

**An Empirical Study of Student Masculinities in an International School:  
Towards a Concept of 'Third Culture' Masculinity.**

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## **Abstract.**

This research explores how masculinity is constructed by students in a European-based international school. The study has two objectives. First, it examines the interplay between the culture of the school and young men's masculine identities and considers how the style of masculinity influences and is influenced by the culture of the school. Second, it explores this interplay by focusing on the institution, friendships and relationships between students, and the curriculum. Methodologically the research is underpinned by critical realism that recognises the mediated nature of reality, and is a situation where constructivism cannot be ignored. The research adopts a mixed-methods approach and considers both students and teachers. It draws upon questionnaires, classroom observations, and focus groups. It also integrates semi-structured interviews with a life histories method to capture young men's gendered worlds. The research finds that existing theoretical frames that have been used to understand young men's schooling experiences have limited analytical purchase in this context. As a consequence, the thesis argues that in order to understand young men's gendered identities in this international school context requires a concept of 'third culture' masculinity. Constituted through respect, tolerance, diversity, tactical heterosexuality, and female masculinity, 'third culture' masculinity becomes pivotal to how young men gender themselves and others in the school. The thesis concludes by suggesting that the negotiation of masculinity in this setting is a complex process of stabilisation and fragmentation. Furthermore the thesis argues that existing educational research on masculinity may benefit from understanding the formation of gender relations in an international schooling context.

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction.**

## **1.1 Introduction.**

Undertaking the school research for this study, one of the primary questions that continually nagged away at me was: “is there really anything different about this setting to what had been found in the past?” I had worked in international schools for twelve years and, on an informal basis, was aware of the differences that international schools can and do bring in a whole variety of different situations, from the way students interacted with each other through to how I planned and taught my classes. However, that is a very different proposition from considering and theorising how masculinity is interpreted and constructed in such a setting and trying to explain the position of masculinity in the culture of an international school. A number of questions were raised. Just as international schools have both advantages and disadvantages, would the same be true when considering a theoretical view of masculinity? How could I find out the style of masculinity that influences and is influenced by the culture of the school? What style of masculinity is being constructed in an international school and to what extent can this be interpreted within current theorising? Would it be possible to take the concept of ‘third culture’ kids and somehow explore and theorise what I was presuming would be ‘third culture’ masculinity? Thus the research would need to be able to both understand and theorise the situation in an international school and hence would need to have both constructivist and interpretivist elements to it. International schools are in one sense ‘confused’ spaces where many different behaviours, some which reinforce each other and some which contradict each other, sometimes for the positive and sometimes for the negative, take place on a daily basis. I needed some signs or symbols that this study had the potential to allow me to interrogate and potentially reinterpret previous theorising of masculinity in a way that would help explain and understand what was happening to the students in the school. I needed a signpost through the ‘confusion’.

Just as the saying goes ‘buses arrive two at a time’. There were two events that happened within a few days of each other which gave a strong indication that in terms of how masculinity is both constructed and theorised, the Dutch International School would provide information that would allow me to inform and interrogate the current theorising of masculinity, when the setting is an international school rather than a national school. These could be described as what Tripp (1993, P.24) calls critical incidents which refer to “a significant turning-point or change in the life of a person or

institution.” Interestingly, for a study on masculinity, they revolve around issues to do with femininity and girls.

The first was in an interview with Vagn who was the captain of the boys’ football team. I was interested in gaining an understanding of the role of boys and football (soccer), as it had figured so constantly in past research. Vagn was clearly a thoughtful and sensitive young man and we got to part of the conversation where we were talking about young men being masculine and how he interpreted this. He explained his viewpoint on this and I then asked if there were any boys in the school who were feminine. After a little thought, and a little tentatively, he said: “I guess people label me feminine with my style and stuff.” After a little more thought, and with a little more confidence, he went on to say: “Yeah, there are guys who are feminine, yes.” In a sense, here was the one person I had expected to show at least some stereotypical masculine traits, telling me with a degree of confidence that he was feminine!

A couple of days later I interviewed Elly, who I had seen and noted during classroom observations and had been part of one of the focus group interviews with a group of boys. I realised that she was self-confident and I wanted to interview her as the role she played with the group of boys had strong resemblances to that of a dominant male. In the interview she talked about her role and had a strong sense of being a girl amongst boys, but quite definitely a girl. After the interview I reflected on this, as I felt I had just undertaken an interview with a boy! This was nothing to do with physical appearance and having listened to the recording again, I realised that there were a number of things she had said which I would have expected a boy to say and not a girl. I give two examples of this. In the first she is talking about her academic success in relation to the boys in the group: “I think before I came there really was (competition between them) and then I came and I beat all of them and they were sort of like ‘I can’t compete because she’s going to beat us anyway’.” Very shortly after this Elly talks about the other girls in her ???<sup>1</sup> class and how many of them have dropped out: “All the girls just couldn’t take it.” The dismissive quality of the sentence came as a surprise! This was a girl in school who felt she had power.

So what is this study setting out to do? It is not that boys and girls in previous research have never made similar comments to these before, but the fact that they happened so

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<sup>1</sup> The use of ??? ensures that the subject and teacher of this class cannot be identified.

close in time to each other, raised questions around previous Western studies on masculinity that have often noted that boys should be violent and aggressive and girls acquiescent, for example (Willis 1977). What is often now presented as stereotypical behaviour indicates that the story of masculinity at the Dutch International School may be different; there is potential dissonance between the situation and previous academic research. Because of the intensity of the days in the school, during the research phase this felt like an in-depth study into schooling and boys. Yet when I was writing the focus became a consideration of interpreting and interrogating theories of masculinity and relating what I had found in the school to those theories. I was constantly trying to work with the theoretical, but could not leave the empirical research behind. Was this a study where the empirical informs the theory or the theory informs the empirical? In some ways this tension has never been fully resolved, but what this study is trying to do is to explore how masculinity is formed and shaped in an international school context and to use this to interrogate and interpret theories on masculinity. This research hopes to create the theoretical space for this to happen. In previous research there is often a tension between the absolute, for example the research of McCormack & Anderson (2010) and the fluid, as exemplified by the research of Kenway et al. (1998). This is as dependent on the researcher as it is on the theory or theories to which they subscribe. In this research a variety of perspectives will be considered, with the aim being that the theory produced is applicable. Ultimately, in this research masculinity and femininity are not seen as simplistic concepts that dovetail with each other, but as complex intertwined behaviours that influence both structure and performance. In one sense this research will challenge some of the existing views of masculinity.

## **1.2 The Objectives of the Research.**

In order to realise these aims and critically engage with masculinity theory, this research focuses on two specific strands that are informing, complex and interdependent. Through exploration of these two strands it is hoped to achieve a more detailed understanding of how masculinity is constituted in an international school context.

- (i) To consider how the style of masculinity influences and is influenced by the culture of the school.

Past research in a national setting suggests that masculinity and culture are intertwined and interlocked and this research follows the same assumption. Some research has been undertaken on international schools, yet few studies make the student voice central to theorising (Hayden & Thompson 1998; Allen 2000; Hayden et al. 2000; Cambridge 2000; Fail et al. 2004). Explanations of student behaviours and attitudes remain limited and there is limited engagement with recent social and cultural theory. There is little on the gendered identities of these schools. One of the main focuses has been on the concept of these students being 'global nomads', coming from, or having, a 'third culture' which in simple terms is seen as being an amalgam of their 'first', or home, culture and their second, or 'adopted', culture which is the country in which they are living. This has been interpreted under the concept of 'third culture kids' (Useem & Hill Useem 1993). This research will take on and explore the concept of 'third culture' as being the culture of an international school, one that is much more fluid, and will work with the idea that, just as with other aspects of culture, this culture is also gendered.

In this context 'third culture' will be viewed as flexible as something that is, in part, produced and developed by the inhabitants of the community and as something that has a degree of flexibility to it. It will assume that the identities of those within the culture are no longer wholly stable and will consider the role of hybridisation. Ultimately the term 'third culture' will be explored both as a slightly fragmented single culture and as multiple hybrid cultures that are more fragmented (c.f. section 7.2.1 and section 7.2.2). Consideration will be given to the role of the stable national culture of the host community, but within this the role of diversity and respect will be incorporated.

- (ii) To gain an understanding of the style of masculinity being constructed in an international school, giving consideration to the primary practices that influence this and how they interact with each other.

Many theorists agree that masculinity is a constructed characteristic and there are two main lines of approach to this, both of which will be considered in this research. The first way demonstrates a materialist approach which emphasises a structure based on social relations, work, institutions and family (Connell 1995). The second approach is more post-structuralist (Butler 1990), where there is an insistence on the mediated nature of our relationship with the world, a focus on meaning, and on language. In both approaches the actions and those who perform the actions are important considerations

and Drummond (2005b, P.276) highlights the problem from a researcher's perspective when he states:

One of the first questions that I ask male participants in my research projects is What does masculinity mean to you? Invariably, I am confronted with a blank look from the participant, who then attempts to conjure up an "answer" as if faced with some kind of test.

The diversity and difficulty in interpreting what it means to be masculine or to show masculinity from the perspective of a research participant is neatly demonstrated in the following definitions from students who were involved in this research.

Carl: Well it would mean more like jock, sporty. The sort of person who lifts weights, has a girlfriend. Does a lot of sport. Gets on with the guys as well as the girls.

Ciska: Buff. Also a strong personality. Someone that guys look up to.

Mick: Well if I think of the word masculine, first of all it reminds me of grammar in languages

Pascha: Obviously you have female and male, but I think a person can be both and I don't see it as something very clear because I like to mix the two very much.

Petra: Well, a person who acts tough, tougher than they actually are, likes to show off about something which is physical, acts like a complete idiot sometimes and usually has a good sense of humour.

Bob: Being very buff and rude.

Wagner: I don't know if I would ever use the term masculine to describe anyone. If I were to, the connotations it has for me are a bit impulsive, aggressive, dominating, that kind of thing.

Baltrus: I myself would stay well clear of those concepts. I find them very stereotypical and stuff. Because again in the subset of men there are lots of different characteristics and you can't really put them all under one name

Eliseo: That he doesn't like girls. Like he kind of disses girls. That he is against girls.

Abigail: Going back to the stereotypical definition, show-off, sports, arrogant.

Rosie: Also an extreme where males prove they are male. I don't think they are very good explanations. It's just like reinforcing the fact that they are as they are.

To what extent it is defined by the body, to what extent it is defined by behaviour and the degree and type of construction within this is part of the focus of this study. The fact that young men and women understand the various discourses regarding the embodiment of masculinity is not the central point of analysis. It is the degree to which the young men can negotiate and navigate the multiple, complex, and yet simultaneously often narrow, gendered pathways available (Kehler et al. 2005).

This research will make a case for suggesting that these previous approaches do not fully capture the complexity and fragmentation of masculinity in an international school and, following on from the idea that the school can be described as having a 'third culture', consideration will be given to interpreting and developing the concept of there being a 'third culture' masculinity. Much of the previous work has taken place in national settings in the developed world and a whole variety of different focuses have been taken. Some consider the roles of class, ethnicity and education in theorising masculinity (Pleck 1982; Brittan 1989; Kimmel 1990; Brod 1994; Seidler 1994; Connell 1995; Edley & Wetherell 1995; Weeks 2003); others have focused specifically on the link between masculinity, boys and schooling which looks at what has been termed by some the 'crisis' for boys – focusing on both the behaviour of boys in a school setting and also the apparent 'failure' of boys in an academic setting (Connell et al. 1982; Epstein 1997; Head 1999; Noble & Bradford 2000; Martino & Meyenn 2001; Skelton 2001; Frosh et al. 2002; Ashley 2003; Frank et al. 2003; Martino 2008). There has also been an equal focus on girls and schooling which both directly and indirectly considers



the role of boys (Walkerdine 1990; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Francis 2000; Morris-Roberts 2004).

The concept of 'third culture' masculinity will be considered as one which is fluid and socially constructed, one that is structured, but also one where young people need to negotiate masculinity within their everyday lives. The idea of structure will primarily be considered through Connell's theory on hegemonic masculinity giving consideration to power structures and the concept of a hierarchy (c.f. section 2.3.2). However, this theoretical perspective will need to take into account a tension between the stable identities that circulate through self-perception, peer groups, international, national and global discourses and the disrupted and fragmented identities where students are influenced by a whole range of different and varied cultural and media-related signifiers. To explain this, within the structure of 'third culture' masculinity there is a strongly interpretivist element being used by students, which draws on the work of Goffman (1959), Butler (1990) and Halberstam (1998) (c.f. section 2.3.3). Thus 'third culture' masculinity will be considered as a negotiation between the institutional and the subjective (c.f. section 7.5). This thesis focuses on exploring the construction of masculinity within an international school and consideration will be given to: the schooling space and its location in Holland, including a focus of how teachers would fit within that space; the friendships, relationships and linguistic interactions between students; and, finally, aspects of the curriculum. Although these are in one sense treated independently, the inter-related and inter-connected nature of these practices will not be lost, as trying to focus on any single one of them potentially renders the explanations rather simplistic and it is essential that the way masculinity and masculinity theory is considered acknowledges that it is "relational, contradictory and multiple" (Frosh et al. 2002, P.3).

### **1.3 The Setting.**

To gain a full understanding of the complexity of this situation, it is essential that the researcher knows the participants of the research intimately, seeing the world through the eyes of the participants and entering into their experiences (Goodley 1996). Given this, certain pragmatic concerns also had to be addressed in that the school had to be accessible from the UK at reasonable cost and had to be willing for the researcher to spend a lot of time working with both students and teachers on a one-to-one basis.

Hence, the decision was made that the focus of the study would be one school, a large international school situated on the edge of one of the major cities in the Netherlands, under the pseudonym of the Dutch International School.

This study focuses on the group of ninety-nine students who were starting year 12 in September 2007 and, hence, were beginning the final two years of school and consequently starting the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. All were invited to take part in the research. This allowed a sixteen-month study to take place, following the students through a major part of their last two years in the school. Because of financial and time constraints, it was not possible for the researcher to be present in the school for the entire period, but the research took place over the course of seven visits of between three days and a week and, hence, this research can be seen as a case study. This is not a case study in the sense of gaining a simplistic understanding of the dynamics involved in a single setting that provide a description and test theory, but as understood by Kenway et al. (1998, P.xv) where there is concern “about social and cultural processes and products, particularly the ways they work on people’s subjectivity and the ways in which people work on them.” The researcher was allowed to interview any students, without a member of the school staff being present, was permitted entry to any class and was allowed to interview teachers. Gaining such unlimited and unmonitored access to such an institution is not easy to negotiate (c.f. chapter 3, section 3.3.4) and being allowed this opportunity was seen as a major privilege. In many ways this was a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the workings of an international school and to observe and hear about the interactions that take place and hence consider both the construction and theorising of masculinity within the school.

### ***1.3.1 What Constitutes an International School?***

There were a number of philosophical and pragmatic concerns over choosing the school. The term ‘international school’ is an over-arching term for a whole variety of very different schools, and many schools around the world call themselves international schools. But exactly what constitutes this, and what the schools themselves mean by this, is often not clear. Those who have researched international schools have a diversity of views on this and Cambridge & Thompson (2000) note, among others, three different viewpoints from three different researchers, which suggest that international schools:

- Promote education with international understanding, have a multinational student body and teaching staff, operate either a multinational or international curriculum and must offer bilingual teaching and teach the local language (Ronsheim 1970 cited Cambridge & Thompson 2000, P.3).
- Must enrol many students who are not host nationals, have a multinational board, have multinational teaching staff, study at least three languages and operate a curriculum that reflects the instructional practices of many national systems (Terwilliger 1972 cited Cambridge & Thompson 2000, P.4).
- Should have a diversity of input from both teachers and students and demonstrate the social adaptability of the students (Hill 1994 cited Cambridge & Thompson 2000, P.5).

Overall, there is a whole range of interpretations. Taking into account the previous literature and given the researcher's past experience, for the purposes of this research an international school was defined as having the following qualities:

- Students are from a diversity of cultures, including both local students and expatriate students with no single nationality or racial group having an overall dominance;
- Teachers are not solely from the host country;
- English is used as the primary teaching medium, but there is strong support within the school for mother-tongue language;
- Teaches the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

### ***1.3.2 The Institution.***

The Dutch International School opened in 1983 and is located on the edge of a major city in Holland. It offers an education for students aged from 3 to 18 and teaches the International Primary Curriculum, the IB Middle Years Programme and IB Diploma Programme to approximately 1050 students. There are approximately 200 students in the final two years of school. It is a co-educational day school with boarding facilities available nearby. The school is private and fee-paying but is subsidised by the Dutch Ministry of Education and is subject to Ministry regulations. It is part of a group of schools that are administered collectively under what is called a 'stichting' in Dutch, but is unique in that it has its own buildings and in many ways operates as a school in its own right. The school was set up to serve the international community and to serve Dutch nationals with an international connection. The latter means it serves the families

of Dutch parents who have worked overseas, Dutch parents who will be taking their children overseas in the future and the children of parents where one is a Dutch national and the other is not. Hence, the school is not open to the whole population. It is not an academically selective school and provided students fit the criteria in terms of nationality, and there is free space in the school, they can enter the school. Over the years the school has grown and it is currently located in a new, specially designed building, completed in 2006.

### ***1.3.3 The Students.***

The range of nationalities of the students in the school is shown in the Table 1 below.

<b>A</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>T</b>
American	Ecuadorian	Jamaican	Polish	Taiwanese
Argentinean	Egyptian	Jordanian	Portuguese	Thai
Australian	Estonian			Turkish
Austrian	Ethiopian	<b>K</b>	<b>Q</b>	
				<b>U</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>F</b>	Kenyan	<b>R</b>	Ugandan
Bangladeshi	Filipino	Kzachstani	Romanian	Ukrainian
Belarussian	Finnish		Russian	Uruguayan
Belgian	French	<b>L</b>		
Bolivian		Latvian	<b>S</b>	<b>V</b>
Brazilian	<b>G</b>	Lebanese	Salvadoran	Venezuelan
British	German	Lithuanian	Serbian /	Vietnamese
Bulgarian	Greek		Montenegrin	
		<b>M</b>	Slovak	<b>Y</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>H</b>	Macedonian	South African	Yemeni
Cameroonian	Hungarian	Malaysian	South Korean	
Canadian		Maldivian	Spanish	<b>Z</b>
Cape Verdean	<b>I</b>	Mongolian	Sri Lankan	Zimbabwean
Chilean	Indian		Swedish	
Chinese	Indonesian		Swiss	
Colombian	Iranian	<b>N</b>		
Croatian	Irish	Nepalese		
Czech	Israeli	New Zealander		
	Italian	Nigerian		
<b>D</b>	Ivorian	North Korean		
Danish		Norwegian		
Dominican				
Dutch				
		<b>O</b>		

Table 1: Student Nationalities.

Like other international schools, the student body at the Dutch International School has a transitory nature, but the students can be categorised into three specific groups:

- Non-Dutch students who have spent a significant part of their lives in international schools;

- Dutch students who have lived overseas, will be going to live overseas, or who have one foreign born parent;
- Non-Dutch students who are in an international setting for the first time.

However, for the purposes of considering student interactions, these groupings have little meaning as they are not the groupings that are formed. Thus, unlike the ethnographies of Willis (1977), Hey (1997) and Frosh et al. (2002), the concept of what would be described in those studies as racial/ethnic/class-based divisions in friendship only happens to a limited extent at the Dutch International School and it is not how students or teachers make sense of the groups or cliques that exist in that year group.

Although there is a reasonable degree of flexibility in how these students interpreted their social situation within the school, there was strong evidence from question thirteen in the student questionnaire, and from observation, that there were three main places within the school where these students were most likely to be found, outside of class.

- On the second floor of the school, there is a balcony area and a single distinguishable group of students can always be found here.
- On the first floor of the school is an area that is called the IB room which is an area with couches and chairs. The students found here make up a number of distinguishable groups.
- There is also an area next door to this which is meant to be a quiet work area and a number of distinguishable groups can be found there.

Previous research (Walkerdine 1990; Griffiths 1995; Frosh et al. 2002; Whitehead 2002) indicates that both boys and girls form different styles of groups, with boys stereotypically forming larger groups that may be close, but not intimate, whereas girls groups are likely to be smaller and more intimate. The work of Tolson (1977) and Connell (1995) both indicate how these can be sites for the development of specific types of masculinity (and femininity), with students conforming to very specific norms. The groups noted in previous research where this happens are single sex groups and within this year group at the Dutch International School, with the exception of the ‘football boys’, none of the groups are single sex, thus making the role that friendship groups play in influencing masculinity different from much of the previous research. Neither the ‘traditional’ male group, with very clear guidelines for conduct, nor the

female friendships of smaller but more intimate groups, appear to happen in the school in this year group. What appears to be happening in the Dutch International School is that this experience, rather than occasionally being seen in a school-based setting, is the norm. This will be considered in more detail through the relationships between students in chapter five and with reference to curriculum in chapter six.

In one sense, students at the school suggest that it does not necessarily make sense to talk about friendship groups at all, as noted by James and Gary:

James: I don't have a special group of friends – I interact with all students.

Gary: It's not like the culture that I saw in other international schools where you had the jocks and the people who studied hard. You don't get that at all because I think there is more mutual respect.

However, although there is clearly fluidity between groups, it was evident from observation, and from the interviews, that there were a number of groups that could be labelled by both students and teachers. These are:

- The 'football boys': This is the only recognised male group and many interviews make mention of this specific group. It consists of five young men Eliseo, Jean, Juan, Vagn, and Petru who hang around together in the IB room and either play or discuss football.
- The 'balcony group': This is a group that this study distinguishes by the space it occupies, but is named by students in a number of ways, many of which indicate that academic success is important to these students. The main members of the group are Renier, Guillaume, Amanda, Lan, Raimondo, Uwe, Giles, Baltrus, Boukje, Gideon, Gary, Wagner, Justin, Ian and Elly.
- The 'Rens group': In Holland, there are boarding houses for older students whose parents are working overseas. However, these boarding houses are not affiliated to one particular school. For the Dutch International School, the students come from the boarding house called the Rensveiderhaus and in year 12 there are four students who live there: Ciska, Aalbert, Falko and Ode.
- The 'Alternatives': This is a mixed group and both the boys and girls in the group wear unusual clothing, exhibit non-gender stereotypical behaviour and, in some cases, wear all black clothing and heavy make-up, stereotypically

associated with the Goth movement. The main members of this group are Jan, Nastusia, Kai, Virginia, Carl, Lazaro and Pascha.

Reference will be made to all four groups throughout the analysis.

#### ***1.3.4 Where the School is Situated Theoretically.***

This research is based on the premise that schools are gendered spaces and are places where gender is formed, but there are similarities and differences in comparison to previous research. Previous research into masculinity formation in schools has been undertaken in national schools where there maybe a multi-ethnic setting, but they are often quite mono-cultural and the actual role of multi-culturalism has not been one of the main considerations. Thus the idea that this is a multi-cultural, international school located in a national setting and the fact that there is a dynamic interaction between them is key to this research. However, similar to previous research in the field, this study will put the idea of the ‘culture’ of the school at the forefront; previous research (Willis 1977; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Frosh et al. 2002) all suggest that this is key to how the students in the school make sense of gender. In past research, there are a number of ways in which the social construction of masculinity has been interpreted, but these fit into two main categories, structural theories and post-structural theories. A structured approach is one where the framework for the structure often comes from either class or patriarchy (Tolson 1977; Seidler 1994; Connell 1995; Hearn 1996). Hence masculinity has been considered through a materialist structure and then through the lens of a more autonomous cultural structure. In post-structural masculinities, as with a patriarchal structure, power still has a key role to play, but rather than being a structure of power hierarchies, it is now more widely dispersed and, in one sense, it operates through language (Goffman 1959; Butler 1990; MacInnes 1998; Butler 2004). In this situation the concept of ‘performance’ is significant. This research will consider masculinity from both perspectives and will attempt to theorise what is happening in the Dutch International School. Again, similarly to previous research, the role of students in determining the social construction of gender is key as is those who run the institution, namely the teachers. These are areas that are seen as important by many researchers and theorists, irrespective of their philosophical standpoints (Stenhouse 1967; Tolson 1977; Connell 1995; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003). The key spaces that much previous research focuses on, friendships and relationships, the language used between students, and sport will also be a focus on this study. However these familiar scenarios will need



to be considered in the context of research into international schools and the experience of both teachers and students in international schools. Thus the challenge of this setting is to consider the theories of construction of masculinity in an environment that has not specifically been under consideration before.

#### **1.4 Realising the Objectives.**

To be able to undertake this study, a number of philosophical and pragmatic concerns had to be addressed. These are the background of the researcher and the motivation for undertaking the research, and the methodology chosen to undertake the research.

##### ***1.4.1 The Motivation for the Research and the Background of the Researcher.***

The motivation for this research comes from the interest and background of the researcher. I have worked as a teacher for eighteen years, twelve of them teaching in international schools in Egypt and in Tanzania. Both the schools that I have worked in overseas were successful schools where, on the whole, students were highly respectful of difference and also very proud of what they called being ‘international’. Given the amount of press coverage that there has been in the U.K referring to problems of cultural integration within schools and the ‘problems’ of boys’ schooling, it was decided that it would be interesting to find out whether international schools make a difference in terms of the construction of masculinity and, if so, how that difference is made. From the literature it became obvious that very little research had been undertaken on international schools and gender, with most past research focusing on what it actually means to be “international” and the effect of the curriculum.

The background of the researcher is important in this research. As a forty-seven-year-old, white, British, gay man, this automatically gives me a standpoint and a quite specific relationship with the parties involved in this research. In terms of the teachers in the Dutch International School, I have a similar professional background, am very similar in age to many of them and also in terms of life experience, having lived in expatriate cultures for many years. For this group, I presented myself as a former international schoolteacher who was now doing research at university. I have also been involved with the training of teachers for the IB Diploma Programme and have great familiarity with the programme. This information was shared with teachers as it

produces a concurrency with members of staff in the school. However, this potentially acts as a double-edged sword. On the one hand the researcher has long-term experience of this setting, and hence have massive background knowledge, but on the other hand there is the danger that the researcher has already processed that knowledge implicitly and hence there is a risk of misconceptions (Hammersley 1992). This will be addressed by the methodology. With parents, the researcher was again presented as a former international school teacher who was now working as a researcher at university, since the idea of being a former teacher increased the legitimacy for him to be in the school.

As far as students are concerned, the relationship to the researcher is very important. From their perspective, I am seen as a lot older and as an adult, but not as a teacher. Students were not told as a matter of course of my background in teaching – as far as the students were concerned, I am working at the University of Newcastle. There was no definite intention to hide this information, but a conscious decision was made to not position myself as a teacher, but to position myself as working for the university. This was partly to make students feel more relaxed when working with me and the idea was also that by not identifying me as a teacher, they would be more likely to give certain types of information (c.f. chapter 3 section 3.2.2). I am well aware that I am not of an age where I will be seen as a peer of the students and I have no wish to be seen as the ‘oldest swinger in town’. However, being a former head of sixth form with a responsibility for the pastoral care of students, and holding a Masters degree in Guidance and Counselling, this allowed certain advantages in terms of being highly experienced in working with this age group, especially in regard to sensitive issues. As Hammersley (1992, P.145) states:

There are no overwhelming advantages to being an insider or an outsider. Each position has advantages *and* disadvantages, though these will take on slightly different weights, depending on the particular circumstances and purposes of the research.

As a former teacher going into a school, there is also an automatic reaction whereby my initial position is to take on the role of a teacher. This was one of the hardest things about conducting this research – realising that in this context I had very little power within the school. Hence, gaining access to background information, which would be very straightforward in a school where I had worked, becomes quite difficult to

negotiate and was dependent on spending time making the necessary contacts. It also means that I could no longer make assumptions about what I would be told and what I would not.

#### ***1.4.2 The Methodology.***

This is not a quantitative piece of research leading to explicit, absolute theories, but a study that sought to develop a deep understanding of the gendered world of these students. A mixed-methods approach was utilised in this research but, slightly unusually, with the research starting from a quantitative base and with further depth coming from the resulting qualitative analysis as opposed to the more common method of an initial qualitative phase, showing the scope of the research, followed up with quantitative methods to 'secure' the results. The reason behind this relates to the fact that the research was trying to understand the lives of these students and teachers to gain an understanding of how they interpret certain behaviours and actions and then to consider this in terms of masculinity construction and theory. Within this research, a critical realist approach has been taken. This assumes that there is a reality within this research, one that potentially exists alongside other realities, but also recognises that the idea of constructivism cannot be ignored (Scott 2005). This thesis uses questionnaires, focus groups, and classroom observation to gain an understanding of how students enhance and develop their worlds. It also integrates semi-structured interviews with a life histories method and respondents were asked to explore the significance of the context in which events unfolded and their sense of their role within these events, thus emphasising the constructive and the interpretive nature of this research. Thematic analysis was used to interpret these.

The researcher began by issuing questionnaires to students and teachers and the analysis of the student questionnaire then informed the topic guide which was used in the focus group interviews with students. The information gained from this exercise was then analysed and informed the interview guide for the one-to-one, semi-structured interviews with students. The analysis of the teacher questionnaire informed the production of the interview guide for use with the one-to-one, semi-structured interviews with teachers. Over the time in the school, thirty-six lesson observations were made and a questionnaire was issued to parents which allowed for comparisons to be made with what was found in the interviews.

## **1.5 The Themes to be Investigated.**

The results from the questionnaires, together with the literature review, indicated three major areas of importance in terms of this research. These are outlined below.

- How masculinities are formed in an institutional context, with a focus on the school as both national and international and the influence of the people who run it. This is the focus of chapter four.

Due to the profile of the students in the school, consideration will be given to the role that Dutch culture may play in the school and this will be combined and considered in terms of what is known about the culture of international schools, which are seen as transient, diverse, respectful and tolerant. Consideration will be given to idea of ‘third culture’ kids, which is much mentioned in previous research (Hayden & Thompson 1998; Hayden et al 2000; Fail et al. 2004; McLachlan 2007; Grimshaw & Sears 2008) and the role of this ‘third culture’ will be considered in detail. There has been much previous research into the role of teachers in schools, in terms of masculinity (Francis 2000; Robinson 2000; Frosh et al. 2002; Reid et al. 2004; Martino 2008b), and the initial questionnaire given to students indicated that this was a potential area for further research in the Dutch International School. Much has been written (Skelton 2001; Dupper & Meyer-Adams 2002; Kimmel & Mahler 2003) about the specific role of male teachers, how they treat boys and girls differently and potentially construct themselves as ‘laddish’. Equally, a lot of consideration has been given to girls and schooling, focusing on the positive influence of female teachers and the potentially negative influence of male teachers (Walkerdine 1990; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Francis 2000). This research will focus on both male and female teachers.

- The construction of masculinity through students’ friendships, the names students call each other, and their intimate relationships will be considered. This is the focus of chapter five.

Students at the Dutch International School indicated the importance of friendships between students and this study will consider how this influences, and is influenced by, the styles of masculinity in the school. Again, this is a key location noted by theorists

(Willis 1977; Seidler 1992; Thorne 1993; Hey 1997; Morris-Roberts 2004; Chambers 2006) where there are a variety of discussions on the style and role of both male and female friendships. Secondly, consideration will be given to the names that students most commonly call each other. These have a basis in sex or provoke connotations related to sex, with the names used for boys focusing on the potentially negative construction of homosexuality and, in the girls' case, on the negative construction of a hyper-heterosexuality (Haywood 1996). Much work has been undertaken in looking at the role of sexualised name-calling, to what extent it can be classified as bullying and the degree to which the names actually retain a sexualised nature. These will be considered in the context of the Dutch International School. Finally, the role these ideas play will be reflected upon in a more material sense through the intimate relationships of the students in year 12. There are two situations here - male students who can be thought of as what Haywood (1996) calls hyper-heterosexuals and the idea of male students portraying non-homosexuality where they are doing 'enough' to ensure they are not perceived as homosexual. The focus here will be on how students make sense of these situations and how this then relates to both the construction and theorising of masculinity in the setting of this school.

- The role of the curriculum in theorising and constructing masculinity, specifically academic success and sport. This is the focus of chapter six.

It is clear from the responses from students and teachers in the Dutch International School that, in certain ways, sport and academic success are important to certain groups of students. This is similar to what has been found in previous research. For example, the position of academic girls is discussed in the research of Hey (1997) and the unacceptability of being a boy undertaking hard work or being considered as an academic student is reflected on in the research of Willis (1977). A number of researchers (Epstein et al. 2001; Renold 2002; Ashley 2003) have stressed the role of sport in the formation of masculinity in boys. In this chapter careful consideration will be given to both the specific similarities and differences in the school and to what extent these practices become absolute in any way, in terms of constructing and theorising masculinity. The primary focus will be on how the boys in the Dutch International School make sense of this, but the role that girls play will also be considered in detail. The latter will be considered from two different perspectives. Firstly, this study will consider the role of 'female masculinity', where the formation of masculinity is

dissociated from the male, as suggested by Halberstam (1998) and MacInnes (1998). Secondly, consideration will be given to the idea that girls play a significant role in forming and understanding masculinity in boys - dominant, subordinate or otherwise. This fits in with the ideas of Kummel (1990), Connell (1995) and Weeks (2003) who give consideration to the idea that we understand masculinity through power relations, in which we consider the power of dominant men over both women and non-normative masculinities.

## **1.6 Conclusion.**

Through this research, an insight into the experiences and behaviours of the students in the Dutch International School will be gained. This will lead to an exploration of the culture of the school, which will be considered under the concept of 'third culture'. Given that there is an assumed link between the culture of the school and the style of masculinity this suggests the concept of 'third culture' masculinity. This will be considered in detail and in light of previous theories on the construction of masculinity.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review.**

## **2.1 Introduction.**

This research investigates the experiences of students with regard to the construction of masculinity in the setting of an international school. It does this through two strands. The first of these strands aims to gain an understanding of the styles of masculinity being constructed in an international school, giving consideration to the primary practices that influence this and how they interact. Primary practices involve or refer to the institution, the relationships and friendships between students and between students and teachers, and two aspects of the curriculum: academic success and sport. The second strand is to consider how these styles of masculinity influence and are influenced by the culture of the school.

The aim of this chapter is to set up the theoretical frameworks for the consideration of masculinity in the Dutch International School. These frameworks are valuable because there is a range of theoretical positions taken in previous research and they are not all coherent and come from different disciplines and different philosophical backgrounds, reflecting the idea of theoretical pluralism (McKie 2006). The chapter will be considered in two parts. The first part looks at the theories of the constitution of masculinity, beginning with a background to the study of gender and masculinity. It then focuses on theoretical approaches to masculinity including previous work on masculinity that has been undertaken in situations relevant to schooling, giving consideration to the role of power. Two particular positions are identified. The first position is around materialist perspectives of masculinity identity formation, including those who identify a class or patriarchal dynamic. The second position looks at the disconnection between structure, meaning and practice; more specifically it is argued that the relationship between structure and gendered identity is not self-evident. The second part of this chapter focuses more specifically on the cultural sources through which masculinity is formed in this context, looking at the background and different interpretations of international schools and on the practices that influence masculinity identity formation: the institution, friendships and relationships, and the curriculum. The first part of the literature review gives the background to what is constructed and the second part to how it is constructed.



## **PART ONE**

### **2.2 The Historical Background to Studying Sexual and Gendered Identities.**

#### ***2.2.1 History Prior to the Rise of the Natural Sciences.***

Throughout history, there have been constant attempts to describe and account for the ‘different’ behaviours of men and women (Laqueur 1990; Nye 1999). Before the industrial revolution and the rise of the natural sciences, the differences between men and women were essentially philosophical ones, where men were seen as rational and autonomous agents and the concept of female was in contrast to this (Laqueur 1990; Nye 1999). Prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, strong arguments were made that there was only one sex and that in fact women were inverted men, and female genitalia were the “same” as male genitalia except they were on the inside. The implication of this was that women were less perfect than men (Laqueur 1990). The bodies of men and women were seen as different with the

cold, wet humors said to dominate women’s bodies and to influence their social qualities – deceptiveness, changeability, instability – while the hot, dry humors in men supposedly account for their honor, bravery, muscle tone, and general hardness of body and spirit (Laqueur 1990, P.108).

These ideas indicate the social construction of the physiology of sex and in effect disturb the conventional understanding of a constructed gender and a trans-historical notion of biological sex.

By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, explanations based on science were developing. This type of thought was undertaken by men and this further reinforced distinctions that already existed between male and female roles at the time, leaving open the possibility of a distinct male and female consciousness and thought process (Laqueur 1990). During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, not only did the concept of men and women change, but there was an acknowledgment of there being a variety of men. Initially, Kimmel (1994) suggests that two models of manhood prevailed which were based on action and class, but he suggests that in the 1830s a new version of masculinity appeared - marketplace manhood. This was the beginning of an acknowledgment of different masculinities and

Rutherford (1997) notes both that these are influenced by social position and that they can change. However, an explanation of these characteristics was required and the natural sciences and reason provided this.

### ***2.2.2 Scientific Accounts of Gender and Sexuality.***

At the beginning of this period, the physical differences in the body were seen as fairly reliable markers, most notably having a penis or not, and gender was based simply on a physical classification (Alsop et al. 2002). However, the classification went beyond this and the physical characteristics were seen as a representation of certain inner attributes which made people either masculine or feminine. This was not a totally successful approach as it did not explain any man who had attributes that were classed as feminine, or vice versa. By the early twentieth century, scientists had moved away from explanations based around physical organs and had become focussed on sex hormones as a way of distinguishing between male and female (Oudshoorn 1994). The argument was presented that these hormones affect the development of the brain which then fixes the different characteristics of male and female, an idea which is now considered questionable because the difference in male and female brains does not show up until well after birth (Alsop et al. 2002).

Over the last fifty years there have been further explanations provided by scientists to the effect that sex difference can now be determined by genetics and it is these genetic differences that cause males and females to act differently. An example of this is the selfish gene hypothesis. However, Fausto-Sterling (1993) and Weeks (2003) point out that only one gene in 100 000 distinguishes men from women and, furthermore, chromosomes do not produce accurate markers. Hence a genetic approach to gender also becomes questionable.

It is through this background that explanations have been provided about the physical construction of sex difference. This is then directly linked to boys' behaviour, which produces and reduces the explanations provided for any behaviour to the idea that 'boys will be boys' and hence their behaviour and performance in school, for example, is solely because they are scientifically boys. This style of explanation is difficult to justify because the absolute link between biological essentialism and psychological and behavioural communalities is highly questionable. To try to explain this further, a

different scientific approach was adopted with the development of psychoanalytical theory.

Theorising sexual difference through psychoanalysis allows for a more direct and causal link between the physical and the behavioural, which suggests a more psycho-social explanation of gender. In the early twentieth century, Freud and his associates began to look at gender in a psychoanalytical way. Freud suggested that gender is formed through the sexual and emotional entanglement between parents and child, which is summarised by Benjamin (2003, P.233):

The boy loves his mother and wishes to possess her, hates his father and wishes to replace or murder him. Given the father's superior power (the threat of castration), the boy renounces the incestual wish towards the mother and internalises the prohibition and the paternal authority itself.

A number of other people worked on gender from a psychoanalytic perspective. Adler, like Freud, started from the opposition of masculinity and femininity and his belief was that submission and striving for independence occur together in a child's life, setting up an internal contradiction between masculinity and femininity. In boys' normal development some kind of balance is struck, but if there is weakness there will in turn be anxieties which will motivate an exaggerated emphasis on masculine behaviours. This became known as 'masculine protest' (Adler 1992), a concept that is later developed by Connell (1995). Jung looked at gender in relation to the gender dynamics of marriage, again recognising the presence of femininity in masculinity. According to Connell (1994, P.21): "He (Jung) suggested that to the extent a man identifies himself with a strong, authoritative masculine persona, 'he becomes inwardly a woman,' ... ." Horney took the work further when she looked at the boy's fear of the mother and introduced the idea that masculinity is a structure of overcompensation. The work of Chodorow (1978) discusses the idea that masculinity is a representation of the struggle to reject the feminine, an emotional separation which is the result of the mother being the primary caregiver and the person with whom a boy identifies. As Weeks (2003) suggests, these ideas allowed for a radical re-examination of the rigid distinctions between men and women. Thus, psychoanalytic theory is a much more successful link between the theoretical and the behavioural and the conclusion is reached that 'boys will be boys' because they are hard-wired to be so. Having said that, it still remains

problematic and ultimately, in a psychoanalytical approach, it is unclear what sort of men and women are being commented on and it does not account for diversity within a specific culture (Edley & Wetherell 1995).

The indications were now clear that any sort of theorisation of gender needed to consider both the biological and the social. The key person in the development of sex role theory was Talcott Parsons in the early 1950s and within this he gave consideration to the role of women as well as looking at the issue of sex and gender through the concept of the family. The rise of second-wave feminism saw a massive increase in sociological research under the auspices of sex-role research and through this there was a recognition that women's roles had to be considered within the context of men's roles, leading to a focus on power relations (Carrigan et al. 1985). Sex-role theory has a dualistic nature where there are "the set of behaviors and characteristics widely viewed as (1) typical of women or men (*sex role stereotypes*), and (2) desirable for women or men (*sex role norms*)" (Pleck 1982, P.10). This explains why, in personality, the male role may be characterised as aggressive, achievement oriented and emotionally inexpressive. Sex-role theory was successful in exploring a plurality of roles between different cultures, arguing that masculinity and femininity are possibly intertwined in some way and that it is not a neat dualistic notion. However, sex-role theory does not account for there being many different masculinities and femininities within a culture, it does not allow for changes and it does not take account of the fact that some people learn, accept and follow specific social roles, while others do not (Pleck 1982; Carrigan et al. 1985; Brittan 1989; Connell 1995; Edley & Wetherell 1995). As Edley & Wetherell (1995, P.70) suggest, if it is to work, "then it follows that somewhere among this gigantic curriculum there must be a particular sub-set of lessons about the meaning of masculinity". Ultimately, it does not allow for any deviance from the pre-determined script and cannot explain successfully exceptions to the rule; any deviances, for example homosexuality, are treated as a biological defect or a psychological problem.

### ***2.2.3 Social Cultural Background.***

As has been demonstrated there are a number of problems with attempting to attribute psychological and behavioural characteristics to a scientific base. This does not mean that an account based on nature is wholly incorrect and the importance of biology is still recognised. The human body provides the physiology that makes having a sexual

identity possible, but as Weeks (2003) acknowledges, it is not the cause of the patterns of gender and sexuality. Hence a distinction was made whereby male and female referred to the biological differences and the terms masculinity and femininity came to be used to describe psychological and behavioural traits that were viewed in varying degrees as socially constructed (Brittan 1989).

There are two main basic approaches to theories regarding the social construction of gender. The first way demonstrates a materialist approach which, according to Alsop et al. (2002), emphasises a structure based on social relations, work, institutions and family. As Bradley (1996, P.6) suggests:

In structural approaches, societies are frequently conceptualised as systems in which parts work together to provide an integrated whole. Individual behaviour is seen as constrained by social structures.

Materialist, structured approaches have been primarily researched in two ways. Firstly, they have been looked at through a feminist lens and have been a central theme of feminist research (Delphy 1984; Jackson & Jones 1998). Secondly, it has been looked at by men working with studies of men and/or masculinity, which itself can be roughly split into two fields: one that celebrates masculinity and male bonding (Bly 1990) and the other that focuses on the potential power of men (Tolson 1977; Kimmel 1994; Connell 1995). This study will focus on the latter interpretation.

The second approach is a more interpretivist approach, where there is an insistence on the mediated nature of our relationship with the world, a focus on meaning, and on language, an approach noted by (Brittan 1989; Butler 1990; Halberstam 1998; Harding 1998; Paechter 1998; Hearn & Parkin 2001; Weeks 2003). This would suggest that the words masculine and feminine no longer have a fixed or closed meaning, can vary over time, and are open to contest and debate (Alsop et al. 2002); it is often linked to the concept of performance and a script. As Butler (2004, P.42) states:

Gender is not exactly what one “is” nor is it precisely what one “has”. Gender is the apparatus by which the production and normalization of masculine and feminine take place ... .

Weeks (2003) further suggests that we act according to a “script” which sets out the parameters for our behaviour, but leaves open certain individual choice. Gagnon & Simon (2005) suggest this sexual “script” has two major dimensions. The first of these deals with the external, the interpersonal, which allows the participants to take part in a mutually dependent, complex act and the second deals with the internal, what could be called the motivational elements. Woods (1983) works with the idea of the symbolic interactionist tradition whereby “meanings are created through the process of social interaction” (Grimshaw & Sears 2008, P.264), and individuals are conscious rational beings in control of their actions, where gender difference is created in some situations and ignored or changed in others. If these viewpoints are taken to an absolute conclusion, Butler (1990) suggests that the type of body a person has and the gender presented may not have any connection, thus severing the connection between gendered categories and biological categories, an argument that is taken up by Halberstam (1998) through the notion of female masculinity. This study will also consider masculinity through this lens.

