epistemology from a relativist ontological stance. I resisted the temptation to address semiotics and Lacan’s writings. The developing contributions of theorists such as Billig, Parker and Gough have helped me to link functional psychoanalytic thinking with Willig’s notion of subjectivity. Coltart and Henwood (2012) provide a complementary view of new subjectivities. Discourse analysis as a paradigm to challenge positivism and reductionism in psychology brings together work that takes account of functional psychoanalytic thinking. This can underpin evidenced-based educational psychology practice and therapeutic interventions for individuals, families and schools. My work supports the father’s voice. To put a hand up to resistance, however, accepts that the similarities are more worthy than the differences inherent in ‘gender’, and promotes the father’s voice. The feminisation of the reception classroom and either side of the door is detrimental to educational outcomes in boys. My findings underpin evidence-based educational psychology practice geared to promoting father involvement in child education.
5.4 Limitations of research

The limitations of the research centre on its lack of corroborative evidence. The inclusion of data from popular culture and media products, such as newspapers and advertisements, could have served to triangulate the research evidence. The researcher wanted to work with a group of men in low socio-economic circumstances: this may have produced more pertinent results for improving outcomes for more boys. If a relationship had been fostered with an individual school in order to recruit fathers, rather than sending recruitment material to all nursery and pre-school establishments in the LA, it may have been possible to recruit a group. Taking time to think critically with participatory partners (who were themselves fathers trained to interview other fathers of boys about to start school), might have enabled the recruitment of enough fathers to commit to a group (Braye & McDonnell, 2012). Nevertheless, my research findings are rich and their message helpful in complementing large-scale longitudinal research, such as the Timescapes Project.

This research is in the form of an exploratory participant study, using the transcript of a conversation with the father of a boy about to start school. Single case studies have many implications. As with all qualitative studies, my research relies upon the richness of the data. The depth of this participant study is evident in its ability to report deep feelings both for the researcher and the participant, which, is anticipated, will resonate with the reader. The research leads to ways of psychologically and socially managing transition to school and might contribute to large-scale, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research projects on transition to school in the future. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) point out that both quantitative and qualitative researchers are interested in the individual’s perspective and qualitative researchers think they can get closer to the individual’s point of view. Theoretical generalisability in using individuals is defended as being different from typicality (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013).
Using audio recording clips of the raw data would have added contextual information such as pitch, tone, pause, hesitations, laughter, timing and interruptions to my data set. These can be counterproductive for transcribed text by introducing difficulties for readability. Such recordings are available on the *Timescapes* (2011) website, indicating the quality of their raw data, available in the archive for secondary analysis.

### 5.5 Disadvantages of FDA

It might be argued that all this analysis does is to repeat what the father said; however, new insights and theoretical clarity have emerged. Willig’s stages do not include a history step, which, according to Parker (2015a), is vital. The cultural backdrop of the research is not addressed in any depth. Parker (op. cit.), addressing discourse analysis as a paradigm, notes 32 problems.

I contend that Foucauldian thinking can account for wider social and cultural discourses, including understandings (in the form of a fully realised sixth stage of Willig’s FDA), which might account for functional psychoanalysis. Foucault (1998) was interested in psychoanalysis, devoting much of his first volume of the *History of Sexuality* to it. Gough (2009) notes that psychosocial studies have been dominated by psychoanalytic perspectives but suggests that Henwood and colleagues (2011), who avoid the psychoanalytic, have also contributed to psychosocial research with their reference to personal histories involving tensions and connections between generations. Willig (2012a), reflecting on discursive analysis, speculates about the culture of the body, thinking and feeling. She states that FDA can illuminate the separation of mind and body: a historical and cultural belief maintained through various institutional practices (Willig, op.cit, p. 126). Her version of FDA (2001, 2008a, 2013) does not address history and institutional practices. Consequently, this is a limitation of the current research.
5.6 Feedback to stakeholders-participants

The research has implications for the inclusion of fathers in all aspects of their sons’ education, with particular focus on the early years in order to establish an ethos of inclusion. The findings were fed back to the principal educational psychologist of the local educational psychology service and to the men who participated in the pilot work. The father who was the main participant told me that he enjoyed participating in the research and wished me well for the future. He pointed out that he was not able to comment on the analysis since he knew nothing about discourse analysis.

Subsequently, an acting principal educational psychologist who is also following an educational psychology doctorate programme fed back on behalf of the Assistant Director of Education, the workers with parents group and the local research ethics group, that the findings from my research did ‘seem common sense but the practice does not follow this’ (Williams, 2015). She knew from her own children that she was deemed the priority carer with only her email used for communications from school, which she forwarded to her partner. She agreed that the current research has implications for how fathers are treated by schools, especially at the outset of children’s school life. It highlights the need for fathers to be included as equals, rendering them more likely to be more involved in their child’s education. She confirmed that the information I presented to the local authority is useful.

5.7 Implications for educational psychology practice

The implications of these findings for educational psychologists raise the question of using discourse analytic skills to attend to the talks they have with children, parents, teachers and support staff in school as well as their interactions with workers from multi-agencies. This, together with an element of psychoanalytic thinking, could deepen the understanding of what is happening in therapeutic and other meetings.
The importance of supporting schools in their efforts positively to include fathers has implications for educational psychologists. This could be done at a systems level, suggesting that communications in the form of letters and emails are directed specifically towards fathers in addition to mothers, especially where the family has been separated. This also applies to parents’ evenings and meetings with teachers and support staff to discuss children’s progress. It applies also to social events such as school fairs and concerts. If efforts are made in the early years to include fathers, fathers will more likely be engaged with their children’s education with the view of continuing to support them throughout their education. Educational psychologists have an important role in promoting the involvement of fathers in their children’s education. This will be even more important in cases of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, when fathers should be involved and consulted on individual education and health plans for children and adults up to the age of 25.

5.8 Conclusion to Chapter 5

Theory and findings were linked in the commentary structured by the five discourses: masculinities, feminist, psychoanalytic, educational and economic. The discourses are not discrete, but relate to one to another and are inherently inconsistent. Time was analysed at a micro level in terms of the way it fit with theoretical considerations of stake and orientation to act, at Stage Three of the analysis, in showing how what is said at the beginning of the interview is not necessarily consistent with later comments. History is mentioned in the limitations of the research, suggesting an idea for future research on the genealogy of fatherhood and changing subjectivities of masculinities as they relate to father engagement in child education. The relation of positioning theory to Tom’s versions of events, rights and duties, were discussed in terms of subjectification, normalisation and problematisation in relation to power and knowledge in what was said, embellished upon,
and unsaid. Tom’s complex, conflicting subjectivity indicated possible ways of seeing and being in managing the technologies of Raj’s transition to school that might apply practically in the ‘real’ world, thereby fulfilling the aim of the research and answering the research question by showing what others might learn from the father about transition to school. The reflexivity subsection was followed by feedback to stakeholders and the implications of my research for educational psychology practice.
Chapter 6:

Conclusion

6.1 Summary of research

To conclude what might be learned from what a father says about his son’s transition to school, the arguments presented in this thesis are synthesised here. In my opinion all people involved in educating children need to be aware how important it is to involve fathers in the education process, because traditionally support has been left to mothers and women in general both at home and at school. Fathers are becoming more involved, but they need to be supported to help with home-work, listening and helping their children to read, from the earliest opportunity. The aim of the current research was to identify how fathers might be more involved in the education of their children. Data from this case study provides rich insights into how this might be achieved. The researcher and colleagues heard the father’s voice. Exploring what the father said has radical implications for changes in practice to promote the engagement of fathers in transition to school and education and thus to promote better educational outcomes, particularly for boys.

Attitudes are not fixed, but change over time, according to discursive psychology. Subjectivity is complex as demonstrated by discourse theory and my research findings as well as the findings from the psychosocial research reviewed in my thesis. Complex subjectivity is influenced by possibilities for seeing and being provided by the social historical and cultural context, rather than by the ‘truth’ about the ‘real’ world and the essential nature of human beings. From the discourse analysis as paradigm perspective, the psychoanalytic discourse is part of the armoury of the discourse analyst for interpreting the
possible ways of seeing and being of the father and sharing these findings with those who
govern and administer pedagogy. Positioning and stake, as they are expressed through
discourse, shed light on issues such as paedophilia, shared parenting and interaction with
the school through PTA membership as articulated by Tom and Mary in our negotiated
constructions influenced by our histories, culture and social construction epistemology.

My research addressed the issue of both local and central government in terms of
engaging fathers in education. Initially, the research idea was to work with a group of men
in a children’s centre located in a housing estate in a deprived area. This evolved into case
study work with a single participant. The study was set in an appropriate theoretical
context with a clear purpose relating to how men create discourses about their position in
education and how they can be supported? Thus, the findings are generalisable beyond the
local context. Single participant discourse analysis is considered a valid means of
qualitative research; commitment and rigour in participant recruitment is evidenced
(Yardley, 2000, 2008). Existing literature on fathers, discourse and transition to school was
taken into account. Sensitivity to Tom’s perspective and position are evident in the
empirical data, which demonstrates his ability to respond freely to open-ended questions in
a friendly negotiated interview context. Transparency in data analysis was achieved by
devoting many hours to transcribing the aural digital data (see Appendix 5) with access to
every stage in the analysis documented in Chapter 4. The qualitative design, analysis and
data presentation are coherent: inconsistencies in the data were noted as including complex
subjectivity around the issues of paedophilia, fathering and ‘the norm’.

The impact of the research is explained in terms of how fathers might be better
supported in helping their children transition to school and to illustrate to schools how
fathers may be welcomed in their own right, by inviting them to be involved in their
children’s education. The findings could also influence policy on transition to school and
on engaging fathers in improving the educational outcomes of their children.

Five papers were selected for critical review, and included concepts espoused by Foucault, positioning theory and discourse as theory and method. The methodology detailed the relativist ontology and social construction epistemology and discourse analysis as a paradigm in psychology. Willig’s (2013) version of Foucauldian discourse analysis provided the analytic framework, including psychoanalysis as a functional discourse lens through which to interpret subjectivity in terms of Tom’s possible ways of seeing and being. Theory and method were drawn together to present findings, interpretations and implications for educational psychology practice. The potential social and psychological effects of what Tom said about Raj’s transition to school were discussed.

Page et al. (2008) reviewed how fathers might be better recognised and supported through policy from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The findings indicate that fathers should be recognised for how they can help manage transition to school – both psychologically, in terms of feelings and emotions, and socially, in his interactions with the family, school and other parents. The current study demonstrates the importance of psychoanalytic thinking (Parker 2015a,b) for evidence-based research in educational psychology, elucidating the role of educational psychologists, who might specialise with working with fathers (Gersch, 2004; Durbin & Thomas, 2014; Gersch & Cowell, 2014) and position themselves to promote better educational outcomes for boys (Fox, 2015).

The Children and Families Bill was passed in 2014. This bill extends statutory protection for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, until the age of 25 years. It focuses on how families contribute to education, plans, and health and care assessments for these young people. The bill offers opportunities for better recognition and support of fathers in its implementation by LAs.
National level policy might support educational psychologists in effecting policy change at the LA and individual school levels. The draft Code of Practice (2014) accessed in June 2014 states that when seeking 'advice and information from the child’s parent or the young person, the local authority must take into account his or her views, wishes and feelings' (p. 141).