Often a simple dichotomy is established between sex and gender, where sex is seen to be a reasonably fixed, dualistic, biologically-determined notion and gender is interpreted as the socially constructed actions that are linked to sex. On a basic level there is a truth to this, but the situation is actually more complex. This section has challenged the supposed neutrality of sex, identified some of the limits of psychoanalysis and shown the diversity of social constructivist perspectives. Simple linear models do not work in this context and this research will now consider this in detail through the concept of masculinity.

### **2.3 Masculinity and Schooling: Structuralist and Post-structuralist Approaches.**

In the last section, two different interpretations of the social construction of gender were mapped out and in this section the specifics of what this means for the concept of masculinity in a schooling situation will be explored. Accepting that society and culture have a key role to play in the formation of masculine identities, it is argued that schools play a key role. Giroux (1988) suggests that schools both influence and shape society and Renold (2002, P.429) states: “Schools are the key site for the production of masculinities, femininities and sexualities, particularly the role of hegemonic heterosexual masculinities.” There is a focus in this section on multiple masculinities,

which is interpreted not as one man, one masculinity but that “(m)ultiple masculinities are, rather, multiple possibilities opened up in our culture which expand rather than constrain the opportunities for men to live rewarding lives for themselves and others” (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998, P.49/50).

There are potentially two approaches to the concept of masculinity as a structure, where structure refers to the concept of structuring properties, “which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them ‘systematic’ form” (Giddens 1984, P.17). Tolson (1977) and Seidler (1994), for example, look at the structures imposed through working conditions and class divisions, echoing the concepts of socialist theory. In contrast, Connell (1995) and Hearn (1996) focus on the concept of masculinity in relation to men’s power and privilege over women and ‘other’ men. In a post-structuralist approach, the idea of patriarchy is still understood, but it is no longer an external structure on which to build the concept of masculinity. The concept of ‘gender’ is no longer seen as self-evident and it will consider how boys construct masculinity in a schooling situation where they are active in this construction and where this construction is based on the concept of a ‘performance’ being given along with there being a ‘script’. These three approaches will now be considered in detail.

### ***2.3.1 Masculinity as a class structure.***

In this section, masculinity will be considered under the labels of working-class masculinity, middle-class masculinity and ruling-class masculinity. In terms of how class structure is considered within the experience of schooling, one of the most iconic ethnographies was undertaken by Willis (1977), who looked at the attitude of working-class boys to schooling. He suggests that their masculinity is defined by low academic success, success with girls, humour, hiding emotions and a degree of physicality (c.f. Pleck (1982) and Barrett (2000)). Tolson (1987) suggests that, in part, working class masculinity has been created through manual labour and that in one sense it is connected with the muscularity that often results from such work. Hence part of the structuring of working-class masculinity is based on the role of the body. Working-class boys develop stories, jokes and routines and through this they reproduce societal expectations. The study by Ashley (2003) backs this up by suggesting that boys have two ways of being ‘in’ - either by modelling themselves on what could be called the

‘football crowd’ or with the much smaller, but explicitly anti-school, ‘disruptive group’, an idea that is backed up by Renold (2002). Both Tolson (1977) and Seidler (1994) consider capitalism through a socialist/Marxist lens and suggest ways in which men are potentially ‘victimised’ by their working situation and by being on the lower rungs of a class ladder. For example, Tolson (1977) takes up the idea that while physical strength and being a fighter may be a primary signifier of working-class masculinity, the fact that the man in question earns little money or has limited interpersonal and intellectual competence limits his power. Thus socio-economic position and class position produce masculinity identities.

Within ruling class schools, the dominant signifiers of masculinity appear to be academic and sporting success, while the roles of ‘success’ with girls, humour, hiding emotions and a degree of physicality are important, but more open to interpretation. The style of masculinity in operation in these schools is one that dates back to the colonial period and this traditional power-based hierarchy, with the ultimate power being wielded by prefects, is still evident today as noted in the research of Poynting & Donaldson (1992). The works of Tolson (1977) and Heward (1988) make similar points and suggest that although schools have changed in certain ways in the past one hundred years, in other ways they have not; the dominant masculine values of competitiveness, personal ambition, social responsibility and emotional restraint are still valued in today’s society. Arguably, middle-class masculinities model the middle classes and hence are aspirational and are thus similar to ruling-class masculinities, what Beckett (2001, P.70) calls “‘cool’ masculinity”. Tolson (1977) believes that middle class masculinities are specifically focused on school and revolve around sport, academic success and preparing young men for future leadership roles.

Overall this suggests a quite rigid structure which is backed up by the research of Aggleton (1987), who focuses on a group of middle-class students in the U.K. He suggests that these students are locked into a gendered, class-based position and provided the ‘comfort’ of their position is not challenged, they do not challenge it. Abraham (1995) would agree with this and in his research into a comprehensive school in the U.K. with a significant working-class population, he notes that schooling does little to challenge gender and class-based divisions and in certain cases it actually reinforces them. However, there are exceptions to this viewpoint and within schools that could be described as working-class, there are students who are academically successful



and are not necessarily subordinated. Ultimately, studies of the formation of class identities have traditionally been understood as being based upon working *with* the body, producing a celebration of an embodied grammar of manual labour and attendant iconic images of industrial masculinities in a Fordist era. In the twenty-first century, manhood can be acquired through work *on* the body or more specifically masculinities can be articulated through consumerism that can be written onto the body. As Mac an Ghaill & Haywood (2007, P.38) suggest the body and gender role are in a performative relationship in the sense that “the signs that are applied to the body operate to signify/constitute the body”. The archetypal masculine physique developed through manual labour is now attained by men of all class structures “through conscious forms of exercise, specifically designed to build and sculpt culturally defined exemplars of masculinity” (Drummond 2005a, P.2). Ultimately Edley & Wetherell (1995, P.104) suggest that in trying to make specific distinctions between different classes of masculinity, the distinction has been to

try to describe representative individuals, or representative characteristics which are not necessarily found in all middle-class or working-class men, but are *typically* found among these groups.

Thus there are potential problems with interpreting masculinity through a class-based framework. A further problem is that all these studies are located in a national context and are used to describe national systems. Given that international schools are not class-based in the same way as some national systems, the concept of class-based masculinities is unlikely to work in any absolute sense. However, descriptions of international schools do suggest that students often have similar socio-economic backgrounds, which suggests a link may be possible. There is also evidence of some form of hierarchy within class-based masculinities, which is suggestive of Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity and will be explored in the next section.

### ***2.3.2 Hegemonic Masculinity: Negotiating Structures.***

This section will consider the theory of hegemonic masculinity, which was developed by Connell in the 1980s and came out of research on gay men’s experiences of violence and prejudice by straight men. Connell (1995) makes use of the idea of hegemony, as noted by Gramsci (1971), to describe the relationships in society’s gender order.

According to Gramsci (1971), the leaders and the led can no longer be identified with a 'ruling' or a ruled class. This is not because a class-based system no longer exists, but because power relations in society are based on specific situations of rule and exploitation and that power, rules and exploitation are intertwined. Gramsci (1971) suggests that not all social forces have an equal chance of becoming hegemonic and there is a structurally based selectivity that favours some struggles over others (Buckel & Fischer-Lescano 2009). Thus, the materialist structure of identity is causative and transparent from a socio-economic position. In terms of hegemonic masculinity socio-economic structure does not necessarily produce an identity, but it is negotiated. What Connell (1995) is suggesting is that masculinity is not simply about class, but is a gender relation based on patriarchy which denotes "all the powers and privileges men enjoy as a group in relation to women" (Edley & Wetherell 1995, P.121). Connell (2008, P.133) defines hegemonic masculinity as:

...the pattern of masculinity which is most honoured, which is most associated with authority and power, and which - in the long run - guarantees the collective privilege of men.

According to Connell (1995), there is not just one pattern of masculinity, but a series of patterns which are differentiated, and each stands against each other in terms of power. Hegemony relates to the idea of cultural dominance, and in contrast to this, other forms of masculinity are subordinate. The relationships between masculinities in the dominant and subordinated classes are defined through "marginalization". As Connell (1995, P.80/81) states: "Marginalization is always relative to the *authorization* of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant group". Thus, the framework for analysing masculinities is hegemony/subordination on the one hand, i.e. internal, and authorisation/marginalisation on the other, i.e. external (Connell 1995). Connell (1995, P.111) also makes use of Adler's idea of 'masculine protest' which results from childhood powerlessness and results in "an exaggerated claim to the potency that European culture attaches to masculinity". He argues that the dominant ideals of hegemonic masculinity, in Western society, are a way of being masculine which subordinates and marginalises women and also marginalises different forms of masculinity, such as being effeminate or being gay. Soja & Hooper (1993, P.84) take the idea of hegemonic masculinity further and describe how hegemonic masculinity "actively *produces and reproduces difference* as a key strategy to create and maintain

modes of social and spatial division that are advantageous to its continued empowerment”. This difference is not dependent on class-defined values. The power produced by hegemonic masculinity is arguably so strong that those who come under the influence of it are often unaware of it and, as Paechter (1998) suggests, it becomes part of the ‘natural order’ and is seen as ‘common sense’. This suggests the idea of complicity, where men do not necessarily show hegemonic masculinity but gain from what Connell calls the ‘patriarchal dividend’.

It is now important to consider what behaviour would indicate hegemonic masculinity and the type of masculinity that could be interpreted as being the ‘top’ of the hierarchy. This is difficult to define. In one sense size and fighting could be seen as one of the primary signifiers of hegemonic masculinity and as Gordon et al. (2000, P.120) state: “Boys are constantly reformulating their hierarchies, partly through a display of physical prowess”. Physical traits, aggressive behaviour and fighting also feature in other research (Askew 1989; Poynting & Donaldson 1992; Prendergast & Forrest 1997; Messerschmidt 2000; Renold 2002; Kimmel & Mahler 2003). There are two different emphases here with hegemonic masculinity being signified through actions and also through the body. As Connell (1995, P.45) states: “True masculinity is almost always thought to proceed from men’s bodies – to be inherent in a male body or to express something about a male body.” Connell (1995) further suggests it is the combination of these two with bodies both being the object of practice and the agent of practice which leads to some of the structures within which masculinity is defined. However, this is in no way absolute and in one sense is not enough. According to Edley & Wetherell (1999), one possible hegemonic masculinity could be stated as men who show a macho masculinity, for example fictional characters such as Rocky and Rambo. It is interesting to note that the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity often come from the world of fiction and this is not necessarily surprising as Connell (1995) would argue that it is an ideal or a set of prescriptive social norms, symbolically represented. According to Connell & Messerschmidt (2005), hegemonic masculinity is not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense since only a minority of men may actually demonstrate it, but that certain behaviours can be enough to gain access to it. However, they do claim that it is normative and it embodies the most respected way of being a man at the current time as well as requiring all other men to position themselves in relation to it. Thus, the question of whether there exists a male exhibiting absolute hegemonic masculinity remains difficult to answer and the extent to which Willis’s ‘lads’ and Haywood’s

‘hyper-heterosexuals’, for example, actually demonstrate hegemonic masculinity in a schooling context, remains in question. Within these descriptions of hegemonic masculinity there is potentially an unwritten assumption that in some ways human beings have the choice of where they stand in this structure. It is important to acknowledge that this is not the case and as Connell (1989, P.295) suggests:

It is indeed important to recognise that differing masculinities are being produced. But to picture this as a marketplace, a free choice of gender-styles, would be misleading. These ‘choices’ are strongly structured by relations of power.

In one sense the absolute characteristics of hegemonic masculinity are not of vital importance and what is important is that the hierarchy actually exists. The power that strives to both produce and regulate the ‘norm’, in doing so also creates and subordinates ‘the other’.

Unlike the concept of hegemonic masculinity, the ‘other’ is more clearly defined. According to Weeks (2003, P.76) this is: “the feared and the execrated or merely despised, which simultaneously denies and confirms the norm”. Brod (1994) and Hearn & Collinson (1994) both suggest that the ‘other’ is women and Weeks (2003, P.60) states: “Males, in *becoming* men, take up positions in power relations in which they acquire the ability to define women.” Hence women have a key (but arguably subservient) role to play in hegemonic masculinity. In a school context, as Gordon et al. (2000, P.116) note: “Nevertheless it seems that boys form the framework for many of the things that girls do, and girls form an audience for the boys.” Hence it is not enough to solely consider the boys when investigating boys and schooling; the voices of the girls must also be heard.

A further category that commonly plays the role of ‘other’, in schooling situations, relates to those who identify themselves as gay or are identified or labelled by their peers as gay. Often the concepts of femininity and homosexuality are linked and there is strong agreement that when the attributes of girls are applied to boys, it reduces the power of those boys. This can be seen through the actions of the body where as Kehler et al. (2005, P.63) suggest “young men are physically positioned within a repertoire of masculine codes that are read off and enacted by the body.” If any of those actions are

perceived as feminine this can lead to the threat of being labelled gay. This is seen in the research of Swain (2003) and Griffin et al. (2005). Specifically, Kimmel (1996, P.198) states: “As adolescents, we learn that our peers are a kind of gender police constantly threatening to unmask us as feminine, as sissies.” Thus there are strong indicators of the sort of behaviour that does not lead to hegemonic masculinity and it is interesting to note that the characteristics of ‘other’ which lead to a subordinate masculinity can be described in ‘real-life’ terms. These hegemonic and subordinate masculinities relate to the internal mechanisms by which gender is ordered, but the concept of ‘marginalised masculinity’ is used when it is related to “the interrelationship of gender with other major social structures such as social class and ‘race’” (Francis 2000, P.51). The concept of hegemonic masculinity is one that clearly works in a schooling situation, but as a number of theorists have noted, it is not a problem-free concept.

As with masculinity based on a class structure, there is the problem of exactly who demonstrates and what behaviours signify a hegemonic masculinity. For example, consider Kimmel (1990, P.100) quoting the rules of masculinity given by Brannon & David (1976):

- (a) No sissy stuff: avoid all behaviour that even remotely suggests the feminine.
- (b) Be a big wheel: success and status confer masculinity.
- (c) Be a sturdy oak: reliability and dependability are defined as emotional distance and affective distance.
- (d) Give ‘em hell: exclude an aura of manly aggression, go for it, take risks.

Previous research identifies all of the above as being representative of hegemonic masculinity, but the problem is that it is not absolute. The fine balance is highlighted in a schooling situation in the research of Frosh et al. (2002, P 81) which suggests that having several characteristics of dominant masculinity is helpful but they are dependent on context, so being ‘hard’, for example, can be an indicator of both hegemonic and subordinate masculinity. There is also the suggestion that girls may take on masculine behaviour and characteristics within the school environment. Jordan (1995) notes that girls are allowed a much wider range of behaviour than boys without fear of ridicule and Epstein (1997, P.109), undertaking research in primary schools, states:

Indeed it is interesting to note that the behaviour of 'tomboys' within the primary context is much more acceptable than the behaviour of 'cissies'. This, I would suggest, is because for a girl to be more like a boy can be interpreted positively, while for a boy to be more like a girl is, almost invariably, seen as problematic because being a girl is, in some sense, disreputable.

This specifically highlights one of the problems in terms of this research in that what constitutes a 'proof' of masculinity in one context, does not do so in a different context. Even within contexts it can vary and, as Frosh et al. (2002) found in their study, some boys are more masculine than others and this depends on a whole variety of markers including class, race, sporting interests and family aspirations. Although 'other' can be defined in one sense, it is not an absolute concept and the question: 'What does 'otherness' mean?' has no straightforward answer. At this point it should be made clear that Brittan (1989) and Connell (1995) do acknowledge that hegemonic masculinity is fluid over time and between cultural contexts. Connell & Messerschmidt (2005, P.841) acknowledge this when they state:

Men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable; but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. Consequently "masculinity" represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices.

Thus, in certain places a specific behaviour is indicative of hegemonic masculinity and in others it is not. Furthermore, not only can there be differences, but there can be outright contradictions and Frosh et al. (2002), in their research, suggest that in some cases boys are attracted to alternative masculinities which are not necessarily subordinate. This is backed up by Nilan (2000) who suggests that even though there are many potentially subordinated masculinities, for example working class masculinities, gay masculinities and black masculinities, each has their own cultural norms which may or may not be powerful. The research of Thorne (1993) takes this further in that she found dominant and popular boys who could 'flout the rules of masculinity'. Thorne (1993, P.123) suggests that in this situation, masculinity "was like money in the bank; he could take the risk of spending because there was plenty where it came from". Both Chambers (2006) and Renold (2007) would agree with this, although the latter suggests it is more often found with high achievers and hence more often linked to middle- and

ruling-class masculinities. None of these destroy the argument of their being a hierarchy, but they strongly question what influences the hierarchy.

Some theorists (Francis 2000; Martino 2008b) also question the concept of the hierarchy itself, since hierarchy suggests something that is fixed and that “invokes a form of structural determinism and, hence, fails to capture the complex ways in which men negotiate their identities” (Martino 2008, P.577). Anderson & McGuire (2010, P.251) take an approach based on the introduction of inclusive masculinity theory when they suggest there are multiple forms of masculinity that are in what they call “horizontal alignment” rather than being “hegemonically dominating”. Francis (2000) also questions the concept of hierarchy and argues that there is one masculinity and one femininity, both of which are notional and oppositional and that they are flexible and able to incorporate contradiction. Thus there is a tension between the fixed nature of the hierarchy and the need for fluidity within the hierarchy. Taken to an ultimate conclusion, with so many signifiers of hegemonic masculinity, the whole idea of hegemony becomes potentially problematic, in that any sort of behaviour can be hegemonic. It is not that the concept of hegemonic masculinity does not work, and in specific situations it provides clear indicators, but there are clearly issues to do with fluidity and fragmentation which are particularly relevant to this research.

In one sense both theories based on class structure and hegemonic masculinity have some success in explaining the influences of culture on boys in schooling, but the tensions arise from the degree to which culture is determined by those in it as opposed to structured from outside. This suggests an approach that is more fragmentary, one that indicates the potential influence of queer theory, which

seeks to destabilise socially given identities, categories and subjectivities around the common-sense distinctions between homosexuality and heterosexuality; men and women, and sex and gender (Mac an Ghaill & Haywood 2007, P.37).

Thus, as Bradley (1996) notes, there appears to be a role for fragmentation which suggests that both men and boys are potentially the oppressors and the oppressed. Hence it is now important to consider a post-structuralist approach.

### ***2.3.3 A Post-Structuralist Approach.***

The last two sections have emphasised a structured approach where the frameworks for the structure come from either class or patriarchy. Hence masculinity has been considered through a materialist structure and then through the lens of a more autonomous cultural structure. In post-structural masculinities, as with a patriarchal structure, power still has a key role to play, but rather than being a structure of power hierarchies, it is now more widely dispersed and, in one sense, it operates through language. It is also important to note the contradictory and fragmented nature of this approach and that “we cannot simply read off social behaviour from a pre-existing male-female oppositional binary structure of ‘victims’ and ‘oppressors’” (Mac an Ghaill & Haywood 2007, P.9).

Within this approach it is important to consider the concept of identity. Bradley (1996, P.24) provides a working definition:

Personal identity refers to the construction of the self: our sense of ourselves as unique individuals, how we perceive ourselves and how we think others see us. Personal identity evolves from the whole package of experiences that each individual has gone through, and is highly complex and individualized.

In terms of identity in a post-structural context, it becomes important to hold onto the notion that identity becomes less fixed and certain and it is no longer possible, in an absolute sense, to produce conventional narratives. Hall (2000, P.17) states:

It accepts that identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions.

As with Connell’s concept of the hegemonic male, being a ‘real’ man is a fantasy that we can only hope to attain, but arguably never succeed, although the influences of this are very real, a perspective with which MacInnes (1998) would agree. As with a structured approach, this does not necessarily mean that there is choice here, as it is the performances that define masculinity. Butler (2004, P.30) states:



To say, however, that gender is performative is not simply to insist on a right to produce a pleasurable and subversive spectacle but to allegorise the spectacular and consequential ways in which reality is both reproduced and contested.

In this situation 'performance' refers to "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman 1959, P.32). Thus the individual construction of a masculine identity is not something that happens alone as it is the interpretation of the outside influences that form identity, the concrete laws, policies and rules.

One of the main theorists to consider this perspective of gender formation is Judith Butler. The focus of her work has been on women, but there are potentially ideas that are relevant for theorising masculinity. Butler (1990, P.136) suggests that gender is expressed through acts, gestures and enactments which are performative, thus expressing fabrications that are "manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means". Whitehead (2002, P.184) backs this up when he suggests: "the body of which we speak is not a biologically programmed, predetermined entity, but a discursive constitution." Overall Whitehead (2002, P.192) summarises this when he suggests: "In short, rather than seek out 'natural' explanations for bodies, we must recognize, from the first, the power/knowledge inventions that usher the sexed/gendered body into existence." Embedded into this is Butler's notion that masculinity (and femininity) is dependent upon a heterosexual matrix, which is the means by which the constructed nature of gender is transformed from sex. Butler (1990, P.208) uses the term heterosexual matrix "to designate that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized", where "there must be a stable gender (masculine express male, feminine express female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality". Thus, heterosexuality is both required by gender and regulated by gender and the terms masculine and feminine are a binary relation differentiated from one another by heterosexual desire. There are potential limitations with this and, as Renold & Ringrose (2008, P.317) suggest, in the repetitive performances undertaken by girls and boys, spaces appear that have the potential to produce "ambivalence, contradiction and perpetual displacement". The concept of heterosexuality in a school environment is not always clear and it can change from one environment to another, from one student to

another. In one sense there is a concept of bisexuality in students and it is not self-evident how this links into the heterosexual matrix.

This can be taken one stage further in considering the concept of female masculinity where the performance and the body are not connected, which is a fairly extreme position and as Nguyen (2008, P.676) powerfully states: “Female masculinity fucks with gender”. In a schooling situation the question often arises as to why only boys choose masculinity and only girls choose femininity and, although there is evidence to suggest that on a basic level it works in this way (c.f. Aggleton 1987; Epstein et al. 1997; Martino & Meyenn 2001), a number of researchers (Riddell 1989; Griffiths 1995; Nilan 2000) also report that there is evidence to the contrary. This is often seen in terms of girls adopting masculine behaviour and it is not unknown for some boys to pursue so-called feminine traits. In the work of Halberstam (1998), she discusses women in the world of athletics, where the attributes required are usually defined as masculine, but for Halberstam (1998) these attributes become human qualities rather than gendered qualities and it is these qualities that produce female masculinity.

Thus, not only is the performance important, but the fragmentation of this performance also needs to be considered. This echoes the work of Bradley (1996) when she suggests that there are four senses of fragmentation: internal fragmentation which is based on the labelling of behaviours from within; external fragmentation which results from the interaction of dynamics from outside the person; fragmentation which results from the process of social change; and fragmentation which results from the person trying to dissolve communal ties. Halberstam (1998, P.27) would support the idea of fragmentation when she suggests that when defining gender “...look around any public space and notice how few people present formulaic versions of gender and yet how few are unreadable or totally ambiguous”. Walkerdine (1990) considers the role of external influences on fragmentation when she suggests that the schooling situation is one of the most powerful influences on masculinity and femininity. Here, students are potentially operating under the idea of schoolgirl and schoolboy fictions where these fictions may or may not be changed and whether or not certain performances produce power is not known absolutely. Although there is clearly a fragmented and fractured approach to masculinity in this study, the fact that the vast majority of students ‘fit’ to some degree suggests that the approach taken must consider the concept of fragmentation, but not absolute fragmentation.

This is not totally contrary to a structured approach and as Alsop et al. (2002, P.142) state: "...the understanding of hegemonic masculinity as a cultural ideal is consonant with Butler's argument that the gender performances we enact are performances in accordance with a script". For example, a male performance at the local football match on a Saturday afternoon may be very different from the performance given by the same male in his job as a nurse. Thus the ideas of Butler and Connell are not necessarily totally incompatible, but they provide explanations in a different way and to a different degree of absoluteness. It is important in this research to consider both points of view as structuralist theories often highlight the deterministic nature of culture and the post-structuralist theories highlight the potential that men and women have to determine their own culture. Within this study, masculinity and femininity are not seen as simplistic concepts that dovetail with each other, but as complex intertwined behaviours that influence both structure and performance.

It is these interpretations of the construction and the theories of constitution of masculinity that will be considered in the context of the Dutch International School. Part two will now give consideration to the cultural sources through which masculinity becomes formed. This will begin with a consideration of international schools, the concept of 'third culture' kids and gender in a multi-cultural setting.

## **PART TWO**

### **2.4 The Role of the International.**

This section will begin by considering previous research undertaken into international schools, focussing on how the culture of those institutions is perceived and how the students in those institutions make sense of their setting. This will allow a considered view of how the construction of masculinity fits within that environment. Secondly, consideration will be given to research that has been undertaken on masculinity which considers its construction in a cross-cultural, multi-cultural, multi-national, or multi-ethnic setting and will consider whether there are ideas from this style of research that can be used in an international school setting. Thirdly this section will consider the background to developing the concept of 'third culture'.

From the introduction to this study, it is clear that there are a range of institutions that call themselves international schools (c.f. chapter1 section 1.3.1) and clearly there are a variety of different cultural perspectives influencing these schools. The concept of diversity in international schools is one that frequently occurs in previous research (Ochs 1990; Cambridge 2000). Cambridge (2000, P.180) suggests that this can be interpreted through the concept of performance and states: “International schools are theatres in which a variety of intercultural encounters are rehearsed between administration, teaching staff, support staff, students, parents and the local community.” Pollock & Van Reken (1999) and Straffon (2003) back this up and further suggest there is an assumption that students in international schools have a higher degree of intercultural sensitivity due to increased mobility and a larger amount of contact with other cultures. The indication is that international school are places where students are highly aware of a diversity of cultures and respectful of those cultures, and that the agreement of this provides a degree of uniformity within the school.

The nature of the population who attend international institutions can also have a dramatic influence on the nature of them. As Robson & Turner (2007, P.7) state: “The cultural diversity of the student body adds to the richness of the teaching and learning experience.” The majority of international schools are private schools and hence fee paying. For expatriate families, it is often employers who pay these fees and hence it is not dependent on the parents’ ability to pay which means that these students are not necessarily from ruling-class backgrounds. For students from the host country, it is often the parents who will have to pay and hence the host country students who attend international schools are often from a particular economic class (Cambridge & Thompson 2004). Lowe (2000) takes a slightly different approach and suggests that the middle classes in certain host countries are increasingly seeking access to higher-powered institutions and are looking for a different educational experience for their children. Thus, to try to interpret international schools through a rigid class-based structure is problematic as there are so many different and diverse influences that combine together in a variety of ways.

The interpretations of international education are not wholly positive and Hayden et al. (2000) found in their study that while the right to free speech and respect and tolerance for the views of others is part of what it means to be international, many participants hold this view largely in a theoretical sense. Allan (2003) notes that although the aim of

international schools is to free students from an ethnocentric point of view, he found that very few actually succeeded in this. In the case of his research, in an international school in Amsterdam, he found the culture adopted by the majority of students was Anglo-American and that students rarely moved beyond this. Thus, clearly there are dynamic tensions within international schools and in the way these tensions are interpreted.

Hence there are parallels with the approach taken to describing masculinities in schools in national settings and since the theories on masculinity construction are not absolutely consistent across or within cultures, there is a degree of flexibility within them, making them at least partially applicable to the Dutch International School. Because everyone around them is in a similar position, students in an international school do not need to feel marginalised and the school plays the role of providing the structure and support for the student to negotiate their identity, suggesting a structured approach to masculinity. The fragmentation found is more indicative of a post-structuralist perspective.

A lot of research has been undertaken on the physical concept of an international school, but in terms of the students in these schools, little work has been undertaken on how the cultural experiences of these international students shape their constructions of masculinity. However, one concept noted in much of the research in international schools that has relevance is that of 'global nomads', sometimes called cross-cultural kids or 'third culture' kids. This study will use the term 'third culture' kids. Before consideration is given to how students interpret this concept, this research will briefly recount what has been found about masculinity in a multi-national, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic setting. This section will focus on the idea of the multi-cultural as it is the cultural content that is important and, as Barry (2001) points out, multi-ethnic and multi-national identities in no way guarantee cultural diversity.

Within the concepts of masculinity already set out, scope is allowed for there to be access to multiple masculinities and it is already suggested that class and circumstance are part of how this is interpreted (Bradley 1996). However, this study has not addressed the issue of cultural diversity up to this point. Frank et al. (2003, P.120) highlight the idea that young men from different cultures have situations where it may be necessary to construct different masculinities. They state:

... masculinity is often practised differently cross-culturally, intra-culturally, and individually. An Indo-Canadian boy might understand and perform masculinity differently from an African Nova Scotian boy. However, the African Nova Scotian boy may also perform masculinity in different contexts, for example in school versus church.

This begins to hint at the number of different influences that a young man may be under in a multi-cultural setting. The study of Thangaraj (2010) looking at how South Asian Americans interpreted their masculinity through basketball is an interesting one to consider in this context. Prashad (2000 cited Thangaraj 2010, P.376) suggests that each culture has its own 'stereotypical' masculinity attached to it and states:

these racializing discourses produce South Asian Americans as all 'brain' while African Americans are all 'brawn'; concurrently a white normative masculinity contains a balance of brain and brawn.

However, Thangaraj (2010, P.382) goes on to suggest that although there are different influences on how masculinity is defined, the commonality of what he calls 'Indo-Pak' basketball made the men involved "realize heterogeneity and enabled them to embrace an expanded category of South Asian America". Furthermore, he suggests that this cultural identity is "multiple, multi-sited, and made through interactions with various communities of color" (Thangaraj 2010, P.381). Ultimately Gilbert & Gilbert (1998) suggest it depends on whether young men see themselves as part of a minority group or a majority group. Hence if their nationality or ethnicity is the same as the majority group, or not a signifier of them being a part of the majority group, then the other signifiers of that culture will be dominant. In this case the construction of masculinity may be independent of nationality or ethnicity. However, if a young man feels his ethnicity or nationality is a major signifier, or it is different from the majority group, then it will become important. These ideas make sense in an international school setting, but must also acknowledge the globalised influence on international schools that clearly exists (Cambridge 2002). Phillips (2002, P.163) suggests that globalised means having "a global character in that they (the ideas) penetrate and/or are adopted by a large number of social groups". James (2005, P.321) takes this further and suggests that "new transnational cultures may be forming", an idea that clearly influences what Gilbert & Gilbert (1998) suggest. This can now be linked to the concept of 'third culture' kids.

John Useem and Ruth Hill Useem first developed this concept in the 1950s whilst they were researching Americans working in India (Useem & Hill Useem 1993; Pollock & Van Reken 1999). These 'third culture' kids have to negotiate the cultural differences presented to them by their 'home' country (often the country of their passport) and their host country. It is suggested that these expatriates created their own communities with a culture that was between these two cultures, which they termed 'third culture'. 'Third culture' kids are described as

individuals of any age or nationality who have spent a significant part of their developmental years living in one or more countries outside their passport country because of a parent's occupation. ...While developing some sense of belonging to both their host culture(s), they do not have a sense of total ownership in any. Elements from each culture and from the experience of international mobility are blended, creating a commonality with others of similar experience (Schaetti 1993 cited Hayden 2006, P.44).

Fail et al. (2004) and McLachlan (2007) both note that for some 'third culture' kids a sense of belonging is more relationship based than geographically based, as they experience a bond with those who have had similar life experiences to themselves. Hayden et al. (2000, P.111) take a slightly different view when they suggest that it is not just physical interaction which determines 'third culture' kids, but that they take on a style of thinking which can be associated with the term:

... interaction within the globally-mobile grouping of what have been described as 'third culture' kids is leading to the development of young people with an international world view, perhaps irrespective of the stance of their parents.

In all these cases 'third culture' is only used as a descriptor of the children who have had a specific set of influences in terms of the culture in which they grew up. This study will take the concept of 'third culture' from 'third culture' kids and develop this as a way of describing the culture of the school. In this context it will be assumed that:

cultures are created by and exist within, and eventually between, people, and they are externally represented by those institutions, artefacts and norms which

become influential cultural icons and, which in turn, influence their creators (Casmir 1999, P.105).

Thus “culture is viewed as a form of production, specifically, as the ways in which human beings make sense of their lives, feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and the wider society” (Giroux 1988, P.123). Lam (2006, P.216) suggests that this is appropriate to use in a schooling context and that to research the role of diversity in education it is appropriate to take

a social practice and cultural-historical approach to look at how individuals develop and assume particular cultural practices and affiliations through their history of engagement in multiple, changing, overlapping and conflicting communities.

In this context ‘third culture’ will be developed through the idea of this being a lived-in culture which is, in part, developed by the inhabitants of that community and the idea that it is a culture that has a degree of flexibility to it. This approach will assume a shift in the understanding of culture from stable identities, and categorical memberships into a more hybridised form. Consideration will be given to the use of the term ‘third culture’ to explore both a slightly fragmented single culture and multiple hybrid cultures that are more fragmented. This distinction is hinted at in the research of Grimshaw & Sears (2008, P.266) when they state:

However, one key question remains unresolved; one that is of particular significance to our discussion of global nomads. Does each individual consist of a multiplicity of different selves, of which none is dominant, or does the personality consist of a dominant self to which various ‘satellite selves’ are attached?

This is backed up by Bhabha (1994, P.38) when he suggests that to “open the way to conceptualising an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s *hybridity*”. This approach would also be backed up by Goffman (1959) who suggests that we all have personalities that are multi-faceted and what we reveal of ourselves depends on the context.



In this study, the term 'third culture' will be taken from being an adjective to describe students who are raised in a specific type of environment to describing the culture of the school where it takes place. Although this interpretation of 'third culture' in this context will need to be developed, the idea of 'third culture' is not unknown in other research and the concept has been used in a variety of ways. The concept of 'third culture' in its own right appears to have originated from the science historian C.P. Snow and in the second edition of his book "The Two Cultures" he introduces the notion of 'third-culture' to mean a culture where literary intellectuals converse directly with scientists. More recently, Sui (2004, P.63) suggests that this "'third culture' stresses the cross-fertilization of the creative ideas from the arts and sciences via state-of-the-art technology". Kelly (1998) takes a similar approach and suggests that it considers the world of the artist and the scientist and how this is interpreted from a technological point of view. Casmir (1999) takes a slightly different approach and uses the concept of 'third culture' to explore interpersonal communication because culture needs to be seen as a developing dynamic process and one "based on an understanding of the actual communication process involved when those from different cultural backgrounds interact" (Casmir 1999, P.91). It is also reminiscent of the work of Kramsch (1993) who introduces the idea of 'third place identities' and the idea of 'third spaces' from Bhabha (1994). Thus the term 'third culture' does not have a specific meaning, but there are clearly common themes; in all cases there is the concept of a cross-fertilisation of ideas and the idea that there are two cultures that interact in some way to create what is being called a distinct 'third culture'.

There is recognition in previous research that this is an area that needs further research and Arnet (2002) suggests the idea of "bicultural identities", a term traditionally used by social psychologists to look at the experiences of immigrant and ethnic minorities within specific societies, now needs to be applied to "many young people around the world who are exposed to multiple forms of local and global cultures" (Arnett 2002, P. 777). Arnett (2002, P. 778) takes this idea further and suggests that to understand this fully we need to "develop identities that combine their native culture, the local culture to which they have integrated and the global culture, thus leading to multicultural identity or a complex hybrid identity". Thus it is important to remember that there is an effect from globalisation in terms of what is being called 'third culture' and as Lam (2006, P.218) states: "there is growing recognition that globalization is creating greater

fluidity and multiplicity in the identity formation of young people”. Further evidence for the need to interpret this scenario through a different lens is provided by Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard (2004, P.22) who suggest that “rather than theorizing identity as oriented toward “either” the home culture “or” the host culture, many immigrant youth today are articulating and performing complex multiple identifications that involve bringing together disparate cultural streams”. It can also be interpreted through what Giddens (1994) calls traditional and post-traditional societies. In the former there is an established order and in the latter individuals can choose from a limitless number of lifestyles, provided they “have the power to move beyond a traditional environment” (Grimshaw & Sears 2008, P.269). Ultimately, as Casmir (1999, P.110) suggests culture is “a chaotic environment in which communication processes play a central role as human beings organise it”.

This ‘third culture’ will be treated as a cultural affirmation model, which is

a model that offers validation of the integrity of the diverse cultural practices of minority groups along with the acknowledgement that these practices diverge from what educational institutions expect and value (Lam 2006, P.216).

One possibility is that there is a significant influence from the stable national culture of the host community and that this is a primary signifier of the ‘third culture’ in the school. On a simplistic level, this could take the form that Holland is seen as tolerant, respectful and open-minded and these aspects of the culture transfer into the school. Thus there is a single culture within the school, but that there are influences on this culture which mean that it is not totally homogenous and this lack of homogeneity could be described as a partial fragmentation. It is this degree of fragmentation that is under debate and both Allan (2002) and Jackson (2005) suggest that although different cultures operate within the environment of the school, there is often a dominant culture of students and/or teachers, which leads overall to a school culture that has quite individual and specific characteristics, although to a degree still fragmented.

However, given the nature of an international school, the idea that diversity is a key influence on the culture of the school is a viewpoint that needs to be considered, with one implication being that when there is such a diversity of nationalities, respectful

behaviour will follow. Giroux (1988, P.123/124) backs this up when he suggests that if culture is viewed as a form of production, then:

Difference no longer symbolizes the threat of disruption. On the contrary, it now signals an invitation for diverse cultural groups to join hands under the democratic banner of an integrative pluralism.

In this scenario the ‘third culture’ operating in the school could be interpreted as multiple hybrid cultures. These cultures are still seen as predominantly positive, where the ideas of respect, diversity and transience are all major signifiers, but where certain aspects are not homogenous. However, diversity does not necessarily lead to a positive outcome and the idea that this may in some way be disruptive also needs to be considered. This suggests a complex, but potentially fragmented and disrupted ‘third culture’.

Consideration will be given to both these perspectives and how these interpretations of ‘third culture’ fit in with the ideas of structuralism and post-structuralism. Ultimately, fragmentation clearly plays a role in both ways of interpreting an international school, which echoes the ideas of Bradley. At this point consideration will now be given to the cultural sources within the school, through which masculinity is potentially formed. The first of these is teachers and the interactions in a school between teachers and students.

## **2.5 Teachers and Their Interaction with Students.**

As Gilbert & Gilbert (1998, P.116) state: “The most well documented forms of gendered relations in the institution of schooling are the relations between staff and students”. In most schools, teachers see themselves and are seen as the leaders, and many would be considered, and would consider themselves, to be role models of what might be called ‘acceptable practice’. However, teachers do not exist in isolation and this research will focus on the interaction between teachers and students. Hetherington (1998) suggests that these may be positions that symbolise authority but, depending on whether students hold the authority or are controlled by the authority, potentially very different gendered pictures are presented. This is backed up by Prendergast & Forrest (1997, P.186) who suggest that teachers treat boys and girls very differently with boys

in opposition to teachers whereas girls are described as “getting on with teachers, talking to them and enjoying school more”.

A number of researchers (Riddell 1989; Francis 2000; Robinson 2000; Francis & Skelton 2001; Ashley 2003; Reid et al. 2004) have given consideration to teachers as providing an influence on students’ construction of masculinity and there is reasonable agreement on the form this takes. For example, Reid et al. (2004) make the point that teachers may be encouraging students to imitate a certain form of masculinity by using sarcasm, shouting and favouritism, and the research of Riddell (1989) saw male teachers using negative female comparisons to keep boys under control. Both Cohen (1997) and Skelton (2001) suggest that the behaviour of the male teachers is a middle-class re-working of a working-class masculinity and hence “revolved around athletic prowess, having a laugh, (not) looking smart and having a good time with mates (pupils)” (Skelton 2001, P.140). In a U.K. context Forrest & Ellis (2006, P.103) suggest the use of Section 28 may have “fuelled some teachers’ sense of their authority to broadcast moral judgements about their pupils”. Inevitably, with male teachers potentially setting themselves up as ‘the powerful other’ in opposition to femininity, part of the discourse used in this context comes across as homophobic. This seems to be common in schools and many studies (Francis & Skelton 2001; Dupper & Meyer-Adams 2002; Kimmel & Mahler 2003; Rivers 2004) have found evidence of anti-gay remarks made by staff. Mac an Ghaill (1994), Francis & Skelton (2001) and Skelton (2001) all suggest that for some male teachers it is not just a matter of being a masculine role model, but of setting themselves up as being “properly masculine” (Skelton 2001, P.138). This suggests that teachers are influencing students’ construction of masculinity by using their own masculinity. However, it should be noted that although there is substantial evidence of this sort of behaviour, it does not imply that all male teachers act in this way and, as Edley & Wetherell (1995) point out, the majority of teachers claim they teach and treat their students fairly, irrespective of sex, although what happens in practice may be slightly different.

Less is reported on the specific role female teachers play in the classroom, but Griffiths (1995) and Hey (1997) both suggest that female teachers are much less likely to demonstrate a domination or marginalisation of students. However, Riddell (1989, P.190) suggests that there is also a female equivalent to the male teacher who plays up the macho role, who draws “on a culture of femininity”. Interestingly, when schools and

classroom spaces are interpreted as feminised, a lot of the reasons move away from the personality of the teacher and ascribe a female gender either to the school or to assessment models used in that scenario. For example, the caring nature of schools has been portrayed in past research (Hey 1997; Chambers 2006) and assessment techniques are feminised by suggesting that they potentially favour female students (Noble & Bradford 2000).

In one sense, what can be deduced from this is that teachers 'look out for their own'. Paechter & Head (1996 cited Paechter 1998, P.56) make the point that both male and female teachers are able to have powerful influences in a school and state:

Among teachers, for example, men are more likely than women to hold positions of structural power, as head teachers or heads of department. Women, on the other hand, may be able to resist this by using interpersonal alliances to build networks of group power, which can make it difficult or impossible for those in structurally powerful roles to take full advantage of their position.

In terms of their role in gender construction, relatively little consideration has been given to teachers in international schools. Overall, the indications are that teachers are influenced in a similar way to students in this setting. For example, the research undertaken by Hayden et al. (2000, P.120) found that "for the most part teachers and students appear to consider similar factors important as contributors to being 'international'" and the same study reported that teachers considered tolerance of cultures and noting issues from a variety of perspectives was at least as important as pragmatic curricula aspects. Phillips (2002) and Cambridge & Thompson (2004) both suggest there are a variety of inter-cultural approaches used when teaching different subject areas and Cambridge & Thompson (2000) suggest that international schools are often seen through the metaphor of a 'family'. Once again there is a fragmentation in evidence here and as Hetherington (1998, P.124) suggests: "In this geography of the elsewhere, margins become centres, centres become margins, and the meaning of centres and margins becomes blurred."

The existing frameworks of considering teachers in terms of the construction and theorising of masculinity has given very limited consideration to international school teachers and this research will consider previous theorisation through the actions and

viewpoints of these teachers, focussing on the role played by both male and female teachers in helping the construction of masculinity in a context where respect is important and where the relationship between teacher and student is often quite close. Schooling space is often interpreted as being either 'masculine' or 'feminine' and this research will paint a much more fluid picture, where some spaces are masculinised and others feminised and these may change within a context. In the next section, consideration will be given to the students and their interactions with each other.

## **2.6 Friendships, Language Used, and Relationships Between Students.**

Much of the previous research into friendships in schools (Willis 1977; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Frosh et al. 2002) focuses on either boys or girls and they all make the point to different degrees that there is a gendered difference in forming friendship. This has been interpreted as being part of a structure and part of a performance; both interpretations are relevant to this study.

Boys' friendships are depicted as being hierarchical and competitive, based on larger groups and lacking intimacy. Singleton (2003, P.131) uses the term 'bonding' to describe friendship between men which he suggests is "characterised by superficiality and emotional distance rather than intimacy, openness and expressiveness". The degree of intimacy allowed in these friendships is debatable, but what the term 'bonding' appears to do is to remove any hint of the sexual, which is unsurprising given that it was put forward by Lionel Tiger to describe "a culturally universal, biologically-based male with a propensity to establish strong social ties and institutions with other men" (Pleck 1982, P.149). In terms of behaviours, boys' friendships often revolve around sport and "having a laugh", 'playing up' the teacher and other potentially disruptive strategies" (Francis 2000, P.98). This style of friendship between men is common and, in its most absolute form, the young men involved have been labelled 'lads'. An explanation of this term is provided by Francis (2000, P.94):

This term evokes a young, exclusively male, group, and the hedonistic practices popularly associated with such groups (for example 'having a laugh', disruptive behaviour, objectifying women, alcohol consumption, and an interest in pastimes and subjects constructed as masculine).