The meaning of this, however is unclear, fathers are not specifically mentioned, nor are gender-neutral terms used. The personal pronouns might refer to the views, wishes and feelings of the young person as mediated by his or her parent, rather than, or in addition to, the views, wishes and feelings of the father and mother.

Educational psychologists could promote recognition of fathers in the LA and in school policy-making by positioning themselves to use their influence to promote an emphasis on naming, involving and taking account of fathers specific needs as parents in their own right.

6.2 Benefits of this research for the experience of transition

Further research might be conducted on engaging fathers at the level of individual schools, where the recruitment of a group may prove more successful. The virtual world of communications and email widens the scope to talk about future research and how findings might be applied. As schools embrace new technology, and methods of communication such as mobile phones and text messages; social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, they should consider how best to ensure that information reaches both parents, and not just one. Tom led the way in describing the importance of an introductory letter from the school to prospective parents in which fathers would be specifically invited actively to participate in their children’s education at all levels, from helping with homework, child protection and membership of the PTA. I would add to his list an invitation to consider
becoming a school governor.

6.3 Thesis conclusion

The schism between mind, discourse and educational psychology practice provides a ‘think piece’. As mind is not implicated in the complex subjectivity of the psychoanalytic discourse, the problem of mind likewise is not concerning in terms of a unitary self (Parker, 2015a, b). Tom’s ways of seeing and being can be understood by his place in the collective unconsciousness, revealed in the text and the discourses chosen by Mary during analysis. To this extent the research is a collaborative formulation of Tom and Mary as equals. The object (transition to school) and subject (father) of the research were discursively constructed. What Tom said during the topic-led interview with Mary has been documented (reproduced), and recommendations for change based on this data are presented (transformation). The reproduction-transformation concept was used in a relativist context as suggested by Parker (2015a). The importance of fathers in early years education has been unrecognised in the field of research and fathers have tried to get their voices heard via the Justice for fathers movement. Some fathers climbed onto the roof of Buckingham Palace to obtain a voice to demand justice in their right to be involved with their children (BBC TV News, 2015). Tom’s situation is less extreme, but he, too, is constrained by the politics of our time and wants to face the challenge of supporting Raj in his education. In this regard, he ‘definitely felt like an exception’ at the same time as reflecting ‘the norm’. Educational psychologists need to listen to the voice of the father and to use our influence to ensure that voice is heard through policy formulation and our relationships with schools. In this way we may aspire to be the kind of psychologists we ought to be as recommended by Fox (2015).
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Literature search terms

The databases PsychINFO, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection, and Fatherhood Institute were used to generate the literature for the research during the period 18.02.08 to 06.06.08. The search term fathers resulted in 21385 published results with 95 web sites from the earliest to 2008. Using the Boolean term and the terms fathers and masculinities resulted in 421 published results. When cross referenced with transition to school, 56 results were found. A trawl through these articles revealed a handful of articles that were directly relevant to this research. A further search was made on 12.08.13 using the University of Essex access to databases, 965 results were obtained for the search term masculinities/masculinity in hard copy and two ejournals. One of the ejournals “Psychology of men and masculinity” was searched for fathering with 10 results. The University of Sussex repository was searched on 13.08.13, for items relating to masculinity yielding three papers that are directly relevant to the current study.

The discourse analysis and feminist literature was accessed via the reference lists of the masculinities literature. Two EP theses and a dissertation were found at the Tavistock library and a thesis at the University of Bristol library. A clinical psychology thesis using discourse analysis was found via the author. In September 2014 the concept of psychology beyond discourse analysis, was accessed via Amazon Kindle.

EP practice and discourse analysis papers were obtained by paper searches of the journals.
Educational Psychology in Practice, and Educational and child psychology from 1995-2015.

Policy reports were found via Local Authority and Children Families and Schools websites, AEP emails and Whitehouse reports. The Timescapes fatherhood papers were obtained via the ESRC website. The psychoanalytical literature led to the on line Kindle edition of “The collected works of Sigmund Freud” translated by Hall (1920) and from the reference lists of the discursive psychology papers leading to Billig’s (1999) text on repression and from Billig (op.cit) the reference to Gilligan (2011).
## Appendix 2: Quantitative and qualitative research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative approach</th>
<th>Qualitative approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective in nature</td>
<td>Subjective in nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deductive (Tests theory)</td>
<td>Inductive (Develops theory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hard&quot; science</td>
<td>&quot;Soft&quot; science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review must be done early in study</td>
<td>Literature review may be done as study progresses or afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One reality: focus is concise and narrow</td>
<td>Multiple realities: focus is complex and broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts are value-free and unbiased</td>
<td>Facts are value-laden and biased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction, control, precision</td>
<td>Discovery, description, understanding, shared interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Interpretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanistic: parts equal the whole</td>
<td>Organic: whole is greater than the parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses subjects/objects/items/specimen</td>
<td>Uses participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context free</td>
<td>Context dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has hypothesis that is usually tested</td>
<td>Research questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning is logistic and deductive</td>
<td>Reasoning is dialectic and inductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishes relationships, causation</td>
<td>Describes meaning, discovery</td>
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</table>
Strives for generalization leading to prediction, explanation, and understanding | Strives for uniqueness. Patterns and theories developed for understanding
---|---
Highly controlled setting: experimental setting (outcome oriented) | Flexible approach: natural setting (process oriented)
Uses instruments | Uses communications and observation
Sample size is an issue of concern | Sample size is not a concern; seeks “informal rich sample

The main differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches are summarized, as shown in the table above, by Tubey, Rotich and Bengat (2015)
## Appendix 3: References to transition

Table of implicit and explicit references to transition to school highlighted from transcription and early readings of the text

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Line Number</th>
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Appendix 4: Extracts from the complete text of the transcription of the interview

Appendix 4 contains the 21 extracts taken from the full transcript in Appendix 5. From line two, the line numbers can be used by the reader to trace the quotations in chapter five to the extract used for line-by-line analysis. The little numbers in brackets on the right side of the page correspond to the line numbers of the full transcript so it is possible for the reader to trace the quotations in Chapter Five, back to the full transcript in Appendix 5. Please note that for technical reasons during the process of compiling the extracts it became necessary to include the small numbers alongside the last line of the previous extract rather than as a heading for the subsequent extract.
Mary: but in this particular area of children starting school
there's this you know I keep hearing men saying
that they don't feel as though they’ve got the same status

Tom: no that's right

Mary: as a woman

Tom: you definitely I definitely felt an exception

I felt a little bit of an exception

going to the parents evening initial originally you know for new parents [mm]

where you met the head teacher [mm mm]

and they all talked about what it’s going to be like

starting school and all that kind of thing [yes]

so at that there were probably two or three other dads there

and may be fifteen mums [mm mm]

um and then today there were two other dads who were there

and twelve mums [mm]

something like that and the two dads probably knew each other

but stood stood near the door and chatted [mm]

ha [mm mm ha ha]

ha they weren't actively involved [no]

and Raj I was more involved than Ann trying to settle Raj and [mm]

looking at what activities there were and chat to the kids [mm mm]

one one of his fears had been

I won't know any of the children's names

so we were trying to support him

in one or two of the children's names and talking [yes]

to the children [ yes yes]

I don't know really maybe there could
Mary: I mean is there anything that that that jumps out at you that you'd want to just round off with?

Tom: I think there's something … although I am fairly confident at…engaging… in a classroom still at the back of your mind… there is also a sense of you are most observing other people’s reactions to you as a man in that close proximity to kids almost as if you know all the stuff that's been in the the stuff about paedophilia and you know male offenders sex offenders and that kind of thing. I think I think I think our obsession with that and the media is sort of um the way that it manages to stoke up a sense of sex offenders being [mm] a) always male [mm] and b) far more prolific [mm] and far more prevalent than they actually are [mm mm] and some of the the rules that there are about contact with kids around limited contact physical contact those kind of things I think all of those things mean as a as a man for me you’re kind of aware of other people’s reactions to you I was today anyway [mm] in terms of a) being a little bit in a in an exception in that there weren't many other dads there b) being the only man down talking to the kids and trying to engage with them and trying [mm]to introduce yourself settle my son basically [mm mm mm] by making him feel comfortable but nobody else was doing that as a dad [mm] um and then being a little bit aware of what
what judgements others might be making of you

in that and so I think there's something about that [mm mm]

maybe might be in other pe’ other dads might as well [yes yeah]

actually about the broader kind of um somewhat um

you know negative images [yes]

stereotypical images about men [yeah yeah]

and about kind of their risk to children [yes] that they carry [yes yes that’s very sad]

Tom: yeah I think it is sad that [ mm]

I mean it influenced me but it

was none the less in the back of my mind [yes mm]

others perception of me [yes yes]

I found myself at one point sort of I was trying to

attract Raj to books they had a nice book corner

and he he didn't want to come over and see me

so I sat there looking at a book for a minute [mm mm mm]

and three little girls came up and basically I read them a story [mm mm]

it was entirely kind of natural thing [mm]

and one of them came and sat on my lap

and I thought what are other people making of this [mm]

me as a parent [mm] that they know nothing about um [mm mm mm]

yeah so I guess those thoughts were going through my mind [yes yeah yeah]

so I think I think there's something yeah

I I I guess a positive message about encouraging dads

and about the value of dads in in a school and that could have made

a difference but there's also a broader point [yes yes]

about the way I see I think potentially as a barrier as well

Mary: yes yes yeah that's very interesting thank you [ha]

thank you thank you for being so um open [sure]

about these thoughts and feelings because I mean um
I wouldn’t have predicted that you might have said [no] that

but it was a passing thought at that moment

yeah yeah sure sure I don't want to make too much of it

it was none the less

in the same way you don't [yeah] but um you know I just think

I wonder how many men that [mm] whose minds that is in the back of

you know th that is preventing them from being more involved because

they don't want they don't want people you know saying what's he up to

why is he in this environment [um yeah]

would that you know if we moved forward with more parents

dads being more involved presumably

would seem less of an exception and more of the norm

I guess less thinking about first settle but more about first day at

school and so I had a photo actually showing Raj a photo of me

on my first day at school a sort of archetypal photo

with a sort of brown satchel and shorts

blue sort of little jumper and me looking slightly terrified

um I can't remember it to be

honest no I I've got very vague memories of my

first teacher um and some vague memories of

sort of you know waiting to go into school and those

sort of things associated to that early period being that first

sort of first primary school[yes]