Connell et al. (1982) and Frosh et al. (2002) both suggest that male friendships sometimes result in the subordination of girls and in perceived homophobia.

In contrast, girls' friendships work through the concept of intimacy and tend to be based around smaller groups; they are private, reliable, transient and focussed on shared intimacies, self-revelation, and emotional support. Hey (1997) suggests that the concept of the 'best friend' seems to play a key role in girls' friendships. Griffiths (1995, P.59) notes that, unlike boys, "adolescent girls are able to express their affection for each other physically without comment" and Chambers (2006, P.72) suggests, "women's friendships are underpinned by a feminine discourse of *nurturing*". However, as with boys' friendships, it is difficult to be absolute and Griffiths (1995) indicates in one part of her research that girls' friendships show kindness and at another point that they are characterised as being shallow and short-lived.

There are a variety of interpretations of these behaviours. One possibility is that it is the intimate female style of friendship that is being promoted as friendship. This explains the use of the idea of 'male bonding' within male friendships and has seen researchers such as Rubin (1983) and Swain (1989) suggest that male and female friendships need to be seen as different and not be compared under the label of friendship. Thus, on the one hand male-male friendship can still be seen as a signifier of dominant masculinity, where repositioning intimacy as 'male bonding' has allowed female friendship to now be regarded as 'other' and on the other hand, according to both Seidler (1992) and Chambers (2006), it has changed from a discourse of 'civic duty' to one of 'intimacy' and created one where men are unfavourably compared to women. When boys' and girls' friendships are considered together, it is often suggested that boys tend to be central to the space and girls are peripheral (Paechter 1998; Gordon et al. 2000; Epstein et al. 2001).

These different interpretations will be looked at within the Dutch International School and although consideration will be given to boys and girls individually, there will be a much stronger focus on the interaction between them, since the concept of boys-only and girls-only groups within the Dutch International School is limited. Consideration will also be given to how the concept of the school having a 'third culture' plays into this, given that respect, fragmentation and caring are key indicators within that culture. The absolute behaviours witnessed in previous research, that need to be understood

through a concept of masculinity, are not seen in this form in this environment and, hence, there will be a slightly different interpretation of the theory, which will in turn feed into the concept of 'third culture' masculinity.

These interactions between students are not always positive and, in previous research into friendships and interactions in schools, there has been emphasis on the role that language plays, although this has often been as a signifier of behaviour rather than the language itself being causal of those behaviours. For the purposes of this study, what is important is a consideration of how the recipient interprets the label. 'Having a laff', 'teasing', 'name-calling' and 'homophobic bullying' are often identical in terms of actions, but quite different in terms of intention and interpretation.

One of the behaviours that is often explored in previous research into boys and schooling is the role and extent of verbal homophobic bullying in schools, where according to Kimmel (1996, P.189): "Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, and reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men." Homophobia and homophobic bullying are key ways in which to remove power. For Dupper & Meyer-Adams (2002) it is used on boys who do not fit a stereotypical macho male image; Besag (1995) notes the idea of labelling, which suggests that victims are chosen for reasons of being different, but what is chosen as the focus of the bullying and the label is not always that difference. Thus, being a bad sportsman, refusing to fight, being a good academic student and not having a girlfriend (all attributes that do not signify dominant masculinity) all become lumped under a homophobic label. Kehily & Nayak (1997), Francis (2000) and Thurlow (2001) would all support this view and Plummer (2001) found that the number of homophobic references witnessed by boys varies, but can be more than fifty times per day. Kehily & Nayak (1997, P.73) note the link between homophobia and boys being feminine. This suggests that a language of oppression not only works by attempting to subordinate 'gay masculinity' but also by linking this style of masculinity to girls and women. However, this scenario does not appear to be true in all schools and in the research of McCormack & Anderson (2010, P.850) a different, but still absolute scenario is suggested. They state: "Terms such as 'queer' and 'poof' were not used, while 'fag' was only used to refer to a cigarette." All this research suggests something fairly absolute and it must be remembered that the degree to which this happens is actually quite varied. As Reid et al. (2004) note in their research, intent has a lot to do with bullying and they ask a number



of pertinent questions including: 'Must the bully intend to cause fear or is fear sufficient without direct intent?' and 'Is causing fear on one occasion bullying or must it be repeated to count?' On this basis one man's bullying becomes another man's teasing. It is the less absolute nature of this use of language which will be the focus of this research, and this will reflect on the extent to which it happens and the intention behind it. The suggestion is that there is a degree of fragmentation to this type of bullying behaviour.

'Other' boys are not the only recipients of this style of language; it is also used by boys on girls, although the common labels are now connected to the frequency with which girls have sexual relationships with boys. For example, Kehily & Nayak (1997, P.73) found that verbal exchanges often centred on "sexist jokes, innuendoes and comments (which) were frequently employed by young men at the expense of female pupils," and Gordon et al. (2000) suggest that girls who are assertive or, arguably, 'too assertive' are often called 'whores' by boys. In one sense it is boys here who are constructing their masculinity through girls. However, it is clear from other research (Abraham 1995; Hey 1997) that some girls use 'homophobic' language to resist and nullify certain boys.

These scenarios can be taken further and this style of language, which on the surface is serving as a descriptor of a situation, is in one sense performative. Frosh et al. (2002), Renold (2002) and Smith (2007) all suggest that there was not necessarily a belief that the people to whom the term was applied were actually gay, but what was important was the power and control achieved by such interactions. The homophobic language between boys, and the sexist language between boys and girls potentially and partially constructs both those who use it and those upon whom it is used. In one sense the school can be interpreted as what Lefebvre (1991) would call a linguistic mental space where a performance dictated by language takes place. Thus, the level to which the language used and its influence are taken, and the interpretations that come from it, can vary and this will be considered in the study as it this which provides a depth of understanding of the scenario found and the reasons behind it. Overall, it is interesting to note how much of the language of oppression is based around sexual behaviour, or intended sexual behaviour, and consideration will now be given to the role of relationships between students.

Gilbert & Gilbert (1998, P.106) suggest that: “(s)chools are intensely sexual places where boys learn a great deal about what it means to be a sexual ‘male’ person.” Accepting this to be true, it follows that one of the key ways for boys to validate masculinity in a school context is to engage in heterosexual practices (Pleck 1982). This is noted by many researchers, but what this means is interpreted in a wide variety of ways. At one end of the scale there is the concept of hyper-heterosexuals (Haywood 1996) and the ‘lads’ (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995; Skelton 2001). Walker & Kushner (1997) take a less overtly sexual approach and note the idea of having a girlfriend, as do Frosh et al. (2002, P.120), who suggest it is “often associated with acting ‘mature’ and not being (too much) like popular boys were with their male peers (funny, sporty and tough)”. At the other end of the scale is what could be described as ‘heterosexual banter’, where boys talk about an actual, potential, or imagined girlfriend and what sexual activities they might partake in, with no indication of the veracity of the claims. As Scott notes in the study undertaken by Forrest (2010, P.211), when discussing his views on ‘the lads’ in the school, he states: “They’re just trying to make themselves look big and they think it’s funny, but it’s not. It’s just talk.” Thus, the question can be asked as to whether, as a teenage male, you need a girlfriend on the arm or a girlfriend in bed to ‘do heterosexuality’ or is it ‘enough’ to talk about one? Obviously the concept of ‘enough’ in this scenario is dependent on the situation and the audience, but in all these situations the argument is put forward that girls are important in this construction of masculinity as the instrument by which heterosexuality is demonstrated and the friends (often male) are the witnesses to the act of heterosexuality (Frosh et al. 2002). Returning to the analogy of performance, as Goffman (1959) suggests, both the actors and audience have to be present for the performance to be both successful and seen as successful, and it is the interaction between the performers that is important; there needs to be both a male and a female ‘gaze’ for this to work. However, there are problems with this argument. Firstly what has been described here is what Mutchler (2000) refers to as the ‘adventure script’ for boys and men in heterosexual relationships. He describes the script for women as being that of romantic love. Thus, on the one hand girls and women are encouraged to save “sex for romance and marriage” (Mutchler 2000, P.16), while on the other hand they are expected to play a significant role in the ‘adventure script’, which clearly expects a very different role. Given that the girls in the Dutch International School play a significant role, the idea of heterosexual relationships will be considered from both perspectives and once again the focus will be on the meaning and interpretation of these relationships, rather than the relationships themselves.

The other important part of the role of relationships is noted by Tolson (1977), Kimmel (1994) and Weeks (2003) who all suggest that a young man instigating this sort of relationship can be interpreted as establishing a power base from which to launch a dominant masculinity, i.e. showing that they have 'enough'. However, previous research also suggests there are indications that in one sense 'enough' is not 'enough' and in some circumstances not only does there need to be a performance of heterosexuality, but there also needs to be a 'performance' of homophobia "that polices and constructs heterosexual masculinities in schools" (Epstein 1997, P.106). Thus, consideration will also be given to the views of homosexual relationships. In this situation it makes little sense to talk about what is witnessed, as few teenage boys actually engage in or witness homosexual relationships in a public sense. Few young men who believe or know they are gay 'come out' at school, partly because a real 'gay' identity is still stigmatised (Sullivan 1996; Coyle 1998; Clark et al. 2004) and although McCormack & Anderson (2010) suggest the situation has changed, Bohan et al. (2002) believe there has been no improvement in the immediate past. As there were no openly gay male students in the Dutch International School, this research will focus on the perceptions of this, which is strongly linked to how it is interpreted linguistically. The research outlined above is often based around what is needed and what is found, whereas this research will use the idea in a slightly different way and focus on the concept of 'enough'.

## **2.7 The Curriculum.**

Two aspects of the school curriculum will be considered in this section: academic success and sport.

### **2.7.1 Academic Success.**

Previous research (Willis 1977; Francis 2000) suggests that low academic success is significant in the performance of working-class masculinity and Frank et al. (2003) believe that working hard and being academically successful are viewed as 'feminine' characteristics. As Smith (2007, P.182) states:

...boys inhabiting 'hard' or 'macho' subjectivities often equate schoolwork with an 'inferior effeminacy that makes it inappropriate for them, as men. Similarly, displaying 'clever' or 'studious' behaviour towards schoolwork often results in aggressively homophobic taunting.

This needs to be treated with care, as it becomes very easy to suggest that being academically successful is a signifier of female and not being so is a signifier of male, which on a basic level is how 'failing boys' syndrome is often interpreted in the U.K. As Foster et al. (2001) and Martino (2008a) point out, these arguments fail to address the complex and sometimes contradictory ways in which masculinity and femininity are conceptualised.

In middle- and ruling-class masculinities, where future success is a signifier of dominant masculinity, the situation often changes. For example, Connell (1989) suggests that boys who achieve academic success have access to social power, Connell et al. (1982) refer to the phenomenon of 'top-stream masculinity' and Redman & Mac an Ghaill (1997) note the concept of 'muscular intellectualness'. As with heterosexuality, this needs to be considered through the concept of 'enough', which is dependent on both context and performance. Frosh et al. (2002, P.16) address this in their research when they suggest: "Private schoolboys tended to take it for granted that they had to do academic work ...However, as in the state schools, boys who were seen to work too hard were feminised and teased." Jackson (2002, P.46) suggests that 'enough' is manifested in other ways and describes the concept of closet learners who are "pupils who establish a pretence that they have done no work when actually they have spent a considerable amount of time studying". This leads Jackson (2002) to the conclusion that the problem is not necessarily about academic success but about appearing to work hard. Walkerdine (1990) proposes that the reasons behind this are that hard work is linked to a performance of passivity, which is in direct contradiction to a lazy but brilliant performance. Gilbert & Gilbert (1998) suggest that it is connected to the concept of 'caring', which as noted earlier is often identified as a feminine trait. Academic success is also discussed alongside both heterosexuality and sport in terms of being a signifier of masculinity and in one sense they work together, suggesting that you can be academically successful as long as you are also good at sport and/or demonstratively heterosexual (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998).

Academic success is argued slightly differently for girls. Previous research (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Francis 2000) suggests that there is some evidence that it is used by girls in a gendered context as a performance of ‘girl power’. For example, Nilan (2000) notes in her research that it was not uncommon to hear high-achieving girls ‘put down’ boys who had failed tests. However, this needs to be interpreted carefully and, as Brown (1987) and Frosh et al. (2002) point out, there are a range of academic successes and failures with both girls and boys.

These ideas will be considered carefully in this research given that academic success within the school is relatively important, with a focus on how it works for both girls and boys and to what extent there are commonalities. As Whitehead (2002, P.51) suggests, it will question the dichotomy of girls’ educational successes and boys “as the new ‘disadvantaged’”. Focus will also be given to the idea that this can be interpreted as a site of dominant masculinity just as easily as it can be seen as a site of subordinate masculinity. As far as this research is concerned, academic success is relevant to the curriculum, just as sport is, and hence it is important to consider them together, given the role of fragmentation in the Dutch International School.

### ***2.7.2 Sport.***

Sport is frequently mentioned in the context of masculinity construction by a number of researchers (Hargreaves 1986; Gilbert & Gilbert 1998; Gard 2001; Skelton 2001; Renold 2002; Ashley 2003; Frank et al. 2003; Swain 2003). It is, according to Connell (2008), a “masculine vortex”, a space where masculinity formation happens in terms of both increasing and decreasing power and prestige and in terms of forming hegemonic masculinity or subordinated masculinity. Gilbert & Gilbert (1998, P.60) suggest that “men’s sport is the archetype of institutionalised masculinity, and the images of men which dominate its ideology are the quintessential manifestations of the masculinist ethos”.

This can be interpreted both through the body and the through the actions and performances of the body. Davison (2000, P.262/263) suggests that the physical appearance of the body can communicate a specific message before any action is performed and states: “If your body is smaller than other men’s bodies, you can be seen as a weakling and as an easy target for verbal or physical attacks.” However, the actions

of that body also play a role in defining masculinity through sport and as Connell (1995) suggests the integrated performance of a body to undertake a range of sporting actions with absolute precision produces highly admired masculine figures within competitive sport. Davison (2000, P.263) would agree with this and states:

If you are less coordinated in sport, you are alienated and humiliated in PE class. Alternatively, bodies that are conditioned to perform in ways which are closer to the hegemonic ideal may be able to exercise a certain degree of body privilege.

As Connell (2002) suggests, in this context bodies are both objects of social practice and agents in social practice.

Parker (1996) proposes that many of the common assumptions attached to modern day sport appear to have originated within the English public (private) schools of the nineteenth century which were exclusively male institutions. These activities were valued for their competitive and repressive qualities but, more importantly, they were seen as fostering the values that were essential for the maintenance of British Imperialism. Hence, being good at sport and 'playing fair' were behaviours associated with ruling-class masculinity. According to Hargreaves (1986) there were also changes in how working-class boys used their time during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, with the rise of boys clubs which put sport and physical activity at the forefront. The reasons behind this were two-fold; the reduction of delinquency on the streets and the increase in physical fitness required for war. These are ideas that transfer well into the modern day. In a U.K. context, when consideration is given to success at football, this has become a major signifier of masculinity, especially working-class masculinity (Epstein et al. 2001; Skelton 2001; Frosh et al. 2002), and success at sport in general has a high degree of relevance in ruling-class schools. Thus, there is a suggestion that it is the national influence that keeps sport important in schools and hence in an international school, where there is a disrupted sense of the national, this will need to be considered. On one hand, in many countries sport, especially football, continues to have a major influence, and hence one argument suggests an international context should not alter this. On the other hand, there are indications that a multi-cultural perspective can change interpretations. Given the importance of sport in the construction of masculinity, the situation in the Dutch International School will be considered.

In terms of boys' interactions with girls in schools, sport also plays a significant role and allows for significant performances to be undertaken. Hey (1997) notes an incident in P.E. class where the girls are running a relay race and the boys, led by the male P.E. teacher, walk across the track, thus sabotaging the race. No comment is made or action taken by the girls or the female PE teacher. There is also the suggestion that if P.E. is taught in mixed groups, then it is often traditionally male games that are chosen which puts the girls at a further disadvantage as the boys have had more previous opportunities to acquire relevant skills, thus potentially leading to a dominant masculine performance (Paechter 1998; Skelton 2001). The research of Francis (2000, P.102) suggests that boys were dismissive of the girls' ability in football and "they appeared hostile to the involvement of girls in football, perhaps because the boys use football as a tool with which to construct their masculine opposition to girls and things 'feminine'". Thus sporting talent and success are both indicators of a dominant masculinity in themselves and are active sites for dominant masculinity in terms of the 'putting down' of 'other' boys and girls. Given the significant role of girls in the Dutch International School, this aspect of sport is worthy of further consideration and possibly reinterpretation.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Overall, this chapter makes a strong case for the social construction of gender and, hence, masculinity and presents masculinity through both a structural and a post-structural approach. Philosophically, and to a degree theoretically, these positions cannot be held on to simultaneously because of "the quite different understandings of power and the self that each position speaks to" (Whitehead 2002, P.103). However, within a detailed case study, there needs to be flexibility with regards to how ideas can be interpreted which are not necessarily dictated by philosophy. Furthermore, as Alsop et al. (2002) note, when structuralism and post-structuralism are interpreted through the concept of performance, they are not necessarily in contradiction. Hence, in this research there is a potential tension between how the empirical practices are explained and how they are then theorised, which will hopefully be partially resolved by using a critical realist approach.

In this research the construction of masculinity is interpreted through the school and its inhabitants. The focus of this is the concept of the Dutch International School being an

international school and the idea that many of the students in the school can be labelled 'third culture' kids. This research will go on to reinterpret this idea and consider the culture of the school as a 'third culture'. Previous research suggests a number of areas in schooling which are important in the construction of masculinity. This is firstly explored through the role of teachers, often male teachers, who reinforce masculinity in students through their own masculine behaviour. Secondly, consideration has been given to student friendships where it is suggested that there are quite strong gendered distinctions between how boys and girls interpret friendships. The language used between students was also considered in terms of male students using it as a way to subordinate 'other' boys and girls. Research was also undertaken into the role of relationships in terms of the importance of heterosexuality in constructing masculinity. Finally, two aspects of the curriculum were considered - academic success and sport. These practices will be reanalysed and potentially reinterpreted through the context of an international school and 'third culture'. Together this will start to develop one aspect of the 'third culture' - 'third culture' masculinity.



## **Chapter 3. Methodology.**

### 3.1 Introduction.

The aim of this study is to gain insight into how the students in the Dutch International School understand and interpret the concept of masculinity and to use this information to give further consideration to the theorising of masculinity. This will be achieved through the objectives of the research. Firstly, this is to gain an understanding of the styles of masculinity being constructed in the school through the key primary practices. Secondly, this is to consider how these styles of masculinity influence and are influenced by the culture of the school.

This chapter will begin by setting out the philosophical basis for this research, including the justification for choosing a mixed-methods approach. It will then consider the data collection strategies before moving on to reflect on the validity of the results. Finally, consideration will be given to the ethical issues and constraints posed by this research. Philosophically, there are potential problems with the research. The results of this study are descriptive, which works well when comparison is made between the results and the established theories. However, as this research is building theory inductively, the supposition that there is a valid theory to start with is not actually the case; this situation can be interpreted as an interrogation of current theory as opposed to building upwards or outwards from it. Thus, when consideration is given to Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity, theories that have a basis in a class-structure and post-structuralist ideas, none of these have been interpreted in an international schooling context and, hence, there is the need for an inductive fusion of these theories of masculinity with what has been theorised about international schooling and international students. Overall, this means there is no basis for demonstrating absolute certainty. This is not necessarily a problem and, as Hammersley (1992, P.181), states: "However, there *are* ways in which we can maximise the confidence we can legitimately have in the truth of a theory." For example, he notes the use of investigating the most favourable and the least favourable cases as a means of providing powerful evidence. Hence, this research aims to open the theory up to maximum interrogation, which begins to hint at the idea of Popper's falsification - used to indicate the truth of theories in the natural sciences.

### **3.2 The Philosophical Basis of the Method.**

This research uses a mixed methods approach which is defined by Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004, P.18) as: “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study”. There is an immediate contradiction with this. On a philosophical level there is a problem as the researcher is mixing paradigms, but on a pragmatic level there are many advantages to using a variety of methods from both qualitative and quantitative traditions. There is an argument that qualitative and quantitative methodologies are fundamentally incompatible paradigms and that the researcher is mixing key assumptions regarding (a) the nature of the social world we endeavour to understand; (b) the nature of the knowledge we can have about the world, including the relationship between the knower and the known; and (c) the purpose and role of social inquiry in society. These points are well known, but have been left behind by many researchers in the field (Cresswell et al. 2003; Greene & Caracelli 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2003). Ultimately, as Polkinghorne (1983, P.253) states: “No longer does following the correct method guarantee truth; it corrects guesses.” However, a consideration of the different paradigms does need to be considered in another respect, in that it positions the viewpoint of the researcher.

#### ***3.2.1 Critical Realism, Social Constructivism and Grounded Theory.***

Within philosophy of science there is a central paradox which is that on the one hand humans produce knowledge as a product of their social activity and, on the other hand, that knowledge is “out there” waiting to be discovered and is not made by humans at all (Bhaskar 1975). The assumption is made that in order for the researcher to make sense of the world, in whatever context, it is important firstly to study how the humans who actually inhabit that world make sense of their world. Maxwell (1992, P.283) states:

As observers and interpreters of the world, we are inextricably part of it; we cannot step outside our own experience to obtain some observer-independent account of what we experience.

Hammersley (1992) takes a similar approach when he acknowledges that knowledge is a product of how a researcher interacts with his field of study as opposed to a reflection of what is out there. This begins to hint at the idea of construction and that there are multiple representations of that knowledge. Greene & Caracelli (2003, P.95) back this up by stating:

...we believe that all inquirers approach their work with some set of assumptions about the social world, social knowledge and the purpose of social research. Thus it is always possible for there to be different, equally valid accounts from different perspectives.

This research is not making the claim for an objective truth, but nor is it accepting all participants' accounts as relative truths. It is assuming that the truth of participants' accounts does not depend entirely on the account itself, but also relates to those things that the account is about. According to Teddlie & Tashakkori (2003, P.6), the beliefs widely held by mixed methodologists include:

...value-ladenness of inquiry (research is influenced by the values of investigators), theory ladenness of facts (research is influenced by the theory that the investigator uses), and the nature of reality (our understanding of reality is constructed).

Ultimately, this research will assume that there is a single reality 'out there', even though there cannot be absolute certainty of the truth of it.

This is essentially a critical realist perspective which takes the stance that an independent reality exists, but that this does not entail the assumption that there is absolute knowledge of the way that reality works (Scott 2005). From a critical realist perspective, the categories that a researcher employs to understand the reality are provisional and the generative mechanisms are not necessarily directly observable, but they are admissible because their effects are observable. For example, in this research, it is noted that the nature of friendships between students affects the formation of a masculine identity. It is not physically possible to look at the mechanism by which this happens, but from observation and student interviews, it is possible to see the effect. According to Scott (2005, P.635):

Critical realism is critical then, because any attempts at describing and explaining the world are bound to be fallible, and also because those ways of ordering the world, its categorisations and the relationships between them, cannot be justified in any absolute sense, and are always open to critique ... .

This implies that both the researcher and the participants have to enter into a critical relationship with both previous and current ways of describing reality, with a view to possibly changing it. As Hammersley (1992, P.50) states: “In my view, we should instead define knowledge as beliefs about whose validity we are reasonably confident.” This becomes increasingly important when consideration is given to the theorising of masculinity in this context.

Although this locates the research in a specific space, it could be argued that this is a philosophical space rather than a methodological space and Wai-Chung Yeung (1997) suggests there is a need to address the idea of method in critical realist research. One possibility for this is to use grounded theory where continued analysis of the data leads to theory generation. As Glaser & Strauss (1967, P.26/27) suggest:

Both implicitly and explicitly, the analyst continually checks out his theory as the data pour in. Explicit verification beyond testing his hypotheses may lead to establishing major uniformities and universals, to strategic variations of theory under different conditions and to grounded modifications of theory. A touch of generation may be included, but the researcher’s focus is on verifying: he generates theory only in the service of modifying his original theory as a result of the tests.

The focus of the method is on constant comparison of the many similarities and differences, which Glaser & Strauss (1967) suggest is the way in which a number of abstract categories and resultant properties are generated. Since these have come from the data, it follows that they will be important to a theory which explains the behaviour which is under observation. As Glaser & Strauss (1967, P. 46) state: “A discovered, grounded theory, then will tend to combine mostly concepts and hypotheses that have emerged from the data with some existing ones that are clearly useful”.

### ***3.2.2 Reciprocity and Standpoint Epistemology.***

The idea of reciprocity is very important within this research. According to Haywood & Mac an Ghaill (2003), the researcher must engage the research participant in a reciprocal relationship that allows his or her voice to be heard. In a reciprocal arrangement the researcher moves from being a stranger towards being a friend, with the idea that it is easier to gather information from “friends”. This fits well with a critical realist perspective, but in this context it needs to be dealt with sensitively. In this context this is suggesting that any use of grounded theory will also have to be handled carefully. The original exposition of grounded theory by Glaser & Strauss (1967) paid little attention to the interaction between the researcher and the participants with the implication being that participants were seen solely as a source of data as noted by Mills et al. (2006, P.11): “Historically, grounded theory has been judged as silently authored; that is, researchers have maintained a position of ‘distant expert’”. Hence it is important to remember that Glaser and Strauss went in separate directions after their initial development with Glaser taking a more objectivist approach and Strauss & Corbin creating a constructivist approach where theory is “constructed in an interactional process between researcher and data” (Hallberg 2006, P.147). Strauss & Corbin (1990) stress the importance of the voice of the participant and Hall & Callery (2001, P.259) state that constructivist grounded theory “acknowledged the investigator’s vital and creative role in the production of grounded theory”. Ultimately as Hall & Callery (2001, P.258) state in this context: “Using grounded theory ... makes it necessary to acknowledge the effects of power, trust and interactions on the substance of the data”. Thus its usage in this research is one based on a constructivist model, not on an objectivist version of grounded theory.

It is now important to consider the issue of standpoint, which goes back to the theories of Marx who states:

In the social production of their existence, people [Menschen] inevitably enter into definite relations of production appropriate to a given stage in their development of their material forms of production (Marx 1970 cited Manicas 1987, P.101).

Haywood & Mac an Ghaill (2003) believe that standpoint epistemology is rooted in the arguments of Hegel over the relationship between a master and his slave, which later developed into a Marxist-based proletarian standpoint. Ultimately, as Manicas (1987, P.100) states: “the possibility of distinguishing between true and false ideas about ourselves presupposes the possibility of a realist conception of social sciences”. Smith (1987 cited Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003, P.107) believes that standpoint epistemology “locates experiences within a wider social order and accompanying public world of relations of ruling from which certain groups are excluded”. It is important to note that this is not stating that the researcher is presenting versions of reality within the Dutch International School that are participant dependent, rather than one definitive reality, but that gaining information on certain aspects of that reality is influenced by who the researcher is. For this reason the reality of the school is obviously critically assessed and hence tentative, but it does not change the idea that there is a specific reality within the school. The feminist researcher Sandra Harding found that

the attempt to generate ‘less false stories’ prompted her to reject reliance on processes strictly governed by methodological rules and to argue that researchers should examine critically their own personal and historical commitments with which they construct their work (Harding 1993, P.70-71).

Thus, understanding and (hopefully) knowledge come from the meanings that the researcher makes of a participant’s social, mental and linguistic worlds in relation to his own world and, hence, the two are linked. Moghaddam et al. (2003, P.115) state:

We propose that in collecting evidence and interpreting findings, researchers should give full and serious consideration to the role of cultural difference which refers to the difference between the culture of the researchers and that of the participants in the research projects on which the investigators are embarked.

Haywood & Mac an Ghaill (2003, P.107) take a slightly different approach and state: “While accepting the idea of science, standpoint epistemology argues that it is not the disengaged scientist but rather the politically-engaged researcher who provides objectivity within the research process.” This is relevant to this research; although the researcher may have parts of his background in common with respondents (for example, having experienced international schools), there will be other parts that he does not (for

example, age and position). This needs to be taken into account when consideration is given to exactly who is being listened to. Fawcett & Hearn (2004) suggest that feminist standpoint epistemologies would be women-centred and Marxist standpoint epistemologies would be class-centred. In the context of this research, this means that the students of the Dutch International School form a key focus for the research and the experiences regarding the 'others' are placed in the wider context of these people's lives. It could be stated that this research is 'teacher-centred'; my role is to operate reflexively and as a research participant rather than an expert.

The standpoint of the researcher, as far as a student participant is concerned, is from an adult perspective and is quite different from that of a teacher participant who would see the researcher as a fellow professional who has worked in very similar environments. Thus the reciprocal relationship between the students and myself is different from that between the teachers and myself – we have different reciprocal relationships. Being a former teacher and more than twice the age of the students, the definition of 'friendship' in this context needs to be treated very carefully. This is not a simple case of just making every attempt to reduce the distance between myself and the participants, which in terms of life experience and age is a naïve approach, but it needs to be thought through in terms of what could be a 'realistic' relationship between the researcher and those being studied. As Walkerdine (1990, P.195/196) notes:

Although I invested considerable desire into wanting to 'be one of them' at the same time as 'being different', no amount of humanistic seeking for the 'beyond ideology' would get them to see in me a working-class girl 'like them'.

Being introduced by the school and being given a lot of freedom gave me an automatic legitimacy for being in the school and was a strong indicator that I could be trusted. It is quite different from the case of a researcher in school who is always working under the observation of other teachers. In this study the researcher is neither viewed as a student nor as a teacher, but it needs to be acknowledged, as with the research undertaken by Skelton (2001), that although the researcher is not positioned as a teacher, this does not prevent them from drawing on the understandings of being a teacher in terms of managing and organising students. In this scenario I do not hold the same power that a teacher holds, but as an older adult, this is a position that still holds some power. Hence, the information I could gain in this situation may be subtly different from the



information a younger researcher may gain. It is not that one is “better” than the other; it is just that they are slightly different. As Walkerdine (1990) suggests, the researcher ‘works with’ the situation rather than trying to ‘become’ the situation. In this context it could be argued that the researcher is using “collaborative interviewing and interactive research”, as used by Laslett & Rapoport (1975) in their study of school dropouts. In this research the ideas developed are constantly being redefined by the students through the different methodologies. In terms of working with teachers, the idea of friendship can be seen from a different perspective and, hence, I do not just hold one standpoint, rather a variety that is dependent on the situation. In this case there are many similarities, including profession and age, but as a white, British, gay man, the researcher has plenty of ‘others’ to take into account.

Hence, for this study, there were a number of advantages to using this approach. It allows the researcher to be empathic with all the respondents, making them more at ease and, therefore, more likely to disclose their experiences. Also carrying out interviews around something that I have experienced myself, and therefore I automatically have in common with the all participants, definitely allowed the participants to find a reasonable connection. Thus, other differences such as gender and sexuality can be dealt with within that framework. Therefore a reciprocal relationship actually existed and this is what Grimshaw & Sears (2008) would call an emic approach or, according to Hofstede (1980, P.41), “understanding-from-within”. Overall, there is clearly both reciprocity and a standpoint in relation to the empirical side of the study.

It should also be acknowledged that there is a standpoint in terms of the theory. Masculinity is not something that can be measured in any form of quantitative way. Although students have an awareness of masculinity, it is not a thought-through awareness and, hence, the understanding of masculinity takes place through the actions performed. Thus, in previous research on masculinity in schooling, many different things have been considered including sport, friendship and attitudes towards homosexuality. None of these in their own right signify a specific masculinity, but all are potentially indicators of degrees of having, or not having, a certain style of masculinity. Evidently the emphasis put on each is dependent on the researcher. As Frosh et al. (2002, P.32) recognise, the interactions in an interview context are themselves gendered expressions and they are not “expressions of some underlying, true ‘gender identity’”. This also needs to be borne in mind in terms of the style of

interviewing that is taking place, as one-to-one interviews provide a more ‘intimate’ environment where it could be argued that a ‘softer’ masculinity is seen rather than a focus group interview where peer interaction may play a highly significant role not only in what is said, but the actual style of masculinity being portrayed. The researcher is neither an unbiased observer of the empirical nor is he unbiased in the theorisation and, as Walkerdine (1990) acknowledges, the power, desire and knowledge of the researcher need to be recognised. Although the researcher is, on the one hand, researching gender politics, he is at the same time part of those same gender politics.

To argue against an absolute constructivist or relativist standpoint in terms of this educational research seems to make sense. However, it should be noted that there is still a degree of construction here. The belief is that the culture of an international school is not one that has an absolute external reality that acts on and constrains teachers, students and parents, but is one that is an emergent reality in a continuous state of construction and reconstruction, within a framework. Hence, the sexual and gendered identities of students are, to a degree, observable within the school and are constructed and interpreted, and this will need to be considered within the framework of a critical realist perspective. Thus, there is an attempt to find a single reality for this school, but it takes into account that this reality must reflect the views of participants and of past theory in order to be both descriptively and interpretively valid. As Scott (2005, P.638) states: “a critical realist, though ready to accept that reality is not constructed in any immediate sense, would argue that it has a history, and it is by virtue of this history that an independent world can be identified”. Although this research does not attempt to directly measure what causes sexual and gendered identities, it does provide a critical reality of where they come from. This tension between constructivism and realism is highlighted by Hammersley (1992, P.44) when he states:

Despite this commitment to realism, however, there is an important strand in ethnography that pushes in a contrary direction. Central to the way in which ethnographers think about human social action is the idea that people can *construct* the social world, both through their interpretations of it and through the actions based on those interpretations.

Ultimately, this tension may not be resolved. However, this thesis acknowledges that the production of knowledge is marked by, if not shaped by, the negotiation of this tension.

### **3.3 Data Collection Strategy.**

#### ***3.3.1 The School.***

Within this research, it is not possible or beneficial to use statistical sampling. Firstly in terms of international schools the characteristics of this population as a whole are not known. Secondly, within the scope of this study it is not possible to sample across the entire population of international school students. Hence, the researcher decided that this would be a detailed case study and a specific international school was found with which to work. On the basis of previous literature it was decided to use a school that teaches the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, has a diversity of students from different cultures and has more than 50 students in any particular grade. As Cohen et al. (2000, P.182) state: “Case studies strive to portray ‘what it is like’ to be in a particular situation, to catch the close-up reality ... of participants lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for, a situation.” Hammersley (1992, P.43) backs this up and states:

by entering into close and relatively long-term contact with people in their everyday lives we can come to understand their beliefs and behaviours more accurately, in a way that would not be possible by means of any other approach.

Thus, there is an ethnographic dimension to this study. The decision was then made to focus on students in the penultimate year of schooling. When the study started, these students had just begun the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and the final visit was made sixteen months after this. The fact that the research took place over a substantive amount of time allowed time for analysis of the data to take place while research was ongoing and hence the analysis of the data was leading to the theorising of the situation, something which Glaser & Strauss (1967) suggest is indicative of grounded theory. The research timetable is set out in appendix K. This allowed the researcher to work with a group of students who had significant experiences of schooling, and who were just beginning to be taught using a common curriculum. All

students from year 12 were invited to participate in this study, but there was ‘mortality’ as the study progressed. Hence, what was being used in this study was criterion-based selection.

To gain a broader picture of this case, it was decided that the views of parents and teachers would also be considered. To ensure that this fitted in with the sample of students, only the teachers who taught these students were used. Because of the difficulty in contacting specific parents in a school, the views of parents were sought across the age range in the school.

### ***3.3.2 The Participants of the Research.***

Students were, in the first instance, asked to complete a questionnaire (see appendix A). From the responses to this, a topic guide was produced (see appendix E) which was used as the basis for a series of focus group discussions in which all students were invited to participate. Following this, a group of forty students was used to conduct further more detailed analysis in the form of one-to-one, semi-structured interviews. Alongside this, thirty-six classroom observations were undertaken. These were selected randomly across the full range of subjects and were looking for evidence of students exhibiting gendered and sexual identities in the classroom as well as teachers promoting those behaviours.

All forty-eight teachers of these year 12 students were given a questionnaire (see appendix C). This questionnaire had a degree of overlap with the student questionnaire to help increase reliability and validity. Based on the analysis of this questionnaire (see appendix D), an interview guide was put together (see appendix G) and a sample of twenty teachers was interviewed using one-to-one, semi-structured interviews.

For the parents, due to the potential difficulties involved in arranging one-to-one interviews, questionnaires alone were used and a selection of parents and guardians from across the school were surveyed (see appendix H). This was undertaken by the researcher at a whole-school parents’ evening. The questions on the survey are a subset of the ones given to students, in order to be able to gain a consistent viewpoint, and the consideration of these responses (see appendix I) was used in interpreting the validity and reliability of the results.

### ***3.3.3 The Pragmatic Basis of the Method: Mixed Methodology.***

In this section, consideration is given to the pragmatic approach to this research:

Paradigmatic philosophical assumptions are less important than the myriad ‘practical demands’ of the particular research problem when making choices about data collection and interpretation. In this research frame, therefore, any potential contradictory ontological (the nature of reality) or epistemological (the nature of truth) assumptions are less important than ‘situational responsiveness’ and a commitment to an empirical perspective. Ultimately, to respect all facets of realism, multiple methods are not only welcomed but actually required (Greene & Caracelli 1997, P.9).

The evidence for this is compelling. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest that both methods use empirical data to address research questions, both construct arguments from their data and both incorporate safeguards to minimise bias and invalidity. Newman & Benz (1998) believe that quantitative and qualitative research are an interactive continuum as opposed to bi-polar opposites. Ultimately, as Polit & Hungler (1993, P.335) state:

Combined judiciously in a single study, qualitative and quantitative data can supply each other’s lack, which is one definition of complementary. By using multiple methods, the researcher can allow each method to do what it does best, with the possibility of avoiding the limitations of a single approach.

In the case of this research, the rationale for mixing the types of data was that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods alone could capture the details of the complex issue of how an international school influences the gendered identities of students.

The researcher began by issuing questionnaires to students and teachers, allowing data to be collected which could then be analysed. The analysis of the student questionnaire (see appendix B) then informed the topic guide which was used in the focus group interviews with students. The information gained from this exercise was then considered and informed the interview guide for the one-to-one interviews with students

(see appendix F). This follows the fundamental principle of mixed methods research, where researchers use a variety of strategies, approaches and methods so that the combination produces complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses (Johnson & Turner 2003). The decision was made to use them sequentially with the quantitative methodology informing the qualitative methodology, as was used in the research of Way et al. (1994) who were looking at depression and substance abuse in high school students. Thus, it is a sequential transformative design. According to Cresswell et al. (2003 P.228):

By using two phases, a sequential transformative researcher may be able to give voice to diverse perspectives, to better advocate for participants or to better understand a phenomenon or process that is changing as a result of being studied.

However, it does lead to some potential problems. As Ivankova et al. (2006, P.4) state:

Such issues include the priority or weight given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in the study, the sequence of the data collection and analysis, and the stage/stages in the research process at which the quantitative and qualitative phases are connected and the results are integrated.

Ultimately, these are subjective decisions that are made on the basis of the purpose of the study. As this is primarily an exploratory study to make sense of and theorise student masculinities in this context, the decision was made to give priority to the qualitative data collection, despite it being the second phase of the research process. As Ivankova et al (2006, P.5) state:

the rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth.

The results are connected at an intermediate stage, since interview questions for the qualitative data collection were based partly on the results of analysis of the quantitative phase. Thus, the qualitative analysis is, to a degree, based on the quantitative analysis.

The work done in this research is as much exploratory as confirmatory (based on current literature) and it should be noted that both these strands are present, once again highlighting the necessity of a mixed methods approach (Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2005). This has implications for the use of grounded theory in this research, as the role played by the literature within grounded theory is not wholly clear. The idea of ‘setting aside theoretical ideas’ is noted and the literal meaning where the researcher does not read existing literature is discarded. One interpretation is provided by Urquhart (2001, P106) who suggests that the idea that the literature is not central to theorising is in place “to ensure that the researcher takes an inductive rather than deductive approach and listens to the data rather than imposing preconceived ideas on the data.” In this research there is very little literature that deals with the construction of masculinity in an international school setting and in that sense the theory emerges from the analysis of the data in keeping with grounded theory. However, there is a vast body of research into the construction of masculinity in a national school setting and this needs to be taken into account and does structure some of the theorising of the situation. There is an awareness in the research of the tension between structural and post-structural approaches that need to be remembered while also being aware of the fact that this is research being undertaken in a different scenario to previous work. There is a grounded approach to this research, but it is not grounded theory in the classical sense as laid down by Glaser & Strauss (1967).

#### ***3.3.4 Access and Gatekeepers.***

Gatekeepers are defined as “people who are attempting to safeguard the interests of others” (Hek et al. 1996, P.73). Access into any institution, such as a school, is mediated by a gatekeeper who is likely to be concerned about the motives of the researcher, what the school can gain from the research and also what it can lose in terms of time given up by staff and potential risks to its image. They may seek to influence what will be investigated, the sorts of questions that can be asked, who participates and for how long, and the interpretation of the results. However it should be remembered that both sides have an interest in making the research work. The researcher wishes to add to cultural, sociological and educational knowledge and to have the material to complete his PhD while the school can learn more about how it works and use this information to work on school policy. Hence, the gaining of access is always a matter of negotiation.

At the outset of the study, I was granted access to all the year 12 students. On subsequent visits, I was given access to any classroom, provided the teacher had advance notice, was allowed to ask any year 12 student to be part of a focus group discussion or undertake a one-to-one interview, and was allowed to interview any teacher provided they agreed.

It should be remembered that for schools to allow researchers access is actually relatively rare. The indication from the work of Melnick & Henk (2002) is that access to schools is often made using personal connections, which was the case in this study. In this situation it is important to consider that there are actually two forms of access. The first is actually gaining access to the organisation and the second is continued access once the initial meeting has taken place. Thus, there may be more than one gatekeeper. At the Dutch International School the permission initially came from the Head of Secondary School. This fits in with the ideas of Burgess (1991) when he suggests that in a school situation access is gained through someone higher in the school hierarchy than those the researcher wishes to study. However, this is not the person that I needed to work with on a day-to-day basis. Hence, the Head of Year 12 is also a gatekeeper and, ultimately, there may be several layers of gatekeepers below this – for example, when a researcher observes classes, the teacher is acting as a gatekeeper. Lu (2007) indicates that gatekeepers can arise in a number of different ways: he/she may be part of a group which nominates that person as a gatekeeper; they may become gatekeepers because of their structural location in a group; or their position may emerge out of cultural certification. In terms of this school, the first gatekeeper is the Head of the Secondary School and he can be described as being a gatekeeper on the basis of cultural certification, at least in part. Thus, the Head of the Secondary School can influence how both students and members of staff react in a specific situation. However, this links to the second position and he is also a gatekeeper because of the structure of the organisation. The Head of Year 12, and teachers themselves, also fulfil gatekeeping roles, mainly due to the structure of the institution. Yet despite the difference in the reason for them having this position, the effect and the power they have remain the same.

In this study the Dutch International School allowed access because of the understanding of the difficulty in doing research in an international school. However, the school was undergoing an accreditation process and I had offered to help with this,



if required. Thus, gatekeeping can be described as a combination of filtering and linking. It must also be remembered that the background of the researcher will influence the extent to which access is granted or withheld and within this study the researcher's previous experience was key. Being very familiar with the systems operated by international schools, being recommended to the Head of Secondary School by a colleague and independently being known by the Head of Year 12 from having previously trained teachers, I was automatically trusted within the school. Time was given to me to initially distribute questionnaires to the students and I was then allowed complete freedom to form focus groups and select participants for one-to-one interviews. Suitable office space was given for both the focus group interviews and the one-to-one interviews.