but I can't remember that specific day

but those first things those sort of

associations that you remember now [yes] about school not necessarily

the first day but your earliest memories of school

it’s difficult isn't it to distinguish stories that you

hear about school [mm] cos I've got very strong kind of um
what would be the word associations to school
that I think stem from stories that I've heard
my parents telling about school and I'm sure those are based on events
but they're kind of reconstructed through them
it's interesting it hasn't particularly raised I haven't
thought about my experiences of being at school
I don't know why that is cos that you'd have thought that would
be fairly logical
Mary: when you went to your second school [yeah]
was that a school that your father was teaching at
father taught at the um senior school [mm]
tt and I went to the prep school
so did you have any sense while you were there
that that your dad was kind of [tat yeah] looking over
oh yes yeah very much so
Tom: um I was reasonably talented at sport
but not that that playing as much sport as I did
I enjoyed it of course I did
but I think that was somewhat shaped by my father
I think think fathers are your strongest as a man your father
is your strongest kind of male role model and he um he was a
really good dad but he was very dedicated to his job as a teacher
um taught long hours kind of was away quite a lot in the evenings and
weekends cos he taught at a boarding school and
I guess our upbringing was left to to my mum
I think it’s quite a um conservative towed the line
kind of eldest [mm ha ha ha]
I rebelled a bit later on I think Mary [did you]
I think my rebellion was more at university [yeah ha ha]
it went down a bit longer then
Mary:   yeah ha ha when you were out of arm's reach
Tom:    well yeah quite yeah [mm] quite possibly [yeah]
Tom:    that it was you know it was quite difficult to have a
very much of an independent life from my parents I mean yes I was
independent but there was still a sense of of them being around
Mary:   did that feel kind of a bit constraining
Tom:    I think it probably did in retrospect
they made an awful lot of sacrifices
you know that they priorities were for us to go on school trips
pay for the school fees and those kinds of things I think
there's something about being a dad and putting
your kids first that I'd like to to to you know live up
to that um but I think there's something about
probably balancing at the same time your own
your own needs as an adult [ahmm]
as a parent and I think probably there was something in and
You picked it up in what words we used a few minutes ago
Something about it feeling slightly claustrophobic in a way
Mary:   yeah constraining
Tom:    constraining and claustrophobic [mm mm]
that came a bit from the degree of of dependence sort of um
sense in lots of ways but they did make an awful lot of sacrifices
Mary:   yes yeah
Tom:    I I wondered whether some of them were a bit too much in a way
Mary:   ahmm
Tom:    and maybe as a dad and as a parent I I still got in mind
something about trying to achieve a little bit of a balance[mm]
where goodness your kids [mm]
and my role as a parent is um the most important one to me[mm]
but there are also I want to also want to maintain roles
as you know somebody who’s got friends
and and we see people as a couple
and we you know have hobbies and interests outside of the kids
I think I think those were things either there wasn't room for
or maybe in retrospect my parents let dwindle in some ways so I um
yeah there's something about that I think in terms the kind of dad
but also recognising that probably to be a healthy dad or in my mind
something that was perhaps a bit missing was to have a balance
between a dad who is a dad but you also observe and you see as
somebody who’s got multiple other kinds of identities in a way[mm mm]
so yes my dad I saw him as a worker and as a dad [yeah]
those were the two dominant roles [mm]
that he occupied probably not a lot else really
tta it so I it’s trying to broaden those kind of identities
and and Raj and A... as they grow up seeing seeing me not
just as a dad actually but as those other things I think would be quite healthy
... today Raj's been to his new classroom [yes]
and his new teacher [yes] was quite anxious and worried and shy
and I guess that was a little bit of a shock
although it probably shouldn't have been 688-715
... a little catholic school ... with quite a mixed
kind of kind of catchment [mm]
so quite a few kids who English isn't their first language [mm]
quite a higher than average number of kids with special needs
and there was very much that feel to it which we weren't
surprised about at all in terms of kind of
the other kids that were there and ah I I guess
what I was surprised about though was about
his vulnerability really and he is young his birthday's in July
so he's not four yet [ahmm]
four in a couple of weeks and he was quite tearful Ann and I were
quite clear we'd stay for a little bit um but we did want to leave him
as it was it was only fifteen minutes that we left
him for but he was brutally back to I guess what it had been
like almost two years ago really kind of what it had been
like when we left him for the first time at nursery
and you know again it's a similar jump isn't it its going from a
small gold fish bowl[mm mm] to a bigger tank [mm mm]
how scary that is
I think Raj was one of the few who didn't know anybody going [mm]
today but I guess a) there was this reaction and b
driving over I was thinking about um
Ann's quite emotional reaction to that in a way
bit more bit more of an emotional reaction to it than me in a way
and I guess that made me think a bit about why that was
and in spite of me having more hands on time with the kids
than my father had for instance I pleased I have that time
still comparatively I think there's a you know there's a
um much more emotive bond I think Raj our eldest and Ann as a mum
that I think that that emotional responsibility I think the whole day
was probably far more emotional for her [mmhm]
in terms of I guess an indication of him being on the cusp really of [yes]
making making that jump
what would it be like for him if he stayed at the nursery
he is at we both think he would get quite board
and quite silly if he stayed [mm] where he was [mm mm]
um so I think that's the right option and then we thought
well what if we just postpone
going to school and do something a bit alternative
and go off travelling for a year…
but I think I think it probably is right
I think I think he's he's ready certainly academically
I think it’s a different question than academic
but intellectually I think [mm]
he he's curious about learning and [yes]
and he's he's kind of knows half of the alphabet
in terms of sort of recognising and saying letters now and
he's interested in what learning that will be at school
whether he's ready emotionally I think is is a bit more difficult
he'll cope with the whole school day
it’s a bit of a worry of mine I guess he's still at the moment
most days has an hour and a half's nap at lunchtime
which obviously he won't do at school
Mary: so will Ann be around to [yeah] look after him in the afternoon
Tom: yeah we're going to juggle things
yeah she was rea' she was pretty anxious
I felt a bit sorry for her in a way
...to meet all these parents who were turning up to check her out
Mary: ha ha ha ha
Tom: cos she she was calmer today actually
um and then we both I guess cos I'd
been grown up in an educational environment
and Ann works ... I guess we both we both had
to stop ourselves at times from making comments about things judging
certain things that weren't quite perfect in some ways to do with
and of course you're not going to find a perfect school
I think I think sorry another thing that I did as I was coming over was a bit about
my protectiveness of Raj and there were three or four quite physical boys
one of whom apparently has no English
Ann wasn't directly affected by any of these kids
but it definitely triggered in me a bit of oh goodness
he's he's gonna have to cope with some fairly sort of full on situations in this classroom
he's going to have to cope with being thumped at some point
that's part of life of course it is but it I don't know
you got a little bit more control over it when they're
just at nursery a couple of days a week [mm mm]
surrendering control of those kind of situations and management [mm]
to the adults involved and if I can see how we'll cope
with those first few times when you know he comes back in tears
or tells us that this has happened and how we will
resolve those decisions about when we when we say well
get on with it Raj sort of thing [mm mm]
`when we say when we say well we'll talk to Miss whatever her name is
but his teacher about stuff that we wonder that concerned about [mm]
and whether there could be a way of managing it [mm mm] differently [mm]
and those being quite tricky discussions to have
as parents and when to when to intervene really and when to just [mm]
be there in the background in a less active way sort of
supporting and helping your child to deal with
situations himself so it made me think about that I guess [mm]
in readiness for this
um and you know I think for him it’s obviously gonna be most effective if
people in both the school and home are pulling in the same direction [exactly]
I know that involves communication [yes exactly]
I think if that's not there then I think we'll find that quite difficul
I don’t think we’ll be very happy with that

Mary: but how how can you make that happen how do you think you can make that happen

Tom yeah it’s I think it’s about lots of things isn't it
I think it’s a little bit about how involved we are in being curious
with Raj about what's going on at school and that's kind of communication with him
I think it’s about other opportunities to go
into the school and be actively involved in the classroom

well I think it would have been good if actually
you know in the letter I know that there are a number of parents
who are single parents [mm] I know that there are parents at this school who are
you know from low socio-economic groups [mm mm]
therefor it might be difficult for both of them [mm] to get to a parents’ evening [mm]
one the less I think there could have been a statement about
you know it would be great to meet with
both parents stroke child carers [mm] and if you could both get to the event [mm mm]
it would be really nice [mm mm] introduce you to the school
because we value kind of working with mums and dads
my wife’ s already um made contact with er
the chair of the school school's PTA who has got a little girl who's
in one of the older classes and a little girl who's starting in Raj's class[mm]

um so she was there on the parents evening
we met her amongst other parents she was very nice [mm]
bubbly and nice and today… she introduced Ann as very good solid
PTA material [ha ha ha] it it was a throw away comment [yes yeah]
but I don't think she would have said or this is Tom he he is very solid PTA material
so it was th there was a real sort of um I may be wrong
but my sense was that there was a real bit of gender
sex kind of bias in terms of the judgement she was making
about who she could cos she was thinking as the chair
who else could we involve to share the workload [yeah] in a way
Mary  so you were standing there
Tom  so I was standing there [next to Ann at the time yes]
and Ann was introduced and you know I said hello then afterwards
but it was interesting [yes yes] that that was that she used and in a sense I guess
my response was a little bit of oh goodness that's interesting [mm]
and and then so yes there is part of me that thinks it’s
probably going to be easier for Ann to be involved with some of those
things whether it’s going in and reading [mm]
or being involved in that sort of thing than me [mm mm]
it’s partly time of course that's time it’s the way Ann works[mm mm]
two and a half days and I work [ mm mm]become full time but just vary my hours
um so maybe there's a bit more of a challenge there for me [yes] and how I stay
involve
I mean I think things are positive around you know the proposal
that's been scrapped in terms of the economic climate that we're in
but the you know the idea that you know
parent no longer going to be maternity and paternity leave
as it’s going to be parental leave [yes yeah]
and then the idea was that you could split that [mm mm mm]
you know dad could take more of that if mum was going to go
back to work [yes yeah] um they’ve been doing that in Scandinavia for years [mm]
and that makes so much sense in a way [ yes mm]
that you don't [yes] prescribe what's right for a family [absolutely] you know that made the choice [yes yeah] and presumably empower families where dad wants to be significantly involved [yeah yeah] t to find a way of making that easier to be [yes yes yeah] so I think things like that trying to think what else would make a difference like that I don't think there is anything ... employers being more open and accepting [ahmm] that there are going to be some dads who are going to want to be actively involved I sort of think it's easier for a a mum to say I want to go to my son's sports day or I've got to go to the sports day [mm] than it is for a dad to necessarily say that [mm mm] be in work a bit earlier [mm] haven't got to that point yet but I think that's one my illusion [ha ha ha ha] anyway that's what will happen ha.
Appendix 5: Complete transcript

Full transcript of the interview between the participant and the researcher

This appendix is the full transcript of the interview between the interviewer and the participant. Times are generated by the F4 software used to aid the transcription process. The interviewer, Mary, is the educational psychologist (EP) and researcher. The participant is identified as Tom (T), a pseudonym for the participant. Data can be traced from this appendix, via Appendix 4, to the quotations used in Chapter 5.

Transcript of the whole interview EP = Mary, T = Tom.

1   EP   Tom thank you for agreeing 00:00:03-1
2   T    It's all right 00:00:05-2
3   EP   to do this interview it's very kind of you 00:00:10-6
4   T    hmm 00:00:07-9
5   EP   um I'm going to talk in terms of topic headings 00:00:16-6
6   T    yes 00:00:26-1
7   EP   and rather than a semi-structured interview with you know 00:00:28-9
8   T    lots of questions um I'd rather we just had these topic headings 00:00:31-9
9   EP   and then we can just let the conversation go where it needs to go 00:00:37-5
10  T    OK 00:00:40-3
11  EP   so it’s fairly open ended and um I'm starting with a 00:00:46-9
12  T    very open question 00:00:50-9
13  EP   yes OK 00:00:50-8
14  T    the first question is what's it like to be a man 00:00:55-6
15  T    what's it like to be a man full stop 00:00:59-8
EP: yep 00:00:59-8
T: or question mark 00:01:02-9
EP: well I don't know I I did put a question mark 00:01:04-7
but it doesn't have to be there 00:01:16-2
O K I I guess it makes me think am I how comfortable am I 00:01:17-1
being a man I guess it’s kind of what it leaves me thinking 00:01:20-1
about the question um I guess fairly comfortable being 00:01:24-0
a man um I that I'm glad that I'm a man now 00:01:34-8
as opposed to twenty or thirty years ago cos I think that um 00:01:39-7
it’s easier to be the sort of man that you want to be 00:01:45-7
as opposed to being more constrained in terms of 00:01:50-1
your identity and in terms of your relationships and in terms 00:01:52-6
of how you go about um living your life with a partner 00:01:58-1
and with children 00:01:59-3
EP: mm so twenty years ago how old would you have been then 00:02:03-6
T: yeah I guess I'm thinking it’s more like thirty or so years ago 00:02:08-4
thinking about my parents' generation 00:02:12-4
EP: ahm 00:02:12-4
T: um when I think back to my father I guess cos I think 00:02:16-2
think fathers are your strongest as a man your 00:02:20-8
father is your strongest kind of male role model 00:02:23-8
and he um he was a really good dad 00:02:15-0
but he was very dedicated to his job as a teacher 00:02:30-1
um taught long hours kind of was away 00:02:34-3
quite a lot in the evenings and weekends 00:02:36-0
cos he taught at a boarding school and 00:02:44-0
I guess our upbringing was left to to my mum 00:02:44-0
really 00:02:44-3
most of the time 
I don't 
so how so how
I guess the point is I don’t think he had choice really about particularly about the kind of man he was
ahm
I think in retrospect perhaps and he might have liked to have had kind of like more of a kind of child rearing kind of element to his life and I think about what was said when we were younger and I think it was just more difficult
ahmm
a a not as accepted to do that kind of thing not not that nobody was doing it but um I think there were just fewer fewer models of people who I I guess are able to do what I do where I work but I also have good amount of contact with the kids I have a day every two weeks at home um I’m really quite involved in terms of their kind of upbringing in decisions
mm not that he wasn't involved in decisions but much more hands on I guess
yes
in terms of a dad
yes
In terms of getting back what you were saying about you know twenty to thirty years ago yeah.

What age were you that you're thinking of when you were twenty to thirty years ago?

Well I guess ah I'm thinking of kind of late seventies kind of on ten years or so.

Yes.

I think kind of when I was five to fifteen that kind of time period.

When I was five to fifteen that kind of time period.

Kind of fairly core in terms of contact with parents.

Ahmm so can you remember when you started school?

It's a good question looking at a photo.

It's really interesting today actually because R went to his new school today for first settle at school.

So we both took him today.

So I guess for both of us wife and I.

There was a certain amount of reminiscing about what it was like for us.

Ahmm.

I guess less thinking about first settle but more about first day at school and so I had a photo actually showing Raj a photo of me on my first day at school a sort of archetypal photo.
with a sort of brown satchel and shorts 00:04:59-4
blue sort of little jumper and me looking 00:05:02-0
slightly terrified um I can't remember it to be 00:05:05-1
honest no I I've got very vague memories of my 00:05:08-7
first teacher um and some vague memories of 00:05:14-0
sort of you know waiting to go into school and those 00:05:17-2
sort of things associated to that early period being that first 00:05:24-1
sort of first primary school 00:05:24-1
EP yes 00:05:24-1
T but I can't remember that specific day 00:05:25-9
EP but those first things those sort of 00:05:28-6
associations that you remember now 00:05:29-7
T yes 00:05:32-3
EP about school not necessarily the first day 00:05:33-9
but your earliest memories of school 00:05:37-7
T it's difficult isn't it to distinguish stories that you 00:05:40-4
hear about school 00:05:42-3
EP mm 00:05:43-7
T cos I've got very strong kind of um 00:05:45-6
what would be the word associations to school 00:05:49-9
that I think stem from stories that I've heard 00:05:52-1
my parents telling about school 00:05:54-0
and I'm sure those are based on events 00:06:00-0
but they're kind of reconstructed through 00:06:01-5
them 00:06:02-5
EP yes yeah 00:06:03-7
T um yeah I ca 00:06:08-5
earliest memories 00:06:15-7
I've just got very vague memories of kind of a big playground and sort of waiting to go into school and then a sort of old fashioned bell coming out of everybody having to line up going to what I see as a class room at that time um very very vague memories of kind of activities at various points in the class room and then it jumps on to sort of very vague memories of kind of nativities plays and those kind of things EP did you play a part yeah well it ah it's where it gets a bit sort of blurry cos it's a bit I was at my first primary school just for two years and then I moved to a different school I was at a state primary school for two years ahmm then went to a prep school so yes I can't remember what part but I've got very vague memories of that first or second end of year sort of nativity type kind of play and the stuff from my parents is kind of odd stuff really I've got memories of it but they're stories that they tell are very much about two things one about um th me taking being given sort of lunch and an apple
and um then realising after a while that there is never a core that came that came back to the apple and that um I was storing these apples in the classroom and not taking them back as I didn't have the courage to tell my mother that I didn’t really like apples.

ha ha ha ha ha

so that's that story goes round a bit

oh does it

and oh what's the other story is that um I was quite young for my school year group the story’s that um a colleague of my father's had a boy who was the same year as me and that one incident in the playground when he was I don’t think he was bullying me but he was kicking me and there's a story about my mother having to intervene and pull us away um yeah I think their relationship as adults wasn't great it was sort of told as a sort of dreadful boy kicking you sort of story

was that the relationship between your your parents and the teacher

well I think parents and the teacher

yeah I think in retrospect their relationship as adults wasn't great

mm

so I'm sure that that coloured to a certain amount um my mother's reaction to probably what was to a fairly non-significant incident in terms of two kids two boys getting to a bit overly physical and me coming a bit at the worse end

that’s my sense of it
whether there was something more to it

you know I was I don't think I was slightly bullied I haven't got recollections of that

so those're the really early memories M... and much more than that

when you went to your second school

father taught at the um senior school

t and I went to the prep school

so did you have any sense while you were there that that your dad was kind of

tat yeah

looking over

oh yes yeah very much so

mm

I was at school through till when I was 18

I was made PE coach at that stage to the under 14 Rugby side and made me captain of the school Rugby side so it was kind of always something that I had to sort of get used to and he had to get used to really um I was lucky I guess in that he was fairly respected
and had a fairly important role in the school
and I think got on well with the kids
so it was never a problem

EP ahmm
necessarily

T um I think I was quite a conservative sort of towed the line
sort of pupil really for much of my school years

EP did you have brothers and sisters

T yeah I've got a younger brother and a younger sister

EP ahmm

T my sister whose um she is 7 years younger than me
no sorry she is 4 years younger my brother is 7 years younger

EP ahmm

they they went to the same school did they

T my brother did my sister cos it was only boys at that stage

EP mm was it a boys' school

T only a boy's school at that stage yeah

EP yeah mm mm

T what did happen my mum started teaching in the prep school as well
so he started off with her as his class teacher when he was seven

EP did you live in

T well we lived yeah we lived on campus
so we lived um for most of the years that I was at school we lived um in a school house
on the grounds of the of the school and then
actually in my last year at school
my father was the house master
of what became the upper 6th form house so we lived 00:11:35-4
on one wing of the upper 6th form house 00:11:39-2
for a couple of years 00:11:40-7
EP mm and how was that 00:11:42-7
T yeah that was that was that was straight 00:11:47-9
it wasn't a great year for me 00:11:48-0
my last year at school um 00:11:52-5
various different reasons why ah the part of it was that 00:11:55-1
it wasn't necessarily easy at that age 00:11:58-3
and that he had such a direct role in 00:11:59-9
all of our lives as a house master of all of my year group 00:12:04-7
tt but we didn't have a very good year group either 00:12:08-9
there were lots of kind of factions within the school group 00:12:11-9
there er I wasn't bullied but there were quite a few 00:12:17-0
unhappy kind of kids who 00:12:20-0
EP mm 00:12:20-0
T who were sort of made to feel um thh er 00:12:21-9
well a bit abnormal I guess 00:12:24-1
kind of a bit persecuted by er quite a nasty kinda 00:12:29-0
um kind of dominant kind of group that last year 00:12:33-2
EP how did that make you feel 00:12:36-2
T umm 00:12:43-3
think I I mean I was a reasonably mature sort of seventeen eighteen 00:12:47-6
year old I was did have some friendships with um 00:12:53-3
some of the group who were kinda being 00:12:55-0
well they made their life wasn't very happy really 00:12:58-3
um and I think that that you know that was 00:13:03-6
er something that I felt 00:13:06-9
quite responsible for at times and intervened with at times sometimes
to my detriment um but there wasn't the way you know what you always hope is when you go through a school till you’ve when you go through a school for for that long I guess it’s kind of understandable that you are going to feel like your last year things really flourish and you come out with some really good sort of school mates and I did have three or four good good friends and a couple of people that I am still in touch with now but I gu I guess a slight degree of regret and resentment that it didn't end up in that kind of way really and the reason for that was I think it was a mix I think there were some kids who weren't very happy probably weren't very happy at home and who um they were going through a sort of developmental phase of kind of rebellion and um making others kind of who didn't necessarily fit with where they were at feel slightly sort of mm marginalised really so from what you're saying it sounds as though your peer group had had a lot of influence on you do do you think yeah your peers had more influence than the adults around you at the end of my schooling do you mean particularly
EP well not necessarily I mean you were just talking about the end 00:14:32-1

of your schooling but 00:14:33-5

T yeah 00:14:33-5

EP you know 00:14:37-9

T I think parents have a massive influence don't they of course they do 00:14:37-9

yeah I think they do 00:14:44-5

I think I was never somebody who particularly when I look back 00:14:48-5

felt a need and did sort of kind of bend try and bend myself 00:14:55-6

or adapt myself to fit in with a peer group 00:14:57-3

in that I was always very much into my sport 00:15:03-7

and that was my number one thing really 00:15:06-2

and my kind of social group to a certain extent 00:15:10-9

you know the main group that I was friends with 00:15:17-3

all through my kind of school years was the group that were kind of 00:15:18-1

also interested in sport were good at sport 00:15:21-1

EP and Rugby was your game was it 00:15:24-7

T yeah Rugby and hockey and athletics 00:15:26-3

EP right mm 00:15:31-1

T somebody that got involved in any sport really in school 00:15:31-3

EP mm 00:15:32-8

T and I had a sport scholarship 00:15:33-7

so was sort of expected to do quite well at that 00:15:36-9

EP yes ya 00:15:38-2

T um which I know in a boys only school environment 00:15:43-6

you know you get a certain amount of brownie points 00:15:46-1

if you like in that environment through being good at sports 00:15:48-8

EP mm 00:15:52-2

T um I was reasonable at sport 00:15:52-6
so you know and that was I was reasonably talented at sport

but not and that that playing as much sport as I did I enjoyed it

of course I did but I think that was somewhat shaped by my father

EP mm

who was a sportsman himself

EP really yes what was his

T charged at the PC it was Welsh Welsh

EP ha ha ha

T it was always going to be Rugby

EP yeah

T I you know so you know it’s a wonder isn’t to what

so I think I think my father had a big influence

on on me as I was growing up

EP yeah

T as a model less in terms of the sort of

um face to face kind of upbringing stuff that was my mum

who did that

EP ahmm mm

T yes yes I think I think that he did have an influence on me

but but I think probably stronger influence actually

EP than your peer group

T Yeah

EP mm mm and then

T because of me possibly and perhaps because I’m a first born ha

EP yeah ha

T you know I think it’s different where you are

in your birth order in your family I think it makes a difference

EP ahmm
I think it’s quite a um conservative towed the line. Kind of eldest.