### ***3.3.5 Use of and Rationale Behind the Questionnaire.***

On the first visit, all students from year 12 were given a questionnaire and teachers of these students were asked to complete a questionnaire on the second visit to the school. The parent questionnaire was issued later, as this was used to provide a further viewpoint on the reliability of the information found. The student questionnaire had been piloted in a national school in Scotland amongst 40 students of the same age and educational experience. As Cohen et al. (2000) suggest, there are many specific reasons for undertaking a pilot and the reasons used in this research were as follows:

- To check the clarity of the questionnaire items, instructions and layout;
- To gain feedback on the validity of the questionnaire items, the operationalisation of the constructs and the purposes of the research;
- To eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in wording;
- To gain feedback on the layout;
- To check the time taken to complete the questionnaire;
- To check whether the questionnaire is too long or too short, too easy or too difficult, too unengaging, too threatening, too intrusive, too offensive.

In a number of questions, words were changed to improve clarity and one question was found to be leading and, hence, was reworded completely. It is important to note that particularly sensitive questions were not included in the questionnaire. The reasoning behind this was that I felt there was a real danger of either under-reporting or over-

reporting by participants and that particularly sensitive areas should be left to face-to-face methods of gaining information. The teacher and the parent questionnaires were based on the student questionnaire, but were not identical.

The purpose behind the questionnaires for students and teachers was two-fold. Firstly, the student questionnaire gauged student views on what they considered to be important and, hence, served as a basis for writing the topic guide for the focus groups. In a similar way, the teacher questionnaire informed the writing of the interview guide for teachers. This potentially solves two different problems. Firstly, one of the criticisms of using a Likert scale is that it may only address one issue regarding a particular case and, as Cohen et al. (2000, P.254) state: "It might have been the case that there was something far more pressing about the issue than the rating scale included but which was condemned to silence for want of a category." Using open-ended questions partly addresses this and the purpose here was not to make comparisons between respondents, but to look for common themes for use in the topic guide and the interview guide. Also, as Cohen et al. (2000, P.255) state: "It puts the responsibility for and the ownership of the data much more firmly into the respondent's hands." Overall, this again backs up the decision to use qualitative methodology to explore quantitative results. Secondly, the basis for these guides is usually the literature and previous research, but given the specific nature of this research and the lack of specific previous research and specific literature on masculinity in an international school context, it allowed informed decisions to be made regarding what was included in the focus group topic guide. This is suggestive of an approach based on grounded theory.

The questionnaires themselves were partly analysed using quantitative methodology and partly using qualitative methodology. With the exception of the open-ended questions, the questionnaires were analysed using the data software package SPSS. All data gained from the questionnaires was coded, taking into account the different types of data, and then analysed using univariate and bivariate analysis. Questions that either showed significant results or unexpected results were then incorporated in the focus group topic guide or the interview guide. In the open-ended questions, themes were identified and were then included in the guides. Given that the three questionnaires had questions in common, comparison was also done across all three to check for agreement between these three sets of stakeholders, thus increasing the validity of the research.

### ***3.3.6 Use of and Rationale Behind the Focus Groups.***

A focus group consists of between 4 and 12 people who discuss a topic in depth. Unlike a group interview, where the researcher is gaining information in the form of answers to questions, the focus group is slightly different. In this situation, the people actually work as a group, listen to each other's points of view and, hence, may change their views accordingly. Krueger (1994) suggests that interviews assume that individuals really do know how they feel and that individuals form their opinions in isolation, but

Evidence from focus group interviews suggests that people do influence each other with their comments, and in the course of a discussion the opinions of an individual might shift. The focus group analyst can thereby discover more about how that shift occurred and the nature of the influencing factors (Krueger 1994, P.11).

This backs up the fact that there is both an interpretivist and a constructivist element to this research. Furthermore, according to Krueger (1994 P.6): "The researcher creates a permissive environment in the focus group that nurtures different perceptions and points of view, without pressuring participants to vote, or reach consensus." Thus, as opposed to an individual interview or a group interview, the idea is that the respondents are the focus rather than the researcher, who is facilitating it. Thus, the arguments and discussions that take place in the focus group may produce a more realistic account of what people think. "It is a particularly appropriate procedure to use when the goal is to explain how people regard an experience, idea, or event" (Krueger 1994, P.8).

In this context, the researcher is often referred to as a moderator since one of the major roles is to moderate or guide the discussion. In this study, fourteen focus groups were formed. The number of students in each focus group was within the range three to seven in order for it to be large enough for diversity of opinion, but small enough for all individuals to have a say. All students were given the opportunity to participate which allowed students to become involved in the study and to feel that they had a voice. Within the fourteen groups interviewed, fifty-five students took part, allowing enough groups for topics to be exhausted. Thus, there is a real sense of the group helping to discover and shape a critical reality of their school. For each group the same topic guide was used. This fits in with the experiences of Krueger (1994) who suggests that by

repeating the focus group several times with similar participants, and using careful and systematic analysis of discussions, that patterns can be identified and that insights can be gained into how situations are perceived. Thus, the technique not only allows information to be found, but allows the researcher to see how groups come to these conclusions (Krueger 1994; Bryman 2004). As a lone researcher leading the focus group, it was only possible to take limited notes and, hence, having a recorded account of who said what was important.

According to Krueger (1994), participants of focus groups should not know each other because if they do, there is the possibility that comments could have been influenced by past, present or possibly future interactions with group members. One of the biggest problems associated with this occurs if there is a superior-subordinate relationship. As there was no teacher present within the focus groups, this was less of an issue. Also, within groups that contain close friendships there is always the danger that some of the communication will take place using subtle non-verbal methods which make the conversation difficult to analyse. According to Bryman (2004), not all researchers accept this point of view and some use groups that are made up of people who know each other to try and enhance the quality of conversation. In this study, the decision was made to allow the students to self-select their groups. I went to the two areas of the school where year 12 students congregated during free-periods and asked them to select focus groups of between 3 and 7 people. Two focus groups were conducted later in the research with two groups that were identified during the research: the 'football boys' and the 'Rens group'. This ensured that there was a level of comfort within the group which I felt would allow for a more open conversation. Ultimately, my experience was that having groups who knew each other quite well really enriched the conversation, as I could not only follow up the verbal cues, but also ask about the non-verbal cues.

According to Bryman (2004) and Krueger (1994), as the moderator needs to have gentle control over the group and needs to control unobtrusively, the moderator should have some training in terms of working with groups. In this study, the researcher has had much experience in terms of working with group dynamics, both in terms of creating an atmosphere where quieter students have the confidence to speak and in terms of not allowing more confident students to dominate. Before the focus group interviews took place, a topic guide was put together based on the answers given in the questionnaires; this is a list of topics or issues that need to be addressed by the focus group. It was

decided to use a list of topics, as opposed to a list of specific questions, as it allowed for more flexibility for questions to be phrased using colloquialisms employed by the students.

The focus group interviews were analysed using computer recording based analysis, where each recording is listened to carefully and an unabridged transcript produced. In this study I was looking for common themes that emerged from the recordings and consideration was also given to the context in which these themes were discussed. It is also important to note whether a comment is made in response to an open-ended question asked by the researcher or as a response to a comment made by one of the other participants in the group. There were also a number of occasions within the focus groups where I noted non-verbal cues, for example prolonged eye contact between participants or a change in voice intensity, and followed these up with questions to try to understand the meaning of the non-verbal cues. The decision was made not to measure frequency of comments or extensiveness of comments since, as Kreuger (1994, P.150) states:

It is risky to assume that either frequency or extensiveness is equivalent to importance without additional evidence. Indeed, some comments in a focus group have been deemed by participants to be of considerable importance, yet the comments occurred with minimal frequency.

To analyse the interviews, thematic analysis was used. According to Braun & Clarke (2006, P.80), “thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest there are six phases to thematic analysis and at this stage the research used the first three:

1. Familiarising oneself with the data: in this research this was done by full transcription of the interviews. This minimises the problem of ‘contamination’ (Plummer 1983), where the researcher rewrites part of the conversation to represent the original meaning.
2. Generating initial codes: this was done informally by highlighting the transcripts.
3. Searching for themes: Within this research the themes were noted from the highlighted transcripts and then compared with the initial questionnaires and both similarities and differences were noted. The idea of the research was to

‘drill down’ into the themes to gain a greater insight with each data analysis tool used. However, there still remained an awareness of what was being said in the literature, and the idea that what was being observed was through a lens of structural masculinity and performative masculinity was not ignored. This is what Braun & Clarke (2006) would describe as an inductive approach, which is looking for repeated patterns of meaning (which is reminiscent of grounded theory).

In terms of the comparison with the results from the initial questionnaires, this is indicative of what Glaser & Strauss (1967) call the constant comparative method. Urquhart (2001, P.106) suggests this “is the process of constantly comparing instances of data that you have labelled as a particular category with other instances of data, to see if these categories fit and are workable”. At this stage the focus of the research was to gain the most appropriate guide for the semi-structured interviews and although there was a constant emphasis on letting the interpretation of the data strongly influence this, there is still an importance to past theorising.

### ***3.3.7 Use of and Rationale Behind Semi-Structured Interviews.***

For this study, there were a number of advantages to using this approach with both teachers and students. Using one-to-one, semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to be totally empathic with the respondents, which actually makes them more at ease and, hence, more likely to disclose their experiences. Brewer & Crano (2002) believe that interviews allow for an interactive relationship between the interviewer and the respondent, which is important as the researcher did not want to limit the direction in which participants took the interview. Rose (1994) suggests that in an unstructured interview the interviewer tries not to allow prior knowledge to influence the interviewee and the interviewer does not try to guide the range or depth of the respondent’s conversation. In semi-structured interviewing, the interviewer does focus on certain issues and can probe and clarify comments made. As the themes that the researcher wanted to focus on had emerged from the focus group interviews, it was essential that the interview had some structure, but it was also essential to allow participants to explore by giving their own stories. In this part of the research, the researcher had a clearer idea of what was influencing masculine identities, but wanted detail on how this worked. Once again it is a critical reality that has both constructivist and interpretivist

elements. In the end, as Rose (1994) suggests, it is a balancing act between achieving consistency between interviews while being flexible with the respondent and allowing for new themes to emerge. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) argue that a completely unstructured interview approach is actually theoretically impossible since any comment can be seen as leading in some way and the fact that the researcher is unbiased is impossible, since by carrying out the research he/she automatically has an interest in the subject under discussion.

In this part of the research, 40 students and 20 teachers gave accounts. For the initial questionnaire with both students and teachers, and the focus group discussions for students, all members of the population had the potential to be involved. This was not the case with the one-to-one interviews. For students, the decision on who to interview was made partly from the focus group analysis, in terms of who was engaged with the topics under discussion, and partly by students who asked to do this. For the teachers the selection was made on the basis of those who had fully engaged with the questionnaire and teachers who asked to be interviewed. Hence, to a degree, judgements are being made on whose accounts are more “important” than others. Given the range of students and teachers who took part, and the crystallisation of the different methods, the problem here should be minimised.

Although these have been named as one-to-one, semi-structured interviews based on questions, there is a tension with this as the conversations often involved asking students to tell stories; therefore there are elements of a life histories method to them. Life histories are narrative self-disclosures about life experience and in this approach the researcher asks the respondent to provide their ideas and experiences regarding a specific theme (Polit & Hungler 1993). Goodley (1996) believes that more than any other social science approach, life histories enable us to know people intimately, to see the world through their eyes and to enter into their experiences vicariously. Given that there was the potential for some students’ experiences to be very personal to them, using interviews in the context of a life histories method seemed highly appropriate. Ultimately, as Dhunpath (2000) suggests, it emphasises personal stories and narratives, and the intensely individual nature of each person’s experience is captured.

Given that certain aspects of a life histories method were used, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. Firstly, Goodley (1996) believes that the way

researchers are perceived by respondents has an impact on the collection of life histories and believes that all researchers should enquire as to exactly how their informants see them. In this research, this was a potential issue. The students at the Dutch International School do not see the researcher as a teacher, but as he has worked closely with them over a period of 16 months, they have built up trust in the researcher and to some extent see him as independent from the school. However, this does not change the fact that both the researcher and the respondent have a viewpoint and to some degree a directive approach will be automatically taken. The fact that both parties were conscious of this issue hopefully allowed the danger of eliciting answers that were wanted or expected to be overcome. Secondly, this method of data collection revolves around memory. According to Beli (1998), past surveys using a life histories method have noted under reporting of major events. This will be considered through the role of social memory, which has a synergy with life histories methodology.

Social memory is an expression of collective experiences and is something that is dynamic rather than static. According to Fentress & Wickham (1992, P.7):

To the extent that our 'nature' – that which we truly are – can be revealed in articulation, we are what we remember. If this is the case, then a study of the way we remember - the way we present ourselves in our memories, the way we define our personal and collective identities through our memories, the way we order and structure our ideas in our memories, and the way we transmit these memories to others – is a study of who we are.

Hence, our culture is based on who we think we are and, as there is no one single memory, there is no one single truth. Fentress & Wickham (1992) give the example of looking in the mirror each morning. We look no different from one day to the next, but if we then see an old photograph, we can see the change. Part of the reason for this is that the changes from day to day are so small, but also that the habitual nature of the action blots out the previous memory. Furthermore, Fentress & Wickham (1992, P.45) state: "Social memory depends on the group's conception of the knowledge it remembers: does it regard this knowledge as images or texts to be analysed, or merely as sequenced patterns of sound to be committed to memory?" The former implies a negotiated and dynamic approach to culture and identity, whereas the latter implies a structured approach, which links back to the theoretical position of this research and fits



with the idea of 'third culture'. As Giddens (1984) suggests, to try to separate absolutely the present and the past is problematic and the two need to be considered as a form of continuum. This was clearly a potential issue within this research, since participants were actually remembering events and how they occurred, which leads to the problem of which events they have "chosen" to remember and what has affected this. Ultimately, this is not necessarily a problem because, as Dhunpath (2000, P546) states: "The focus is not on the factual accuracy of the story constructed, but on the meaning it has for the respondent."

To analyse the semi-structured interviews, as with the focus groups interviews, thematic analysis was used. Thus the first three stages (c.f. section 3.3.6) were undertaken again and then followed as suggested by Braun & Clarke (2006) by the final three stages.

These are:

4. Reviewing the themes: this was undertaken with reference to the transcripts from the one-to-one interviews and in comparison with the other tools used to gather data in this study.
5. Defining and naming themes: consideration was given to the 'story' connected to each theme and how this connected to the broader picture of the research.
6. Producing the report.

This fits in with the ideas of Ricoeur (1985 cited Burcke 2005, P.252) who suggests that we are compelled to use narrative to make sense of our lived experience. The research by Johnson-Bailey (1999) suggests that this sort of analysis should allow the researcher to see connections between certain events and to understand people's sense of place within the events, which was exactly what happened in this research.

However, this presents a potential problem in terms of making decisions on which data to use and what themes come from this data. One of the ways in which decisions were made on the 'keyness' of data leading to the idea of 'key' themes was through the degree to which it captures an important feature of the research question. For example, sport is a way in which many men 'normalise' the concept of being a man and hence this becomes a key theme. However, in the case of the role of academic success this was a key theme that emerged from the data because of a combination of the way in which students talked about it as an important way of establishing their identity with the frequency with which it came up. At whatever point concepts and themes began to appear, to try to ensure they were 'key' face validity was used where new or emerging

themes need to reflect the understanding of the situation. As Kemmis & McTaggart (2000, P.591) suggest, this reflects whether the evidence researchers “collect makes sense *to them, in their contexts.*” Lather (1986a, P.67) suggests that face validity should be “integral to the process of establishing data credibility” and that good research refines themes and results in the light of the reaction of the participants. The fact that data was obtained from students using three separate methods and that information was sought from a variety of stakeholders meant that themes were constantly revisited and reviewed and hence face validity was consciously built into the research design.

Thus what was important in this research was some of the underlying ideas and conceptualisations. It was not a matter of just counting the number of occurrences within the data and as this is qualitative analysis it was not deemed appropriate to say that if an idea occurred in a certain percentage of the data, then it would become a theme. Furthermore, the idea of numerically coding the data to determine the importance of a theme was also rejected, as importance is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures. Ultimately as Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest, thematic analysis involves searching through a data set to find repeated patterns of meaning and the advantage of thematic analysis is that it allows the researcher flexibility in terms of the way in which themes are determined, but that there needs to be consistency in how this happens.

Thus given the visiting and revisiting of the themes and the wish to theorise this, constructive grounded theory is used in this research where, as Charmaz (2006) notes, the participants’ voices are consistently included throughout the process of analysis. In terms of the theories connected to the language that boys and girls use it is the case that emerging themes are written about, reinterpreted through the data and then the whole process repeated with the theory emerging from the data. This is an example of what Glaser & Strauss (1967) would describe as the theorising beginning with a low level of category of theory, which through grounded theory develops to a higher level. Glaser & Strauss (1967, P.105) suggest this is not necessarily a problem as “earlier stages do remain in operation simultaneously throughout the analysis and each provides continuous development to its successive stage until the analysis is terminated”. However, there is a circularity suggested by this and in this research, this was not always the case. There were points where the literature was reinterpreted with the data as part of the theorising, which is the case in terms of working in the context of

structural and post-structural theories. In this sense there is an interpretivist element to this research. As Wai-Chung Yeung (1997, P.63) suggests the fact that grounded theory is to a degree 'disrupted' is neither unusual nor wholly problematic for a realist researcher and states:

a realist researcher should not simply 'borrow' an existing theory and fit it into empirical data; nor should the theory emerge solely from concrete data. The most practically feasible method of theorization is an iterative process of abstracting theories based on an imminent critique and the grounding of abstractions in concrete data.

There are also points where grounded theory was disrupted since not all themes were successfully developed into theories and in that case data was then reinterpreted again. However, the interpretation of this research lies within a critical realist perspective, and although there is a 'reality' to them, this reality always remains, to a degree, tentative. This fits in with the concerns of Wai-Chung Yeung (1997, P.63) who states:

although causal categories can emerge from the data, relations among these causal categories (i.e. generative mechanisms) cannot be 'read off' straight from the data. They must be abstracted in conjunction with substantive theorization and immanent review.

Grounded theory is used as part of the basis for this research, recognising the importance of the theory, but it is necessary to be reflexive and self-aware, bearing in mind the 'produced' nature of research. Overall grounded theory is used carefully in that it had to further, rather than limit, interpretive understanding and that in the context of this research it is not possible to use the idea of grounded theory exactly as it was formulated.

### ***3.3.8 Use of and Rationale Behind Classroom Observation.***

In this context, observation allows the researcher to collect data on the physical setting, the human setting (who is in the class), the interactional setting (formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal, non-verbal) and the programme setting (Morrison 1993). An alternative description is that observation means watching students individually, in

friendship groups, in specific contexts and asking: what do they see, what do they feel, what do they think, what do they do? (Greig & Taylor 1999). It has one significant difference from the other methods used in this study in that it is gathering data as it is happening as opposed to what people remember. In this situation the interpretations of what is happening are only being filtered by the researcher as opposed to both the researcher and the participant. It also has the advantage of allowing the researcher to see things that might be unconsciously missed and to potentially discover things that may not be freely talked about in interview situations (Cohen et al. 2000).

Within this study thirty-six classroom observations were made with the researcher undertaking non-participant observation. In this situation the students were aware of the presence of the researcher, but the researcher was not actively involved in the class. An observation pro-forma (see appendix J) was produced and observations were recorded. This allowed the researcher to address the forms of behaviour in which he was interested. The decision on what to observe was based on the results from the student questionnaire. A method of semi-structured observation was used and, hence, there was a specific list of what the researcher was looking for, but it was designed to be hypothesis generating as opposed to hypothesis testing and the results were partially followed up in the semi-structured interviews. As well as an observation pro-forma, the researcher made notes of specific interactions that took place in the classroom. The observations were also analysed using thematic analysis and the results both informed the design of the interview guide for the semi-structured interviews and were revisited in terms of the theorising of the data.

However, there are two major issues that occur with classroom observation. The first issue is exactly how to note what is actually going on. Bryman (2004) suggests that a brief note is made each time something interesting is seen or heard and that full field notes are written up at the end of each day. However, this can be quite off-putting to those being observed and there needs to be some balance between making enough notes to remember and being unobtrusive. The second issue refers to the Hawthorne effect. This is described by Greig & Taylor (1999, P.151) as “if the subjects are aware that they are being observed, they may change their behaviour and thus the researcher would not gain a true and accurate picture of normal behaviour.” There is no absolute way in which this can be overcome, but given the number of lesson observations that were

undertaken, the hope was that students became comfortable with the presence of the researcher and, hence, the possibilities of a Hawthorne effect were minimised.

### **3.4 Validity.**

According to Hammersley (1996), there are three approaches to mixed methods research:

1. Triangulation which allows the researcher to corroborate quantitative research findings using qualitative research findings or vice versa;
2. Facilitation which allows qualitative research to aid quantitative research or vice versa;
3. Complementarity which allows different aspects of a study to be dovetailed.

Greene et al. (1989) outline five approaches to mixed methods research. These are the same as Hammersley (1996) with the addition of:

4. Initiation (i.e. discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to a reframing of the research question), and;
5. Expansion (i.e. seeking to expand the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components).

This research study showed evidence of all five of these approaches. Having the interviews at the end of the study allowed the researcher to corroborate the earlier findings and involving three different sets of stakeholders allowed comparisons to be made. There was an element of facilitation, since using a quantitative approach at the beginning allowed the researcher to begin to make informed decisions on where to direct the study, given that previous literature in the area is rather limited. It was complementary in the sense that it allowed the researcher to be more certain about the subjective results obtained. It showed initiation and expansion, since certain ideas that came from the initial questionnaires were found to not lead anywhere and other ideas became clearer from later techniques.

Lather (1986b) and Maxwell (1992) take slightly different approaches to validity in this context. Lather (1986b) firstly suggests triangulation, but in a definition beyond

multiple measures and one that includes multiple data sources, multiple methods and a range of theoretical schemes. This may be more helpfully thought of as a crystallisation where there is an interweaving of the processes in the research (Lincoln & Guba 2000; Richardson 2000). Maxwell (1992) suggests that the first concern of a researcher is with descriptive validity, in that the researcher is not making up or distorting the things that were seen and heard, or indeed missing things out – for example the tone in which something is said. They refer to specific events and situations and, in principle, refer to matters in which intersubjective agreement could be achieved. There is by and large consensus for this within the research community. These are very similar and agree with the outcomes suggested by Hammersley (1996) and Greene et al. (1989).

Secondly, Lather (1986b) suggests that a researcher considers the idea of construct validity where we need to determine whether constructs are actually occurring, as opposed to being invented by the researcher. Maxwell (1992) suggests that the second form of validity is interpretive, which refers to what objects, events and behaviours mean to the people engaged in and with them. The issue here from a critical realist perspective is not the appropriateness of the concept for the account, but for the accuracy of those individuals included in the account. For example, when looking at the term ‘gay’ as a word used to describe boys and objects, has it really changed its meaning to mean ‘lame’ or ‘stupid’ or is there still a sexualised undertone when it is used? This change of meaning can be argued from both a constructivist perspective and from an interpretivist perspective, both of which may be important to a critical realist in this context. Ultimately, as Maxwell (1992, P.290) states: “Accounts of participants’ meanings are never a matter of direct access, but are always *constructed* by the researcher(s) on the basis of participants’ accounts and other evidence.” However, more importantly, unlike descriptive validity or triangulation, the consensus for the terms used in interpretive and constructive validity lies in the community being studied, which is why it is important that aspects of research are given back to participants for comment.

This is linked to the ideas of Becker (1967) who suggests that it is actually impossible to do any sort of scientific research without bias. He states:

The scientist who proposes to understand society must ... get into the situation enough to have a perspective on it. And it is likely that his perspective will be

greatly affected by whatever positions are taken by any or all of the other participants in that varied situation (Becker 1967, P.245).

He raises the question 'whose side we are on?' rather than 'do we take sides?' For example, if a strong bond has been made with the participants of the research, it might mean that researchers do not publish the results that might be damaging to this group. Becker (1967) suggests that what could be presented is a rather one-sided picture, where rather than highlighting the deviants' problems, society at large is blamed for potentially causing them. Becker (1967) uses the word 'deviance' in a number of ways, but he does use it to refer to subordinate and superordinate groups, including in the field of education, where the subordinate group is students and the superordinate groups are teachers and the administration. Becker (1967) makes reference to the hierarchy of credibility where he suggests that we are more likely to believe those in superordinate positions than those in subordinate positions and, hence, when we research those in subordinate positions we are researching the supposedly less credible.

In light of this, it is now important to consider the possibility to generalise this research. This can be seen from two different viewpoints. Firstly, there is the idea of generalising within the Dutch International School to other teachers and students who were not directly observed or interviewed. Secondly, there is the issue of generalising the results to other international schools. As far as generalising within the school is concerned, a number of factors were taken into account. In terms of lesson observations, the researcher saw classes from all 6 of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme groupings and tried to see a range of teachers in terms of age, gender and nationality. In terms of finding the students for the focus-group interviews, the researcher learnt where different groups of students would congregate in order that different groups of students be chosen. Since a critical realist perspective has been taken, to generalise within the older age groups in the school should be acceptable, with the idea being to explain and theorise some sort of common reality. The issue of external generalisation is more complex. Hammersley (1992) believes that summarising from a study of a single case to a larger population is a legitimate means of making findings relevant and requires, amongst other things, reflection and clarity about the population and time period to which generalisation is to be attempted. The attempt to generalise externally will be limited, but the research will bring out some key questions to be considered in the future and from the data will attempt to theorise the situation in

terms of the influence of the ‘third culture’ on the construction of student masculinity. It will also re-evaluate some of the previous theories put forward in the light of this research.

### **3.5 Ethical Issues.**

Within this research it is important to consider the role of both politics and ethics, and in this section consideration will be given to where politics and ethics interconnect.

According to Simons (2000, P.39):

The political conditions in which the research is conducted and the politics of interaction in a democratic society contribute to and constrain what it is possible to achieve and how to act ethically in achieving it.

Potentially, in a school situation the political relationship between the researcher, the principal, the staff and the students will affect the ethical issues regarding the extent to which the aims of the project are made clear and the extent to which academic freedoms are restricted by censorship. The ideas of informed consent and data storage are all-important in this area and are considered below.

#### ***3.5.1 Informed Consent.***

Informed consent underpins the whole of the negotiation process and according to Cohen et al. (2000), arises from the right to freedom and self-determination of the subject under research. In this study, all teachers and parents involved were sent a letter explaining the nature and scope of the research and, in terms of interviews and questionnaires, all were given the option of not taking part. All the students were given this information orally and, once again, there was no coercion of those who were not interested. It is essential that all students know they have a choice in whether to participate in the research and that they can withdraw from the research at any time. According to Greig & Taylor (1999), the participants also need to know exactly what their role is within the research. This follows the BERA (2004) guidelines which state:

Researchers must take the steps necessary to ensure that all participants in the research understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including why



their participation is necessary, how it will be used and how, and to whom it will be reported (BERA 2004, P.6).

And:

In the case of participants whose age ... may limit the extent to which they can be expected to understand or agree voluntarily to undertake their role, researchers must fully explore alternative ways in which they can be enabled to make authentic responses. In such circumstances, researchers must also seek the collaboration and approval of those who act in guardianship (e.g. parents) (BERA 2004, P.7).

However, it should be noted that the information given was restricted to one side of A4 and, hence, it could be argued that not all information had been shared. As Bryman (2004) states, this is not really unusual in research in the social sciences and giving too much information about the research could influence the decisions that participants make. It also needs to be noted that the students taking part in this study are aged between 16 and 19 and, hence, the consent of parents is an interesting point to consider. In this situation both parents and students need to consent and it is not a case of gaining one through the other. In this study, due to the age of the students, it will be assumed that consent is based on understanding.

In terms of observation this potentially becomes more complicated. This is not covert research and everybody within the school knows the role of the researcher within the school. However, when observing classroom behaviour this technically causes a problem as the researcher may be observing students who have not given their permission. In terms of observation of communal areas, this problem may continue to exist, but may also grow as, inevitably, the researcher will be observing students from other year groups who have not been asked to give consent.

### ***3.5.2 Data Storage.***

All data storage is secure and all data will be deleted once the thesis is complete. The names of all participants have been changed to protect identity. Students are noted by their assumed first name and teachers by the title Mr. or Ms. followed by their assumed

first name. When a specific reference is made to a lesson, “???” is used in order that the subject and the teacher of the lesson cannot be identified.

### **3.6 Conclusion.**

Within this research, I have taken a critical realist approach to the research, which assumes that there is a reality within the research, one that potentially exists alongside other realities, but also recognises that the idea of constructivism cannot be ignored. The idea of using both an interpretivist approach and a constructivist approach produces a tension, but it is the negotiation of this tension that will allow the production of knowledge. Overall, this research is building theory inductively as it is not the case that there is a valid theory which can be tested in this scenario. There are two aspects to this. The data will be interpreted in terms of current structural and post-structural theories on masculinity and this will result in a reinterpretation of current theory in light of the results of this research. However, this can only take this research so far and as there is little information available on the construction of masculinity in an international school setting, there is also a constructivist approach being used, which allows theory to emerge from the data. To do this a constructivist model of grounded theory is used as opposed to an objectivist version. Thus it is important to acknowledge the standpoint of the researcher as this both allows the researcher to be empathic with all the respondents and also ensures a full engagement with the critical reality. In part, the researcher is involved in constructing a reality and, hence, it is essential that consideration be given to his own story as well as those of the participants. Furthermore, the socially constructed nature of the research is explored in greater depth through an examination of access and gatekeeping.

Having set up the philosophical basis for the research, to ensure that this could happen a mixed methods approach is used where the qualitative data is used to gain deeper meaning and understanding of the initial quantitative data. I felt that the use of neither qualitative nor quantitative methods alone could capture the details of the complex issue of how an international school influences the formation and construction of masculinity in students. The validity of the research has also been considered and the ethical implications acknowledged. This research will now continue to explain and interpret the findings of the 16-month study, begin to theorise the themes that emerge from the data,

and link and interpret this with current structural and post-structural theories on masculinity.

## **Chapter 4. The Institution and the Influence of the People Who Run It.**

#### 4.1. Introduction.

The overall aim of this research is to explore how masculinity is formed and shaped in the Dutch International School and to use this to interrogate and interpret theories on masculinity. The institution is key to this and, as Connell (1989, P.295) states:

The differentiation of masculinities, then, is not simply a question of individual differences emerging or individuals' paths being chosen. It is a collective process, something that happens at the level of the institution.

According to Gordon & Lahelma (1996), there is no doubt that schools are gendered and are places where gender is formed. Specifically, it is the culture of the school that plays an extremely important role in this and, as Bruner (1996, P.14) suggests, there are two parts to this: "Life in culture is, then, an interplay between the versions of the world that people form under its institutional sway and the versions of it that are products of their individual histories." Within a schooling context, exactly what is meant by a school or institutional culture is something with which previous researchers (Hargreaves 1995; Schein 1985) have struggled. There is no single agreed meaning on what is meant by 'school culture'. There are two main arguments put forward; firstly, that schools, like other institutions, have an overall holistic culture and, secondly, that they are a dynamic aggregation of sub-cultures (Prosser 1999). Stoll (1999, P.35) suggests: "school culture is most clearly 'seen' in the ways people relate to and work together". There are two sides to this: the values and beliefs that a school holds and the behaviours exhibited. This chapter will take this into account. Firstly, consideration will be given to the school being located in Holland and it being an international school, both of which are key to the culture formed in the school, as suggested by the pseudonym for the school - the Dutch International School. Secondly, consideration will be given to those who run the institution, namely the teachers, who Schein (1985, P.6) would suggest are one of the groups in the school who portray "the deeper level of *basic assumptions* and *beliefs*".

For the purposes of this research, the culture of the school has been defined as a 'third culture', a term taken from the idea of 'third-culture' kids. Although previous research does not give a sophisticated development of what might be meant by a 'third culture' in its own right, this study will try to develop the term and then apply it to masculinity construction and theorising, through the concept of 'third culture' masculinity (c.f.

chapter 2 section 2.4). As previous theories suggest (Giroux 1988; Ho 1995; Bruner 1990), this can happen in two mutually informing ways: through the 'third culture' influencing the construction of masculinity and through the styles of masculinity in the school influencing the 'third culture'. In a school, according to Bruner (1990, P.28):

What it teaches, what modes of thought and what 'speech registers' it actually cultivates in its pupils, cannot be isolated from how the school is situated in the lives and cultures of its students.

This research suggests that the 'third culture' in the school is one that is influenced by the concepts of transience and diversity, as is hinted at in previous research (Ochs 1990; Pollock & Van Reken 1999; Cambridge 2000; Straffon 2003). In combination with this, it will consider the potentially diverse influence of 'respect', as noted in previous research (Hayden et al. 2000; Allan 2003; Grimshaw & Sears 2008). These viewpoints on international schools will be considered alongside previous studies of gender in schools in national settings which all directly or indirectly make reference to the idea that the 'culture' of the school influences the way the students in the school make sense of gender (Willis 1977 ; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Frosh et al. 2002). Although there are a variety of behaviours noted within these pieces of research, the settings tend to be reasonably mono-cultural, even though they may or may not be multi-ethnic. When comparisons are made, this is often done by undertaking two or more studies within contrasting schools (Connell et al. 1982; Epstein et al. 2001; Martino 2008b; Renold & Ringrose 2008). This research considers the situation where there is a degree of diversity within a single multi-cultural setting and, hence, the concepts found in international schools will need to be linked to this.

Previous research into gender in a national setting, and the experiences of the people in international schools, both recognise that teachers have a significant role to play and this study will take a similar viewpoint. In terms of gender, much of the focus in previous research (Riddell 1989; Francis 2000; Robinson 2000; Francis & Skelton 2001; Ashley 2003; Reid et al. 2004) has been on teachers creating classrooms with an emphasis on the masculine. Connell & Messerschmidt (2005, P.841) suggest that it is the structure of the school that ensures a certain gendered behaviour and state:

One is not free to adopt any gender position in interaction simply as a discursive or reflexive move. The possibilities are constrained massively by embodiment, by institutional histories, by economic forces, and by personal and family relationships.

Given that the Dutch International School has more female staff than male staff, the role of female teachers will also form part of this study and previous research in a national setting suggests that female teachers often adopt a performance of caring and intimacy (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Chambers 2006). In one respect, previous research has tried to adapt results to be relevant across a variety of schools. The consequence of this is that the behaviours noted become partially stereotypical. This is partly exemplified in the research of Kenway et al. (1998) looking at gender reform and the role of teachers through six major case studies and eight cameo studies. Unsurprisingly, many teachers, when interviewed, would consider themselves to be ‘gender neutral’ in terms of their interactions in school (Edley & Wetherell 1995), leading to the concept of ‘ordinary teachers’, a label taken from what Brown (1987) describes as ‘ordinary kids’. These situations will be considered in this research and it will also consider the performance of teachers in an international setting, where they are often portrayed as respectful, inter-culturally aware and caring (Hayden et al. 2000; Phillips 2002; Cambridge & Thompson 2004). This research will treat the Dutch International School as a complex gendered space which is influenced by a number of sometimes opposing factors and as a space where there is a potential interplay between masculinity and femininity, as suggested by (Mac an Ghaill & Haywood 2007).

#### **4.2. The Dutch International School as a School in Holland and as an International School: Towards the Concept of Schooling in a ‘Third Culture’.**

“I think one of my favourite things about the Dutch International School is that you can be whoever you want to be” (Theodora).

As was indicated earlier, the school has been given the pseudonym of the Dutch International School, which highlights the question: To what extent is this a Dutch school and to what extent is this an international school? The simple answer is both, which immediately suggests the potential influence of differentiation where, as Hetherington (1998, P.124) suggests: “margins become centres, centres become

margins”. However, it is the extent to which each has an influence and the way they combine that is the focus of this section. The idea that schools have a range of influences on them is not unknown in previous research and Mitchell (1989) makes the comparison between schools and monasteries, mansions and prisons, suggesting some sort of physical divide between the community of the school and the outside community. When applied to international schools, Jackson (2005) suggests that whether it is positive or negative, the host community will affect an international school and that this could be either embracing or isolating. She suggests that meaningful interaction with the local community allows students to develop a greater understanding of that culture, while superficial contact can result in the development of stereotypical images, which can do more harm than good. Schwindt (2003, P.75) would partially agree with this, but notes that it does not always happen:

Contrary to expectations, a meaningful contribution from the ‘locals’ to the ‘internationals’ by helping with the formation of ties to the local community is not necessarily always forthcoming in all international schools.

Giroux (1988, P.130) highlights the dual nature of the influence that schools have and states: “But schools do much more than influence society; they are also shaped by it.”

In the Dutch International School, the responses to question three in the parent questionnaire demonstrate that they strongly believe that the school is influenced by Dutch culture. There are connections between the local community and the international community on a number of levels, most critically with the school having significant numbers of teachers and students from both communities. This opens up the discussion on the culture operating in the school and how, and to what extent, this constitutes a ‘third culture’. One possibility is that there is a significant influence from the stable national culture of the host community and that this is a primary signifier of the ‘third culture’ in the school. On a simplistic level, this could take the form that Holland is seen as tolerant, respectful and open-minded and these aspects of the culture transfer into the school, thus potentially influencing how masculinity is constructed. When considering diversity in multicultural education Nieto (1994) suggests that there are four hierarchical levels on which it can be interpreted: tolerance, acceptance, respect and affirmation. This indicates that there is a difference between tolerance and respect which will be noted in this research. Tolerance suggests an acceptance of differences,



but only if they can be modified, whereas respect indicates admiration and high esteem for diversity.

In the Dutch International School, this is a view held by a number of students and teachers and is seen in the interview with Ms. Linda, where she explains that there is a Dutch word, that does not translate easily, but which refers to the concept of respect and tolerance.

The fact that you are so used to dealing with different cultures, the Dutch have a good word for it - that it is so natural to not look at people and think threats. You don't look at whether they have a colour or whether they have a religion or from which culture they come from. It's sort of you see the person.

The indication is that this concept from Dutch culture is directly practised within the Dutch International School and, hence, becomes part of the school culture. Similarly, a number of students discuss the ideas of freedom, respect and tolerance coming from the Dutch and influencing the culture of the school. This is highlighted by the following comment from Tanja:

I think the fact that it is in Holland makes it more free, I guess and people here are more tolerant to things like homosexuality. I find Dutch people to be tolerant.

However, there are strong indications that this is a rather unsophisticated explanation. Unsurprisingly, a good number of students pointed out more negative interpretations and Boukje, in the focus group twelve discussion describes a quite different side of Dutch culture, stating: "Because at other Dutch schools, Dutch public schools, there's a huge macho culture and lots of bullying... ." Emma thought about transferring to a local school, but did not do so because: "People weren't respectful, like it really mattered what clothes you were wearing or where your parents lived in Wasenaar... ." It is interesting to note that these observations about Dutch national schools fit in well with previous research into national schools in other countries (Connell et al. 1982; Abraham 1995). All these students contrast what they say about national schools with positive descriptions of the Dutch International School.

Thus, the influence of Dutch culture on the school does not appear to be consistent and begins to hint at a culture in the school that may be more complex. It is further compounded by the fact that although there are many Dutch students in the school, they are not ‘truly Dutch’, a label used by both Obelia and Ms. Linda. Obelia states:

But I don’t think that there is anything that you see when you enter this place that says you are within the Netherlands. Well, maybe the fact that we have more people of Dutch nationality, maybe that shows it, but it doesn’t really show it that much because these Dutch people are usually people who have travelled. So they are not exactly ‘truly Dutch’.

As noted in the introduction (c.f. chapter 1 section 1.3.2), the school does not take ‘truly Dutch’ students. Numerically, Dutch students form the largest group of students by nationality in the school, but nobody in the research described the Dutch International School as a Dutch school and nobody talked about Dutch dominating either as a language or as a nationality. The indication may be that the Dutch in the Dutch International School are not ‘Dutch enough’!

Overall, the indications are that in the Dutch International School certain aspects of Dutch culture enter the school and this is combined with aspects of the international. This creates a physically and personally diverse student body which has a degree of coherence because the majority of students come from an educated background. This interaction is noted by the following comment from Amanda:

Yeah, I mean there are certain factors, like for instance gay pride and stuff, which is very tolerant and stuff in Holland. I think it is more tolerant here (in the Dutch International School) because of the country, but things like racism and stuff is very much because of the people.

The overwhelming feeling from students was that if you moved the school outside of Holland, and kept everything else the same, then it would not change dramatically. Bob backs up this point of view by suggesting that ‘local’ students ‘change’ when they come to the Dutch International School: “Yeah, there are some people who used to go to Dutch schools and then they came here and they became more open-minded, I guess. Definitely.”

Hence, in one sense Dutch culture is one of a number of aspects that influence the school. This is not radically different from other research undertaken in national schools, where there is a range of cultural and social forces that have influence. However, the overall effect seems to be different in that as the students overwhelmingly notice, it is quite different from a national school. On a basic level, students and teachers interpret the reason behind this being the fact that this is an international school. As was seen in the introduction, this is a non-exact term, but there are indications that in the individual context of the Dutch International School, it does have a specific meaning. This will now be investigated.

Institutions are not just influenced by their physical location, but also by what they purport to be and it appears that the Dutch International School is seen as a location of cultural diversity, transience, tolerance and respect, which again highlights the positives noted in previous research and is often how the culture of international schools is described (Hayden & Thompson 1998; McKenzie 1998; Hayden et al. 2000; Cambridge 2000; Schwindt 2003; Cambridge & Thompson 2004). Cambridge (2002) suggests that part of the reason for this is because this is the mission with which international schools are set up and that this internationalist current stresses the importance of peace and understanding between nations, values the moral development of the individual and recognises responsible citizenship. This is demonstrated in the mission statements of many international schools; for example one of the biggest conglomerates of international schools, the United World College movement, states:

UWC schools, colleges and programmes deliver a challenging and transformative educational experience to a diverse cross section of students, inspiring them to create a more peaceful and sustainable future (UWC).

This may well be true, but it does not become a reality in a school unless it is adopted by all members of the community. On one level, this is clearly how many students and teachers see the Dutch International School and all the above researchers would understand the perspective of Raimondo, who sums up the situation at the Dutch International School quite succinctly.

The best thing about the Dutch International School: There's a lot of people from all over the world that can come here, tell their stories, be friends, share their experiences and they have all these different standpoints. It's a really good thing to have. Discrimination isn't easy because you just have all these people with different standpoints.

The message coming across is complex and the role of Dutch culture in the school could be interpreted as having some influence, but not absolute. The indications from both students and teachers are that it is the positive aspects of Dutch culture that enter the school and the more negative interpretations do not, or are not allowed, to happen. This could be seen as the first aspect of the 'third culture' of the school and it indicates a culture that is potentially hybridised and, hence, fragmented. Part of the nature of 'third culture' is a tension between the school and where it is situated.

#### ***4.2.1 Diversity, Difference and Otherness in the Dutch International School.***

All the teachers interviewed agreed, and a significant majority of parents believe, that the Dutch International School is sensitive to dealing with students from diverse backgrounds. Diversity in this context does not solely mean diverse in terms of nationality, but can also indicate diversity in terms of ideas and viewpoints. This is exemplified by Victoria, who suggests that her friends back in Scotland, in comparison to her friends at the Dutch International School, "are all the same and they are so closed-minded". The idea that diversity is a key influence on the culture of the school is a viewpoint put forward by a number of students and teachers, with the implication being that when there is such a diversity of nationalities, respectful behaviour will follow. Elaine sums up the situation succinctly: "We are just used to it. It's almost like we don't know any better. We don't know what it's like to be somewhere that is not like this." This implies that respectful behaviour is 'so normal' that, in one sense, it is not even noticed in the school; it is a situation which has moved beyond the concept of tolerance. As is commonly found in research into international schools, there is an implication in this statement that such behaviour is somehow innate to students who attend international schools.

However, in the Dutch International School this may be a problematic way of looking at things and there may be reasons and experiences that are causal. Ciska provides some

indication that it is related to the idea that we cannot, and should not, make judgements, with the unstated implication that ‘if we do not judge them, then they will not judge us’:

I guess people mix a lot and they don’t judge each other, they get to know each other. And people here have travelled around the world a lot so they see more and they know you can’t just judge someone if you don’t know them.

Overall, this argument is not fully formed and in many settings judgement clearly does take place; many of the one-to-one interviews carried out in this research showed strong judgements being made. For example, when Elly describes the boys who live in the boarding house, the ‘Rens group’, she states: “They are the type that don’t really care about school and they are very into their sports. I don’t really know them that well!” The construction of masculinity in a national context indicates that all sorts of judgements are based on behaviours and there is no reason to believe that this will change in the Dutch International School. For example, Skelton (2001, P.134) makes judgements on the role of girls and football in the following scenario: “When girls did play football it was in PE and, even then, men class teachers would use these sessions as an opportunity of providing the boys with more practice.” In this case, there are some similarities between the Dutch International School and research that has taken place in a national setting.

Ida provides a different reason, suggesting that tolerance, respect and freedom are norms and values that circulate through the school. She states:

If you were intolerant it would just be such a hassle to go to school because it’s so like 50 different things. If you had to sit in class and think about what not to tolerate about each person it would be such a drag.

However, this does not really explain the overwhelmingly positive viewpoint that most students and teachers have of the school. Valentina provides a more thorough

explanation which centres on the paradox of the similarity of difference<sup>2</sup>.

I think it's because we are all the same. We've all lived this ex-patriot international life. We have a more open mindset than other people. For example, if you get people who've lived their whole life in one place, they are quite closed-minded. They haven't had the opportunity to see as much as we have. Being with people from different cultures and living in different societies, I think makes us appreciate the fact that there are people who live differently from us.

This acceptance and appreciation of diversity suggests that there may be a relationship between the 'third culture' of the school and the construction of masculinity in this schooling context, where notions of respect and tolerance are having an effect on the articulation and construction of masculine subjectivities. This style of masculinity has been named as 'third culture' masculinity. Difference, leading to the concept of 'other', is seen as a key location of power and, according to Connell (1995), it is the subordination of the 'other' that leads to marginalisation in terms of masculinity. Marginalisation refers to "the relations between masculinities in dominant and subordinated classes" and "is always relative to the *authorization* of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant group" (Connell 1995, P.80/81). This is exemplified by Paul Gray, one of the men that Robert Connell used in his study, who found that cross-dressing has risks attached to it, in that he does not completely pass, i.e. he is a subordinated 'other' who is marginalised in terms of his masculinity (Connell 1995, P.113/114). However, once 'other' comes to mean so many different things, which is what Valentina is suggesting, the concept of 'other' either ceases to have a meaning or potentially becomes dominant. Applying this to the construction of masculinity implies that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is problematic in these circumstances, as the performance by which hegemonic masculinity is constructed is disrupted. Dominant cannot subordinate 'other' when they are the same. This links with the ideas of Kenway et al. (1998, P.115), who suggest "that a multicultural mix would help in reducing sex-

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of difference comes from what have been termed the 'new French feminisms' and the degree to which 'difference' is a positive or a negative term is under debate. Fraser & Bartky (1992) suggest that 'difference' is often seen as a negative term where 'differences', for example when applied to gender, is positive. Nicholson & Seidman (1995) takes a similar view when considering the position of the gay community and suggests that when applied to a single identity it is negative, but with a concept of multiple identities can be interpreted as positive.

based harassment because of the need to learn to accommodate and respect difference”. Giroux (1988, P.123/124) takes a similar viewpoint and suggests that if culture is viewed as a form of production, then:

Difference no longer symbolizes the threat of disruption. On the contrary, it now signals an invitation for diverse cultural groups to join hands under the democratic banner of an integrative pluralism.

Integrative pluralism suggests that different cultural practices can be regarded as integral parts of a holistic development process and this can provide an open and creative vision, linking ‘difference’ into an over-arching whole. Furthermore, it suggests that commonality needs to be sought, but at the same time recognises what is genuinely and insightfully different in other traditions. This is noted on a number of occasions in the interviews with both students and teachers and the following extract from the focus group two discussion provides a clear example:

Carl: We don’t really discriminate against a certain type of person. Everyone’s sort of equal.

Mick: Let’s give you an example. Jan. A very nice person. He’s wearing tight pants as a guy. He is a good friend of mine but he is eccentric. In this school people don’t mind. In a Dutch school, they wouldn’t accept him.

In this situation, it is suggested that students at the Dutch International School are not just tolerant of difference, but that they respect difference. However, it has been suggested that ‘other’, although influenced by a socially constructed society, may be changed by the power of that society (Haslanger 2000) and in this study is described in a variety of ways, for example being confident and flexible. As Ms. Jill states: “I think in general they are quite confident and sure of themselves. I think a lot of them having travelled are quite adaptable, flexible people and know how to interact.” The concept of ‘third culture’ is influenced by a variety of perspectives, providing further indication for its complex nature.

Overall, it is this similarity of shared experiences of difference, where their sameness is their difference, that appears to lead to respect, but the point needs to be made that it is not at the expense of individuality. As Obelia suggests: “You can be whoever you want

to be – you can be yourself.” Not only does this allow for the concept of individuality, but also the indication is that as a student you should be proud of that individuality. Individuality can be thought of as a self-reflexive notion of an individual's need to define his/her own self in relation to power. This is backed up by the following comment from Elly in the focus group ten interview, when she suggests that it is acceptance and respect of individuality that allows the acceptance of all:

I guess the way that international comes across is that you are so surrounded, we are all the same person, but when you are not in an international school, it's like oh Italian, they're posturing or South Africans, they do something weird with their language. So you have these stereotypes, but when you are actually in a school like this stereotypes are actually broken down. And when that happens, I guess that rather than seeing the world as different sections you see the world as a whole.

Paradoxically, this is suggesting that what happens within the culture of the Dutch International School is flexible and fluid, linking back to the idea of a complex 'third culture'. She reiterates this idea in her one-to-one interview, but this time introduces the idea that being caring plays a significant role in this culture, suggesting that this is also important in 'third culture' and, hence, potentially to a 'third culture' masculinity.

I think that because we've all moved that much and moving is hard on people, and living in an abroad country is hard on people, compared to living in your own environment, they are more than ready to help you out. I think they care a lot more about you and are much more accepting about who you are.

This caring role is a way of bringing together the individuality, once again contributing to the similarity of difference, and has been interpreted in previous research as international schools having a 'family' role (Cambridge & Thompson 2000). Thus a link is emerging between the 'third culture' and the construction of masculinity in the Dutch International School. The 'third culture' of the school potentially influences how masculinity is lived out and how gendered identities are formed in this scenario, leading to the concept of 'third culture' masculinity.



#### ***4.2.2 Diversity and the Fragmented Nature of the ‘Third Culture’ in the Dutch International School.***

In the previous section, consideration was given to how diversity can lead to constructions connected to difference and otherness. However, it also leads to the concept of fragmentation. In one sense the strongest evidence for the fragmented nature of the school comes from the students and teachers themselves. This comes in two forms. Firstly, there is a physical fragmentation in the school that comes from the transience of the student population. As Ms. Annabel states: “I think one of the other differences in an international school, you have such movement of people. They can’t form those sorts of groups. There is not the stability.” However, fragmentation is also implied in a quite different sense and in the initial questionnaire given to students, one of the most common words used to describe the school was disorganised and it was mentioned in every teacher interview. This is a characterisation that is not often presented in research on schools. From a teacher perspective, the level of disorganisation is generally seen from a negative, and wholly pragmatic, viewpoint in terms of not allowing them to get a job done or disrupting decision-making. Some students also note this, commenting on the fact that it makes them less efficient at working. Interpreted in this way, it only has limited effect on the development of the ‘third culture’.

However, there are indications that this may only be part of the story. This is seen in the following comment by Wagner, from the focus group eight discussion:

In my last school, because of the country I lived in, there was nothing else. The school was the community I lived in. ... Normally, it’s your school that ties you together, whereas here you have many small communities, like your place in this orchestra and you play for that sports team. You never come together as a whole school...

It is important to note that Wagner is not suggesting that the school has no coherence, but that the coherence, is to a degree, fractured. This reflects earlier work and the idea of a fractured, fragmented approach is implied by Shilling (1991, P.26), who states: “As numerous ethnographic studies have implied, students and teachers can use the same sort of educational space in many different ways.”

However, many students see it in a far more positive light but, in the words of Elly and Amanda, it is interpreted as chaos and is potentially an inclusive feature of a 'third culture'. Elly describes the school as "chaotic in a homey way" and Amanda suggests: "It's like organisation in chaos." Baltrus and Wagner, in the following extract from the focus group eight discussion, are almost effusive about the degree of chaos, which in one sense is surprising given that academic success is important to both of them:

Baltrus: I also think one of the very good things about the Dutch International School is that it is chaotic. The school has a sense of chaos which in the beginning may be bewildering, speaking from personal experience, but it really gives the Dutch International School a very good feel.

Bill: Why is the chaos a good thing?

...

Wagner: (interrupting) Originality.

Baltrus: Individuality.

In the focus group one discussion, Jane suggests that it affects the way she sees things and that it indicates a certain degree of relaxation. She states: "When you are in a school with that kind of mentality, you kind of also develop it. So like, oh yeah, I'll do it tomorrow or that can wait a bit." These extracts suggest the importance of individuality and respect. Because everyone around them is in a similar position, these students do not feel marginalised and the disorganised structure of the school is actually a positive attribute, potentially providing the structure and support for the student to negotiate their masculine identity.

Given that this is a multi-cultural environment, this section will finally consider the point raised by Gilbert & Gilbert (1998), when they suggest that in a multi-cultural setting there could be variety of ways in which young men choose to present themselves; this depends on whether young men see themselves as part of a minority group or a majority group in terms of nationality<sup>3</sup>. The following comment from Gary addresses this:

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<sup>3</sup> The researcher has direct experience of this and when he worked at a school in the U.K., approximately 20% of the students were from an Asian-Indian background. Because of the numbers, their 'own culture' had an influence in the school and in one sense was one of the dominant cultures. In an expatriate environment, this is often rather different.

Well I think that if you have many people from a similar background then you become divided between all the people that have the same background and those that do not. Whereas here everyone has different backgrounds and it so diverse that you get a real difference in the way people are treated.

In the Dutch International School, there is no perceived dominant nationality either through number or through language. Hence, the argument that the nationality of those students in a minority may become a major influence on how they construct their masculinity does not appear to hold. In keeping with other research into international school students (Fail et al 2004; Harrington 2008), all students are in a minority in the Dutch International School, although the sense of this minority is slightly different. The suggestion is that fragmentation can be interpreted in both a positive and a negative way when its influence on the ‘third culture’ in the Dutch International School is considered.

#### ***4.2.3 The Economic Culture of the Dutch International School.***

Just as diversity has an effect on the Dutch International School, there are also issues around class and economics that influence the scenario. On a basic level, to talk about the Dutch International School as being a working-class, middle-class or ruling-class setting has no meaning, as these indicators are not universal. However, one of the arguments that has been put forward in previous research into international schools (Allen 2000; Cambridge 2000; Heyward 2002) is that although students are culturally diverse, they are not economically diverse and from an economic perspective they can be compared to middle- or ruling-class school students in national settings<sup>4</sup>. The students at the Dutch International School are certainly aware that they are, to a degree, privileged. This is demonstrated in the interchange between Tanja and Jane in the focus group one discussion:

Jane: Dutch kids sometimes clash with international school kids because there’s a stereotype of us being uhh, ehrrm ...

Tanja: Of us being snobs because our school is expensive.

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<sup>4</sup> There are a variety of different viewpoints on what is meant by class structure and this research assumes a social stratification which indicates rank, part of which is determined by economics. However as Tolson (1977) notes - social class links to the idea of family culture and, hence, class is not solely based on economic equalities or inequalities, but on other differentials including power, status and education.

Jane: Especially for the public schools who think we are all just rich ex-pat kids that are superior or whatever, but that is what it is.

As noted earlier, there are a number of interpretations as to how Dutch culture influences the school and these may include socio-economic factors. Amanda, when talking about some of the Dutch families in the school, suggests that some are ruling-class when she notes:

And so I guess tolerance of let's say something like racism and that sort of thing – they (Dutch families) are very tolerant of that sort of thing, but things like social class, they are the ones that are actually sniffing their noses, let's just say. So I guess it kind of works in both ways.

These scenarios are not unknown in previous research. Allen (2000, P.129) makes the point quite emphatically when he states: "...students from less-developed nations can find access to an international school impossible unless they are *already* part of the socio-economic elite". This is backed up by Heyward (2002), who approaches the issue from the opposite perspective and suggests that international schools in developing nations are often defined by exclusivity and economic and political advantage.

However, this is not how everyone sees it. Ms. Christine explains that the fact this is a Dutch International School means that the fees are subsidised by the Dutch government and, hence, students from a variety of backgrounds, in terms of wealth, come to the school. In talking about the students she states: "I find them somehow a lot humbler than the students that I encountered in Munich and in Vienna". This is true for both Dutch and international students – there is no differentiated fee structure based on nationality. A more agreed interpretation in the Dutch International School, which fits in with a class-based structure, is that the vast majority of students come from backgrounds where parents are well-educated themselves, irrespective of how much money they earn. This is a view put forward by a number of teachers and as Ms. Jill states: "I think one can assume that many of them are coming from family backgrounds where, in general, parents are well educated and that automatically rubs off on the kids ... ." This interpretation fits with previous research into international schools, where it is noted that the vast majority of students continue on to higher education (Cambridge & Thompson 2004).

In one sense, the idea that is being put forward here is related to the concept of “ordinary kids”, as presented by Brown (1987). He suggests that research on working-class responses to schooling have focused on either the ‘high flyers’ or the ‘rebels’ and “the very fact that the ordinary kids have been regarded by teachers and indeed by other pupils as *ordinary* has tended not to make them an intrinsically appealing object of sociological enquiry” (Brown 1987, P.3). However, in contrast to Brown’s research, ‘ordinary students’ in the Dutch International School, from a teacher’s perspective, could be seen as closer to middle-class. ‘Ordinary’ is dependent on the context in which it is used. Mr. Henry provides the description that students at the school are “usually receptive, on the whole, self-motivated, mature relative to their age and well-behaved”. This is a description that research into national schools recognises of some boys and, arguably, more girls. Mr Henry goes on to make the link to the concept of middle-class. He states: “Well, I get the impression that a lot of them are from what we in Britain would call a middle-class background and, as a result, have been relatively well socialised.” It is clear that there are parallels with class-based masculinity, but the indication is that an attempt to interpret the Dutch International School through exactly the same framework would not work. Class relations have an influence on masculinity, but to suggest it is defined in this way is not what is indicated. Ultimately, as Connell (1995) suggests, masculinity is not simply about class.

#### **4.2.4 Conclusion.**

The school has a number of constituent parts that make up the culture. In national systems, school cultures are often considered through a political lens, since the educational policy of government is an important part of generic school culture. Other research has been undertaken through the concept of the school having an organisational culture, which emphasises the influence of homogenous and stable groups within an organisation (Prosser 1999). Given that class structure is partially under discussion, Wolpe (1988, P.28) suggests that popular culture plays a role as this is “often implicit in popular culture”. Compared to national schools, the Dutch International School appears to have a wider diversity of influences, some of which pull in one direction, some in another.

This suggests a complex, but potentially fragmented and disrupted ‘third culture’. However, it is one that is primarily positive. An overall description could be a single, slightly fragmented culture. This suggests that the ‘third culture’ that operates in the school is prevalent enough to influence all behaviour to a reasonable degree and hence there are only minor interpretations, which may be more indicative of fluidity and flexibility. However, this is not the only interpretation and the ‘third culture’ operating in the school could be interpreted as multiple hybrid cultures. This culture is still seen as predominantly positive, where the ideas of respect, diversity and transience are all major signifiers, but where certain aspects are quite severely fragmented and disrupted, meaning that negative behaviours may only have a limited impact. In this scenario ‘third culture’ potentially has quite different interpretations depending on the scenario and hence the ‘third culture’ consists of a number of different fragments which may indicate separate interpretations and where fragmentation is not necessarily a negative attribute. This is not a ‘third culture’ that is a simple amalgam of a student’s home culture and the culture in which they live; it is living, changing and, above all, fragile. As Lefebvre (1991, P.341/342) states: this is a space that is “both *abstract* and *concrete* in character” and is “*homogenous yet at the same time broken up into fragments.*”

One suggestion of a student identity in an international school is provided by Bennett (1993b, P.63):

There is no natural cultural identity for a marginal person. There are no unquestioned assumptions, no intrinsically absolute right behaviours, nor any necessary reference group. And it is certainly true that many marginal people experience great discomfort and dysfunction as a result of their status.

This is not an accurate description of the students in the Dutch International School. It is clear that the students in the Dutch International School do have a cultural identity and, furthermore, it is suggested that this culture is having an influence on the construction of student masculinity. Cambridge & Thompson (2004, P.167) suggest:

International education may be viewed as a means of changing the world by increasing international understanding through bringing young people together from many different countries.

It could be argued that a slightly different view on masculinity, a 'third culture' masculinity, is one tangible way in which this may be happening. However, as noted in previous research (Chambers et al. 2004; Carrington et al. 2008; Grimshaw & Sears 2008), the nature of the institution is only part of the story. Prosser (1999) believes that one of the most common topics for research into school culture is those who run the institution and this research will now look at the role played by teachers.

#### **4.3 'Third Culture': Gendered Relationships Between Teachers and Students.**

This lesson provides a clear example of how the boys' behaviour, and the teacher's interpretation of it, has forced her to adopt a particular coping strategy. She rewards their demands for attention with her time and allows the girls to chat quietly, rather than get on with their work, simply because she does not have enough time and energy to insist that they do this. Were she to focus more attention on the girls, the boys threaten that their behaviour might get completely out of hand (Riddell 1989, P187).

The above quote is a familiar enough scenario in previous research and theorising into schooling (Hey 1997; Skelton 2001; Martino 2008a) and in one way is a stereotypical representation of how female teachers deal with classroom management. Skelton (2001) provides the following description of how male teachers manage the classroom - they can either try specific bonding tactics with the boys in the class and effectively set themselves up as 'one of the lads,' or they can position themselves as being the 'other' in terms of femininity. Again, this is a familiar picture painted by previous research (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995). This section will focus on the accuracy of these scenarios in the Dutch International School and will consider male and female teachers as 'sources of masculinity', both from a negative and a positive perspective. Alongside this there will be a consideration of female teachers potentially taking on 'male' characteristics in certain environments and of male teachers showing caring behaviour. Finally, the idea that the gender of the teacher is not actually noticed by the students or is represented as unimportant to students, will be examined.

At the Dutch International School, of the forty teachers involved with this particular year group, twenty-four are female, sixteen are male and the senior management team in this part of the school is made up of two men and one women. Hence, it could be argued

in a physical sense that the school is reasonably balanced in terms of the sex of members of staff. In national schools in western contexts, this mix of teaching staff would not be uncommon, but it is often presented as a predominantly female set of teachers managed by a group of males. In these situations, previous research (Kenway et al. 1998; Skelton 2001) often argues that schools mirror broader social structures of gender and, hence, this is the model that is portrayed as appropriate for students to follow in their own lives. In the context of the Dutch International School, it is not equivalent.

The initial questionnaire given to students in the Dutch International School indicated that teacher-pupil relationships was a potential area for further research, in that there was agreement to both the statements that: “There is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes” and “Teachers treat male students differently to female students”. Teachers gave a variety of responses as to whether or not they treat male students differently to female students. These can be summarised under three types of response, with the first two accounting for the vast majority. The first style is exemplified by the comment: “No, I attempt to treat them alike as young learners”, indicating a conscious decision not to treat them differently. The second category is exemplified by: “No, not consciously. I would be more likely to treat boisterous and quiet students differently”, indicating that there is awareness that they should not be treated differently, but that potentially, on an unconscious level, they may do so. Finally, there is the outright admission that girls and boys are treated differently as exemplified by: “Yes, sometimes, when the hormonal clocks cause havoc, you sometimes have to ‘protect’ girls against boys and vice-versa”. It is interesting to note that in all the examples where teachers admitted this, justification was always provided and always had a biological basis, suggesting that any admission of this being a social or cultural construction would make the behaviour less defensible. This mirrors the findings of Edley & Wetherell (1995), who point out that the majority of teachers claim they teach their students fairly, irrespective of sex. As both Edley & Wetherell (1995) and Convery (1999, P.144) point out, this may be a “therapeutic process of teacher recovery” with teachers potentially bolstering their confidence and self-belief by justifying what they believe to be true and that they are doing the right thing in the classroom; what happens in practice may be slightly different. Parents presented an even more fragmented picture when considering the statement: “there is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes”. This is a fragmented position due



to there not being a consistent viewpoint with almost as many parents agreeing with this statement as disagreeing with it (22% agreed, 28% disagreed).

This can be taken further by suggesting that this is a situation which has moved beyond the concept of gender and the so-called gendered behaviour of teachers becomes dislocated from the concept of sex. This is an interpretation that is tentatively suggested in the questionnaires and backed up by the fact that nineteen out of the thirty-six lesson observations make positive statements that girls and boys are treated evenly or that there is no difference in how teachers treat girls and boys. Of the thirty-six lessons observed, there were seven classes that had more boys than girls and were taught by men. These would potentially be the most likely places to observe male teachers exhibiting dominant masculine behaviour, with either the boys playing up to the male teacher or the male teacher playing to the boys. In fact, of the thirty-six lessons observed there were only four where there was any evidence of teachers promoting potentially negative forms of masculinity in students and only one of these was male dominated and taught by a male teacher. This is backed up by evidence from appraisals of teachers that have taken place in the school, as noted by Mr. Alexander.

As far as I know, as far as I observe, as far as I went into class, as far as I saw from appraisal interview documentation where we have a special box asking the question: "Is there any evidence of a gender specific approach or discrimination?" there was nothing.

It is also interesting to note the following quote from Ms. Barbara: "In the U.K. I always got the feeling that the students were interested in us a little bit, but they imagined that we hung upside down in cupboards at night and their interest stopped there." For many students this is not how teachers are perceived; these students are coming to the end of their high school career and they sometimes have quite close relationships with teachers. Although these students are less dependent on the teacher and more independent in terms of how they work, overall there is a genuine interest shown in the teachers and a genuine fondness; hence the ability for teachers to influence constructions of masculinity is real. This is backed up by the study undertaken by Cambridge & Thompson (2000) who use the metaphor of a 'family' to describe the relationships within an international school. The suggestion is that the international school becomes the centre of a student's life and, like a family, each student feels like a

valued member of that community. Further consideration will now be given to the role of teachers in the construction of masculinity.

#### ***4.3.1 Understanding Teachers and Masculinity.***

The role teachers play in influencing the culture of a school, and more specifically gender relations, has been of key interest in previous research (Giroux 1988; Gilbert & Gilbert 1998; Francis 2000). This has been considered in terms of the perceived power of teachers and, in some cases, lack of power, suggesting a strong link to firstly patriarchal (Connell 1995) and secondly post-structural (Butler 1990; Butler 2004) concepts of masculinity as well as an indirect link to class-based masculinity (Tolson 1977). The viewpoints that are presented in previous research take a number of different forms. On a simplistic level, due to the behaviours needed for success, such as working hard, schools can be interpreted as feminised environments where masculinity is punished and femininity rewarded. For example, Martino (2008a, P.202) suggests that historically “those men who remained in schools ‘doing’ women’s work increasingly risked being stigmatized as *sissies* or effeminate men” and that there have been repeated calls for more male teachers to ‘masculinise’ schools. For a number of reasons, including the idea that male teachers exhibit a variety of masculinities, this argument oversimplifies the situation. A number of researchers (Shilling 1991; Griffiths 1995; Robinson 2000; Reid et al. 2004) suggest a model where male teachers promote masculine behaviour in boys partly as a means of control where they can demonstrate the masculinity of dominance and power by the use of authority in the classroom. This also includes the use of the body as a means of communicating the same message with the body becoming what Drummond (2005b, P.277) calls “a central point around which these men display their masculinity to others as well as develop a personal sense of masculine identity”. In turn this is seen as a ‘shoring-up’ of their own masculinity. In the first scenario male teachers use masculinity as a controlling device and in the second they portray stereotypical attributes of masculinity to ‘fit in’ with the views of male and female students. These two scenarios can be achieved in a number of ways, but two have prominence in previous research. The first involves teachers using negative female comparisons as noted by Riddell (1989), Cohen (1997) and Skelton (2001) and is exemplified by the description provided by Kenway et al. (1998, P.27): “Geoff (the teacher) and the boys enjoy the freedom to be sexist. It has become a bond between teacher and students.” On a more theoretical level, Dixon (1997) and Paechter (1998)

both suggest that male secondary school teachers implicitly support the sexualisation of women's identities with the intention of positioning them as 'other' and without power. The second way of achieving this is through the feminising of boys and homophobic comments, as noted by Dupper & Meyer Adams (2002), Kimmel & Mahler (2003) and Rivers (2004) and is exemplified in the research of Askew (1989, P.65), who noted teachers making comments such as: "He's a sissy", and "He's got to learn to take it like a man."<sup>5</sup>

Overall, this has tended to be described as 'laddish behaviour' or being 'one of the lads'. Willis (1977) talked about 'the lads' in his research to mean a working-class style of masculinity, but the concept is now more fixed and not necessarily class-based (c.f. chapter 2 section 2.6). In one sense these are fairly extreme forms of behaviour and although there is clearly evidence that this behaviour is not uncommon, it is difficult to see this as the position adopted by the majority of teachers. The problem with the concept of 'laddish behaviour' revolves around the point at which the behaviour can be described as 'laddish'. Just as the question is posed as to whether or not the students are 'Dutch enough', it could be asked whether or not teachers are 'laddish' enough. Clearly, when all the characteristics noted above are put together, then it is 'laddish behaviour', whereas a single interest in a specific sport does not constitute 'laddish behaviour'. This is backed up by the research of Archer & Francis (2005), who suggest that 'laddish behaviour' is partially resisted in the male British Chinese community as it is positioned as a threat to 'normal' Chinese identity. For the purposes of this research, behaviour that indicates sexual objectification of the opposite sex and/or sexual put downs of certain members of the same sex will be considered separately from behaviour that demonstrate same-sex bonding and non-sexual put downs of the opposite sex, for example in terms of academic success or ability in a certain academic subject. Both could be described under the concept of 'laddish behaviour', but the second could be thought a less extreme form of the first. This scenario will be considered in light of the 'third culture'.

This style of behaviour demonstrated by male teachers can be interpreted through the concept of performance, which suggests an interpretivist approach. As Goffman (1959 P.32) suggests, this performance has a quite specific meaning, referring to "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous

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<sup>5</sup> In the researcher's previous school, the researcher witnessed the male deputy head telling a boy he was a 'poof' for not taking part in a particular race on sports day.

presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers”. In this scenario, it is suggested that the role the teachers play is specifically a performance for students, although not always with a single aim and, in the light of previous research, it is a performance, at least in part, of ‘masculinity’. Hence, the ‘third culture’ of the Dutch International School and the construction and representations of masculinity within the school are dependent on the performers and the performances within the school. Ultimately, as Goffman (1959) suggests, a certain act may lead to a set of stereotypes, abstract expectations and these expectations then take on a reality of their own. On the one hand, if teachers are seen as part of the structure of the school, then this becomes a patriarchal performance which is part of this structure. On the other hand, this could be interpreted as a linguistic performance, where the student’s world is being shaped by the language used.

Consideration has also been given to girls and schooling, often focusing on the positive influence of female teachers and the potential for a negative influence from male teachers (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Francis 2000). In contrast to the relationships that male teachers have with male students, the relationships between female teachers and female students have often been portrayed with a focus on the intimacy of these relationships and the caring and nurturing nature. In the research of Riddell (1989, P.190), describing Lois Roughton’s art/textiles class, she states: “The atmosphere of this lesson, as girls tried clothes on and talked about boys, parents, friends and teachers, was more like a cosy chat in a bedroom than a school lesson.” In one sense this can potentially be interpreted as an ‘anti-masculinity’ stand, but it demonstrates a similar causative relationship between female teachers and students as there is between male teachers and students.

In both these scenarios, the implication is that male and female teachers are acting as the gendered ‘role models’ for the behaviour that students should portray in their own relationships and in the wider world. To what extent teachers act as role models is questionable and when this is considered from a positive stance, Carrington & Skelton (2003, P.262) found that there is an “absence of an adequate evidence base to show that matching teachers and children either by gender or ethnicity leads to an improved educational performance”. There is also clearly a degree of disruption due to the concept of ‘rebellion’ by students against teachers who hold a position of authority and, ultimately, there is the idea that teachers are there to provide education and never move

from the concept of being teachers to being gendered human beings with lives outside school. This links back to the quote made by Ms. Barbara (c.f. chapter 4 section 4.3). As with the students in the Dutch International School, the concept developed by Brown (1987) of 'ordinary kids' can also be applied to teachers, suggesting that certain potentially 'undesirable' behaviours may manifest themselves, but they rarely become fully defining. They are just 'ordinary teachers', although the concept of 'ordinary' remains dependent on position and/or location. In the Dutch International School, the indication is the 'third culture' is a complex culture, suggesting the role teachers play in promoting 'third culture' masculinity may be slightly different from the position outlined above.

Overall, the interviews and the lesson observations presented the researcher with a variety of gendered performances from the teachers. As shown above, in past research the labels and categorisation of teachers have often been based on gender dichotomy with male and female teachers often portraying quite different styles. This is brought into question in the Dutch International School and, hence, in this study behaviours will not be specifically assigned to male and female teachers. The first category considers teachers who exhibit behaviour towards the opposite sex, and specific members of the same sex, which potentially uses verbal or non-verbal messages about sexual attraction or rejection. The second category examines teachers who exhibit 'masculinity' through power relations, showing the dominance of his/her own sex, bonding with students of the same sex and/or often putting down students of the opposite sex. Finally, consideration will be given to the teachers who, in this context, appear to be 'independent of gender'.

#### ***4.3.2 Gendered Lessons and Sexualising Students.***

In the Dutch International School, throughout all the interviews conducted and all the lesson observations undertaken, there were no examples of teachers using gay or sexist remarks to demonstrate their power and subjugate those who they make comments about as 'other'. There were no overt portrayals of masculinity through muscular demonstrations of the body or through specific actions of the body. Given the nature of the 'third culture' described in the previous section, with the emphasis on respect, this is not surprising. The pervasiveness of tolerance and respect potentially downplay the importance of particular signifiers of the body; the lack of emphasis on the body is

about the reduction of dominant masculinities. This is a theme that was consistently picked up through the different tools of data collection and is clearly an important aspect of third culture and in one sense this is a case that suggests a respectful 'third culture' masculinity; in this scenario the 'third culture' is more consistent and less fragmented. The other way that male teachers potentially show power in the Dutch International School is where they show a preference for female students and the preference can be interpreted as having a sexual or pseudosexual influence. This would fit in with the ideas of Paechter (1998, P.24) who suggests: "Male secondary school teachers often tacitly support a more general school atmosphere in which girls and women are positioned as sexual Others." The following extract from the interview with Falko mentions the behaviour of one of his male teachers and provides an indication of this:

I don't know if he favours girls, but I know he favours those girls because some people are rather nice, they are rather attractive, they are humorous and they are interested or at least they feign interest in the class and I suppose the teacher likes that.

In the interview with Mr. Alexander, he suggests that in a staff of eighty people, occasionally inappropriate behaviour occurs and that it is dealt with on an appropriate level. However, these are the only two situations that were commented on or noted throughout the research. No reference was made to female teachers in this sort of context. This is further evidence for the idea that the influence on students' or teachers' masculinity in this way appears to be very limited, again potentially contributing to a respectful, positive but complex 'third culture'. There is still, potentially, a fragmentary disrupted sense to the 'third culture' but it appears to be successful in curbing excessive behaviour, as this style of behaviour does not fit with the notion of respect that this research suggests is clearly important in this school. Arguably, it is this aspect of the culture that ensures, at least in part, that this style can gain very little hold. Further evidence for a respectful 'third culture' is provided because the only cases noted in the Dutch International School would be considered quite benign in comparison to what has been described in previous research, although whether the girls involved in either scenario interpreted it in that way is not known; at most, this provides an indication that this sort of behaviour would only be tolerated to a very limited extent and it is not allowed to develop in any meaningful way. This behaviour suggests that what is being

portrayed here is style of masculinity that is respectful and this needs to be developed further under the concept of 'third culture' masculinity.

However, when we consider masculinity construction through the concept of bonding with students of the same sex, i.e. potentially 'laddish behaviour' at a less extreme level, examples can be found, as noted in the following comment from Valentina in the focus group one discussion.

And of course you sometimes get a bond with the teacher, like all the football boys with the ??? teacher, but it's not like that teacher will treat them more lightly than another teacher. The ??? teacher is the football coach. You know, they have a little football talk. But it's not like he would pass them if they were really failing.

This is certainly not 'laddish behaviour' in the sense that has been described by Willis (1977), Abraham (1995) or Francis (2000) and it was not noted during the classroom observation with this class. The following extract from the interview with Falko suggests he has witnessed similar behaviour:

Falko: Yes, that is favouring boys and a man.

Bill: A male teacher? And what do you think the reason behind that is?

Falko: I don't know. I guess it is a kind of we men stick together kind of thing.

Falko was unable/unwilling to elaborate on what sort of things made 'men stick together'. However, the incidences of even this 'low' level of solidarity are relatively uncommon at the Dutch International School and there is arguably a tension here where, in one sense, male teachers are resistant to the concept of dominant masculinity but, in another sense, there is a potentially limited conformity and complicity with it. This fits well with the idea of this school having a fragmented 'third culture', where the beginnings of a dominant masculinity could be formed, but are then disrupted. In the Dutch International School, these do not appear to be primary signifiers of a 'third culture' masculinity, but they are not completely non-existent. It appears that 'third culture' masculinity can be constructed as respectful, but that this is not respect in any absolute sense.

Interestingly, this has strong parallels with the girls and female teachers in the Dutch International School. On a fairly covert level, female teachers will potentially bond with girls and ‘put down’ boys, and this appears to be tied to female solidarity. In one sense, this can be interpreted on a relatively simplistic level, as there are more female teachers than male teachers – twenty-three out of the thirty-six lessons observed were taught by women – and, hence, female solidarity has the potential to be observed more often. The following comment from Elly, from the focus group ten discussion, provides a good example:

My English teacher last year, she is female, she very much favoured the girls and like if they had their hands up she’d always call on them. That’s because her favourite students were always girls. I don’t think it necessarily had to do with girls or guys.

Although the final statement appears to be an entirely unnatural conclusion, it is difficult to imagine that there is not a certain degree of gender bias in here. Again this may be indicative of an awareness of what is and is not appropriate, hinting at the idea of tactical behaviour. There are clearly parallels with the bond between male teachers and male students and the fact that Elly denies the obvious reasoning behind it could again be interpreted through the concept of a fragmented ‘third culture’; behaviours such as this are not allowed to become dominant. The following extract from the interview with Carl backs up Elly’s observation:

Well in ??? there’s more interaction from the teacher with girls talking about girl stuff – that sort of thing. Well I can understand that because it is dominated by girls in our class. That’s the only way that I mean. There’s no bias.

Again, like Elly, Carl plays down the scenario and this time suggests that although he has recounted the incident, he is not complaining about the situation in his ??? class. When the researcher observed this class, it was interesting to note that the class was split into two distinct groups - one table of girls and one table of boys, with no interaction between the two tables. However, there was no evidence of the teacher interacting more with the girls than the boys. It was written in the field notes that there was a caring atmosphere in the class and it could be argued that this was a lesson where there was a ‘feminine feel’. The evidence for this is suggested by the fact that no one



was dominant in the class and that Carl was looking after Justin, who at that point in time had only been in the school for five weeks. The ‘feminine feel’ was, in one sense, provided by the boys.

The next situation considers a style of aggression in class exhibited by teachers and the potential to put down students of the opposite sex through that aggression, but with no reference or implied reference to sex. It can also be interpreted as teachers ‘picking on’ or deliberately ignoring students of the opposite sex, thus putting them down, either because of a lack of academic success or a perceived lack of intellect. These behaviours can be used in both a conscious and an unconscious way. Firstly, there is the teacher who has no idea that this is what he/she is doing. Secondly, there is the teacher who makes a conscious decision to verbally ‘attack’, where the comment leading to verbal domination is often based on a lack of academic success or intellectual curiosity.

The first scenario is fairly common in previous research (Cunnison 1989; Riddell 1989; Dixon 1997; Paechter 1998), where teachers are not aware that their behaviour can be interpreted as relating to the promotion of a dominant masculinity. Francis (2000, P.48) suggests: “some teachers interact differently with boys and girls, adopting a more robust, bantering style with boys and a more lenient, caring approach with girls”, but the degree to which this is conscious can be questioned. The teacher of lesson seventeen can be described in this way and the field notes state: “It is twenty minutes into the class when he first seems to notice a girl.” The field notes also state: “Because of the diagonal, he has a direct view of all the boys and all the girls remain peripheral.” Teachers like this unwittingly contribute to the construction of certain styles of masculinity and, in one sense, the culture of the school is unable to influence this. It is interesting to note that there was no evidence for the female teachers doing this, which is backed up by previous research into girls’ education (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997). The fact that this was the only incident noted suggests that this has limited impact in the Dutch International School.

However, there is more evidence for the second scenario and the case of Mr. Jack will now be considered. This study will look at the observations from lesson twenty-two, which was taught by Mr. Jack and is a male dominated class. The following comments were written in the field notes on this lesson:

There is a real dominance in terms of the class from the teacher. The actual position of the teacher is interesting. He is sat at the front with his feet on the desk and expounding. There is a real feeling of oppression in the class.

Later on in the class, the following was written in the field notes: “The teacher makes the statement to a female student that: “your opinion does not matter.” The following extract from the interview with Amanda demonstrates that he is quite noticeable in this school.

Bill: That’s really interesting. So what is the name of the new ??? teacher?

Amanda: Mr. Jack. He is really aggressive.

Bill: Aggressive?

Amanda: Yeah, it really is quite scary when you are in his class because he just makes such comments.

Amanda uses the adjectives “aggressive” and “scary”, both of which imply a dominance and, in one sense, it is surprising to hear this from Amanda as she does not appear to ‘scare’ easily and is confident and dominant within her group (c.f. chapter 6 section 6.2.3). There is no indication from Amanda that Mr. Jack’s style of behaviour is solely directed at girls. Tanja also notes Mr. Jack’s behaviour in her interview, but she suggests that his behaviour is directed towards the girls in the class: “I heard some guys say that this new ??? teacher that they have got is really sexist, because he is saying that girls should just shut up and sit in their corner.” This description can be interpreted as an attempt by a male teacher to portray a dominant version of masculinity by exerting power over the girls in the class. In both cases, the girls are focussed on his verbal actions rather than how he appears physically. This is reminiscent of Mr. Lefevre in the work of Redman & Mac an Ghaill (1997, P.169) who is described as taking up space not through his physical presence, “but through his ability to ‘push people around intellectually’.”

However, this is not a simple story of another dominant male teacher and in the classroom observation of one of his lessons it was the girls in the class who were actually prepared to question him. The field notes state:

When he does engage (with students) it is entirely with girls; the teacher interrupts a lot of female student answers. The teacher is not playing fair as he keeps interrupting them. A lot of sarcasm. Good on the students to keep going; towards the end of the class one girl asks a question, but no answer is given. No comment is made by a boy throughout the entire class.

Given that it is a boy-dominated class, the fact that the girls are supplying all the interaction is surprising. A number of students were very keen to tell me about Mr. Jack and the expectation was that the focus would be on how the girls did not like him because of his aggressive behaviour and the comments made, and that the boys may show a degree of admiration. This is not what transpired. The following comment made by Victoria describing Mr. Jack, is illuminating: “And the teacher is like the coolest guy ever and he is so like eccentric.” Mr. Jack may have been attempting to use dominant masculinity, but there was no evidence of Victoria feeling dominated. Amanda also made reference to an incident where she and her mother went to see Mr. Jack; her description of the event is as follows:

So we went in and he was like we should not have political correctness, it shouldn't be allowed in this school and I was like this is what our school is based on. It's based on political correctness, on respect and acceptance of cultures and you can't just say like racism is correct in this school.

In one sense this could be interpreted as the retelling of an event that the student ‘wished’ had happened, but in the case of Amanda it is easy to believe that she did say this! Whenever students wanted to tell me about Mr. Jack, it was not to complain about him or talk about how he mistreated them. It appeared that there was a realisation by the students of what the researcher was investigating and they had found a new and ‘unusual’ case they wanted to talk about. This is suggestive of a consciousness of what behaviour means within the school and also that this behaviour is in some way indicative of masculinity. Also, none of the boys in the class backed up Mr. Jack's behaviour and if there had been approval of this style of behaviour, this would have been a safe place in which to voice it. This is a quite different scenario from the one found in the research of Abraham (1995, P.83), where one of the teachers, Mr. Pebble, states that he gets on better with boys because they have an interest in sport in common. Overall, the masculine performance given by Mr. Jack was not very successful in either

‘promoting masculinity’ in students or in ‘shoring-up’ his own masculinity. This was by far the most extreme case witnessed or described in the school and, as has been indicated, the overall effect on students was rather limited.

This style of behaviour can be interpreted in a quite different way. The following comments by Wagner, from the focus group eight discussion, suggest that male teachers do use a dominant style, but in an academic sense and to positive effect:

...They very much pressure the extremes, you know. ...those that are doing worse they will pressure to do better and those who are the best, they will pressure to do more because they believe if you are that good you can do more.

This does not appear to be influencing the construction of masculinity and the suggestion is that this behaviour is not restricted to male students and male teachers alone. Wagner does suggest later on in the same conversation, however, that with female students it may be more thought through, although there is still no indication that it is used in a negative way against girls:

But I guess for some teachers they may sympathise more with female students and therefore be more slack with them or push them even harder because they think she can do better. So I guess it depends on the teacher.

This suggests that this style of behaviour does not discriminate between girls and boys in the Dutch International School and, in effect, the teacher is often using his/her influence to positive effect. Taken one stage further, in the case of Uwe, the teacher he most admires is clearly intellectual and academically successful and does not portray a stereotypical masculinity:

He’s studying philosophy at night and he’s quite charming, quite funny but he also knows a lot and has quite deep perspectives. I really admire him and in Spanish he poses some interesting questions.

Thus, this dominant style of behaviour again has relatively little influence in the Dutch International School and were it not for the example of Mr. Jack, it would have been

more difficult to make a case for this style of behaviour existing at all amongst male teachers in the school.

This is a clear indication that the reaction of students to teachers is influenced by the 'third culture' in the school and provides further implications for how 'third culture' masculinity works. It is clear that some of the girls in the Dutch International School have a degree of resilience to patriarchal behaviour and in this situation it does not seem to be through portraying their own style of masculinity. The indication here is that the level of respect they gain from being at the school offers a degree of protection.

Previous research (Abraham 1995; Martino 2008a) has often focused on the role that male teachers play in portraying dominant behaviour, but within the Dutch International School it appears as likely to be used by female teachers. From the classroom observations, it was noted that there were three classes with female teachers where a note was made about boys being ignored or being peripheral to the conversation. In lesson three, the female teacher was being sarcastic to a disengaged boy and the field notes state: "First interaction by a boy is after twenty minutes. Quite a lot of sarcasm being used by the teacher." Lesson sixteen also involved a female teacher who makes a number of sarcastic comments to male students and the field notes state: "There really is the feeling that the teacher is 'picking on' Mick and Bob and this is followed by a sarcastic comment that is aimed at Juan." This is highlighted in the following comment from Sabastian, in the focus group four discussion.

Some of the time female teachers will ask the guys far more questions than girls and challenge the boys more than the girls. I've had it a couple of time in ???, where the girls are talking in the front and the guys are trying to keep focused and they keep getting questions asked and the girls are just sitting there talking.

This could be explained as male student's reaction to a female teacher he does not like, but in this grouping it was backed up by both Elaine and Belia. Belia states: "Yeah she asked the guys everything; she asked about two questions to the girls and about 12 to the guys." The following extract, from the focus group two discussion, highlights a similar situation, but in this case there is evidence to suggest that the teacher is behaving fairly:

Bill: OK. Now do teachers treat girls and boys differently here?

...

Carl: Ms. Karen

Bill: In what way?

Carl: She picks on certain people and its usually guys.

Victoria: There might be a good reason for that.

Bill: Do they deserve to be picked on?

Carl: I always try hard in class and two thirds of the class, they always get sevens, and they are always messing around and yeah I'm the one getting picked on.

When Victoria suggests “there might be a good reason for that”, this could be interpreted as a female reaction to the way in which the boys are behaving, although Carl implies that this is not so. The researcher observed this class and although there was no evidence of the boys being “picked on” during that particular lesson, the field notes state: “When the teacher is engaged with the class, it is only with the girls at the front – this is throughout the class – is she nervous of engaging with those at the back?” This appears to be behaviour that is positive towards the girls, but it does not indicate dominant behaviour; when compared to some of the previous research on male teachers in national schools, it seems to be quite minor. Thus, ‘third culture’ masculinity seems to influence and be influenced by both the female teachers and, potentially, the girls.