I rebelled a bit later on. I think. M...

I think my rebellion was more at university.

It went down a bit longer then.

Well yeah quite yeah.

Quite possibly.

I think it probably did in retrospect. I think it probably did and we it was quite a rural location where the school is so it a a lot of my friends were boarders kind of you know social life to a large extent was kind of term time.

And then kind of everybody pushed off to different parts of England or kind of abroad.
so it wasn't necessarily easy to maintain some of the friendships

and of course that was when my parents were both around

cos they taught and had holidays off so then we were a kind of close

sort of nuclear family so

ahmm so did you go off on holiday together the

yeah very nice holidays

the five of you

exactly

projects things like that

you did projects during the holidays did you ha ha

we always won the project prize ha M... in school

ha ha ha ha

no it was kind of yeah our mother in particular was very keen on us

sort of doing things in school which was great

you know we we were always doing something

thh going off to visit Wasworth field or first world war

battle sites

and doing a project which was you know great

but it was very family sort of heavy ha

mm

and doing a project which was you know great

but it was very family sort of heavy ha

mm

um as opposed to necessarily there being a lot of room

for independence and um developing your own

sort of peer relationships outside of the school environment
there wasn't a lot of opportunities.

when I look back...

well so when you see yourself as father now...

yeah...

what things would you want to do the same when...

it's interesting isn't it cos I think I think that way...

that you the way that I took to that question...

what thing the same what things different...

mm...

There are both really I think there are strengths...

mm mm mm...

and I think that um one thing is a bout sacrifice and I think...

that when I look back my parents made big sacrifices for us in that...

thh um they had a reduced sort of fee for us to go to the school...

that we went to but they they still had to pay a significant...

amount...

mm...

for us to go there...

mm...

they made an awful lot of sacrifices...

you know that they priorities were for us to go on school trips...

pay for the school fees and those kinds of things I think...

there's something about being a dad and putting...

your kids first that I'd like to to to you know live up...

to that um but I think there's something about...

probably balancing at the same time your own...
your own needs as an adult 00:20:29-8

ahmm 00:20:29-8

as a parent and I think probably there was something in and 00:20:33-4

you picked it up in what words we used a few minutes ago 00:20:37-7

something about it feeling 00:20:39-0

slightly claustrophobic in a way 00:20:41-8

yeah constraining 00:20:43-5

constraining and claustrophobic 00:20:45-4

mm mm 00:20:45-4

that came a bit from the degree of of dependence sort of um 00:20:49-0

sense in lots of ways but they did make an awful lot of sacrifices 00:20:52-6

yes yeah 00:20:56-0

I I wondered whether some of them were a bit too much in a way 00:20:58-2

ahmm 00:20:59-5

and maybe as a dad and as a parent I I still got in mind 00:21:05-0

something about trying to achieve a little bit of a balance 00:21:06-7

mm 00:21:06-7

where goodness your kids 00:21:08-6

mm 00:21:08-6

and my role as a parent is um the most important one to me 00:21:13-5

mm 00:21:15-0

but there are also I want to also want to maintain roles 00:21:19-3

as you know somebody who’s got friends 00:21:21-0

and and we see people as a couple 00:21:22-9

and we you know have hobbies and interests outside of the kids 00:21:27-7

I think I think those were things either there wasn't room for 00:21:32-2

or maybe in retrospect my parents 00:21:34-6

let dwindle in some ways so I um 00:21:39-8
yeah there's something about that I think in terms the kind of dad
but also recognising that probably to be a healthy dad or in my mind something that was perhaps a bit missing was to have a balance between a dad who is a dad but you also observe and you see as somebody who’s got multiple other kinds of identities in a way

so yes my dad I saw him as a worker and as a dad those were the two dominant roles

that he occupied probably not a lot else really t t a t so I it’s trying to broaden those kind of identities and and ... as they grow up seeing seeing me not just as a dad actually but as those other things I think would be quite healthy

you asked what kind of things I mean I guess being more involved day to day than my father was in our upbringing is probably quite important to me

mm that’s in domestic yeah the domestic things mm

the the sort of day to day side of things you know I think it’s easier when I was little there wasn't parental leave wasn't that opportunity right from the outset

to to sort of um I guess establish that
involvement from day one 00:23:13-4

so did you have leave when the babies were born 00:23:18-1

yeah I think I had two weeks 00:23:20-6

mm 00:23:20-6

I think I had an extra week when R... was born 00:23:20-6

so I think it was three weeks 00:23:22-3

ahmm 00:23:23-9

for our first born and then I had a bit more leave a little later on 00:23:26-8

I think with Ann it was two weeks 00:23:28-10

and then I had a couple of weeks back at work 00:23:32-2

and then another couple of weeks so yes 00:23:32-2

lucky that I've been able to do that 00:23:35-6

so what was that time like 00:23:39-5

yeah with Raj it was I mean it was so important really 00:23:41-9

I mean for me to be around and for us together to be working out 00:23:49-9

some of the challenges that you know get presented in those 00:23:56-9

first few weeks so much of our thinking and sort of antenatal classes 00:24:04-6

and all that kind of thing was so focused on the birth 00:24:05-4

ha ha 00:24:10-8

it was kind of over to us now and up to us 00:24:12-9

to design quite how we were going to do things 00:24:16-1

so did you go to all the antenatal classes 00:24:19-9

yeah 00:24:21-8

mm how many did you go to 00:24:23-6

well we went to with Raj there were must have been four 00:24:27-1

three perhaps evenings of hospital antenatal classes 00:24:33-8

and then we went to I think it was two two full days 00:24:41-5

of what's the charity called 00:24:46-6
National child birth trust

did some private day classes that we went to

we both went to all of those

did you enjoy them

yeah I did enjoy them yes I um

it was a chance to meet other parents

who were at the same stage as we were

and we made a a group of friends who were quite important in that first year

yeah

after we became parents

yeah

there haven't been people that we stayed in contact beyond that

but that was quite important I think as a something to support us

with

yes

for that first period of time

yes

I don't think we learnt a massive amount

cos I think we both read things

and we um had friends who had had children already

mm mm
who we'd been quite involved with

I mean yes some of the panics of childbirth

um it it was more I guess it was more having a bit of a space

and prompting us to think a little bit about how we wanted to do things

yes

it was less information

ahmm

but it was more prompting us to make some decisions about

mm

not only about the childbirth I wish actually

there had been more really

about what kind of parents we wanted to be and about

and about how it would be when we got home

mm

after the birth cos I think it’s all very well

worrying about what sort of birth you're going to have

mm

but a) I think it’s a bit beyond your control often

and b) it’s over pretty quickly and you move on to

ha ha ha

the rest of the stuff

so what would you advise other people who were you know um

about to have a child

I I just think you know it’s almost the model that I get

from sort of traditional um traditional marriage preparation

if you want to get married in a church
then I think a good vicar will sit you down and will talk a little bit about your religious beliefs and will talk about whatever else and will then talk about what kind of husband and wife you want to be and about the sort of challenges I guess its some form of whether its you as a couple sitting down and talking through that together and preparing yourselves obviously you can't prepare yourselves fully but I think being helped or encouraged to to talk in advance about some of those things

EP ahmm

T what’s it going to be like getting up and who’s likely get ratty if you don't get sleep

EP mm mm

T what what how would it be if breast feeding was more difficult than you thought

EP ahmm

T what might it feel like if you have to go on to a bottle and um do you know what I mean

EP yes yes

T some of those things that I think are quite emotional and potentially quite difficult for couples

EP yes

T a little bit of advance thinking about that
and I guess how involved each of you when you had your dream of how parenting was going to be which I think we all have a bit of an illusion in our mind of how it’s going to be what kind of role we want to play and to think about

EP mm

how the goodness of fit

EP mm

almost between so could you have asked any of those questions of your parents or do you think your parents could've been more proactive in

do you mean in supporting us when we became parents yeah when you well when you were expecting or do you think your parents could've been more proactive in

do you mean in supporting us when we became parents

EP

yeah when you well when you were expecting

EP

when you were pregnant yeah

T

um possibly

T

possibly

EP

mm

I guess it's such a yeah I mean

EP

would you have seen it as interfering

T

I wonder how fresh

T

I wonder how fresh it all was for them

EP

right

T

sort of thirty thirty years on thirty odd years on
mm so were yours the first grandchildren 00:28:39-8
first grandchildren for both families yeah 00:28:46-8
mm mm mm 00:28:47-5
both my wife's and mine 00:28:49-6
mm 00:28:49-6
ah I don't think I'd have wanted that actually 00:28:54-1
right mm 00:28:58-9
I'm quite independent and I guess right from kind of 18 really 00:29:03-4
and going off to university really 00:29:04-6
I had good relationships with them but 00:29:07-5
ah no we do talk emotionally about things but 00:29:11-5
I think there are other things 00:29:12-1
that I'm a little bit more protective over in wanting to 00:29:15-7
do things my way really 00:29:18-6
so how do you think um 00:29:22-3
that will affect your relationship with your boys 00:29:26-2
would you want your boys 00:29:29-4
in terms of how they see my relationship 00:29:31-0
would you 00:29:31-1
with their grandparents 00:29:33-1
well no I'm just wondering about no what I was wondering about 00:29:36-4
was how you would want them to be with you when 00:29:42-6
they're about to be parents 00:29:46-6
yeah 00:29:47-5
you know would you want them would you want 00:29:50-4
I think it might be I think certainly I would hope my expectation 00:29:52-6
is somehow that it would be easier for them 00:29:59-1
to talk with me about becoming a new parent 00:30:04-0
than perhaps it has been for me with my father.

because I've been more involved.

and that might be that might be a disen....d.

.....reasonable not reasonable it might not come to pass.

might be a bit inaccurate in a way because I don't know how.

involved I'll be sort of in their twenties thirties.

whenever they have kids maybe not.

that's my hope I guess.

....was there anything else you wanted to talk about.

in terms of what we've been saying.

I mean did you come to this conversation with any thoughts in mind.

about what might come up or what you might want to talk about.

I don't think there was actually I guess today.

R.'s been to his new classroom.

and his new teacher.

was quite anxious and worried and shy.

and I guess that was a little bit of a shock.

although it probably shouldn't have been.

when we'd really thought about it.

mm which school is it.

sh go to St ....

ahmm which is a little catholic school in the centre of … with quite a mixed.

kind of kind of catchment.
so quite a few kids who English isn't their first language

quite a higher than average number of kids with special needs

and there was very much that feel to it which we weren't

surprised about at all in terms of kind of

the other kids

that were there and ah I I guess

what I was surprised about though was about

his vulnerability really and he is young his birthday's in July

so he's not four yet

ahmm

t four in a couple of weeks and he was quite tearful Z. and I were

quite clear we'd stay for a little bit um but we did want to leave him

and that was you know leave him for a bit

as it was it was only fifteen minutes that we left

him for but he was brutally back to I guess what it had been

like almost two years ago really kind of what it had been

like when we left him for the first time at nursery

and you know again its a similar jump isn't it its going from a

small gold fish bowl

to a bigger tank

to how many children

I'd kind of not fore seen that
in a way well it was open to all thirty kids that were going to be in his class

but there were probably about fifteen kids there

some of whom are in the nursery at the school already

so knew the sch' ar

and some we realised have got older siblings who are at the school as well

so have got some sense of the school

I think Raj was one of the few who didn't know anybody going today but I guess a) there was this reaction and b) driving over I was thinking about um

Ann's quite emotional reaction to that in a way bit more bit more of an emotional reaction to it than me in a way and I guess that made me think a bit about why that was and in spite of me having more hands on time with the kids than my father had for instance I pleased I have that time still comparatively I think there's a you know there's a um much more emotive bond I think R ... our eldest and Z... as a mum that I think that that emotional responsibility I think the whole day was probably far more emotional for her
in terms of I guess an indication of him being on the cusp really of making making that jump into a um ... a fair amount of independence in the environment do you think it was the right time for that to happen for him to be doing that its difficult isn't it we talked a little bit about our different options and you know if we weren't happy about whatever school he got into would he doesn't have to go to school this year cos of his age yeah he could go in a year's time a) what would it be like for him if he stayed at the nursery he is at we both think he would get quite board and quite silly if he stayed and then we thought well what if we just postpone going to school and do something a bit alternative and go off travelling for a year or do something different and we thought about that for a little bit
yeah it would be a big change

I think it’s a different question than academic

but intellectually I think

he's curious about learning and

he's interested in what learning that will be at school

In that sense I think he's ready

whether he's ready emotionally I think is is a bit more difficult

because he's

what about physically

well physically he's pretty average really

but today he was sort of not the smallest

and not the biggest

In the class
so yeah he starts after just half days 00:36:33-6
they go from there till at least half term 00:36:36-6
just going in half days he gets shattered 00:36:38-7
and that's the other thing because it's um 00:36:43-7
he'll cope with the whole school day 00:36:43-7
it's a bit of a worry of mine I guess he's still at the moment 00:36:47-9
most days has an hour and a half's nap at lunchtime 00:36:51-6
which obviously he won't do at school 00:36:54-9
mm but if he's just going for is it just mornings 00:36:58-9
mornings for the first 00:37:01-0
can have a sleep when he gets home 00:37:04-6
probably for up to the first half term and then he'll go 00:37:05-3
yes 00:37:05-3
so yes he could he could do that for the first half term 00:37:07-1
which we would want him to do 00:37:08-6
yeah 00:37:05-0
so yes 00:37:05-0
so will Ann be around to 00:37:11-7
yeah 00:37:11-7
look after him in the afternoon 00:37:11-7
yeah we're going to juggle things 00:37:13-3
yeah 00:37:13-3
so that she's taking some leave for the first 00:37:16-9
month for some of the first month she only works two and a half days 00:37:24-1
mm 00:37:27-5
so she's two days one week and three days the next 00:37:27-5
so she'll be around some of the days 00:37:30-0 00:37:32-3
and then her mum's going to come down 00:37:32-3
and be around for some time 00:37:34-7

EP  oh right yeah 00:37:34-7

T  so we are going to try and juggle it that first month 00:37:36-8

EP  mm 00:37:38-1

T  and then second we're assuming 00:37:40-0

it will be another month tails us to half term 00:37:43-2

EP  ahmm 00:37:45-5

T  it will be half days I think 00:37:53-9

they go to nursery off to do a pick up 00:37:53-9

EP  that's the one that he's going to now 00:37:55-7

T  the 00:37:57-6

EP  the W... 00:38:02-6

T  um no it’s not W... 00:38:02-6

EP  PC 00:38:02-9

T  PC exactly 00:38:03-5

EP  I always think of it as W because its W road 00:38:06-4

T  OK yeah 00:38:06-4

EP  you know but its PC 00:38:09-7

T  exactly so that 00:38:09-7

EP  and all these names will be will be you know 00:38:12-1

we won't use these names um 00:38:13-0

T  so yes that 00:38:17-4

EP  I mean we know we know this 00:38:18-0

we know that we both know this information 00:38:21-1

so it seems silly not to 00:38:23-0

to use the words um and I can easily get rid of them 00:38:30-1

you know in the transcription 00:38:30-1

because its very much part of the whole ethos you know 00:38:35-2
I see that confidentiality is maintained.

That’s fine.

Yeah what about did you make any connection with the teacher?

Yeah we’ve met her twice now.

We went.

There was a parents’ evening about ten days ago which we went to as new parents.

Ahmm.

We met er she’s a new teacher who started in the school in September.

For the new class.

New trained.

No she’s not new trained she’s been trained think she said four years teaching in London and moving down to...with her son er...

And um yeah it would be her first class.

Mm mm.

Yeah she was rea’ she was pretty anxious.

I felt a bit sorry for her in a way...

To meet all these parents who were turning up to check her out.

Ha ha ha ha ha.

Cos she was calmer today actually.

Um and then we both I guess cos I’d been grown up in an educational environment.

And Ann works as ... I guess we both we both had to stop ourselves at times.
from making comments about things judging certain things that weren't quite perfect in some ways to do with and of course you're not going to find a perfect school perfect sort of you know EP mm teachers dealing with every situation that you as parents when you are going in and you are sitting trying to let your child get on with things and encouraging him to be doing these and you're watching everything that's going on in the class room of course there are going to be things that you're going to see that the teacher your attention is drawn to you know a couple of the kids she's dealing with she's going to miss EP mm mm in a big class room but does she have an assistant yeah there's a one teaching assistant for her class she's going to miss I think there are probably two other kids with um teaching assistants ahmm mm as well sometimes mm so there might be four adult in the room
is it a big room

it is yeah it's a room split in so so there's a nursery room and then a reception room and a big divide between the two which is quite nice because there are a whole lot of times in the day when although they are separate for large parts of the day they also have times when they pull back the divide

ahmm to sort of through play kind of the nursery and reception mixed up yes together and have they got access to the outside and have they've got a nice outdoor space mm and they're allowed to freely go in and out are they ah I think there are specific times when they go outside

OK yeah I don't know whether I know what you mean when there are break times weather they just go out and come in I don't know whether it works like that whether they all go out and in

I'm not sure nice if it were that through yeah I think in some of the schools that does happen that they if they want to go outside and play with sand and water they can at this age um

I think I think sorry another thing that I did as I was coming over was a bit about
my protectiveness of R... 00:42:05-8
and there were three or four quite physical boys 00:42:07-8
one of whom apparently has no English 00:42:10-7
no no verbally I think born and raised with English as his 00:42:18-6
first language but his doesn't have any sort of um speech yet 00:42:22-2
and he was charging around with a learning support assistant 00:42:27-2
sort of trying to sort of keep him under 00:42:30-5
control on a scooter when they were outside 00:42:33-6
bumped into several of the kids and it seemed to us 00:42:36-7
that she didn't have a great deal of control over him um 00:42:41-2
and there were two or three other boys who were 00:42:46-3
just quite physical and um upset a couple of girls 00:42:47-9
a couple of times during the morning but it made me 00:42:51-5
Ann wasn't directly affected by any of these kids 00:42:55-3
but it definitely triggered in me a bit of oh goodness 00:42:59-0
he's he's gonna have to cope with some fairly 00:43:03-0
sort of full on situations in this classroom 00:43:04-8
he's going to have to cope with being thumped at some point 00:43:10-2
and bumped into and stuff snatched from him you know 00:43:13-3
that's part of life of course it is but it I don't know 00:43:18-0
you got a little bit more control over it when they're 00:43:21-2
just at nursery a couple of days a week 00:43:21-2

EP mm mm 00:43:24-0

T surrendering control of those kind of situations 00:43:26-4

and management 00:43:28-2

EP mm 00:43:28-2

T to the adults involved and if I can see how we'll cope 00:43:33-6

with those first few times when you know he comes back in tears 00:43:38-3
or tells us that this has happened and how we will resolve those decisions about when we say well get on with it R... sort of thing

when we say when we say well we'll talk to Miss whatever her name is but his teacher about stuff that we wonder that concerned about

and whether there could be a way of managing it differently as parents and when to when to intervene really and when to just be there in the background in a less active way sort of supporting and helping your child to deal with situations himself so it made me think about that I guess in readiness for this it's interesting isn’t it the the balance between sort of letting go and wanting to protect them yes and 00:44:42-9 and 00:44:42-9 yeah the the notion of you know the adults acting as a team yeah you know
T yeah 00:44:53-9
EP so how do you feel about 00:44:58-9
sort of working as a team with the teacher rather 00:45:03-8
than the teacher being 00:45:08-1
T it’s quite important to me I think 00:45:09-2
EP yeah 00:45:09-2
T to be in a position where the teacher does want to do that 00:45:14-8
and is accepting of that 00:45:16-3
EP yeah 00:45:16-3
T I would find it quite hard if that’s not the case 00:45:19-3
and if I feel a bit shut out as a parent 00:45:22-8
EP mm 00:45:26-0
T um because I think you know the way we’ve brought R... up 00:45:29-4
and that the way we want to be raising him is that education 00:45:32-7
isn’t just about being at school 00:45:34-7
EP yes 00:45:34-7
T education’s probably more of his learning going to happen 00:45:38-8
at home rather than in school 00:45:38-8
EP mm mm 00:45:40-1
T um and you know I think for him its obviously gonna 00:45:49-4
be most effective if 00:45:46-3
people in both the school and home are pulling in 00:45:48-9
the same direction 00:45:50-4
EP exactly 00:45:51-5
T I know that involves communication 00:45:51-5
EP yes exactly 00:45:53-8
T I think if that’s not there then I think we’ll find that quite difficult 00:45:55-9
I don’t think we’ll be very happy with that 00:45:57-8
But how can you make that happen?

How do you think you can make that happen?

Yeah, I think it’s about lots of things isn’t it?

I think it’s a little bit about how involved we are in being curious with what’s going on at school and that’s kind of communication with him.

mm

I think it’s about other opportunities to go into the school and be actively involved in the classroom.

mm are there opportunities to be actively involved in the classroom?

Yeah, I don’t know explicitly what they are going to be.

I know that they have adult helpers that go in for reading that sort of thing.

mm are those parents or?

Yeah.

Yes.

and the teacher, new teacher when spoke up in actually spoke to all the parents.

when its parents evening one of the things she said was that she’d she was very committed to having parents come in and be involved in the class room that she’d seen great results as a consequence of that.

so

mm

I’m hopeful that her model of involving parents is not distant from.

mm so are any of these assistants?