Ultimately, there are suggestions that students do not see this type of behaviour as particularly gendered and what appears to be happening is a fairly extreme case of what Martino (2008b, P.577) describes as “contradictions involved in how male teachers negotiate their identities as gendered subjects”. This is suggested in the following extract from the interview with Wagner:

They don't do it based on sex. They sometimes favouritise based on skill. If someone is smart, they try to push them even further, which is special treatment in a way, but there's no sort of like negative.

Many students at the Dutch International School feel that the gender of the teacher makes no difference to how they are treated; this was found in many lesson observations. In lesson two, for example, the field notes state: “No sign that either boys

or girls are peripheral. Teacher interacts with all students – no evidence of more interaction with boys or girls.” Statements like this were noted in the field notes in nineteen out of the thirty-six lessons. Thus in one sense the gender of the teacher appears to make no difference (c.f. Carrington & Skelton 2003); from the point of view of the student in terms of teaching behaviour and characteristics, the teacher potentially has no recognisable gender. This was a theme that came through in both the focus group interviews and the one-to-one interviews more strongly than the gendered behaviour of teachers. The following extract from the interview with Falko support this and makes the point that it is actually the behaviour of students that influences a teacher’s behaviour, which will be discussed in more detail in chapters five and six:.

Most teachers do not care whether you are a boy or a girl. They care if you are hard working or if you are a lazy procrastinator at least if you are intelligent, and last of all if you try to contribute.

This is quite different from the behaviour of Philip Norris and Bill Naismith in the research of Skelton (2001, P.128) who appear to spend a lot of time constructing themselves as suitably masculine and this difference is backed up when Emma talks about other students being liked by teachers:

Well there are teacher’s pets or teachers have favourite students, which is natural because they are humans as well. In that way, yes. So in Physics it is Wagner and in Maths it is Elly and Amanda. ... But it is nothing to do with sex, it is to do with the fact that she likes them.

The suggestion is that ‘ordinary teachers’ in the Dutch International School also understand and appreciate the role that respect has to play in the ‘third culture’ of the school.

#### **4.3.3 Conclusion.**

Overall, there is little dominant behaviour exhibited by teachers in the school and, as with the students, the overall atmosphere is one of respect. If a difference can be distinguished, there is limited evidence to suggest that female teachers are more likely to use dominant behaviour with boys in the school and when it is attempted by male

teachers on girls, they seem to be fairly resistant to it. The impression that this is not having a profound influence on the formation of negative interpretations of masculinity, and the limited examples given, fit in with the idea of a disrupted, fragmented, respectful 'third culture'. When it does happen, it is not often followed up on or does not go far. Overall, the behaviour of teachers can be interpreted as respectful and one of the ways in which respect is shown is through the idea of being caring (c.f. chapter 2 section 2.5; chapter 4 section 4.2.1). In many ways teachers treat students as equals, which in itself shows a degree of respect, and there is a sense that because of this they want the best for their students. Given the teacher-students interactions in the Dutch International School, teachers have had some success in defining or even potentially redefining behaviours associated with masculinity. Robinson (2000) suggests that authority shown by teachers is gendered and power based, that it is most effectively administered by stereotypical males and that this has consequences for females and for males who are not "appropriately" masculine. It is not, however, the Dutch International School that is being described.

In terms of the 'third culture' operating in the school, this again links back to the idea of fragmentation, where gender relations themselves become fragmented. The combination of the fragmentation and the role played by respect suggests that teachers may influence 'third culture' masculinity in the school in a different way. The indications are that certain students note certain behaviours and these behaviours are sometimes interpreted in a way that links with the construction of masculinity. When it does, it seems to apply as much to the girls in the school as it does to the boys, but what is found is limited. There appear to be the beginnings of aggressive behaviour, but it does not lead to a traditional form of hegemonic and subordinated masculinities, where one marginalises the other. The more significant role played by the girls and the female teachers in the school disrupt the concept of patriarchy and, overall, it does not seem able to gain a substantial hold, but the idea of hegemonic femininity, as presented by Schippers (2007), is also not indicated. There is clearly an awareness of where this style of behaviour can lead, but it does not seem to be able to take that more extreme form in the Dutch International School. This research indicates that the emerging theory of 'third culture' masculinity is strongly influenced by respect and by both the girls and the female teachers. This can now be linked back to a construction of masculinity that is probably best interpreted through post-structuralism. In this sense, post-structuralism refers to the acts and gestures of teachers and students. This leads to teachers' identities



that are multiply constructed and never singular. The measurement of gender relations is not predictable – it is not possible to simply read off teacher behaviour and gendered teacher-student relationships. It is not that the teachers in the school are ‘lacking in gender’, but in terms of interaction with students, in a majority of cases it is not part of the script. Ultimately, this is not a discussion on teacher masculinities, but on students’ interpretations of particular styles.

#### **4.4 Conclusion.**

The Dutch International School was given this pseudonym to note the influence of both ‘the Dutch’ and ‘the international’. An unsophisticated interpretation would be that Dutch culture promotes tolerance and open-mindedness and that this in turn, has a positive influence on the culture of the school. ‘The international’ can be interpreted as the range of nationalities involved making it essential for respect to prevail. Ultimately, it is the interplay of the ‘Dutch’ with the ‘international’ which has an influence, with the two cultures sometimes working together and sometimes working separately. Overall, the ‘third culture’ of the school, whether it is a single culture or a hybridised culture, is clearly having an influence. In the school there is respectful behaviour demonstrated by both teachers and students and in one interpretation this is respect for diversity. Student-teacher relationships are close and mirror the role played by respect in the school. This chapter suggests that this is central to the school identity and is portrayed through the behaviour of teachers, the beliefs of teachers in education and links to the basis on which the school is founded. In one sense the culture in the school is relatively homogenous as demonstrated by the fact that students mostly come from backgrounds where education has at least a degree of importance and there is a limited, but potentially steady, influence from Dutch culture. However, the negative portrayals of masculinity that have been noted in previous research are not wholly unknown, and although they do not play a large role in the school, teachers and students are aware of them and they are portrayed to differing limited degrees. This is what leads to a description of disruption and fragmentation. Within this scenario, collective and communal ties and identities in the school could also be seen to be dissolving with the rise of individualism. Although respect dominates in the Dutch International School, it is not at the expense of individuality; difference is not only respected, but also desired. Ultimately, the ‘third culture’ is not strong enough to exert a wholly positive dominant

influence, but it is disruptive and fragmented enough to ensue that the negative does not gain a hold.

This research will now move on to consider student-student relationships in the next two chapters. The ways in which students behave is very much influenced by who the audience is and Goffman (1959) points out that what is on-stage in one context is off-stage in another. In terms of the gaze of teachers, students' social spaces are off-stage, allowing only limited access to teachers. However, in terms of constructing a masculine identity where peers dictate behaviours, they can be seen as on-stage and what is performed is very much prepared. This indicates that these spaces have a degree of importance and the next chapter will focus on their friendships, the language they use between themselves and their relationships.

**Chapter 5. Student Friendships and Relationships: The Actions and  
Language they Use to Define Identity.**

**“Not all boys are Neanderthal, nor all girls passive victims.”**

**(Hey 1997, P.9)**

## 5.1 Introduction.

In this chapter the research now considers the role the students themselves play in influencing and being influenced by the 'third culture' in relation to how they interpret and identify with masculinity construction. This is an area that is seen as important by many researchers and theorists, irrespective of their philosophical standpoints (Stenhouse 1967; Tolson 1977; Connell 1995; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003). As Connell et al. (1982, P.107) state: "The school is an institution that is, among other things, a power structure, and is felt as such by its students." This chapter will consider this through three distinct areas: friendships, the use of sexualised language and relationships.

Much of the previous research which considers friendships in schools (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997) makes the point that there is a gendered difference in forming friendship. Previous research (Kehily & Nayak 1997; Francis 2000; Gordon et al. 2000; Plummer 2001; Thurlow 2001) on the negative use of sexualised language by boys to subjugate certain boys and girls suggests that it is used to produce a subordinate 'gay masculinity' by constructing problematic masculine characteristics as decidedly feminine and to construct girls as a subjugated 'other' by labelling them as 'hyper-heterosexual'. When considering sexual relationships, Pleck (1982) notes that one of the key ways for boys to validate masculinity in a school context is to engage in heterosexual practices. These range from a boy having sexual relationships with a girl or girlfriend (Willis 1977; Haywood 1996) through to the idea of 'heterosexual banter', where boys talk about an actual, potential, or imagined girlfriend (Abraham 1995; Frosh et al. 2002). All these behaviours will be considered through the ideas presented in the previous chapter - that students at the school are operating in a 'third culture', where there is a focus on the fragmented and disjointed part of the complex nature of this culture, thus suggesting that it may be difficult for potentially negative constructions of masculinity to gain a hold or stabilise as demonstrated by the idea that respect has a fundamental role to play; however, the presence of respect does not mean that other styles of behaviour are unknown. There does not appear to be an absolute understanding of the concept of the 'third culture' in the school and it is taken on board in different ways and to different extents by different members of the school community, thus leading to the idea that it is fragmented and disjointed. In light of these behaviours, it might be necessary to reinterpret some of the

meanings that they have for students and these will then further inform the concept of a 'third culture'. As noted above, previous research suggests that heterosexuality (and by association homosexuality) plays a key role in relationships and the sexualised language used. This research will examine this further through the concept of 'enough'. In terms of friendships and relationships, much of the previous research sees girls as being objects through which to construct masculinity, whereas this research will put forward a much more dynamic and flexible role. It is suggested that girls in the Dutch International School play a pivotal role and careful consideration will be given to this. Overall the focus is on the intent of these behaviours as opposed to the actual behaviours themselves. This will allow further theorising on how masculinity is constructed in the Dutch International School, which can then be considered as part of, and in terms of influencing, 'third culture' and a resultant 'third culture' masculinity.

## **5.2 Friendships and Acquaintanceships Between Students.**

"Well, we are all unusual in a sense; basically, unusual is rather the norm here"  
(Baltrus).

Friendships and acquaintanceships between students is a theme that has been explored in previous research into girls and boys and schooling (Willis 1977; Thorne 1993; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Morris-Roberts 2004; Chambers 2006). The responses to questions three, four and five in the student questionnaire indicate that students at the Dutch International School feel strongly that friendships are important and there is no significant difference between how this is viewed by girls and boys. Parents strongly agree with the statement that their sons and daughters have made good friendships at the school. This is backed up by the following effusive comment made by Elly in the focus group ten discussion:

Oh my god, I've never had better friends in my whole life. It not because, as people say, that you are in high school and in high school you get better friends. It's because you understand that you are so short of time that you make the most of it and that's amazing.

The concept of strong friendship is recognised in previous research, but there have been a variety of different gendered interpretations which will be drawn upon in this research by considering both male and female friendships.

Much of the previous research focuses on single sex groups (Willis 1977; Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997). In the questionnaire, in keeping with other studies, students indicated that the significant majority of friends were of the same sex. However, from observation and from comments in the one-to-one interviews, this does not appear to be the whole story and with the exception of 'the football boys', who will be considered in more detail in chapter six, there are no other distinctive single-sex groupings. So, although a majority of friends may be of the same sex, often this does not result in single sex groups and, hence, the concept of the all-male groups being a site for the development of dominant masculinity, for example, is somewhat limited.

Previous research suggests that boys' friendships are depicted as hierarchical, competitive, based on larger groups and lacking intimacy. Connell et al. (1982) and Frosh et al. (2002) both suggest that these friendships sometimes result in the subordination of girls and perceived homophobia. As Prendergast & Forrest (1998, P.167) suggest, for many boys "membership of a male peer group was key to the experiences of school and for many completely absorbed and displaced interest in any other form of friendship or relationship." In contrast, girls' friendships tend to be based around smaller groups and are characterised as being private, reliable, transient and focused on shared intimacies, self-revelation, and emotional support. All this indicates a situation that is quite structured, with only a limited sense of interaction between girls and boys. This study suggests that in the Dutch International School the interaction and the roles played by boys and girls is much more blurred, with some of the girls taking on what some researchers would describe as a 'masculine style' of friendship and some boys taking on a 'feminine style'.

Overall, an argument is presented that friendship can be seen as "feminised" and based on a model of intimacy. Hey (1997, P.65) recognises the importance of intimacy in her research on the friendships of adolescent girls and states: "The central premise of girls' friendships are: reliability, reciprocity, commitment, confidentiality, trust and sharing." Schippers (2007) interprets intimate friendships as being a signifier of hegemonic femininity where men and women who demonstrate masculine styles of friendship are

subordinate. Thus, as noted in previous research (Seidler 1992; Singleton 2003; Chambers 2006), the concept of intimacy is seen to negatively affect the interpretation of friendship between men. Again, these are quite absolute arguments and the degree to which friendship is a hegemonic behaviour for either masculinity or femininity is questionable, as neither considered in isolation fully explains the situation. This has been partially resolved by repositioning intimacy in male friendships through the concept of 'male bonding'. Many researchers (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Skelton 2001; Morris-Roberts 2004) directly or indirectly mention the potentially sexualised nature of adolescent friendships and there is an indication that it is the policing of the sexualised nature of friendship, both through homosexuality and heterosexuality, that seems to indicate some of the potential differences seen in friendships between girls and friendships between boys. Hence, the argument is restructured that both male and female friendships can be intimate, but that male 'intimacy' is desexualised and becomes 'closeness' or 'mateyness'.

There is no doubt that the male students in this study do show a strong degree of closeness or 'mateyness', but there is also evidence of sensitivity, suggesting a softer style of intimacy. Thus when Griffiths (1995) suggests there is sensitivity to girls' friendships, this seems to be replicated in this research by a much wider variety of friendships. This is exemplified by Wagner when he talks about the concept of supporting his best friend:

For example, Baltrus who is my best friend. I tend to have a stronger character than him sometimes, so sometimes I tell him Baltrus, you shouldn't be doing this and he tends to listen.

Wagner is not unique amongst the boys in mentioning the concept of a 'best friend', but it is often portrayed in the literature as a female way of 'doing' friendship (Thorne 1993; Griffiths 1995). It is further highlighted by Uwe when he is talking about persuading one of his male friends to go to the Winter Ball:

For example, when I managed to take one of my group to the Winter Ball ... I managed to take them and everybody was impressed. Everybody was surprised but happy that he had gone to the Winter Ball because they weren't expecting it.

In this conversation, until he uses the word 'he', it would often be assumed that Uwe was talking about a 'girlfriend' as opposed to a 'boy' friend. This style of friendship would be more common between girls and although it does not necessarily suggest physical intimacy, it does show a publicly expressed closeness and caring quality which are not often demonstrated in male friendships. There is an embodied element to this intimacy where the boys in the Dutch International School are not extremely physically intimate, but there is a relaxed nature to boys hugging and touching shoulders and thus demonstrably showing a limited degree of physical affection. This was seen in the friendship between Wagner and Baltrus in the 'Balcony group' and also between Max and Falko in the 'Rens group'. It is the public and caring nature of these friendships that is partly the reason why they are being considered in a 'feminised' way rather than through the concept of 'male bonding'. Thus, it appears that the style of male friendship is rather more fluid than suggested by previous research, allowing more liberal interpretations to take place and suggesting that these contribute to the concept of 'third culture' masculinity which allows a more intimate style of behaviour between boys, while still retaining sexual boundaries. As will be seen in the next two sections, although homophobia is not generally tolerated within the school, there is still an awareness of what it is and the power it can bring. The friendships within the Dutch International School are different from a national school, but they have not reached the stage where homophobia, for example, is absolutely unacceptable and unknown.

In one sense it is not surprising that intimacy is a key feature in the Dutch International School, as this metaphor was a common way for students to reflect on the school. Many students, both boys and girls, when talking about the old school, used words connected to intimacy, which was contrasted with the words and metaphors connected to cold and it being like an airport, when describing the new school. This is demonstrated by the following extract from the focus group nine discussion.

James: But there you had more intimate places.

Obelia: Yeah, there were more intimate places so it was cosier.

James: Here all is exposed; you have no intimacy.

Some of the students made the connection between intimate spaces and friendships and interactions. For example, there are indications from Elinor in the focus group one



discussion that suggest the change of building has affected their friendships due to the lack of intimacy:

Well, in the old school there was a much nicer atmosphere; everybody was really close together. ... everybody hung out together in free periods and there was lots of things to do. In this school it is really big and people have started to separate more, people have started to form groups in different places.

However, Lazaro and Raimondo take the opposite viewpoint and suggest that rather than it fragmenting friendships, the move to the new building has brought them together. Raimondo states:

It has changed the hang out spots, so it might have brought people together. For example the IB room used to be closed, closed off by a big door which kind of symbolised, you know, you can only enter if you are in IB.

Thus intimacy is portrayed through actions and performances, through the body and within the school building itself. This can be explained through the concept of space as theorised by Lefebvre (1991, P.8). He suggests that physical spaces influence mental spaces and vice versa and states: "We are thus confronted by an indefinite multitude of spaces, each one piled upon, or perhaps contained within the next." Shilling (1991, P. 23) would agree with this and states: "Space is no longer seen merely as an environment in which interaction takes place, but is itself deeply implicated in the production of individual identities and social inequalities." The complex interaction under the concept of space has been noted in previous research into schooling (c.f. Epstein et al. 2001) looking at power relations in the playground and Morris-Roberts (2004) researching the importance of space in interpreting the identity formation of a group of 'alternative' teenage girls. As Whitehead (2002, P. 190) states:

In short, the male child bodily occupying space in the playground emerges as the male adult bodily occupying space, or seeking to, in the office meeting, in the sports ground, on the street, on the highways and, not least, through the entrepreneurial masculinity writ large in the corporations now straddling the globalized marketplace.

Thus it is important to consider space as a place for social interaction and hence a place where masculinity is formed, an idea backed up by Gordon & Lahelma (1996) who argue that spaces within an institution are both potentially gendered and are places where gender is formed.

Ultimately the building may have changed, but the concept of intimacy has not vanished, as demonstrated by the large number of students who use the term to describe the old school. Although this may be influenced by the idea of social memory (Fentress & Wickham 1992), it is nonetheless a concept with which the students in the school are familiar and feel strongly about. Space can be seen as a way of bringing together the influence of actions and performances, bodies, and schooling spaces and thus potentially has an influence on 'third culture' masculinity.

This research will now return to Uwe. Earlier in this section, his friendship with one of the boys was presented as having a caring, intimate and potentially feminine quality about it, but his interactions with girls indicate a quite different side. This is described by Victoria.

He seems to want to have power over us and I wasn't brought up that way and neither was Belia and Hannah, so with that kind of thing we are just seriously like, this is not going to happen.

Although this could easily be interpreted as an attempt by Uwe to establish a dominant position, it appears to have little success, again suggesting that in these situations the behaviours that influence the 'third culture' of the Dutch International School ensure that any sort of strongly dominant masculinity portrayed by boys cannot gain a hold. A further situation with Uwe was found during the focus group twelve discussion when, in an interaction between Boukje and Uwe, Uwe took a recognisable 'male' stance over girls. However, the reaction of Boukje to this is one of irony, again indicating that the girls in the school are more than ready to deflect this style and in doing so they deflect the power. Thus, on the one hand Uwe's behaviour fits with the concept of a dominant masculinity, and in many schools Uwe could be part of a stereotypically male dominant group; on the other hand, in the Dutch International School it is not allowed to develop.

In one sense this agrees with previous research where gendered positions were not seen as fixed or followed by all students (Paechter 1998; Francis 2000). However rather than being seen as common exceptions, in the Dutch International School the exception often becomes the dominant form of behaviour. In certain situations in the Dutch International School the 'third culture' masculinity is a hegemonic style of masculinity, where the intimate becomes hegemonic behaviour for boys and the dominant becomes hegemonic behaviour for girls. Thus, one interpretation suggests that the fragmentation in the culture of the school is almost reversing the signifiers of hegemonic gender and hence 'third culture' masculinity is, in one sense, an inverted hegemonic masculinity, where girls hold the power.

Interpretations of male-male friendship and male-female acquaintanceship often focus on the hierarchy that is established, where the top of the hierarchy is often a group of boys. This section has noted that in one sense intimacy is the behavioural focus of friendship in the Dutch International School, but this does not mean that there is no role for dominance. The concept of dominance is not always negative and this study will now focus on the ideas of being outspoken and confident, a scenario that is demonstrated by boys in previous research. The following description of Gary, given by Carl, is an example of this:

Usually it's Gary who's dominant; he's a friend of mine. But it's just people who are more outspoken about what their beliefs are. And when asked about it, of course, they give their complete opinion.

Although this is not unusual behaviour for boys, in this school it is equally common in girls. Hannah indicates that overall it is girls who exhibit confident and potentially outspoken behaviour, which could be linked back to the suggestion of a role reversal, with more dominant girls demanding attention and more passive boys listening and watching the performance.

Hannah: I do think that generally the girls are more opinionated, especially in ???, I notice. And last year as well, the girls are quick to voice their ideas and defend them. There are some guys that do it, but less in quantity.

Bill: So generally girls are more opinionated?

Hannah: Yeah, but it is not like the boys are being suppressed by the girls. It's just that they keep their opinions to themselves and they are more listening.

This can also be linked back to the comments made by Victoria in relation to Uwe's behaviour, which emphasises that this is the way that a significant number of girls behave at the Dutch International School. Again, there is quite strong evidence of masculine style behaviour here but, similar to teachers, it is portrayed as much by the girls in the class as by the boys and in a number of cases students do not necessarily interpret it in terms of masculinity. Valentina notes this when talking about confident students in the year group: "That's one factor. But it's also the people in that class. They are generally outspoken people. If there was just one guy amongst a group of girls, they would still be outspoken." What is clear from this is that the stereotypical viewpoint of dominant interactions is not being portrayed here and it is not the preserve of males at the expense of females. Again this could be linked back to the idea of respect being a key component of 'third culture' masculinity. Thus, there appears to be a real diversity in what is being portrayed in the Dutch International School and it is difficult to provide an absolute interpretation, unlike many of the scenarios portrayed in previous research and is indicative of the fragmented and fluid.

The idea of popularity is also key as this is arguably one of the concepts that drives friendships and interactions in a single-sex setting in national research. As Frosh et al. (2002, P.10) state: "'hardness', sporting prowess, 'coolness', casual treatment of schoolwork and being adept at 'cussing'" are the key signifiers of popularity amongst adolescent males. Among girls, some research indicates that popularity can come from academic success, but overall the most common suggestion was social success. As Eder (1985, P.154) states: "For girls, social success was the closest thing to athletic achievement." Given the lack of single sex groups in the Dutch International School, the concept of popularity will be explored across students in general and then consideration will be given to whether or not there is any sort of gendered divide in this.

Unlike previous research into girls' popularity, Elly and Amanda in the focus group ten discussion focus on specific activities and suggest that a whole range of these could lead to popularity in the Dutch International School. There is no indication that they see it as gender segregated:

Amanda: ... It's like even if you do MUN, you are popular. ...

Elly: If you represent the school, that gives you pretty much a sense of popularity. Like being on the student council ...

Wagner, in the focus group eight discussion, notes the role music can play:

Yes. ...a friend of ours, he's a clarinettist and he played this really nice solo piece. People were really impressed and people thought it was really cool and, of course, playing the guitar and drums is still cooler than playing the classical instruments, the orchestral instruments.

Not all the activities associated with popularity are 'positive' in terms of schooling and Jan from the focus group six discussion suggests that partying, which could be set up as the opposite to working hard, may (or may not) play a role:

Amongst certain people I think it definitely would. But it also creates the opposite, like if you do drugs and you do go out and party like an animal, people can look down on you as well.

The 'Rens group' has a reputation in terms of partying, but there appears to be an element of myth to this and observations of members of this group in class suggest that even if this were the case, they still took their academic work seriously. There is no suggestion that there is a gendered side to popularity in this school, with most students focusing on activities which could be accessible to both boys and girls. Again, the situation described in previous research is disputed at the Dutch International School.

Another area where interactions and friendship may potentially influence constructions of masculinity, as has been noted in previous research, is the use of groups and cliques. A number of specific group or cliques of friends were identified in the Dutch International School, but even within this there is quite definitely a blurring of friendships and in the following extract James suggests that, in one sense, groups and cliques do not exist.

As I said before, everyone is open; everyone interacts with each other, so there is no problem of closed community or a reserved community.

A number of focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews describe friendships in terms of a Venn diagram, which emphasises their overlapping nature. So within the Dutch International School there is evidence of what might be called a 'unified but disrupted' approach in that this could be described as a school of individuals who seem to follow a variety of different friendships, but that they are all interconnected. The idea that students belong to several friendship groups is certainly not uncommon in students in this age group, but the degree of blurring and the fluidity of these groups are less common in other research in the field (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995). Thus, although there is a significant role for fragmentation and disruption, the complex nature of the 'third culture' also allows for a degree of unity.

Overall, in the Dutch International School there is a blurring of the boundaries noted, in terms of how both male and female friendships have been primarily interpreted in previous research, which has a significant influence on the 'third culture' of the school. There is disruption and fragmentation from what has been found in previous research, since in a number of situations there is dominance portrayed by the girls and intimacy amongst the boys. Equally, the concept of the popular boy or boys does not seem to exist and the independent public friendships of boys are also found with girls. Groupings and cliques exist, but in all cases they appear to be respected and interconnected and, hence, have limited influence in producing a dominant masculinity. However, the way friendships are formed between both sexes is not wholly fragmented, as there is a sense of the 'unified', as demonstrated by the strength of the friendships that the students form. Evidently if the 'disrupted' elements of these were to gain dominance over the 'unified' then, potentially, it would have been possible to find 'loners' in the school, a concept that is noted in previous research on friendship both in a national setting (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997) and in an international setting (McLachlan 2007). However, the responses from students did not touch upon this idea; there are no indications that these students are what James (2005) would call rootless, world citizens.

This is consistent with the role of respect that is found in other aspects of 'third culture' masculinity. Students in the Dutch International School are well aware of a number of basic traits of their culture and are also aware of what is being constructed as 'third culture' masculinity. On the one hand there is both disruption and fragmentation of both

positive and negative dominant behaviours, but on the other, there is a clear sense of what wins, indicating the complexity of the 'third culture'. Fragmentation and disruption are not necessarily negative and need to be interpreted in terms of not allowing stereotypes to form and not allowing a unique style to dictate all others. This allows for students to have pride in the school, a sense of belonging to the school, and a sense of a student's position in the world. It allows the potential formation of what could be described as a 'caring' masculinity, which is again linked back to the idea of respect that is seen prevalently in the data. This research suggests that a key component in the construction of the concept of 'third culture' masculinity is respect and that one of the characteristics of this is to be caring.

Thus, in terms of 'third culture' masculinity, this can be linked back to the problem acknowledged by Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) - that the signifiers of hegemonic masculinity are not consistent over time and space. However, in the Dutch International School it may go beyond this and in some cases there is a suggestion that the signifiers are reversed. Because of the individuality of the groups and the diversity of the people who make up these groups, the suggestion is that 'third culture' is actually multiple hybrid cultures, which potentially suggests a performative base for 'third culture' masculinity. However, there is also clearly an overarching ideal that students recognise, which suggests a slightly fragmented single culture which could be interpreted through a form of a hierarchical structure. Based on the degree of fragmentation there are arguments for both scenarios and this is a tension that is ongoing within this research. Whichever way this is interpreted, the scenario highlights the idea that a young person, either male or female, who is open to and influenced by a whole series of constant ideas over a period of time, which slowly assimilates into a specific way of "doing masculinity", cannot happen here and the idea of any sort of absolute norm being established is not possible. In the next section the research will consider the sexualised language used between students.

### **5.3 The Sexualised Language of Students.**

The names that students most commonly call each other all have a basis in sex, with the names used for boys focusing on the potential negative construction of homosexuality and, in the girls' case, on the negative construction of a 'hyper heterosexuality'. Both positions suggest, "language operates as a *representational system*" (Harding 1998,

P.53). Much work has been undertaken to look at the role of sexualised name-calling and to what extent it can be classified as bullying as well as the degree to which the names actually retain a sexualised nature. The indication from the responses to question twenty-three in the student questionnaire is that there is the potential for both verbal and physical responses to disagreements between boys only, but that disagreements between girls alone or mixed groups, result in a verbal response. This fits with the views of previous researchers (Thorne 1993; Connell 1995; Griffiths 1995; Messerschmidt 2000). This research will only focus on the role of the verbal, as little mention is made of physical disagreements in the one-to-one interviews and focus groups. The results from the teachers' questionnaire back this up, suggesting that there is very limited evidence of physical bullying, but more evidence for verbal bullying. According to the initial student questionnaire, 'gay' and 'fag' or 'faggot' appear to be the derogatory terms used for boys and 'bitch', 'slut' and 'whore' are the most common derogatory terms used for girls. From the one-to-one interviews with teachers, they were clearly aware of the sexualised element of student language, but were much more ambiguous on whether or not that verbal element constituted bullying. This potential contradiction was also implied in the questionnaire, in that all teachers agreed that forms of bullying took place in the school, but that bullying was not a problem in the school. The slightly unclear picture is also suggested by parents, where 22% of those who answered the questionnaire suggested that bullying takes place at the school. Thus, there is reasonably comprehensive agreement that name-calling takes place, but the focus of this section is the meaning and the intent. Poynting & Donaldson (1992), Reid et al. (2004) and Rivers (2004) all wrestle with this issue in terms of what name-calling means and at what point it becomes bullying. These have been related to the construction of masculinity through both the concept of power and performance.

The most common definition of verbal bullying is: name-calling when it is a systematic and repeated abuse of power that deliberately harms others (Reid et al. 2004). This will be considered in conjunction with the ideas presented by Besag (1995) who discusses the role of labelling in bullying, whereby a label is attributed to a person for derogatory reasons, but the label is not necessarily true. As Roberts (2008) found in his study, the homophobic labels attributed to young men do not necessarily indicate that they are gay or that anybody else believes they are gay, but that it is an 'easy' insult to manipulate. This idea is backed up by a number of researchers including Gordon et al. (2000) and Clarke et al. (2004). The following comment from Ms. Linda implies that the actual act



of labelling may have a limited effect in the Dutch International School: “It’s the whole culture, it’s the culture that nobody is more important than another and you are not excluded because of who you are, what you look like.” This links back to the concept of respect and it also raises the question of whether it is the label that is attributed to a specific person that causes a certain kind of performance or whether it is the person using the label who is actually giving the performance. This research will now consider these issues by evaluating what students and teachers have to say about the names used for girls and the names used for boys. These will be considered separately as they are based on different negative stereotypes and potentially influence the construction of masculinity in slightly different ways.

### ***5.3.1 Girls’ Talk: The Language Used About Girls.***

Much of the previous research indicates that girls are the recipients of sexualised name-calling, but girls themselves use sexualised language. Examples of this include using homophobic language to resist and nullify certain boys, and language pertaining to the frequency of sexual relations to control certain girls, i.e. the same language that boys often use. The questionnaires indicated that girls in the school use sexualised names, but both the focus group interviews and the one-to-one interviews indicate that the meaning and intention of name-calling are slightly different. In the Dutch International School, it is suggested that the term ‘bitch’ is used by both boys and girls as a term to refer to both boys and girls, and, in general, is not seen as a derogatory term that men use to remove power from women. Furthermore, the suggestion is made that the gendered nature of the term seems to have been lost from the meaning when used in this context. This is seen in the focus group three discussion:

Eliseo: It is just a word that everyone uses.

Petra: A ‘bitch’ is more like someone who goes and bitches behind your back or it’s something you can call your friend: “Hey, ‘bitch’”.

Bill: Is that girls to girls?

Petra: Not necessarily. I would also use it with some guys if they are like good friends of mine – like these two.

Hence, there is no evidence of a gendered or power-based script being performed through this word and it is used commonly enough that it does not bring power to those

applying the labels, nor remove power from those to whom it is applied. Petra suggests that it is not used uniquely between girls, or about girls, and that it can even be used as a term of endearment, implying solidarity within the group. Aalbert in the focus group five discussion clearly backs this up when he states: “Bitch is sometimes used between guys and as a word of affection.” This does not mean that a misogynistic interpretation no longer exists, or can longer be attributed to the word, but there is little evidence that it is interpreted in this way in the Dutch International School. Hence, the viewpoint presented by Schippers (2007, P.95) that when “a women is authorative, she is not masculine; she is a bitch – both feminine and undesirable”, is not how it is interpreted in the school. The concept of a dominant and powerful masculinity being performed by putting down girls and ‘other’ boys by using the word ‘bitch’, is not indicated here. It can be argued that if there is reasonably universal agreement that it has a changed meaning within a certain group, then this becomes a linguistic reality for that group and, hence, the word loses its negative gendered intention. For those listening on the outside, for example teachers, this may not be the case, which would explain why some of them could interpret this as bullying behaviour. The meanings of words can also be disrupted and fragmented when there is not absolute agreement within the group, but this leads to a slightly different scenario. This is seen in the use of the words ‘whore’ and ‘slut.’

Some students argue that these two terms are non-sexualised and non-gendered in the same way as ‘bitch’ is used. As Pablo states in the focus group three discussion:

I would use it sometimes but then it has a meaning like I said, instead of saying you are such an idiot, I would say you are such a ‘whore’. But I never really mean it in a serious way.

Like the use of the word ‘bitch’, there is the sense that they have been reclaimed from the negative and removed from the feminine. However, the argument here is more blurred. The extract from the focus group five discussion below makes this point clearly, when a distinction is made between the term ‘slut’, which can be used between boys in a similar way to ‘bitch’, and ‘whore’, which they suggest still retains a gendered and/or sexualised meaning:

Aalbert: With one of my friends at the American School of Holland, I kind of joke about it. I call him a ‘slut’ ...

...

Bill: So you would use the term?

Aalbert: Yeah, but they are really close friends of mine.

Bill: Would you use the term 'whore'?

Aalbert: Not as much. To me 'whore' sounds harsher.

Ida, in the focus group three discussion, suggests it is the opposite way round and that it is 'slut' that retains the negative gendered meaning. Thus, there is something more fragmented in the interpretations here. Some boys describing boys, and girls describing girls, seem able to use these two words in a similar way to how 'bitch' is interpreted, but this is quite limited. The following extract from the focus group seven discussion suggests that there is a hierarchy within the use of these three words where 'bitch' can be used between boys and girls and appears to have lost its gendered meaning, whereas 'slut' and 'whore' are much more problematic:

Bill: ...Would you use 'bitch' against other guys?

Kai: That's just generally as a joking term.

Raimondo: In a hierarchy it's a kind of lower insult.

...

Bill: What about 'whore' and 'slut'?

Kai: I try to avoid those words.

Gideon: Only hardened people use those names.

Kai: It's a very sensitive insult to girls these days. Therefore I try to avoid it.

There are also weak indications here of some of the behaviour associated with dominant masculinity. The final comment by Kai could be interpreted in a pejorative sense, showing a potentially patronising view of women. The comment by Gideon that "only hardened people use those names", could be an indicator that there are "hardened" people in the school and, by implication, these are men. In both cases it can be interpreted as men potentially wanting to establish power over women, but these are very tentative interpretations and this is as extreme as the behaviour becomes in the Dutch International School. This echoes what was found with teachers and within student friendships and acquaintanceships (c.f. chapter 4 section 4.3.2; chapter 5, section 5.2).

Further evidence is provided during the focus group eight discussion, with Wagner describing how ‘guys’ would use the term ‘slut’ for girls because they mean it. Although he initially distances the conversation by referring to others, a technique that is often used by students in the Dutch International School and is a potential indicator of the awareness of the pivotal role that respect plays in the school culture, it becomes evident later on that one of those ‘guys’ is him. The start of the discussion can be interpreted in terms of a power relationship, in that using the name in a derogatory sense puts down the girl, thus elevating the position of the boy and the boy also elevates himself by actually using the term.

Wagner: I know that guys would call girls ‘sluts’, meaningfully; they mean it but not as an insult, they’re just trying to make a point. Like “you’re acting like a ‘slut’.”

Bill: What would you have to do to be called a ‘slut’?

...

Wagner: When they wear like really, really short skirts and they wear those spaghetti t-shirts, the really tight ones. ...If you are one of those girls that sort of looks at guys, then you would be called a ‘slut’. If you are one of those girls, who is kind of over everybody, then you are called a ‘slut’.

Up to this point, the conversation is entirely indicative of a dominant male position, and would not be out of place in the research of Willis (1977) or Abraham (1995) but as the conversation progresses, the indication is that Wagner has a slightly different viewpoint:

Wagner: No, it is girls who like ignore you forever and when they need your help they come to you. Those are the kind of people I call ‘sluts’. They’re like can you help me and they lean over.

Bill: Are there guys who behave like that?

Wagner: ...those I call bastards and yes they exist.

Having begun with a stereotypical definition of ‘slut’, when asked to define it more specifically he defines it for both boys and girls as people who use their looks to gain favours in terms of help with their academic work. This is an example of what Connell (1995) would call ‘emphasised femininity’. It should be noted, however, that Wagner implies the idea could apply to boys as well. This research puts forward the idea that

Wagner is not a young man trying to aspire to dominant masculinity, but may be starting down that route, immediately noting the potential contradiction in the argument of how this fits within the 'third culture' of the school and recognising that it is an unsustainable position to hold. As was suggested earlier, it is not that 'third culture' masculinity has nothing in common with what has been found previously, it just does not seem able to develop as far and stabilise. This also leads to the idea that 'third culture' masculinity can be constructed through the idea that there is a tactical element to it, which is influencing a potentially more benign situation.

It is also interesting to consider the reaction of girls when boys use these terms, where it is suggested that if boys use them against girls they need to be 'careful'. As Victoria says in the focus group two discussion, "it could be really out of place". This has a different emphasis from the research of Gordon et al. (2000, P.133), for example, where they suggest that although it could be used in different ways, overall "it was a way of trying to ensure that girls occupied appropriate positions in gender relations". The following extract from the focus group ten discussion shows that Elly's reaction would be one where the boy would need to 'take care'!

Well, I don't think guys go up to girls and say you're a 'slut'. That's really offensive, if a guy goes up. ... But I don't think a guy would ever say it to a girl just in normal conversation. It is just completely insulting. If a guy walked up to me and said: "you 'slut'", I'd be like excuse me. I'd be completely insulted.

Once again there is evidence to suggest that in the Dutch International School this style of insult is not used on a regular basis, although there appears to be an awareness of the power it can give to the user. Elly also provides evidence to suggest that the girls in the school would not just accept this as a status quo, and is in keeping with the interpretation noted in the section on friendship where girls partially 'patrol' certain styles of behaviour in the Dutch International School.

There is not a single unique picture being presented here and, thus, these terms have clearly not lost all their original meaning. Students at the Dutch International School are aware of the gendered meanings of these terms, but they also have different constructions of these terms that are used in different contexts. Some of this is influenced by the role that girls play within the school, suggesting the idea that girls

have a significant part to play and there is also a conscious awareness to the behaviour, which suggests the idea that there is a tactical element to what is being portrayed. In one sense this fits with what Francis (2000, P.119) found in her research when she states: “Of course there are many different strategies for ‘doing’ gender, and my findings show that most pupils took up different constructions at different times and in different environments.” However, the case in the Dutch International School is more disjointed and fragmented than Francis suggests. As mentioned previously, there are indications that girls play a significant role in defining ‘third culture’ masculinity and that they themselves may be influenced by it. There was no sense, through any of these interviews or observations on the language used by girls, that they felt themselves to be in a subservient position, which could be interpreted through the concept of female masculinity. In terms of the boys, the disruption and awareness of what is being said could be seen through the idea that ‘third culture’ masculinity has the potential to be tactical and in this case it could be described a tactical heterosexuality. The boys are aware of the power it brings, but are limited by the role of respect and hence their behaviour appears fragmented and disrupted, but not necessarily in a negative sense. Thus a disruption of linguistic power comes to the forefront, as these are not words that always shock and insult. In some ways there is a degree of ‘normalcy’ to using them, but it has not completely reached that stage yet and it is not as if the concept of men gaining power over women by using these words is unknown. ‘Third culture’ masculinity tightly patrols the influence it can have. In the next section this will be considered further through the use of the concept of ‘gay’ in the Dutch International School.

### ***5.3.2 Boys’ Talk: The Language Used About Boys.***

The initial questionnaire suggested that ‘gay’ was the most common word used to ‘insult’ boys. Synonyms such as ‘fag’ and ‘faggot’ were also suggested in the initial student questionnaire, but only played a very minor role in the course of interviews with students and teachers. Hence, this section will focus on the concept of ‘gay’. According to students, its meaning is not very clear-cut and there are potentially two ways it can be interpreted. In one sense ‘gay’ could be interpreted as the ‘boy’ equivalent to ‘bitch’, but unlike ‘bitch’, which is used by both boys and girls on both boys and girls, ‘gay’ is only used about boys or in reference to objects and events to mean ‘lame’ or ‘stupid’. In another sense it could be interpreted with the homophobic inferences seen in previous

research, as a way of perpetuating a dominant masculinity and as a way of establishing power within that dominant masculinity. From the point of view of Sullivan (1996), the use of the word 'gay' in this context will always be homophobic because of the absolute association to a specific lifestyle adopted by men, whereas from the perspective of Reid et al. (2004) it is not because it causes neither fear nor distress and is not interpreted in this way by the receiver.

In terms of interpreting it in the first sense, language progresses and the original meaning of 'gay', meaning happy with no sexual overtones, is now seen as archaic by many and for much of the younger generation as meaningless. There are indications that the same thing is happening with 'gay' being linked to a homosexual identity. The most extreme view on this interpretation comes from Tejal in the focus group ten discussion, where she states categorically that: "We use it for objects"; the indication is that it no longer has any sort of sexualised meaning for her and the meaning of the word has moved on. This research also notes that the concept of 'gay' in a sexualised sense has not fully permeated the whole school culture, as is demonstrated by Lan. In the focus group eight discussion, Baltrus and I had to explain the meaning of 'gay' to him. This is despite the facts that the other members of focus group eight, who are Lan's friends, understand and use the term and Lan had been a student in the school for eighteen months at the time of the interview.

However, these viewpoints are unusual and the majority suggested that the term 'gay' is meant as a 'light' insult, but is not used as a way of demonstrating or producing a subordinated masculinity. The interchange between Elly and Amanda in the focus group ten discussion group exemplifies this:

Amanda: Everyone says 'gay'. But they don't actually mean they are 'gay'. You mean stupid or retarded.

Elly: Yeah, 'gay' has become stupid and retarded.

So the viewpoints of researchers Poynting & Donaldson 1992; Kehily & Nayak 1997; Plummer 2001; Dupper & Meyer-Adams 2002; Frosh et al. 2002; Clarke et al. 2004, that homophobic references abound in school situations, are in one sense true, but the interpretation of how homophobic this is, is worthy of further consideration. In previous research (Gordon et al. 2000; Frosh et al. 2002), there are a number of examples of

students who would agree with Amanda and Elly, suggesting “sexual naming among boys did not really mean anything and was not taken seriously” (Gordon et al. 2000, P.133/134). For many students at the Dutch International School, the concept of ‘gay’ has changed its meaning and appears to have gone a stage further than the idea presented by Besag (1995) and Smith et al. (2004) - that this is a label for some ‘other’ non-hegemonic characteristic that is being insulted. It could be argued that what may be described as a homophobic concept is being used as a label for something totally unrelated to gender or sexuality; the sexual meaning has been entirely lost. This is similar to the scenario found in the research of McCormack & Anderson (2010, P.850) where they suggest “*all* informants positioned themselves against it”. There is a sense, from students in the school, that the meaning of the word ‘gay’ has moved on to such a degree that its current meaning as ‘rubbish’ or ‘stupid’ is as far removed from ‘homosexual’ as ‘gay’ is from the original meaning of ‘happy’ or ‘lively’. This is exemplified in the focus group one discussion where there appears to be a slight sense of disbelief that ‘gay’ could be interpreted in a derogatory sexualised sense:

Jacob: You just call someone ‘gay’ to call them ‘gay’. It’s not that they are actually ‘gay’ or anything like that...

Valentina: There’s no like homophobic action going on here.

Thus, there is an indication that the ‘third culture’ is having an effect. It is not a transparent concept and it is one that manifests itself through social relations; ‘third culture’ is influenced by and influences a variety of different signifiers, one of which is ‘third culture’ masculinity. Over time words do lose and entirely change meaning and the idea that this is related to culture is not surprising. As the ‘third culture’ in the school is not just a simple amalgam of two separate cultures, but is potentially a complex, fragmented and disrupted crystallisation of a variety of cultures, it makes sense to consider the fact that, in this context, the meaning of the word ‘gay’ has been fragmented and disrupted and arguably recrystallised in a different form. Another possible viewpoint considers it through the concept of ‘third culture’ masculinity which is strongly influenced by a respect for difference within the school. Hence, students are aware of the viewpoint that using the word ‘gay’ is an indicator of a homophobic performance, and that this performance is not allowed to stabilise. In fact some students would argue that the inappropriate use of the word ‘gay’ is not a problem in the school. This is made very clear in the focus group nine discussion where Obelia quite forcefully



interrupts the discussion to state: “It’s not the kind of thing that happens here.” This idea was noted in a number of different situations throughout the research.