Yeah.
EP male or are they all women 00:47:09-0
T no they're all I guess that was one thing 00:47:13-3
EP z saw my wife’s already um made contact with er 00:47:20-1
T the chair of the school school’s PTA who has got a little girl who’s 00:47:25-9
EP in one of the older classes and a little girl who's starting in R's class 00:47:30-6
EP mm 00:47:30-6
T um so she was there on the parents evening 00:47:32-4
EP we met her amongst other parents she was very nice 00:47:37-4
EP mm 00:47:37-4
T bubbly and nice and today... she introduced Ann as very good solid 00:47:46-9
EP PTA material 00:47:48-4
EP ha ha ha 00:47:48-8
T it it was a throw away comment 00:47:51-7
EP yes yeah 00:47:51-7
T but I don't think she wouldn't have said 00:47:57-4
EP or this is Tom he he is very solid PTA material 00:47:59-2
T so it was th there was a real sort of um I may be wrong 00:48:04-0
EP but my sense was that there was a real bit of gender 00:48:08-4
T sex kind of bias in terms of the judgement she was making 00:48:12-9
EP about who she could cos she was thinking as the chair 00:48:17-1
T who else could we involve to share the workload 00:48:21-1
EP yeah 00:48:21-1
T in a way 00:48:23-2
EP so you were standing there 00:48:25-5
EP Tom so I was standing there 00:48:25-5
EP next to Ann at the time yes 00:48:28-8
T and Ann was introduced and you know I said hello then afterwards 00:48:30-7
T but it was interesting 00:48:32-8
that that was that she used and in a sense I guess my response was a little bit of oh goodness that's interesting probably going to be easier for Ann to be involved with some of those things whether it's going in and reading or being involved in that sort of thing than me it's partly time of course that's time it's the way Ann works two and a half days and I work become full time but just vary my hours um so maybe there's a bit more of a challenge there for me and how I stay involved but in terms of um stereotyping um that that that kind of what you've just described is the kind of thing it's kind of at the core of what it is I think my research is all about and it's it's kind I mean I'm just doing a bit of reflecting now
on what the research is and what it is that I'm interested in. You know as a woman and the mother of girls and the grandmother of granddaughters to suddenly at the beginning of doing my doctorate become the grandmother of grandsons for the first time in my life considering what it must be like for a man because um and this really is what's triggered my interest in this whole area because there's a lot isn’t there of in the sort of feminist literature about how um you know women feel because um and this really is what's triggered my interest in this whole area because there's a lot isn’t there of in the sort of feminist literature about how um you know women feel because um and this really is what's triggered my interest in this whole area because there's a lot isn’t there of in the sort of feminist literature about how um you know women feel because um and this really is what's triggered my interest in this whole area because there's a lot isn’t there of in the sort of feminist literature about how um you know women feel
that they don't feel as though they’ve got the same status

no that's right

as a woman

you definitely I definitely felt an exception

I felt a little bit of an exception

going to the parents evening initial originally you know for new parents

mm

where you met the head teacher

mm mm

and they all talked about what it’s going to be like

starting school and all that kind of thing

yes

so at that there were probably two or three other dads there

and may be fifteen mums

mm mm

um and then today there were two other dads who were there

and twelve mums

mm 00:51:25-0

mm 00:51:33-0

something like that and the two dads probably knew each other

but stood stood near the door and chatted

mm 00:51:42-8

ha

mm mm ha ha

ha they weren’t actively involved

no

and R I was more involved than Z trying to settle R and

mm 00:51:55-8

looking at what activities there were and chat to the kids
one of his fears had been I won't know any of the children's names so we were trying to support him in one or two of the children's names and talking yes to the children so really quite actively involved I guess you know I'm reasonably confident in that environment I've had to work with kids in my work so I'm reasonably comfortable with talking to the kids but I wonder how easy it would be for somebody who didn't have those experiences and that confidence in that environment in that environment mm and then how but how what can be done well I think it would have been good if actually you know in the letter I know that there are a number of parents who are single parents I know that there are parents at this school who are you know from low socio economic groups
therefor it might be difficult for both of them

to get to a parents evening

none the less I think there could have been a statement about

you know it would be great to meet with both parents stroke child givers

and if you could both get to the event

it would be really nice

introduce you to the school because we value kind of working with mums and dads and

and other care givers

who ever has a significant amount of contact with your child

that might have made a bit of difference

ahmm and the I know I

I don't know really maybe there could have been something else emphasising particularly for boys
the value of a dad being involved

in kind of their education

from the outset

so what things around the place could have been

yeah you see

say visually more father welcoming to fathers

I didn't get particularly a sense of stuff being

I'm trying to think what was on the wall that I noticed today

I don't know I think they made some Picasso

kind of facemasks that were on their

they'd written about um holidays

in general

there was nothing that either way you'd feel

wasn't welcoming or could have been more welcoming
to men that I took in today

time

I mean do you think do you think in a way there's a there's a

there's a an argument for sort of like

sort of like I can't even I mean it probably

isn't a good way of putting it

but sort of like positive discrimination
well I think it's like something like kind of um um
you know male teachers
isn't there I think definitely you know male teachers
and male support assistants that I think
 EP mm mm
 is what I think um
so do you think schools should actively try and create more males …
yeah it's difficult for schools isn’t it
 EP yes
 cos there's so few males as I understand it going through um particularly primary
 through um particularly primary
 you know PGCE sort of training
 um I think it probably starts before then doesn't it
 it probably starts it goes back to schools really I think
 it goes back to how we as a society and we encourage people to men particularly to be doing jobs in the caring kind of
 professions
 I mean caring in the broader sense
 I guess would include school teachers
 in that I think it’s still a bit of a
 you know slightly alternative choice for a male
 to be a male primary school teacher
 mm 00:56:06-5
 or a nurse or a um psychiatric one whatever it is
 EP mm 00:56:12-4
it’s still a female dominated kind of profession something its probably about yeah the gender bias that probably still influences careers right from early on about how may be it is in the primary school that the seeds around who who goes and talks and you know it goes on from there yeah I mean those are the kind of thoughts I had when I I got interested in doing this research yeah but then I wondered you know I mean is it should I have gone back even further I mean should I have gone back to um you know when couples realise that that they are going to have a child yes maybe that maybe that’s the point at which the intervention should start you know um do you know Liz Mcdonnell she’s done some research into fathers involvement during birth and she was she was um working with um young fathers you know teenage fathers well not teenage up to twenty five and talking about the experience of the birth of their child and how um moved they were by it and you know her research is about you know what is it about
our society that curbs that enthusiasm they want to do so much and then

and yet we know from research as the children get older they become less and less involved and then we know from research

mm yes that those others that do stay involved actually have a huge um impact on their sons educational outcomes

yes yeah and it’s you know as as working as I am on a sort of practice doctorate rather than

I mean it’s not like a PhD where it’s kind of more theoretical I mean the whole reason for doing this kind of research is to try and think of ways to um affect services and affect um how they can become um more effective and so you know if it’s possible for me to write up stuff from these interviews that can then be presented

um to schools um I I guess um I guess I have mixed feelings cos I guess I think I think there are gender biases between men and women that are innate and hard wired I don't think we're born the same

yeah yeah in most cases yes that said I think there are there are my personal view is that there are
men probably who would make very good people
within the caring profession
who get put off somehow
EP mm
who potentially could go
EP yes
into that line of work and get put off and I guess the question is
where do they get put off
EP yes
what what happens
to make that happen
EP yes
and I think it’s a series of points I think
from quite early onwards
EP yeah
um
but from my point of view it’s not just about getting men into teaching
but it’s about
getting fathers more involved in their sons’ education
mm
and I mean you’re quite exceptional because your father was
so involved in your education
yes
that was quite exceptional
T: yes yes 00:59:55-7
EP: isn’t it 00:59:57-2
T: yes I mean he taught me A level English 00:59:58-6
EP: yes yeah 00:59:58-6
T: very much 00:59:59-9
EP: I mean he was very very much involved in your education 01:00:04-2
T: yes 01:00:04-2
EP: so um 01:00:04-2
T: that's different 01:00:05-2
EP: It is different but having said that you still felt that 01:00:15-8
T: difference 01:00:15-8
EP: status difference between 01:00:15-8
T: yes 01:00:17-7
EP: yourself and Z...today 01:00:18-9
T: yes yeah 01:00:20-6
EP: and it’s because 01:00:23-3
T: yes 01:00:23-3
EP: w why was that 01:00:28-0
T: well a it’s difficult actually cos I'm not comparing like to like 01:00:30-8
in terms of thinking about how there the same age really but 01:00:34-4
you know I'm not at the point of 01:00:36-8
eighteen years old y'know R...'s not eighteen 01:00:41-0
and I'm not thinking about how I was 01:00:43-8
when I was eighteen and the difference in the relationship 01:00:45-7
but I mean arguably 01:00:50-0
it it’s about the amount of time I've been allowed to have with R... 01:00:53-8
EP: mm 01:00:55-2
T: I think probably 01:00:55-2
and the bond I think the birth was really important actually.

it’s been really important to me.

to be there and to be actively very involved in both boys’ birth.

I couldn't and I still struggle really to understand dads who don't want to be there or don't feel they could can be there.

and just sad really.

I've got almost sort of flash bowl like memories actually of the birth and of then what was a sort of six o’clock walk through the park.

back home um six am walk.

back it was morning generally just smells.

Um particularly when Raj was born the first one went through it.

I’ve got almost sort of flash bowl like memories actually of the birth and of then what was a sort of six o’clock walk through the park.

back home um six am walk.

back it was morning generally just smells.

and sounds and those kinds of things.

that are encompassed in flash bowl memory.

so yeah.
I think that’s what we both wanted
I think that’s what we really did want

and lucky that we had the kind of birth experience both natural births and both ones where I could support Z...in some sense

she tells a funny story actually about when A... was born that um she gave birth in a water bath and um for part of the birth I was leaning over the bath and supporting her which did involve bending my back near the end of the birth when she was in quite a lot of pain she remembered looking up at me sort of bending oooop

rubbing my back which she continues tell at every opportunity

how blooming useless men are

but yes it was important to me an and you know I think that then made it easier so that you know being involved in the birth made it easier to have lots and lots of contact with both boys soon after they were born
so Raj our first born Ann wasn't ever so well for she had some sort of physical complications after the birth and meant mobility wise she was pretty limited um so she didn't find it very very easy to be holding him lots in those first so I spent most of those it was summer I spent most of those couple of days with the shirt off having lots of kind of skin to skin kind of contact with him and you know I think that was important in us bonding actually grateful for that um I think time is kind of marching on so I just wanted to kind of go through my topic headings with you and um cos see if anything sort of springs out yep yep that you just wanted to contribute so the my first sort of topic was what is it like to be a man
and you talked about that um very openly thank you and then you more or less anticipated some of the next questions so the next one was, what is it like to be the father of a son about to start school so I think we've covered that topic haven't we it's interesting it hasn't particularly raised thought about my experiences of being at school I don't know why that is cos that you'd have thought that would be fairly logical mm although I got a photo out to show him today prior to that I haven't really thought at all about my experiences which is probably interesting in a way that I haven't done yes you'd have thought that would be fairly logical to well I mean I've been thinking about this for a long time now you know deciding what my topic headings would be yes and um it seemed like putting these five
I'll just read the next ones and see what you think.
The third topic heading was what was it like when you started school.

and then what involvement did your father have?

and then the fifth one how do you think schools could involve fathers?

and I think we've pretty much talked about those things haven't we?

I mean is there anything that that that jumps out at you that you'd want to just round off with?