However, as the interpretation of the school culture indicates, although it may not be perceived as a problem and many students do not interpret it in a sexualised way, this does not mean there is no evidence for a contrary position or that this is in anyway absolute; the ‘third culture’ of the school is not an absolute culture. So there is a suggestion that although the students claim the use of such a term is not homophobic, researchers interpret the use of words like ‘gay’ on a more invasive level, suggesting that ‘lame’ and ‘stupid’ then become associated to being gay and living a gay lifestyle. This now begins to hint at the second position, where homophobic name-calling remains an effective form of policing boundaries of heterosexuality. This is exemplified in the following extract from the focus group four discussion:

Aalbert: Not in that sense, but in the sense of being feminine, I think. If you have female traits and you are not manly.

Ciska: But you can also say, that’s so ‘gay’ and you don’t really mean anything sexual.

...

Aalbert: I think it’s kind of obvious. If you’re not manly and you really act like a girl – it’s the way things are. If you are not masculine, then you are less accepted.

...

Bill: Are there guys in the school who are effeminate?

Aalbert: There are some, but I think of them as metrosexual, which is kind of a different story in a sense.

This example initially fits in with the ideas of Besag (1995) on labelling and Aalbert makes the link between ‘gay’ and ‘feminine’ often seen in previous research into schooling situations. However, in the final comment Aalbert distances himself from his own argument by introducing the concept of metrosexual. Thus, there is still a tension in the Dutch International School over what it means. It is interesting to note that throughout the conversation Ciska is trying to disrupt the scenario that Aalbert is portraying, which fits with the pivotal role played by girls in the school. The conversation between Aalbert and Ciska is also indicative of Aalbert being tactical in

what he is saying. Also, throughout the entire research, there is not one suggestion that this term is ever used against girls – an argument which again indicates that the concept still holds a degree of a sexualised notion. It has not changed in the same way as ‘bitch’.

It is also interesting to note that there are very few examples of girls using the ‘gay card’ to gain power over boys. Given the strong role that girls play in the school, and the fact that this style of behaviour has been noted in previous research, this is to some extent surprising and differs from the findings of Gordon et al. (2000) and Frosh et al. (2002). Petra’s performance will now be considered, as she is one of the few female students who uses the word ‘gay’ to describe boys. In one sense this is slightly unusual as, by her own admission, she recognises that she has a certain number of masculine traits and believes that males and females can have a mixture of masculinity and femininity. She is the only girl who mentions “slapping other boys” for “being stupid”, although when asked about actually doing this, she backtracked slightly and claimed it was a tap on the head. The group of boys to whom she applies the term ‘gay’ are the ‘football boys’. As she suggests:

Bill: Do you literally mean that they are gay?

Petra: No, but it is their obsession with calling everyone else gay; when they are in a group they act all gay. They make all those gay jokes, so I just call them gay.

Bill: Why do you think they do that?

Petra: Either because they are horny or because they watch too much porn because they are horny. And they want some because they are horny. They are horny.

Thus, in the situation where the use of the word ‘gay’ by a girl against a boy or group of boys is most strongly demonstrated, it is not being used as a traditional putdown or in a traditional way of gaining power. The idea that the word ‘gay’ is being used as a label for ‘horny’ is an unusual label as they have almost opposite interpretations in terms of the power the two words bring. Again, this can be interpreted through the role of fragmentation and disruption, as in one way Petra is promoting a powerful position with the boys by reducing ‘horny’ to ‘gay’, but this is against a backdrop of her openly exhibiting an alternative position in respect to her own femininity. Petra’s own interpretation of masculinity and femininity are unusual, but they are not naïve

interpretations; she is well aware of the sexual connotations of what she is saying and this does not appear to be a case of a lack of understanding of the terms being used.

Thus, the whole concept of what sort of performance is being portrayed here, and the fact that there is a complex and changing power relationship being enacted, can be linked back to the interpretation of 'third culture' masculinity. The use, or lack of use, of perceived homophobic language once again suggests a degree of the tactical as changing its meaning or noting it and then not fully applying it, is again suggestive of an action that is conscious. Students are aware of how they should and need to behave in this environment. In one sense this can be viewed as the idea of tactical heterosexuality since the students are aware of how this plays into the roles of heterosexuality and homosexuality and also the question of 'how much?' However, tactical heterosexuality which exists in an environment of respect implies consciousness, but does not imply cynical. The idea that boys are becoming more 'boy like' as girls take on more masculine roles, as suggested by Francis (2000), is really not happening here and what seems to be suggested is that in certain ways the boys become less 'boy like' and it is the girls who are more 'boy like'. This is reminiscent of Judith Halberstam's concept of female masculinity. It appears that the girls play a strong role in setting and patrolling the boundaries on sexualised behaviour, but that this is, in one sense, feminine behaviour. This is also reminiscent of what Schippers (2007) calls hegemonic femininity and is being applied to boys. If it is compared to hegemonic masculinity, then the dominant behaviours from previous research become subordinated and characteristics that were marginalised are now, to a degree, hegemonic. 'Third culture' masculinity fits with the concepts laid down by Connell, but the signifiers are sometimes quite different and the culture of the institution under discussion is of paramount importance. It can also be seen as a post-structural linguistic performance, where there is a blurring of the heterosexual/homosexual binary. Ultimately, one of the reasons behind the difference between this school and schools in national systems is that it is difficult for any sort of 'deep' cultural 'norm' to be established in the school and there is a 'conflict' going on between a 'standard' way of establishing a dominant masculinity and other accepted ways of approaching things within the school.

### **5.3.3 Conclusion.**

There is no doubt that the styles of language used between male and female students here are not radically different from what has been found in other studies. However, there are strong indications that the meanings of this language are different, which lead to potential differences in how power relations are negotiated and established. In fact the power the words hold seems to be balanced differently, partly because of the fragmentary and disrupted nature of the school's 'third culture'. In the next section this research will consider how this is realised in a more physical sense through the nature of intimate relationships within the school.

### **5.4 Intimate Relationships Between Boys and Girls, Boys and Boys, and Girls and Girls.**

"Sex is used to shore up and confirm a shaky sense of masculine identity" (Francis 2000, P.147).

Given the significant, albeit slightly different, role of potentially sexualised terms in the language used between students (for example, the use of words such as bitch, slut, whore and gay), this suggests that relationships themselves may also play a role. This is an idea which is backed up by previous research (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995; Haywood 1996; Frosh et al. 2002). As Forrest (2006, P.115) states: "Schools represent an important arena where this process of 'working out' sexuality takes place." This section begins on the premise that one way to validate masculinity is to engage in heterosexual practices. As Messerschmidt (2000, P.300) states:

(S)tudies of school and sexuality show that to 'do' heterosexuality is an everyday dominant masculine practice in junior high and high school and that such sexual orientation is an important source of acceptable identity.

In the Dutch International School, eighteen out of the forty-nine students who completed the questionnaire identified as having either a boyfriend or a girlfriend and boys and girls were listed as the most popular topic of conversation amongst friends. Furthermore, by far the most common reason for disagreements between just boys or just girls is the opposite sex, while relationships are quoted as being the most common

reason for disagreements between boys and girls. This final statement is entirely backed up by the teacher questionnaire. Hence, relationships, or potential relationships, are important to these students.

For boys, there appear to be two situations. Firstly, these male students can be thought of as what Haywood (1996) calls 'hyper-heterosexuals', where there is an overt portrayal of heterosexuality. Secondly, there is the idea of male students portraying 'non-homosexuality' where they are doing 'enough' to ensure they are not perceived as homosexual. As Abraham (1995) suggests, the images may be more important than the relationships themselves. Previous research (Hey 1997; Chambers 2006) suggests that girls view heterosexual relationships in quite different ways to boys in that the 'hyper-heterosexual' - 'non-homosexual' binary does not work in the same way. Hey (1997, P.84) suggests that girls have to negotiate a very fine line when negotiating heterosexuality and quotes one of her interviewees who states you have to "be 'lovely, gorgeous' without being 'slaggy'; to be provocative without 'doing it'". Overall, there is an indication that both girls and boys can view a heterosexual relationship as a 'trophy', but previous research argues there are quite different trophies being sought. This section will then go on to consider the attitude towards homosexual relationships and to explore whether there is a culture in the school whereby masculinity is promoted by a 'rejection' or 'fear' of the 'other'.

#### ***5.4.1 Heterosexual Relationships.***

Much research has been undertaken on boys who are working class and low academic achievers (Willis 1977; Haywood 1996; Connell et al. 1982) and these boys are arguably producing a performance that is visibly and convincingly heterosexual. This is also relevant in middle- or ruling-class schools, where it is often used in conjunction with other behaviours. For example, the research of Frosh et al. (2002) suggests that a boy having a girlfriend allows him a certain freedom, where his masculinity is not called permanently into question. This discussion on heterosexuality can also be interpreted more positively and can be used to explain examples of gender crossing, such as were noted in the research of Griffiths (1995) and Renold (2007). In both these situations descriptions were given of boys who crossed over the (blurred) boundaries of masculinity into femininity without any loss of popularity or indeed loss of masculinity, because it was perceived that they already had 'enough' masculinity to give a little

away. Thus, in the case of the Dutch International School it will be considered if 'non-homosexuality' is 'enough' or whether a boy needs to be more 'hyper-heterosexual' to 'pass'. Consideration will also be given to the different style of relationship undertaken by girls.

In terms of groups in the Dutch International School, one of the more likely settings for this style of behaviour was within the 'Rens group'. The following extract from Aalbert suggests that some students interpret the group as 'hyper-heterosexual': "Some people think that 'Rens' is like one big orgy. I mean some have asked me and really think that. And that is really not true". However, Aalbert suggests that this is not necessarily the correct interpretation and there is no indication from the rest of the group that they would agree with this. Falko has a girlfriend, but there is no sign that she is any way a 'masculine trophy' and Ode has friends who are girls, but none of those were described as demonstratively intimate relationships. Although the questionnaire shows that relationships are important to this year group overall, when the focus group interviews were undertaken, one of the themes that came out unanimously was that there is little or no pressure to be in a relationship. A number of focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews back this up and Ida sums it up in the focus group two discussion:

I think overall there's not that much pressure. There's people who have done stuff and there's people who haven't and that's that. Some people catch up later. It's not even catching up, it's not like people are ahead.

Boys see it in a similar way, as noted in the following extract from the one-to-one interview with Falko:

Bill: Is there any pressure in year 13 to be in a relationship?

Falko: No. None at all.

Bill: Would it make you more popular if you were in a relationship?

Falko: It depends on who you have the relationship with. No, not really. It might make you more popular in the sense that you might become friends with more people.

These viewpoints almost indicate a lack of consciousness or lack of interest in visible relationships in the school; having a relationship does not seem to matter outside of the

relationship itself and the immediate groups of friends of those students. There is no 'trophy' in sight and as Ida says: "...I know boys in our year who have never even kissed a girl and nobody even pays any particular attention to that. There is no pressure". Tolson (1977), Kimmel (1994) and Weeks (2003) all suggest that a young man instigating this sort of relationship can be interpreted as establishing a power base from which to launch a dominant masculinity, i.e. showing that they have 'enough'. However, no focus group discussion or one-to-one interview viewed it in this way. There is no indication of any form of overtly 'hyper-heterosexual' behaviour from boys and equally the girls do not seem to be searching for romantic love. In this scenario the behaviour of the body seems to have little meaning for these students. Again, this can be linked back to the concept of the 'third culture' in the school, where specific behaviours are regulated and hence the concept of a dominant masculinity being established through behaviour associated with heterosexual relationships does not appear to work.

However, as with other interpretations of signifiers of masculinity in the Dutch International School, the story can be seen from a different perspective and the following extract from the focus group four discussion is interesting to consider:

Bill: Is there any pressure here to be in a relationship?

(Chorus of no from the group).

Belia: Not at all. What I've noticed a lot between the people in our class is that a lot of people switch relationships really quickly. They have a boyfriend or a girlfriend for like 2 weeks and then it's over. Relationships never last long here.

This suggests that boys and girls see relationships in a similar way, but the fact that Belia notes that both have the potential to be rather short-term indicates they are noticed. For many students, relationships are not necessarily of the highest importance, but the indication here is that 'enough' may not be 'nothing at all'. The scripts for relationships appear to have been slightly fragmented in the Dutch International School and although relationships may not have the same visibility as in a national setting, they may still provide a limited degree of power.

In one sense, this situation appears to be less fragmented than other aspects of the culture. Unlike when Frosh et al. (2002, P.126) suggest that: "the 'nice' ones were not boyish enough", maybe in the Dutch International School the opposite is true and they

actually are. It is also suggested that boys and girls see and interpret relationships in similar ways and in one sense 'third culture' masculinity is not established in any overt, embodied way through relationships, which again is different from much of the previous research. However, it still does not become absolute and the lack of visibility and the fact that 'enough' still means 'a little' suggests that limited power may be retained. Once again this is indicative of 'third culture' masculinity acknowledging tactical heterosexuality – only a little is needed, but there is evidence for a little and for it being demonstrated in an atmosphere of respect.

#### ***5.4.2 Same-sex Relationships.***

It is now important to consider this from a different angle and reflect on the views and interpretations of the students from the Dutch International School on same-sex relationships. Previous research suggests quite different scenarios for boys and girls in a schooling environment. For example, Griffiths (1995) notes that although teenage girls can express a degree of physical closeness, this has to be monitored carefully to avoid potentially negative labelling. However, for boys, as Frosh et al. (2002) and Kimmel (1996) both note, any sort of physical closeness is a problem. These situations suggest that fear plays a role in this, where men are either afraid of being thought of as non-masculine or that they appear masculine but can then be 'found out' as 'other'. Overall, previous research indicates that heterosexual relationships play a mainly positive role in the formation of any sort of dominant masculinity, whereas homosexual relationships are predominantly seen as negative and are often used as one of the indicators of a subordinated masculinity, diminishing both popularity and power. In this section the extent to which this is true in the Dutch International School will be explored.

In the school, the most common view held by girls is one that suggests they have no issue with same-sex relationships, but that many boys do have a problem, although they would ultimately be able to deal with it. The following comment from Pascha provides evidence of this:

Once they got over it, they would be fine, but I think that they would take a very long time to get over it because they are just so afraid of it and most of them are so homophobic to be honest with you.



This mirrors the situation with language noted earlier (c.f. chapter 5 section 5.3), where there is some evidence for the behaviour, but that it cannot progress or stabilise beyond a certain position. Pascha seems to be indicating that, once again, the ‘third culture’, and hence ‘third culture’ masculinity, is influenced by the concept of respect. This is taken further in the one-to-one interview with Rosie:

Bill: Do you think the boys would accept it?

Rosie: It depends. I think maybe certain ones would pretend they don’t, just to put on a whole show of like ‘machoness’, but I think deep down inside – like where we are living and the times we are living in, it is pretty much accepted anyways.

Here Rosie suggests that the performance of homophobia by boys is similar to what has been seen in previous research, but that it is ‘false’. The indication is that boys are expected to give a negative performance, even though the ‘local’ reality indicates that this is not in keeping and arguably not required.

The viewpoints of the boys in the Dutch International School are more diverse. With studies such as this, it is not unusual to find no young man giving any indication of being gay or of knowing another young man in the school who would voluntarily identify in this way. Hence, no conversations took place with an ‘out’ gay male student and all the conversations focusing on same-sex relationships between men had a hypothetical element to them, suggesting that interpretations based around this are quite tentative. In the Dutch International School, although tolerance and respect may have an influence, it is unlikely to be absolute and the school may not be a wholly safe environment in which to ‘come out’. On the one hand boys seem to be aware of the role that homophobia plays in the wider world in determining masculinities, but on the other hand they also ‘know’ that in the Dutch International School it does not and should not work in that way. Hence, the suggestion is that there are two opposing forces, homophobia and non-homophobia, which are in tension here. There are at least two different scripts of masculinity being used, both of which are controlled by respect. The view of Epstein (1997) who suggests that the ‘performance’ of homophobia polices and constructs heterosexual masculinities in schools, only works in a limited sense. For example, Falko takes a similar view to the girls about the role played by boys in the school in viewing same-sex relationships:

Falko: ... But most of the boys, I don't think will ...at least for some of them it may take some time to accept something like that.

Bill: But for you it is not a problem?

Falko: No, I don't mind. I suppose that is a result of how I have been raised. My mother has several male gay couple friends and I know them very well. I know they are extremely nice people, they are friendly, they are funny and I've known them all my life and I've never really had any prejudice.

Although some of the boys may have a problem, at the end Falko makes it clear that he is not one of those boys. This is also exemplified by Jan in the focus group six discussion when he states: "I don't think it's a problem, but I do think it's present in that a lot of people in our school are homophobic. I think it's that they are literally scared of it." As with Falko, Jan makes it clear that this is not him and distances the idea onto other boys. This also links back to the idea of the acceptance of intimacy within friendships between boys (c.f. section 5.2). In fact, in none of the face-to-face interactions did any of the boys directly say that they were homophobic or make explicit homophobic remarks. Once again this could be interpreted through respect or tolerance where the students' interpretation of 'third culture' is positive and pro-active, leading to a realisation that homophobic remarks are not acceptable. Although the degree to which this is agreed is not known. Vagn, in his one-to-one interview, also makes his non-homophobic viewpoint clear, demonstrating a quite confident approach when he discusses the fact that older men have approached him because he is slightly effeminate:

Sometimes, yeah, when I went out. Like going out in centrum. Even like older people, like adults. 40 year olds. Men would also approach me and ask me if I was homosexual and I asked them why they want to know. That is not any of your business. ... If I was homosexual, I would admit it, but you don't have to label me like that.

Vagn is clearly undeterred and arguably proud of his femininity and the reactions from him and Falko do not seem to be based on having more than 'enough' masculinity. It is not a situation similar to the one suggested by Thorne (1993, P.123) where masculinity "was like money in the bank; he could take the risk of spending because there was plenty where it came from". In both cases, they seem to have the confidence often

described in 'third culture' kids and this confidence includes their own way of portraying gender and sexuality. In this sense the element of respect that seems to be part of the construction of 'third culture' masculinity comes to the forefront.

However, this is not true of all the boys. The earlier extracts indicate that students in the school are respectful of sexual difference, but this is not unanimous and some boys indicated much more wariness. For example, Aalbert, in the focus group four discussion, gives an almost contradictory response to the idea of another boy being gay. At the beginning of the conversation Aalbert expresses a personal worry about being in a potentially sexualised space with a gay man, but as the conversation progresses, with some encouragement from Ciska, he takes on a more distanced position - that hiding your sexuality would actually be more of a problem:

Aalbert: It would be kind of uncomfortable in a sense ... . Like I don't have anything against it but if I was in a locker room with someone who is gay, I still wouldn't be totally comfortable.

Bill: Do you think if a guy came out or was openly questioning his sexuality, then that would be a issue?

Aalbert: No not really. I think there's a couple of people you really can tell, so it really wouldn't be a shock.

Ciska: If you were gay and trying to hide it, that would be more of a problem.

Aalbert: Yeah, that would be more of an issue.

Further evidence for this disrupted approach is provided by the views of boys on gay men outside school. Within Dutch culture, demonstratively same-sex couples are seen on the street and most students will have noted this. Eliseo demonstrates a degree of unease about this.

It kind of seems weird, especially for boys. Like we went out once with my friends and we were just walking in centrum and we saw 2 guys making out. And we kind of got shocked by it.

Overall, there are varying levels of unease portrayed by the boys in the school. Part of this can be explained through the 'third culture' but it is also possible that because there are no 'out' male students, there is no 'reality' to this. Although arguments have been

presented in previous research that gay male members of staff are needed as role models, this does not fully work, as students do not always see teachers as occupying the 'same reality'. This is seen in the following extract from the 'football boys', who suggest that provided someone is not in their immediate sphere of influence, then it is not a problem.

Juan: We have teachers who are gay and that is ok

Bill: So was that a problem?

...

Petru: No, but really it was ok.

Juan: But I guess if someone is our age and we know, it's a bit different. We had a respect for the teacher, but it doesn't work in the same way for a student.

This is backed up by the research of Martino (2008b) who suggests that being gay in the classroom is not a problem as long as it is not 'in your face' and is reminiscent of the 'don't ask, don't tell' situation that has been used in the American military until the ban was repealed in 2010. Overall, the conversation indicates that there is no problem with those who are 'at a distance', because of position or age, but that it may become more of a problem for those who are closer.

In the focus group four discussion, there is an example of slightly stronger personal unease with the situation when Matthew demonstrates he is unaware of any same-sex relationships within the school until the girls in the group hint that there might be:

Nicola: It's usually outside of school.

Belia: There's also some guys kind of, yeah bisexual.

Sabastian and Matthew together: Who?

Belia: Us girls notice these things.

Matthew: Are you serious, I'm going to be careful.

The final reaction of Mathew is interesting to note, because it is a clear indication of fear on some level. However, the comment does not progress beyond this and under a series of non-verbal cues from the girls in the group, he immediately looks embarrassed. This can again be interpreted in a number of ways. Clearly Matthew is aware that what he has said is not fully acceptable within the Dutch International School, but whether it

is related to respect for diversity, respect for the researcher or respect for what could be interpreted as an informal rule remains unclear. Equally it could be interpreted through the concept of tolerance. Although the girls are clearly 'policing' this conversation, to what degree Matthew is aware of this again remains unresolved.

Thus the message from the boys is clearly mixed, but there appears to be an awareness from the boys that the girls are 'right' (or have ensured that they are 'right') and that homophobia could be overcome. This could also be interpreted under the concept of tactical heterosexuality as reactions to potential homosexual behaviour have a link to the perceived 'normality' of heterosexuality. This is exemplified by Uwe. When asked if he can judge what makes boys popular in terms of relationships, he gives a fairly standard answer that he cannot comment because he is a boy. However, slightly later on in the discussion, when he and Boukje are discussing whether Wagner is good-looking, it ends up in a heated discussion, with Uwe contradicting his earlier statement and quite freely giving his opinion:

Boukje: He is good looking.

Uwe: I don't think he is that good looking.

Boukje: Oh, Uwe!

Uwe: I can still argue if a boy is good looking or not, even if I am a boy.

The idea of fearing gay men, and being afraid of being labelled a gay man, is not unknown to the boys in the Dutch International School and it has some influence, but it is clearly under question from a variety of different sources and hence as a signifier of dominant masculinity, it is limited. The limitation seems to come from a form of respect, which is part of the concept of tactical heterosexuality and appears to be physically 'policed' by the girls in the school who, arguably, are ensuring that the boys do not become homophobic. Many of the examples above put girls in a supervisory role and Ida describes a hypothetical situation regarding what would happen if a boy 'came out' and there was a negative reaction to another boy:

I think that people would just try to talk him out of it. Just try to make him realise that it's normal and that the guy is not going to come on to you. It's got nothing to do with you, don't change your opinion about him.

The implication is that girls could/would 'fix' the problem and there is absolutely no sense of girls trying to take advantage of boys by using homophobic putdowns as seen in the research of Griffiths (1995). Thus, as in hegemonic masculinity, where boys police 'other' boys, in 'third' culture masculinity it is the girls who police the 'other' boys. The difference is that the 'other' boys are not those who are perceived to be gay, but potentially those who perceive others to be gay; it is the policing of respect and tolerance. In one sense the girls are ensuring that 'third culture' masculinity is influencing the school, partly through tactical heterosexuality.

The muted unease of boys about gay men in the Dutch International School may also be influenced by the much more relaxed attitude about same-sex relationships between girls. Belia was the only student to openly admit that she is bisexual and she appeared quite relaxed having this identity. From the conversation with her, there was no indication that she had faced any problems.

Once again a similar situation is found with relationships as was noted in friendships and the use of sexual language. Overall, in the Dutch International School, there appears to be little demonstrative behaviour of heterosexuality, either in public displays of affection or the language used. Hence a very limited encounter with heterosexuality is 'enough' to 'pass', but it appears that this is combined with having 'enough non-homosexuality'. These scenarios are tame in contrast to what has been presented before (Pleck 1982; Seidler 1994; Mutchler 2000; Skelton 2001), and the final comment by Matthew, for example, is one of the most homophobic actions witnessed throughout the entire research. The viewpoint of the girls in the school is much more coherent than that of the boys, suggesting homophobia at the Dutch International School is policed by the girls. A lot of conversations expressed some degree of unease from the boys and as, before, this could be interpreted in terms of the 'third culture' of the school influencing the boys' perception of masculinity - where they are sometimes acutely uncomfortable about the concept, but realise that it is wrong or politically incorrect to say anything negative about it. To what extent it is absolutely connected to respect or slightly differently, to tolerance, remains uncertain. It is also possible to interpret it through the concept of silence, where silencing mechanisms can denote a conformity with positions that may not be accepted in the situation (Benjamin 2003). Thus, there are indications that the view on male same-sex relationships has not quite reached the stage of social normality, but there are strong indications of a potentially disrupted and confused

performance where same-sex relationships between men can no longer be used as an absolute indicator of a subordinate masculinity. Overall, the culture in the school could be described as non-homophobic, and one that is disrupted from a national culture. Nardi (2000) makes the point that gay men are no different from straight men in that both exhibit a variety of different masculinities and, in a limited sense, this fits well in the Dutch International School. The situation described by Frosh et al. (2002, P.175), that “boys’ homophobia is seen as a set of activities through which they publicly and repetitively assert their ‘normal’ masculinity through heterosexuality”, does not appear to happen. This can also be related back to the ideas explored earlier on the influence of Dutch culture (c.f. chapter 4 section 4.2). As stated there, in certain ways Dutch culture does influence the concept of the ‘third culture’ and one of the ways it potentially does this is through Dutch attitudes towards same-sex relationships. In one sense Dutch culture provides a context for the ‘third culture’.

This section finishes with Dimitrie, who provides some evidence for ‘third culture’ masculinity at work. At the time of the interview Dimitrie had only been in the school for six months, had not been educated before in an international school and came from a country where the human rights of gay people are questionable. Dimitrie is also a practising Christian. He begins the conversation about homosexuality obviously quite nervous and initially presents a familiar argument propounded by religious groups opposed to homosexuality:

Bill: What would the attitude here be towards gay relationships?

...

Dimitrie: The ones who are more religious don’t agree with them – I don’t.

Bill: So is your viewpoint based on religion or is it ...

Dimitrie: Yeah. God gave us woman and man and they want to change that.

In this part Dimitrie notes that because of his religious beliefs he does not agree with gay relationships and there is a slightly combative tone in the use of “they want to change that”. The indication from this part of the conversation could be that it might potentially become homophobic. However, what is interesting is where Dimitrie takes this. When the researcher gently pushes the idea that there might be other viewpoints, the conversation then takes a quite different direction.

Bill: But if that is what they want to do?

Dimitrie: In this school you cannot tell them something – let them be, it's their choice; it does not affect me.

Bill: And if there was a gay relationship in school, would that be a problem.

Dimitrie: It's up to them.

In one way this demonstrates how 'third culture' masculinity potentially has the power to influence viewpoints. The conversation with Dimitrie indicates he holds two opposing viewpoints simultaneously and this research would argue that this is not uncommon for students operating in this type of culture. These viewpoints represent different parts of their lives. The 'religious' viewpoint, in this case, is the home culture viewpoint and the 'live and let live' attitude has probably been acquired since being at the Dutch International School. So, although there is a fragmented element to the 'third culture' masculinity, this is evidence to suggest that fragmentation does not lead to weakness and that the 'third culture' masculinity of the school is capable of having a strong tactical influence on students. It is suggested that tactical heterosexuality is part of 'third culture' masculinity.

## **5.5 Conclusion.**

There is no doubt that the actions used to define friendships and relationships in the Dutch International School play a significant role in this school, as they do in many schools, but that this role is slightly different. Equally, the friendships, the language used and the relationships between students all appear to influence how respect and tolerance is shown in the Dutch International School and potentially disrupts other interpretations. This is not necessarily about describing a 'third culture', but is about how 'third culture' is constituted and practiced. Hence, the homophobic name-calling so prevalently noted in other research does not happen to the same extent in the Dutch International School and does not have the same interpretation. In previous research the role of girls has been seen as partially powerful and partially submissive in terms of intimate relationships, but in the Dutch International School their role is pivotal and powerful. So maybe Pleck (1982) is right when he suggests that schools are 'feminised', but maybe it is not to the detriment of the male inhabitants of the institution. The interpretation of the data suggests that the emerging 'third culture' masculinity has three



main constituent elements. These are the idea of respect, tactical heterosexuality and the role of the girls.

This research will now continue to consider two aspects of the curriculum, academic success and sport, and consider the role they might play in the construction of ‘third culture’ and associated ‘third culture’ masculinity.

**Chapter 6. The Influence of Curriculum on the Construction and  
Theorising of Masculinity: The Role of Sport and Academic Success.**

## 6.1 Introduction.

Previous research indicates that the school curriculum plays a significant role in the construction and theorising of masculinity in a schooling environment. The study by Frosh et al. (2002) summarises the situation simply, but quite neatly, by suggesting that those who come from economically secure backgrounds tend to be concerned about future professional careers and take the relational side of life for granted, whereas those from less economically secure backgrounds tend to be more focused on relationships. This has been explained through the idea of a class-based masculinity (Tolson 1977; Willis 1977), through the role of patriarchy and power (Connell 1995; Francis 2000; Frank et al. 2003; Smith 2007) and through a post-structuralist model (Butler 1990; Weeks 2003). In this research, it is suggested that the elements of the curriculum that play the most significant roles in the theorising and construction of masculinities are academic success and sport. In previous research these two areas have been interpreted in diverse ways. For example, on the one hand Edley & Wetherell (1997, P.211) reported how

some sixth-form non-rugby-playing boys challenged the domination of rugby players at a private single-sex school by portraying them as ‘unthinking conformists, incapable, or even scared perhaps of doing their own thing.

On the other hand Gard (2001, P.223) suggests, “violent, sexist and homophobic words and actions are often rewarded and encouraged during PE and SS (school sports)”.

One of the features of existing work in the area of academic success is that divisions between boys and girls are sharply defined. This chapter takes up this theme and suggests something far more fragmented. Secondly, previous work suggests that academic success and peer behaviour form a linear relationship, i.e. that there is an easy read-off between academic success and peer group behaviour. This chapter suggests a more complex situation. With sport, much of the previous research has focused on the role played by boys and its link to masculinity in a national setting. This research considers the role of the international. Furthermore, in the past the emphasis has been on boys and sport, often with the indication that girls are peripheral to this. This chapter suggests a situation where there is a much more even role. As noted here and in

previous chapters (c.f. chapter 4 section 4.3; chapter 5 sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.2), there will be a focus on how the boys in the Dutch International School make sense of this, while remembering that the girls have a significant role to play; the formulation of ‘third culture’ masculinity is as much about girls as it is about boys.

## **6.2 Academic Success.**

At the beginning of the study, academic success was not seen as an area likely to be key in establishing and theorising masculinity within the Dutch International School. The student questionnaire did not focus on this and the responses to the more general descriptions of the school only provided hints that some students potentially considered it to be important<sup>6</sup>. The teacher questionnaire backed this up, as only three teachers agreed with the statement that good academic grades are the most important thing a student gains from school. However, in the focus group interviews it was a recurrent theme and hence became a concept to be explored in the one-to-one interviews. This is indicative of an approach based on constructive grounded theory. This section will begin with a consideration of the link between academic success for boys and femininity, which has undergone a lot of research in a national context, much of it focusing on the U.K. and Australia (Connell et al. 1982; Connell 1989; Redman & Mac an Ghail 1997; Smith 2007).

Historically, the focus of research in terms of academic success has been on girls where the argument was put forward that boys created academic success for themselves and caused failure for girls. The suggestion was that girls were underachieving, especially in mathematics and the sciences, which is noted in the research of Stipek (1984) and Walkerdine (1998). More recently, research has taken a quite different approach with boys now seen as the victims of the academic success of girls, as exemplified by the ‘failing boys’ syndrome in the U.K. which has been the focus of much research over the last fifteen years (Noble & Bradford 2000; Francis & Skelton 2001; Carrington et al. 2008). There are two ways of interpreting the link between academic success and femininity. The first suggests that girls are predisposed to certain styles of assessment. The second idea is that academic success is often seen as a signifier of the feminine and hence in a structured approach is linked to ‘other’ (Francis 2000; Gordon et al. 2000).

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<sup>6</sup> The questionnaire was only a blunt instrument to gain an initial indication of how students understood their schooling experience and to indicate areas for further research. Although academic success is important, the students do not frame the school solely in academic terms.

Thus, as was reflected in the study of Willis (1977), it is unacceptable for boys to undertake hard work or to be considered as academic students. Haywood (1996) and Smith (2007) also suggest that low academic achievement is often used as a resource for a dominant masculinity and Frank et al. (2003) believe that working hard and being academically successful are often viewed as 'feminine' characteristics. However, this is rather dependent on the style of masculinity being formed or performed. In what Connell et al. (1982) call 'ruling class' schools, male academic students appear to hold a stronger position. Pleck (1982) and Connell (1989) both suggest that there are two opposing ideologies at work here and that in the context of the working/corporate world: "A man who can command this power has no need for riding leathers and engine noise to assert masculinity" (Connell 1989, P.298). Thus, academic success can be used to construct a dominant form of masculinity, but the idea of working hard, which often accompanies academic success, is often linked to the concept of 'caring', something usually interpreted through a feminine lens (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998; Chambers 2006). Walkerdine (1990) and Jackson (2002) would both agree with this and further suggest that working hard is a passive activity, again something that is often signified as feminine. Hence, one approach is to see working hard and academic success as part of a conforming, caring and passive female performance. However, this is not the only possible performance. The research of Griffiths (1995), Hey (1997) and Francis (2000) all argue that there is some evidence to suggest that academic success is used by girls, still in a gendered context, but as a performance of 'girl power'. Furthermore, Nilan (2000) notes in her research that it was not uncommon to hear high-achieving girls 'put down' boys who had failed tests.

This next section explores how academic success was interpreted in the Dutch International School. It suggests that the notions of masculine deficit and masculine enhancement need to be understood in a more complex manner. It will consider how these ideas are interpreted in the year group in general, then through the 'balcony group' specifically, and finally through two of the girls in the 'balcony group', giving careful consideration to the 'third culture' of the school and how it affects the concept of 'third culture' masculinity.

### ***6.2.1 The Perception of Academic Success in the Dutch International School.***

There is no fully coherent picture of how this year group in the Dutch International School sees academic success. Although the school is not academically selective (c.f. chapter 1, section 1.3.2) in terms of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, the school would be classed as academically successful with a pass rate above the world average. However, the importance placed on students gaining high academic grades by parents and teachers is limited. This was shown in the parent questionnaire, where only just over 50% agreed that good grades are the most important thing that a student gains from the Dutch International School. Teachers see it in a similar fashion and very few of the most common words used to describe the five most important features of a school named academic success. Hence, the indications from this are that although academic success has a role to play in the school, it is not viewed as either the most important feature of the school or as the only important characteristic in the school by those who teach and care for the students. Consideration will now be given to how the students interpret this.

Of key concern for this chapter is the suggestion that there is little evidence for academic success being constructed as either feminine or as a way for boys to ‘shore-up’ masculinity. However, the concepts of dominance and competition surrounding academic success are not unknown. In the Dutch International School, a number of people involved in this study note the interlinked nature of confident and potentially outspoken behaviour and academic success, but they suggest that it is as likely to come from girls as it is from boys. A number of names commonly came forward in relation to this style of dominance including Wagner in Physics, Elly and Amanda in Mathematics, Wagner and Valentina in Economics, Paulina in Biology and Gary in History. The evidence suggests that in the Dutch International School, confident and dominant behaviour is not exclusive to either male or female students. The following extract from the one-to-one interview with Gary backs this up:

Bill: ... Do boys dominate here? Do girls dominate?

Gary: I don't think so at all. ...I think there is no real male/female thing because everyone has an equal opportunity to learn and I think everyone can be equally capable of doing it as well.

Although there clearly are boys in the school who show dominant academic behaviour, i.e. demonstrating their academic or intellectual confidence, there were indications that some considered this to be something that could be connected to the girls. Vagn, for example, suggests that this is due to the girls in the class:

Bill: So who would dominate in that class usually?

Vagn: Academically it would be Valentina. Yeah, she is a smart one. And then there are the girls. There is Nike who is loud, Nicola who is loud.

In some ways this echoes previous research because it resonates with the idea of hard-working, 'clever' girls. The difference is that it appears that these are not quiet, hard-working girls gaining success, but ones with more dominant personalities. On the one hand Gary demonstrates that the Dutch International School encounters behaviours that are similar to those in national schools, where male students will dominate the class. He admits to being dominant because of his academic success in certain subjects, because: "I tend to be quite vocal. I enjoy speaking about subjects like History, Economics and English – I usually tend to be one of the people that speaks the most." On the other hand he shows how this behaviour can only be taken to certain level. Firstly, he admits that: "I tend to get told to shut up, which I think is a good thing." Secondly, he notes that this sort of behaviour is as likely to be exhibited by boys as girls.

Much work on masculinity identifies a strong cultural linearity where peer group culture defines student behaviours such as academic success. In the Dutch International School, the correspondence between academic success and peer group practices appears far more fluid. This is exemplified by Bob in that he belongs to two groups, which carry quite different labels:

Bob: I wouldn't say groups. I guess there are more intellectual ones; ones that want to study more, who distance themselves from the smokers, who are completely the opposite to what the smokers are.

Bill: Are there any very academic students who smoke?

Bob: Yeah, I'd call myself an academic student and I smoke. I guess that there are a couple of other smokers who are like me – who smoke and who do care a lot about the school and perform high grades.

Initially Bob appears to suggest that there is a split between students who value academic success highly and students who smoke, but in his final comment he admits the lines can be blurred. There is no sense of this being a uniform response and there is no evidence that particular expressions of behaviour are idiomatic of masculine dominance. Thus the view of Lyng (2009, P.463) that: “The notion that, in general, school commitment and masculinity are fundamentally incompatible” does not appear to be happening.

Explaining the notion of academic success and peer group behaviour can be explored further by looking at the ‘Rens’ group. The group mentions that they are most commonly labelled as a group of young people who party, which would be consistent with the idea of a popular group that has both power and dominance.

Falko: We kind of have a popular party connotation, I think ...

Aalbert: Definitely from last year.

Falko: But that is largely due to the people who were here last year as well.

Bill: Have you lost that reputation?

Falko: No. I think people do still see us ...

From this description it would be easy to see how this could be constructed as a group of boys who shun the concept of hard work. However, on further exploration there appears to be a strong degree of myth to the stereotypical label and there is no evidence to suggest that these are poor academic students. During the lesson observations, Ode always portrayed himself as a serious academic student and a number of students in their interviews made reference to Aalbert being one of the students who was likely to contribute to serious classroom discussion. The implication is that in the Dutch International School academic success, hard work and partying may not be mutually exclusive.

There are two approaches that seem appropriate to explaining the role of academic success in this context, both of which can be interpreted through the concept of ‘third culture’ which has respect and tolerance as two of its main pillars. One is the idea of certain styles of dominant behaviour taking a hold, but only being able to progress or stabilise to a certain degree, suggesting the idea of a slightly fragmented single culture. The other is a blurring and fragmentation of behaviour, where no behaviour gains



absolute hold and the 'third culture' of the school is one in which many behaviours can potentially be seen. This could be interpreted through the idea of multiple-hybrid cultures, where academic success produces a space in which some boys (and girls) flourish, while for others it is less important. Overall there are no extremes. As Brown (1987, P.31) suggests 'ordinary kids' "neither simply accept nor reject the school, but comply with it". This would suggest that in this particular context the concept of 'other' either cannot fully form or has been broken down so that there are so many 'others', the concept no longer holds meaning. There may be a 'multiplicity of otherness' which is indirectly suggested by Whitehead (2002) when he notes the idea of there being other 'others' and links the concept of 'other' to queer theory. Previous research indicates a dichotomy in the interpretation of masculinity in the setting of academic success, whereas in the Dutch International School ambivalence is also noted; in one sense academic success is seen as positive but in another sense it is just not seen as important. The opposite part of the dichotomy, which would be a negative sense to academic success, is extremely limited. From this, what appears to be formed in the Dutch International School is a 'third culture' masculinity that is benevolent, where there are hints of dominance, but the dominant is not allowed to progress. In one sense academic success plays a role rather like relationships in that if it happens, other students are happy for the person concerned and if it does not, it is not a problem. This is an interpretation that would fit in with the views of teachers and parents.

### ***6.2.2 Academic Success, Friendships and Acquaintanceships.***

The previous section suggests that student perceptions of academic success are slightly different from what has been found previously and this section will give consideration to how academic success influences and is influenced by the friendships and acquaintanceships between students and groups of students. This exploration of the role of academic success on masculinity construction and theorising will now focus on the role of the 'balcony group', since the students in this group are clearly proud of their academic success and for some of them it is how they define themselves and are defined by others. The negative connotations of academic success do not exist within this group and exist only to a very limited extent in the perception of this group by others. In many of the schools noted in previous research, this would often be a group of students that was marginalised, and in some schools bullied, for being in this position. In the context of their own theorising and research Askew (1989), Boulton et al. (2002) and Smith

(2007), among others, would all agree that the ‘balcony group’ at the Dutch International School is a location for a subordinate style of masculinity and is not a location that would be a site for establishing dominant masculinity in a national setting. This now needs to be considered in the international setting of the Dutch International School.

On the whole, in the Dutch International School this group is seen in a positive light, as noted with a degree of surprise by Ms. Fanny:

Because sometimes the ones who are really clever and do really well seem to be quite popular. Maybe that is an international school thing, or maybe it is this school, I don’t know, but I think that is quite unusual.

Although the group is clearly separate in one sense, in that the balcony area is a separate space, this is in no way absolute and this is not a group that is sidelined and despised. Emma, who is not part of the ‘balcony group’, notes this:

Bill: Is that group in any way cut off from the rest of the year?

Emma: In a lot of ways, just because they are upstairs means that they are slightly excluded, but it’s not that the rest of the year cuts them off.

Bill: And do any of them mix with people who you would more commonly find in here?

Emma: Oh yeah. Mostly. I mix a lot with them and I know other people who do as well. ... Also like a couple are on my bus and they are great fun. I would classify them as my friends as well.

In one sense this is the ‘centre of academic success’ in the Dutch International School, as this is the only group that, at least in part, defines itself by academic success. Previous researchers have given a variety of names to this style of group including “ear’oles” (Willis 1977), “swots” (Brown 1987) and “Academic Achievers” (Mac an Ghaill 1994). In this research the group of academic students have been named after the location where they ‘hang out’, as this was felt to be a more positive term, one that suggests that the group is respected as opposed to tolerated. This reflects the way in which the group is perceived by many teachers and other students in the school, who refer to the group as the students who play cards, the gamers, the academic kids, the

students who get high grades, the conscientious group, as well as by their location. Only limited numbers of students are willing to actually assign a negative name such as ‘the nerds’ to the group. The term ‘nerd’ dates back to the 1970s to mean a male who is intelligent but socially inept and in the 1980s this was then associated with computers (Kendall 1999). Eckert (1989 cited Bucholtz 1999, P.211) suggests that in U.S. high schools ‘nerd’ is used in opposition to ‘jock’. When the term is used in the Dutch International School it is often followed by an immediate apology or a statement that this is not really what the person meant, but that he/she cannot find the right word. This is exemplified by Ida:

You could say the people that hang out on the balcony, ... who are a bit more like the nerds, but they are not and nobody really calls them that, but if I had to put it in a more stereotypical group association, then this is what I would call them.

No student who took part in the interviews actually used a negative term for the group without some form of qualification. So this is not a group with a negative label and the number of interviews that state this as a group, without prompting, indicate that this is not a marginalised group. It appears that students are struggling to find positive language to describe the concept and, hence, they are forced into potentially negative stereotypes with asides. In the Dutch International School, because of the role played by ‘third culture’ masculinity, the behaviour of and towards these students is interpreted in a slightly different, more positive, way.