I think there's something you know I was thinking about it today actually when I was in the school although I am fairly confident with kids and fairly confident at engaging in that kind of environment in a class room.

in the class room environment still in the back of your mind is is I know it’s just it may be just be me but I think there is also a sense of you are most observing other people’s reactions to you as a man in that close proximity to kids almost as if you know all the stuff that's been in the the stuff about paedophilia and you know male offenders sex offenders and that kind of thing I think I think our obsession with that and the media is sort of um the way that it manages to stoke up a sense of sex offenders being
a) always male  
and b) far more prolific  
and far more prevalent than they actually are  
and some of the the rules that there are about contact with kids  
around limited contact physical contact those kind of things I think  
all of those things mean as a as a man for me you’re kind of aware  
of other people’s reactions to you I was today anyway  
in terms of a) being a little bit in a in an exception  
in that there weren't many other dads there  
b) being the only man down talking to the kids  
and trying to engage with them and trying  
to introduce yourself settle my son basically   
by making him feel comfortable  
but nobody else was doing that as a dad  
um and then being a little bit aware of what  
what judgements others might be making of you  
in that and so I think there's something about that  
maybe might be in other pe... other dads might as well  
yes yeah
actually about the broader kind of um somewhat um you know negative images
stereotypical images about men
that they carry
and about kind of their risk to children
that they carry
yeah I think it is sad that
was none the less in the back of my mind
I mean it influenced me but it
I found myself at one point sort of I was trying to
attract Raj to books they had a nice book corner
and he he didn't want to come over and see me
so I sat there looking at a book for a minute
and three little girls came up and basically I read them a story
it was entirely kind of natural thing
and one of them came and sat on my lap
and I thought what are other people making of this
me as a parent that they know nothing about um yeah so I guess those thoughts were going through my mind I guess a positive message about encouraging dads and about the value of dads in a school and that could have made a difference but there's also a broader point about the way I see I think potentially as a barrier as well because I mean um I wouldn't have predicted that you might have said no that but it was a passing thought at that moment yeah yeah yeah sure I don't want to make too much of it it was none the less in the same way you don't yeah but um you know I just think
I wonder how many men that whose minds that is in the back of you know th that is preventing them from being more involved because they don't want people you know saying what's he up to why is he in this environment with more parents dads being more involved presumably would seem less of an exception and more of the norm would that you know if we moved forward with more parents dads being more involved presumably yeah and more more pictures of dads in clinics having skin to skin contact with their new born yeah yeah yeah yeah there there's I mean I think things are positive around you know the proposal that's been scraped in terms of the economic climate that we're in but the you know the idea that you know parent no longer going to be maternity and paternity leave as it’s going to be parental leave yes yeah and then the idea was that you could split that mm mm mm mm mm back to work yes yeah yes
um they've been doing that in Scandinavia for years.

and that makes so much sense in a way.

that you don't.

prescribe.

what's right for a family.

absolutely.

you know that made the choice.

and presumably empower families where dad wants to be.

significantly involved.

yeah yeah.

t to find a way of making that easier to be.

yes yes yeah.

so I think things like that trying to think what else.

would make a difference like that.

I don't think there is anything ... employers.

being more open and accepting.

ahmm.

that there are going to be some dads who are going to.

want to be actively involved.

I sort of think it’s easier for a a mum to say I want.

to go to my son's sports day.

or I've got to go to the sports day.

mm.

than it is for a dad to necessarily say that.
be in work a bit earlier
haven't got to that point yet but I think that's one my illusion
T haven't got to that point yet but I think that's one my illusion
EP ha ha ha ha
EP yeah well I think we
EP yeah yeah
T well I hope it’s been useful
EP yes thank you very much it’s been very useful thank you so much
T that's fine I'd be really interested in seeing
EP what you'd you know a summary
EP yes yes
T of the research when you do get it done
EP yes absolutely I will
T will let me know
EP be in touch yeah
T what's your time frame in terms of
EP well at least another year
EP yeah
EP maybe longer maybe two years
EP yeah yep
EP but certainly you know I'll get some feed back to you
T and how many interviews are you going to do
EP well I think I'm only going to do five now
T right yeah
EP I cos initially I wanted to get a group together
I wasn't able to get a group together and um I thought I'd do quite a large I did have the idea of doing about 15 interviews and then when I realised how in depth I wanted the interviews to be it just seemed to make more sense and having taken advice from other people in the field you know it seems that five would be an okay number and I shall be doing um discourse analysis

T: yes

EP: it just seemed to make more sense and having taken advice from other people in the field you know it seems that five would be an okay number and I shall be doing um discourse analysis

T: yes

EP: so you know

T: I think I was thinking about something else Mary

Which I'll just say quickly when we were living in H... we were part of um one of the Sure Start areas and one of the things that I think that they do from quite an early age is kind of try and get young dads together

T: and I think it was a Saturday morning kind of young dad um and I think it was a Saturday morning kind of young dad

EP: mm mm

T: kind of together

EP: mm mm

T: very keen to kind of um advertise and kind of recruit to

EP: ahmm

T: and I always think I'll have to go to the young dad's session

EP: hahaha
T didn't think that I needed it anyway 01:14:19-6
...I guess I was thinking thing things like that 01:14:22-9
within a school environment 01:14:25-5

EP yes yeah 01:14:25-5

T that a school and a connection between a boy or a child 01:14:30-5
and and a dad and supporting the development of 01:14:36-6
that inner school environment and whether you know there 01:14:40-5
could be things done around 01:14:41-0
you know you know a Saturday morning or 01:14:44-1
a kind of II don't know an after school that particularly involved dads 01:14:48-8

EP ahhm 01:14:48-8

T so it was an activity that was a dad and a daughter 01:14:52-4

EP mm mm mm 01:14:52-4

T or a dad and a son 01:14:54-1

EP mm 01:14:54-1

T activity that was kind of drawing dads in 01:14:59-2

EP yes yeah 01:14:59-6

T it maybe even drawing the parent who was not 01:15:03-2
the main parent who was part of kind of the regular school picking up 01:15:05-8

EP yes 01:15:05-8

T so the parent whose less involved with the school 01:15:10-2

I guess if its dads and sons 01:15:13-3
you think about you know dad and son football 01:15:15-9

EP mm mm 01:15:17-8

T kind of on a Saturday morning 01:15:20-8

EP ahhm 01:15:20-8

T in a school context 01:15:20-8

EP yes yes 01:15:20-8
T actually in a school 01:15:23-1
EP yes yes 01:15:23-1
T so that you were going into the school 01:15:24-9
EP yes 01:15:24-9
T and then the classes were open 01:15:27-7
EP yes 01:15:27-7
T and the child could wander 01:15:29-5
EP yes 01:15:29-5
T and show the dad what was on the wall 01:15:30-0
EP yes yes 01:15:30-0
T and the books could be out 01:15:31-8
EP yes yes 01:15:33-4
T and it was it was an opportunity to I guess to engage 01:15:37-7
EP yes 01:15:39-3
T with your child about their education 01:15:41-5
EP yes mm 01:15:41-5
T feel part of it in a way that may be just rolling up for a school 01:15:47-0
T you know parents evening once a year or once a term 01:15:49-4
T probably doesn't do 01:15:53-2
EP ahmm 01:15:53-2
T probably isn't sufficient 01:15:54-7 01:13:28-3
EP so that would be great wouldn't it can you see yourself doing 01:15:55-7
T that 01:15:56-6
T yeah 01:16:00-6
EP making that happen 01:16:01-7
T yes well yeah I mean I think it needs to be school and governor driven 01:16:10-8
T doesn't it an initiative like that 01:16:11-3
EP or PTA 01:16:11-3
PTA possibly -

um but yeah I mean y you can imagine something like that making a little bit of difference

actively sort of trying to create opportunities for dads and children

it does happen in some school in ...

does it I see

and it and there is a father's network

yeah that's good

there is a network of workers with fathers

yeah

in ...

it's been going now for about a year

so you know I mean there are things happening

I don't know what a network does I mean my illusion is that it's more about kind of dads getting together outside of school

no the network I'm talking about is a network of workers with dads

workers with dads

yes you know so so um people like for instance um people from the library

OK

people from the museum

yeah

people from um the th nurseries you know ...

OK

I mean I've been along to these network meetings myself

yes
a few times so I mean 01:17:21-3

yes 01:17:21-3

it does happen and there's um a um 01:17:28-0

a connection with the prison as well 01:17:30-6

ok yes 01:17:30-6

um er involving fathers who are actually in prison 00:17:40-5

and keeping the contact with children 01:17:42-9

yes 01:17:42-9

so I mean that is happening in ... 01:17:47-2

yep 01:17:48-0

yeah 01:17:48-0

yep 01:17:53-2

but um you know that probably isn't for the tape 00:17:52-8

Probably not use that 01:17:54-9

yeah 01:17:56-3

yeah 01:17:56-3

great 01:17:57-5

OK 01:17:57-5

lovely thank you 01:17:59-4

thank you;01:18-00
Appendix 6: Information sheet

The pilot work led to contact with the five fathers who were interviewed after signing consent forms and reading the information sheet.

A study of what Fathers say about their sons’ transition to school

This information sheet tells you about the background to the study, why it is important to do this research, what I would be inviting you to do and, if you decide to take part, what will happen afterwards.

Why it is important to do this research

Research shows that the educational outcomes for boys are improved if fathers are involved in their education. Often parent involvement is directed at mothers. The aim of this research is to explore the ideas and opinions of fathers about sons starting school. The study will find out your ideas and opinions about being the dad of a boy starting school. The study hopefully, will lead to ways of improving the process of boys starting school.

What you will be invited to do

Take part in an interview for about one and a half hours to talk about the process of your son starting school. The discussion will be digitally recorded and used to study your ideas and views. You will be asked to sign a consent form to show that you agree to take part in the study. If you want to leave the research study at any time you can do so without having to give your reasons.

What will happen afterwards?

You will be contacted with the results of the study and invited to comment on the findings. The study will be written as a thesis and your name will not be used so as to respect your anonymity. The study will be used to help fathers to be more involved in their children’s education.

Ethical approval
I have applied for Ethical approval from the University of Essex. All personal data will be protected by using a different name than your name. All information about you will be stored in a secure place under lock and key and transported in a locked container. All data on the computer will be protected by a pass word.
Appendix 7: Ethical approval letter

Declaration of Principal Investigator:
The information contained in this application, including any accompanying information, is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and correct. I/we have read the University’s Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in this application in accordance with the guidelines, the University’s Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice and any other conditions laid down by the University’s Ethics Committee. I/we have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my/our obligations and the rights of the participants.

Signature(s):

Name(s) in block capitals: MARY SHORTHOUSE

Date: 22 December 2008

Supervisor’s recommendation (Student Projects only):
I recommend that this project falls under Annex B / should be referred to the FEC (delete as appropriate).

Supervisor’s signature: ____________________________ 6.1.09

Outcome:
The Departmental Director of Research (DoR) has reviewed this project and considers the methodological/technical aspects of the proposal to be appropriate to the tasks proposed. The DoR considers that the investigator(s) has/have the necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in this application, and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise.

This application falls under Annex B and is approved on behalf of the FEC

This application is referred to the FEC

Signature(s):

Name(s) in block capitals: GILL GREEN

Department: 11.45
Appendix 8: Sketches (by Olivia Waller, Mary’s granddaughter)