In the ‘balcony group’ the majority of the group are male and there is no evidence of this being seen as a feminised group. Valentine provides an indication that the interpretation of the group is quite complex and that they are not viewed in the stereotypical way, as a group of students who are either marginally tolerated or not tolerated, depending on the specific situation. She states: “A lot of people hang out with them. In one sense they are really nerdy and at the same time really cool.” It is the fact that Valentine has put a binary together, which is rarely seen in other research, that begins to provide indicators of what might be happening here. This appears to be a location where specific dominant traits gain a certain amount of hold, but it is moderated by respect; this again suggests the role of a fragmented ‘third culture’, which is perceived as positive, and where a variety of behaviours can exist side by side. There

are strong parallels between how the year group in general perceives academic success and how it works within the 'balcony group'. Consideration will now be given as to whether this is a group that holds some degree of power.

The space they occupy, the names they are called and the fact that students and teachers see this as a recognisable group, all indicate that this is a group that potentially holds some symbolic power or influence and, hence, could be a location for the formation and performance of a style of dominant masculinity. The role that Wagner plays within the group is interesting to consider in this context. Wagner is well established within the group, is seen as popular with girls, and is academically successful, all of which could be signifiers of establishing a dominant masculinity. The following interchange in the focus group twelve interview, between Uwe and Boukje, about Wagner provides a summary of how he is perceived:

Uwe: He has a very special personality.

Boukje: The thing is, he is nice, but he isn't dominant, not really.

Bill: And who is he popular with? Girls? Boys? Both?

Boukje: Both these days, I think. Girls hang around his neck or on his lap.

Uwe: Yes, but that's because they see him as a friend.

Boukje: It's a bit of a teddy bear thing.

Bill: So they don't see him as sexual?

Uwe: No, I wouldn't say so.

This is not a description of a dominant or a hegemonic young man! Boukje suggests that at least part of the reason for him holding a noticeable position is the fact that he is 'nice', which is not a characteristic often associated with dominant male behaviour and Hey (1997, P.134) would argue: "'Being nice' as other writers argue, is *specific* to the formulation of white middle class femininity." Unlike in the research of Frosh et al. (2002), being 'nice' in the Dutch International School appears to be enough to make a boy attractive. However, this is not the whole story and Wagner shows a number of characteristics that could be attributed to a more dominant and aggressive style of masculinity. The researcher observed Wagner in seven classes and he showed evidence of dominant behaviour in five of them. All observations and interpretations indicate that Wagner is a nice, but maybe slightly arrogant young man! This could be equated to a situation where nice but slightly arrogant becomes dominant in a more covert sense, but

the 'patrolling' behaviour of the girls tempers the behaviour. Arguably, this is a performance of 'third culture' masculinity, where it is possible to demonstrate masculinity in a variety of ways, some of them recognisable in previous theorising of dominant masculinity and others which would be interpreted as subordinate. This has been touched upon in the research of Swain (2006) when he talks about the concept of 'personalised masculinity', referring to a style of masculinity which is not culturally authoritative and where boys in a schooling situation are not subordinated and do not necessarily wish to subordinate others.

Clearly, the concept of academic success and the role it plays in the construction of masculinity is more complex than has been found in past research. This is neither a situation of low achieving boys who shun academic success, nor of an intellectual elite who have constructed their academic success through their innate ability, or what Connell et al. (1982) would call "top-steam masculinity". The complexity is demonstrated further by the fact that there is almost a pride to working hard, as exemplified in the following quote from Baltrus: "We are also all really high achievers and work hard. To me a five is not good enough, not good enough at all." The suggestion is, once again, that this can be explained through the 'third culture' of the school which allows a diversity of different ways of 'doing masculinity' to not only be accepted, but to actually thrive. For a young man to exhibit 'third culture' masculinity, one possibility is that he should be nice, hard-working and to a degree arrogant! Wagner is in one sense representative of the 'balcony group', in that although the other boys in the group do not have his level of popularity, there is very little evidence for them being dominated and despised by other boys. The position of the 'balcony group', with reference to academic success, is not absolute in that it does not lead to absolute power or absolute subservience, but that it plays a somewhat blurred and contradictory role. This idea will be developed in the next section, as there is evidence of some degree of domination within the group by girls.

### ***6.2.3 Girls and Academic Success in the 'Balcony Group'.***

The idea of girls taking on a more masculine gender has been considered by many researchers (Anyon 1983; Riddell 1989; Lees 1993; Griffiths 1995). For example, researchers such as Lees (1993) suggest that girls are beginning to show a more confident femininity, where they are both challenging and mocking boys on their

behaviour and Griffiths (1995) notes a group of girls who belong to the Air Cadets, something interpreted as not 'doing' girl in a conventional sense. In light of this, consideration will now be given to the girls in the 'balcony group'. In the year group, those girls who exhibit academic success often do so in a confident, dominant and sometimes competitive way. This will be the focus of this section, which will consider Elly and Amanda, who are key members of the 'balcony group' and are in many ways the most dominant members of the group. It is interesting to note the following comment by Amanda about the group:

...Everybody knows these guys on the balcony, these gamers, the little nerdy guys, they aren't social, but everyone loves them, still. So they are a bit further off from the centre, but not really...

Although she is a key member of the group, in this extract she talks about the group as if she were not part of it, and with some affection. However, there is also a sense of benevolence, even patronisation to that affection, which could be interpreted as an indicator of the dominant role she plays in the group. Although Wagner portrays a degree of dominance, it is less obvious from the other boys and in one sense the 'balcony group' without Elly and Amanda may be a more likely site for developing a more subordinate style of masculinity. The fact that Elly and Amanda are highly successful academically, hard working and competitive affords them a noticeable and dominant position within the group. Later on in the conversation Elly suggests: "There's no sense of being macho, but there is a sense of competition, which you don't find in girls as much." Like Amanda, Elly gives the sense of being outside the group; it is almost as if she is describing a group of young men who she knows, and she is the observer of that group. Once again this is a potential reflection of the role she holds within the group and possibly indicative of controlling and manipulating some of the power in the group.

This is an unusual situation and this study will now reflect on how some of the boys in the group interpret this. Wagner clearly holds Elly and Amanda in high respect and states: "Both of them are like geniuses" and "It's amazing that they are that smart". Uwe has a slightly different interpretation and he attempts to downplay the role of Elly and Amanda:

Then we have one of the girls who has quite a strong character, but it isn't dominance, it's more strong characters. One of the girls bosses us around a little bit, but it's not like we follow her around.

It is interesting to note that there is no hint that he feels angry about this or that he is trying to take a stereotypical masculine stand, but there does appear to be a degree of unease, which is unsurprising given Uwe's relationships with other girls in the school (c.f. chapter 5 section 5.2). Ultimately, there is no sense of the boys being disgruntled about this and although Uwe may be hinting that his masculinity is being undermined, there is no suggestion that he wants to, or can, do anything about it. So, in one sense this can be interpreted as a girl playing out a role in a masculine space and the following comment from Elly backs this up:

I love guys as friends, more than girls, because they are easier to understand, they are just nicer. Girls always just dramatise everything and I already have enough stress in my life without listening to girls talking about their boyfriends non-stop.

In this extract Elly almost appears to be distancing herself from the feminine, which fits in with the studies of Ringrose (2007, P.474) where she suggests that we are moving "towards a celebratory, neoliberal discourse of girls' new found equality as a formula for the hard work needed to attain educational and career success". In one sense, Amanda and Elly are the dominant boys in the group! They inhabit a masculine space and their behaviour is indicative of the 'nice but dominant' form of 'third culture' masculinity. This is a style of masculinity that appears to move beyond the male/female boundaries, a situation that is recognised in previous research (Halberstam 1998). It has also been noted elsewhere in the Dutch International School itself, with as many girls as boys noted as dominating during classes and there being only very limited agreement to the statement that boys are more disruptive than girls from both teachers and students in the respective questionnaires; in one sense Elly and Amanda are extreme representatives of the year group.

However, there is also evidence to suggest that what is being constructed here within the 'balcony group' goes quite a long way beyond this, which may partly explain Uwe's unease. One example of a more extreme style of behaviour was noted with reference to

Elly in the introduction (c.f. chapter 1 section 1.1) and ideas of both dominance and arrogance are also demonstrated in the following extract from the interview with Amanda, where she is talking about her ??? class:

...if there is ever a silence it is always Elly and I answering a question. It's constantly us. ... I think we dominate the class academically, definitely people look to us for answers, definitely people look up to us as role models.

This indicates that Amanda does not see her position within the group as "just another male" and arguably, as far as she is concerned, this is her space and her performance. It is one over which she has some control and is most evidently demonstrated in terms of her academic success. Not only is there an indication that she dominates the boys in an academic sense, but the following extract suggests that she has a role to play in their relationships:

So I think that I connect with guys more and they find me really easy to understand compared to most girls, so they come to me with relationship problems all the time ... . Before I came here they were totally clueless with relationships and now they've gotten a lot better. You can definitely see that as they branch out.

This indicates the level of control Amanda feels she has over the boys. This could be interpreted through the concept of a 'caring masculinity' except that, unlike the caring 'third culture' masculinity for boys, there are no girls to police it. Although this is some of the most dominant behaviour described so far, there is little sense of dislike and in one way it can be likened to a dominant mother figure. There is also a suggestion that this is an example of protective patriarchal behaviour which previous research suggests is often portrayed by men over women.

Taking this a stage further, it is interesting to consider whether the question posed by Francis (2000, P.17) has any relevance: "why it is apparently only boys who choose masculinity and girls who choose femininity?" This raises the question as to whether this is behaviour that is non-gendered or whether this is female masculinity. In one sense there is no evidence to suggest that Elly or Amanda have in any way 'chosen' a masculine style. Ultimately, I cannot fully answer the question, but what I can do is try



to provide adequate conceptual frames through which to make sense of it. This could be interpreted as part of the multiple-hybrid model of 'third culture', where part of this culture allows stereotypical behaviours assigned to sex to become part of the 'third culture' and, because of the fragmentation and dislocation, to become at least partially, if not wholly, removed from a gendered interpretation. It can also be interpreted through a single 'third culture', where the dominant, but essentially 'nice' masculinity, is open to girls. Ironically, and arguably, what Amanda and Elly are describing here is a situation where there is a potentially dominant masculine performance, but the chief performers are Elly and Amanda. As Halberstam (1998) implies, to what extent the concept of masculine and feminine styles being in any way located in male and female has to be questioned in this location. This is quite a different viewpoint of Elly and Amanda from the one shown earlier, again hinting at the role of fragmentation and disruption. These contradictions are common in the Dutch International School and although it is possible to talk of 'third culture' masculinity, it is one that shows certain behaviours that are common, but not absolute to all, and one where extreme behaviours are controlled by both the structure of the school and the performance of the inhabitants. This more dominant style of behaviour, portrayed by Elly and Amanda, is not widely indicated across the year group, either by girls or boys, and it appears that the 'third culture' is limiting how it works. The 'third culture' masculinity is dominant but 'nice', portrayed equally by girls and boys, and any form of more extreme dominant behaviour is either limited or stopped. The power of Elly and Amanda remains amongst a small circle of people and although they are part of the reason for this group being noticeable, their power does not really extend beyond the group. Within the school this is different to what has been found in previous research and the statement from Riddell (1989, P186) "that girls were indeed quieter in the class than boys", is really not the case here.

#### ***6.2.4 Conclusion.***

Given the role that confident behaviour seems to play in the school, the dichotomy of the girls being on the periphery of classroom space and of the boys academically and physically dominating classes, does not seem to happen. Hence, there is evidence to suggest that academic success is a signifier of 'overall' success and to a degree influences popularity, but it does not work in the sense of a masculine-feminine divide and it does not work completely. It also suggests that there is a dominant but 'nice' inclusive 'third culture' masculinity within the school, where extreme behaviour is

regulated. This research will now continue to consider the role played by sport, which is often seen as a primary signifier of masculinity in a U.K., U.S and Australian context.

### **6.3 Sport.**

A number of researchers (Hargreaves 1986; Epstein et al. 2001; Renold 2002; Ashley 2003; Forrest 2006) have stressed the role of sport in the formation of masculinity in boys and this is summed up by Epstein et al. (2001, P.158) who state:

Football and fighting solidify and cut across ethnic boundaries and many boys become deeply invested in these activities as the primary signifiers of masculinity.

In a national setting, it is clear that sport is of great importance and in many settings anybody who does not measure up to certain indicators of sporting excellence is immediately in a subordinated position (Kimmel 1990; Frank et al. 2003; Swain 2003). As Forrest (2006, P.116) suggests schooling “celebrates sporting prowess as manly”. Sport is a potential indicator of dominant masculinity in all constructions of masculinity and the initial questionnaire given to students at the Dutch International School provides a limited amount of informal evidence to back this up. The results to question sixteen suggest that boys are more likely than girls to consider themselves good at sport and in question twenty there is agreement with the statement that as a boy being good at sport makes you more popular. It is noted in question twenty-six that five students stated that disagreements between two boys could be over football and that thirteen students stated that it could be over sport. Furthermore, in question twenty-one there is evidence to suggest that boys are more likely than girls to think highly of someone who is good at sport. These results are presented in appendix B. The questionnaires from both parents and teachers indicate a more ambivalent interpretation, with only 34% of parents and six out of fifteen teachers agreeing that the Dutch International School places a lot of emphasis on sport. The limited nature of these results is an indication that sport is potentially interpreted in a different way in the Dutch International School.

This section will begin by giving the background to how sport is set up and perceived in both the school and the local community and will then go on to study three themes. Firstly, it will consider the extent and the ways in which sport is important in the school.

A number of researchers (Renold 2002; Ashley 2003; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003) all suggest that sport is a way for boys to demonstrate dominant masculinity, that in a schooling situation male-male friendships are often based around sport (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998) and that anybody who chooses not to, or cannot, participate at a certain level is often in a subordinated position (Connell et al. 1982). This is demonstrated through the actions they take and the messages that are portrayed through the body. As Whitehead (2002, P.181) suggests: "Most critical gender perspectives on the male body have concerned themselves with the relationship between men's sense of embodiment, masculinities and sports". This section will then go on to specifically consider the 'football boys' as a potential site for the establishment of dominant masculinity. Ultimately, as Skelton (2001, P.136) states: "Being proficient at football granted that select group of boys access to a range of benefits which were not available to the less competent footballers." Within this, specific consideration will be given to the views of these boys on sexuality. Finally, the section will consider the role of girls in sport through girls 'doing masculinity' and through 'promoting masculinity' in boys.

### ***6.3.1 Sport in the School and its Relation to the Local Community.***

The initial indications are that sport potentially plays a slightly different role in the Dutch International School than it does in a national setting and, hence, it is important to gain an overview of where sport fits within the school curriculum. There are three strands to this. Firstly, there are taught PE classes which although not part of the IB Diploma Programme, are a compulsory part of the curriculum for all students in years 12 and 13. Students have choice and there is a change of activities each term, allowing students to sign up for the sport that is of most interest to them. All sport within this programme is promoted as non-competitive. Secondly, there are school teams for football, hockey and basketball. To become a member of the team there is competition for places and the teams play competitive matches against other schools. The boys' football team is the most talked about of these and hence has the highest profile. It is coached by two teachers in the school, neither of whom are qualified football coaches and there are indications that this detracts from the importance of the team. It is suggested that football is taken much more seriously and has a much higher profile at two other nearby international schools, where they do have qualified coaches. Thirdly, there are non-competitive sporting activities, organised as part of the school's extra curricula programme, where anybody can practise or play.

Although this research is focused on an international setting, this is one of the spaces in the school where Dutch culture potentially has an influence and, hence, it is important to understand the situation in Dutch national schools. Ms. Anna, one of the PE teachers, explains that in some international schools and in national schools in countries such as the U.K., Australia and the U.S.A., sport in school has a high profile and is a significant part of the school community and culture, whereas in Dutch schools this does not really happen. The idea of after-school activities where students play sport either competitively or non-competitively is extremely limited. Sport is still important for young people in Holland, but it is played in clubs in the community, not connected to schools. Obviously many students from the Dutch International School are involved in these community clubs and it is quite common for students to play sport with a local club that has no connection with the school.

Thus the role of sport in the school is different from other researched contexts and, hence, what happens in terms of masculinity construction and theorisation needs to be considered within this context. When asked the question about what makes someone masculine, Carl suggests that it is connected to sport and provides a description that would fit with the viewpoint of many researchers (Connell 1995; Hey 1997; Gard 2001): “Well it would mean more like jock, sporty. The sort of person who lifts weights, has a girlfriend. That sort of area. Does a lot of sport. Gets on with the guys as well as the girls.” He then goes on to note three people who he believes follow this form of masculinity. In this scenario Carl is suggesting that it is both the body and the actions of the body that contribute towards this perceived masculinity and this fits in partly with what Drummond (2005a, P.1) finds in his research when he states: “That is to say, size, specifically muscle size, plays a crucial role in determining the masculine identity for many males.” However, Carl immediately suggests that there is a difference in how it is interpreted in the Dutch International School in that it does not bring popularity, which indicates that it is the actions of the body that are of the most importance, rather than the appearance of the body itself. He states:

No, I'd just say they are seen differently. I wouldn't say they are popular; they are just a different sort of person. It's not really a big thing with popularity in this school. People just like people who they like.

It is interesting to note the implied role of respect in the final sentence of this statement. Uwe begins by indicating that he also sees football in the way that it is often portrayed in the literature as a signifier of dominant masculinity:

Yeah I think that's one thing. I'd say if I had to choose macho people from the group, I would automatically go for the football players. Maybe not all of them, though, and maybe not very macho.

However, the final sentence notes an element of doubt over how this works in this situation. Wagner and Baltrus are both serious musicians in the year and both suggest that music and sport hold similar positions within the school. Baltrus states:

I wouldn't know who the best soccer player in the year is. Again, sports people do not get as much attention as they perhaps deserve. Neither does music.

Disruption and fragmentation are also highlighted in that on occasions there is almost a caring role associated to sport in the Dutch International School. When consideration is given to the 'Rens group', the three boys in the group identify as close friends, with sport playing an important role. Again, previous research would indicate that this might be a space for a performance of dominant masculinity (Gilbert & Gilbert 1998). However, when the researcher was observing a PE lesson Ode, who would class himself as a good sportsman, was playing tennis with a group of girls, with no attempt to dominate the game; there was no sense that he considered himself to be the best player and was "controlling" the girls. In one interpretation this could again be described as a caring masculinity. The idea of placing the words caring and masculinity together is not common in the theorising of masculinity, although not unknown. The research of MacDougall (1997), looking at men in the nursing profession, recognises that there are situations where the dichotomy needs to fit together. Similarly, Hansen & Mulholland (2005) consider the role of caring in male elementary school teachers. In both cases there is a level of resistance shown by some of the men participating and in neither of these pieces of research are the mechanisms by which caring and masculinity can intertwine made clear. In the Dutch International School, the suggestion is that the caring element of masculinity is emphasised by the 'third culture' in the school, leading to what has been described as a 'nice' but potentially dominant 'third culture'

masculinity. In this situation the adjective ‘nice’ is used to recognise the combined roles of respect and tolerance.

The teachers also back up the idea that sport has a limited and disrupted role to play in the school. Ms. Carole notes that sport does not have a high status in the school, but acknowledges that many students are involved:

Not a particularly high level I think. ... There are lots of opportunities for the kids. I always see things about hockey and about football – there seems to be a huge after-school activities base, but as a curriculum, not particularly and I don’t think we are hugely high achievers in the American way of thinking of sports.

In this extract, the association of sport with American schools and its importance is noted. This is a comment that is made a number of times by different groups and individuals. From these, the constant message communicated is that this is not a school which students link with a (stereo)typical American school and in one sense this is not part of the culture in this school or part of the culture of the students. These references to American culture may indicate an awareness of the role of sport in terms of power and heterosexuality (c.f. Pascoe 2003) and by rejecting the concept students are, arguably, rejecting the behaviour associated with it; this provides further evidence to suggest that the Dutch International School is not a location where dominant masculinity can gain a hold.

However, sport does have some role to play in the school and, hence, in certain ways there is at the very least an awareness of some of the messages that come from a sporting performance. This is indicative of the concept of hybridity which is explained by Bradley (1996) as being a way of describing contemporary ethnic identities, although the scenario in the Dutch International School potentially suggests a greater degree of fragmentation. The theorising of hybridity by Bhabba (1990 cited Bradley 1996, P.134) suggests that all cultures are to a degree hybrid “since all have been inevitably affected by processes of migration, travel and tourism, cultural exchange and communication”, which proposes a tentative truth for a form of global masculinity; the concept of masculinity travels. This is an idea addressed by Connell (1998), where he recognises the link between patterns of trade, investment and communication with hegemony. From this perspective, there is a degree of importance ascribed to success at and to the

playing of sport, but it does not have the level of importance to sustain a level of power that would provide a dominant performance and has limited influence on any form of dominant or subordinate masculinity.

Some students in the school are much more absolute about the role of sport in the school and are almost dismissive of it. In the previous section the importance of academic success for some students was noted and, in certain cases, this is connected to a lack of interest in and belief in the importance of sport. This is not unknown in previous research. In her retrospective study of a British private school between 1920 and 1950, Heward (1988, P.62) states:

In the inter-war period the ideology of public school education was changing to reflect the increasing importance of academic qualifications, (and) the decline in the games cult ... .

Redman & Mac an Ghaill (1997) note the idea of a male intellectual hero as a style of alternative masculinity and the idea of muscular intellectuality as a weapon with which to counter daily harassment. In the school, this point is made quite bluntly by Boukje in the focus group twelve discussion when she states: “The vast majority of the year almost takes pride in being mediocre.” The comment by Nastusia when asked about the role of sport in the focus group eleven interview also demonstrates something very limited. She states:

(Under her breath) It’s a joke. (Out loud) I used to do basketball for quite a long time, played in the team, but since this school starts things but never takes them completely seriously, I never felt like continuing.

Although both these comments were made by girls, they were both part of focus group discussions which involved boys and they were not contradicted by any of the boys in the group. Furthermore, Justin, who joined the school at the start of year 13, was a keen sportsman in his previous school, but he did not hear or notice anything about the trials for sports teams in the Dutch International School, again indicating a lack of visibility.

The other major signifier of the role sport plays in establishing a dominant masculinity is through bullying that takes place because a young man is not perceived as good enough at a particular sport. This can be seen in the context of labelling which would connect with the ideas from previous research (Brittan 1989; Waldo et al. 1998; Connell 2008; Roberts 2008). The initial student questionnaire provides mixed messages on this. Students strongly disagree with the statement that bullying could take place in the school because someone is not good at sport, but then a significant number of participants in the survey indicate that the most likely reason for disagreements between two boys is sport. A mixed message is also given when the results to the questionnaire indicate that thirty students state they would not treat a student who was bad at sport any differently and eight state they would. However, the student interviews indicated that this was overstating the case, with many students saying outright that this does not happen. This is demonstrated by the following brief interchange in the focus group one discussion:

Bill: Has anyone ever been bullied here for being bad at sport?

(Lots of quiet mutterings and I haven't seen it).

Valentina: I haven't seen it in sports.

Ciska suggests that teasing takes place on the basketball team, but that it does not, and ultimately would not, be allowed to progress beyond this.

Bill: Can you ever think of a time when teasing has become nasty here?

Ciska: If it did, then somebody would go up to the person and say stop it.

Because nobody really wants to get problems.

Bill: So it couldn't become bullying?

Ciska: No. This school's really good about this in my opinion.

This construction based on the data provides further evidence for the idea that it is not just a disrupted approach, but also one where there is more absolute evidence. In all the interviews undertaken, only one student suggested that bullying took place in this context. Ultimately, the following extract from the one-to-one interview with Bob implies that it is the nature and fragmented culture of the school that causes sport to potentially have less influence on masculinity.



Bill: So it's not a case of, for the guys that play football, all the girls run round them because they play football.

Bob: No, this stereotype does not happen. It's definitely not like this.

Bill: Why do you think it isn't like that, because it is like that in some schools?

Bob: I don't know. I'm pretty sure that it has to do with the fact that this is an international school.

Bill: What does that mean to you?

Bob: People with other cultures and ways to think about certain things and different types of respect for other people. And just because of that, there's not that stereotypical image – that just because you play sport you are more popular or because you care more about school you get excluded.

Thus, the difference in how sport is set up in the school is mirrored by the fact that it is perceived differently by students. Most students in the year group do not see sport as holding an important position in the school, with all hinting at disruption and fragmentation and some suggesting a more absolute disruption. It appears that sporting success plays, at most, a very limited role in constructing and theorising potential spaces for dominant masculinity, an idea backed up by Eliseo, one of the 'football boys'. He states: "So I really care about my education and I want to have good grades." Although academic success is not a signifier of dominant masculinity, it does play a role in the concept of 'third culture' masculinity found in the school and from what has been considered so far, sport appears to be less important than academic success. In one interpretation academic success and sport are almost playing opposite roles to what is found in previous research (Hargreaves 1986; Gilbert & Gilbert 1998; Foster et al. 2001). However, this is clearly not the whole story. The most talked about group in the year is the 'football boys', indicating a degree of popularity and influence, and in previous research this style of grouping has been a prime location for the formation of dominant masculinity. Their position within the Dutch International School will now be considered.

### ***6.3.2 Sport and the 'Football Boys'.***

The researcher initially became aware of the 'football boys' through the focus group interviews and then through the one-to-one interviews. As they were mentioned and discussed more than any other group, a special focus group interview was set up with

the ‘football boys’. This is the only all-male group in the year, one in which friendships are based on playing and watching football. The role of all-male groups in previous research into masculinity theory is well documented (Stenhouse 1967; Kaufman 1994). This is backed up by Ashley (2003) who suggests that one of the ways for boys to be ‘in’ is to seek and gain the approval of the leaders of what could be called the ‘football crowd’. The fact that the ‘football boys’ is one of the most recognisable groups in the year indicates that it may, possibly, have a strong influence on the construction of masculinity. The action of playing football and being successful at this school is indicative of a certain style of masculinity in itself. There is a potential contradiction between this and what was noted more generally in the previous section and this tension will now be explored. This section will begin by considering the views of Carl, one of the ‘alternative group’. In certain circumstances Carl could be the victim of a group like the ‘football boys’, but the following comment indicates almost an indifference to them: “Well, they wear sports clothing and they talk about football a lot, but that’s understandable because that’s what they like doing.” The feeling is very much that they do what they want to do and his group will do what his group wants to do.

One of the key characteristics of groups similar to the ‘football boys’ has been noted in previous research as popularity and the following extract from the focus group interview with the ‘football boys’ will now be considered:

Bill: Do you think you gain any popularity by being in the football team?

Juan: Not really. We play football because we enjoy football, not because it makes us more popular.

Vagn: In a sense because sometimes you have the people watching you play and then you are the centre of attention.

Petru: Because we represent the school as well.

Vagn: And we stand up against other schools and I guess that might let us gain popularity.

Although the ‘football boys’ are clearly a noticeable group, the indication from this extract is that being noticeable does not translate into automatic popularity and in one sense football is just something to be enjoyed and does not have any other labels attached to it. However, the comments from Petru and Vagn at the end indicate a more performative element to playing for the football team, where there is a sense of loyalty

being shown to the school and the phrase “stand up against other schools” is almost indicative of a fighting mentality, one sometimes seen in ruling-class schools (Poynting & Donaldson 1992). Although there may be limited pressure to present an aggressive stance, it does not appear to progress beyond this and the violent situations found in the research of Poynting & Donaldson (1992) and Messerschmidt (2000), for example, do not happen in the Dutch International School. In one sense the ‘football boys’ are performing ‘basic’ behaviours that are indicative of dominant masculinity, where the group is the centre of attention and the members of the group portray a loyalty to the school, which has a ‘fighting’ quality to it. There is no indication that the situation can develop and progress beyond this; it is not allowed to fully stabilise. This could be one of the signifiers of a ‘third culture’ masculinity which is influenced by some of the behaviours that indicate dominant masculinity from other cultures or via the media, but it does not develop far enough or gain enough power to begin to stabilise as a hierarchy based on a dominant masculinity. This is also indicative of an interesting dichotomy. In the international schools described by Pollock & Van Reken (1999), Hayden et al. (2000), and Straffon (2003), there is an assumption that students have a higher degree of intercultural sensitivity due to increased mobility and a larger amount of contact with other cultures. This contrasts with the views of Head (1999), Epstein et al. (2001) and Ashley (2003), who present the role of football in national schools as dominant and with little sensitivity for those who do not fit. The suggestion is that the students at the Dutch International School are aware of the potential contradiction between these two scenarios and have to negotiate their construction of masculinity through this dichotomy. It is this negotiation that influences the concept of ‘third culture’ masculinity.

The following extract from the one-to-one interview with Eliseo, who after some questioning modestly admits to being the best footballer in the year, indicates that what he feels is gained in terms of popularity is limited:

Let’s say maybe a bit. It has maybe made us a bit more popular, especially myself. If you play football with other kids from different years, then if you are good they are going to appreciate you and they are going to get to know you.

This is also how it is seen from outside the group. In the one-to-one interview with Lan, the interviewer was asking about friendship and sport, and the example Lan chose refers

specifically to Eliseo, again indicating that sport certainly makes these boys visible, irrespective of how it affects their popularity. Although the group may not be giving a full performance of dominant masculinity, the fact that the ‘football boys’ are the most recognised group in the year cannot be ignored and maybe there is ‘enough’ popularity for the group to possess some of the indicators of dominant masculinity.

Connected to this is the fact that although the ‘football boys’ are clearly a close group, they are not seen as an exclusive clique, one where only a few very specific boys are welcome. Hence, the idea of power based on exclusivity does not happen. The following extract from the one-to-one interview with Fabio notes this: “I know for a fact that the football group get together with other people. It’s not like the sport group are together and that is it.” Hence, the concept of this being a dominant group of boys, with a limited and highly selective membership, and who the majority of boys look up to, does not appear to hold true.

### ***6.3.3 Sexuality and the ‘Football Boys’.***

This study will now consider the role of football and popularity connected to sexuality. In previous research, it would often be the case that the ‘football boys’ would be a space to show ‘enough’ heterosexuality and to demonstrate no homosexuality. The researcher asked the ‘football boys’ directly if being in the football team made them popular with girls:

Bill: OK, let’s be blunt about it, does being part of the football team make you more popular with girls?

(A few sniggers).

...

Petru: Not in this school.

Bill: What do you mean by not in this school?

Jean (aside): He imagines all the movies.

...

Bill: So why doesn’t it work in this school?

Juan: Because there is not like enough stress on it. If you don’t stress on it, there is not enough emphasis on the football team or the sports team. People also

focus on the academic and I've already told you there is more of a balance between academics and sports. And the girls I guess are just not that interested.

In one sense there appears to be an awareness of some of the implications behind this conversation. The sniggers at the beginning seem to indicate a potential awareness of the dominant style of masculinity that this behaviour could signify in the Dutch International School, but is one that is not actualised. This is backed up when Jean states: "He imagines all the movies", which indicates a possible fantasy of what being a top footballer in the school might mean in terms of relationships with girls. Throughout the focus group discussion with the 'football boys', the idea of establishing and performing masculinity through heterosexuality, and the idea that this group of boys "do" heterosexuality, as Messerschmidt (2000) suggests, was often hinted at, but not really seen as a dominant performance.

Linked to this, consideration should be given to the reaction of the 'football boys' to the idea of a lesbian relationship. The conversation on the fact that there are allegedly same sex relationships between girls starts off quite seriously, but a stereotypical heterosexual fantasy of lesbian sex is potentially indicated by the giggles at the end.

Vagn: There's a lot of kissing between girls here, but there's nothing serious.

The only serious relationship is these 2 girls - Hafiza and Sabina are serious.

Eliseo: They don't just kiss, let's put it that way.

(A few giggles).

In terms of heterosexuality, there are some indicators that this group has, at least in part, some of the behaviours associated with establishing dominant masculinity, through the actions of the body. However, the viewpoint that this is a group of young men appearing hyper-heterosexual to confirm their masculinity is naïve and to what extent they actually succeed in demonstrating any sort of dominant masculinity at all is questionable since other indicators suggest the 'football boys' do not seem to operate in this school in the ways often described in previous research.

The 'football boys' were also asked about same-sex relationships between boys and the beginning of this conversation is shown in the extract below.

Bill: What about between boys?

(Lots of giggles).

Juan: Not that we know of

Jean: I haven't heard of any.

Bill: What would be the reaction if there was?

(More giggles).

Eliseo: What about if Petru had a boyfriend?

(More giggles).

Petru: Thanks guys, thanks.

Firstly it is noted that this conversation about male same-sex relationship does not indicate issues of bullying, homophobia, or violence, which might be expected, but begins with a set of giggles and then a joke about one of the group being potentially in this situation. This hints at the idea of male camaraderie and is slightly different from the more caring and affectionate relationship between boys in the school that was noted previously. Petru is clearly the focal point for jokes within the group, but appears to be completely unbothered about this. Picking on one member of the group as potentially gay could be seen as a way of reaffirming heterosexuality for the others, but not in this situation; Petru is not being subordinated as 'other' through a joking scenario that is actually meant more seriously, as is often found in bullying scenarios (Reid et al. 2004; Smith et al. 2004). However, this scenario can be linked to the research of Kehily & Nayak (1997) where joking and humour are used as a more covert way to show masculine dominance and this sort of conversation could be potentially interpreted as establishing 'enough' heterosexuality.

Later on in the focus group interview, the 'football boys' were asked more specifically about their attitudes to gay relationships between boys in the school:

Vagn: Initially it would be a bit awkward, but I think we would be ok. It's a case of getting used to it.

Jean: It wouldn't matter.

Bill: But just think about it seriously. How much of a problem would it be?

Eliseo: It would be a problem

Juan: It would ...

Petru: If one of us was.

Juan: I think it would cause a problem. Not that we would want it to cause a problem, but it would naturally happen.

Bill: What sort of problem would it cause?

Eliseo: It would cause insults.

(More giggles).

There is a real sense of confusion in this extract and, overall, there is an unspoken disagreement about what the reaction would be. The comment by Juan indicates that they are aware of it being a problem and “politically incorrect”, but nevertheless the indication is that it would be difficult for them to act against this and do what is seen as “politically correct”. In one sense the group seem to be well aware of the idea of respect and the liberal ‘third culture’ of the school that is put forward.

At this point the researcher felt it was important to pursue this a little further and in the following extract he asks about what would happen if they were in a situation where another man found one of them sexually attractive:

Bill: Is any of it based around fear?

Eliseo: Fear?

Bill: Fear that they are going to come on to you? That’s the standard one.  
(Lots of giggles).

Petru: I wouldn’t say I was scared of it, but it is a bit weird.

Juan: In my perspective it is weird.

Vagn: It’s something I am not used to. Like having another guy, you know ...

Bill: Would any of you be violent if that happened.

Juan: Well it depends on how far they want to go.

Bill: No, I’m not suggesting that they are attempting rape on you; I was suggesting that they might come onto you.

Juan: No, I wouldn’t.

Eliseo: Well we should respect them and they are meant to respect us too.

In one sense the group deal with this rather uncomfortable conversation reasonably well and the fact that they giggle indicates nervousness, but also ensures it is not going to take a more negative direction. There is also a direct attempt to take the conversation in a positive direction, which is indicative of the level of respect seen in the school, when

Juan outrightly rejects the use of violence. However, this was the closest that any conversation came within the research to demonstrating how fear could progress to violence, which is noted in previous research (Askew 1989; Poynting & Donaldson 1992; Messerschmidt 2000; Renold 2002; Smith et al. 2004). When Eliseo uses the word “fear” as a question this could be interpreted as really meaning “What would I have to fear?” especially given the tone of voice he uses. His last statement is also slightly indicative of potential aggression. Thus, there is evidence of fear, but how these boys interpret the concept of fear is not absolutely clear - whether this is fear of the feminine or fear of being thought of as gay. This can be linked back to psychoanalytic theory and, as Segal (1987 cited Edley & Wetherell 1995, P.68) suggests, to what extent this is related to the perceived link between femininity, homosexuality and powerlessness is not absolutely determined. This is clearly neither a situation where students have realised that homophobia is wholly inappropriate (c.f. McCormack & Anderson 2010), nor is it one where these young men have no awareness of the issue. In one sense they are balancing two opposing ideals, where ‘being a real man’ involves homophobia but being part of the ‘third culture’ in the school does not. It appears that ‘third culture’ masculinity is about holding different parts of a hierarchy as important at different times and trying to make it balance: it is tactical. In one sense because the scenario is not absolute, it cannot be resisted in an absolute way and, thus, the boys remain in partial control. This also can be interpreted through the concept of tactical heterosexuality where students negotiate the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity due to increased mobility and a larger amount of contact with other cultures with the heterosexual possibilities that can be demonstrated through football. The suggestion is that the students at the Dutch International School are aware of the potential contradiction between these two scenarios and have to negotiate their construction of masculinity through this dichotomy. Part of this can again be construed as tactical heterosexuality where a limited purchase of heterosexual behaviour and an understanding of homophobic behaviour need to be combined in what could be seen as the structure of respect. This is one way in which tactical heterosexuality can be understood and is one of the indicators of ‘third culture’ masculinity.

The captain of the football team, and the best footballer in the year, will now be considered within this context. Vagn was quoted earlier (c.f. chapter 1 section 1.1) regarding aspects of his performance that are feminine, and with respect to his reaction to an older man assuming he was gay (c.f. chapter 5 section 5.4.2). Previous research



would indicate that Vagn's position as captain of the football team clearly has the potential to influence dominant masculinity but, by his own admission, in this school it does not. He states:

Some schools have more hype about the football team. We don't have that much here. If there was more hype, I'm sure there would be more stereotypes about me being captain. I don't think it makes me that much of a stereotype.

There is the argument that would interpret this as a young man who has already established his dominant masculinity and is now "playing around" with the boundaries, as noted in previous research. However, no discussion made reference to this and the researcher noted Vagn's behaviour during classroom observations and no evidence was seen of this. This is a young man for whom dominant behaviour is actually one of respect and provides some evidence to suggest that the role of respect in 'third culture' masculinity comes from the students themselves and is not in some way 'built-in' to the school, although there clearly are other external influences. Eliseo, who is considered to be the best footballer in the year, is the member of the group who seems to demonstrate a degree of the homophobic style of behaviour so often seen in previous research, with indirect indications of violence and also joking about other members of the group being gay. However, even with Eliseo, the construction and performance of masculinity are not fully clear. He does have a girlfriend and it is a visible relationship and hence it could be argued that through the actions of the body he is performing a heterosexual activity. On the other hand, he is one of the boys who is teased by Petra as being one of the 'gay' 'football boys' (c.f. chapter 5 section 5.3.2) and, in Petra's eyes, Eliseo does not appear to be portraying a dominant masculinity defined by homophobia.

The masculine performances related to the sexuality of the 'football boys' as a group, and both Vagn and Eliseo specifically, are, to different degrees, incomplete and overall they are not performing a role of dominant masculinity. Their friends and peers do not see them in this role and this suggests that sport as a sexualised space for the creation of a dominant masculinity, or to subordinate masculinity in the Dutch International School cannot develop into the situations seen in previous research in national schools; it is a space under the influence of tactical heterosexuality. There is only limited importance associated to this space and no visible power. The idea that the boys have partial power that is not shown demonstratively, and which is disguised by the concept of respect, is

also questionable as this is influenced by the role girls play in a sporting context, which will be considered in the next section.

#### **6.3.4 *Girls, Boys and Sport.***

The initial student questionnaire tentatively suggests that girls have an influence on sport, whereas the interviews take this further; they suggest that girls are fully involved in sport at the Dutch International School and that it is not a male only domain. For example, Ciska suggests that sport is for ‘people’ and it is the word ‘people’ that is emphasised in her statement.

Ciska: I think if you do play sports, then people ... People like it if you have got ambition in something. But if you are really bad at it or really good at it, it really does not make much difference.

Although much discussion has taken place in previous research on girls opting out of sport entirely, and of girls being invisible in sport (Hey 1997), for some girls sport in a national setting is clearly important. In one sense, what has been found in the Dutch International School mirrors the national setting.

Consideration will now be given to the role of girls’ groups that could be seen as similar to the ‘football boys’. The ‘hockey girls’ are the most likely group to be in a similar position to the ‘football boys’ in that they are a successful team and made up of girls alone. Like football, most of this takes place in clubs outside school, with the difference being that as a group they remain close to invisible within the school. There is also a girls’ football team, but it has far less prominence than the boys’ football team. Elly, who is part of the girls’ football team, suggests that it is only important at a certain time or place, and that it does not have the all-consuming role of the ‘football boys’:

Like right now with my football team, we are going to Denmark this weekend, so like we are really close and we keep talking to each other, whereas like normally, in the winter, we never talk to each other.

The ‘football boys’ would agree with this and they suggest that the girls’ football team contains younger girls and, hence, does not have the same status as the boys. This is not

entirely true and could be interpreted as the 'football boys' exerting a limited degree of masculine dominance and power. However, there is no feeling from the girls that they have in any way suffered at the hands of the boys. In fact Dina notes that students are as supportive of the girls' football team as they are of the boys' team:

Sometimes there is a guys match and a girls match and the fields are next to each other and then all the guys come and they watch part of the guys game and part of the girls game. They support all of us.

Overall, these scenarios suggest that the girls' teams are not entirely peripheral, but in the main they are viewed rather neutrally; there is no sense of the girls' teams either having, or not having, a significant place in the school.

A number of researchers (Kimmel 1990; Connell 1995; Weeks 2003) would certainly see women as having a role in the definition of masculinity in a sporting context, but often in a negative context, with the women being seen as the objects over which men exert their power and demonstrate their masculinity. This concept is recognised by Amanda: "I mean you definitely do see it in the sport, especially in the football – the men definitely take over and they are definitely like the girls can't do anything". Although Amanda recognises the scenario externally, she makes no mention at any point of how she sees it within the school and, given the role Amanda has in the performance of academic success, it is unlikely that she would be the victim of this type of behaviour. There is no sense from any of the girls interviewed, who played roles in sport, that this was actually the case anywhere in the school.

The scenario presented so far suggests that the more dominant role played by girls in other areas of school is not fully replicated in sport. However, the following anecdote about a girl making her choices for PE, given by Mr. Roy, provides a slightly different scenario:

...she couldn't get her first choice because it was full and for some reason she put her second choice as American football. And so they said, sure, come and play American football. And she was the only girl. And then she came to me, I want to drop out, I want to change, there's no way I can do this with boys. I spoke to the PE department and they said of course it is not going to be physical,

you know you are not going to get tackled. They didn't change it and she did do it and she was very good – she got into it and the boys respected her and they let her on to the team.

One interpretation of this is that because everyone around them in the school is 'different', the cultural norm established in the school, what has been termed the 'third culture', is negotiated and potentially fluid. Hence, there is no reason for girls to feel marginalised and the school plays the role of providing the structure and support for the female student to negotiate masculinity, which would fit with the ideas of Halberstam (1998) and MacInnes (1998). Although this could be interpreted as making a girl undertake a boy's sport, because the scenario is presented as positive this research suggests it makes a statement about the inclusive role of sport in the school. The attitude of Petra towards sport also indicates something different:

Bill: You said before that you see yourself as having boy and girl characteristics. Would you describe yourself in any way as being masculine?

Petra: Yeah, you know how girls get embarrassed when they play football and like other sports with guys? I never get embarrassed. I used to play that with the guys constantly. ...

Petra: Well, I'm pretty girlish.

Bill: So you are both?

Petra: Well, I don't act more masculine than feminine, but I like playing all those sports like guys do. But I like the feminine as well, like fashion and I like dancing.

When interpreted through the concept of girls taking on a masculine persona, Petra, in one sense, is not unusual. However, what is more unusual is that not only does she hold on to a form of masculinity, she also succeeds in holding on to her femininity. Petra is adamant that even though she "plays sport like a boy", she is still feminine and this is a strong hint towards what Halberstam (1998) calls female masculinity. Halberstam (1998) implies that gendered behaviour and gender do not fit together, which is certainly true to a degree for Petra and in the Dutch International School in general. However, this is potentially over-simplified, as there is still a definite understanding of masculinity and femininity shown by the students. There are also no indications in the above interviews that these are girls who are 'doing masculinity'. Another interpretation

is that specific gender roles for individuals do not fully develop here and the concept of a disrupted formation of masculinity is once again suggested. Masculinity is, in one respect, a matter of personal negotiation within the culture of the school, suggesting that a structural approach only has limited use.

At worst, there is very limited evidence to suggest that the boys in this school are able to use girls in negative power relations. There is even less evidence to suggest that they succeed. In the Dutch International School, the degree of fragmentation becomes so disjointed at times that to try and interpret this through a masculine-feminine binary makes only very limited sense. This does not necessarily suggest that this is power-free and, as has been suggested earlier, it is not that dominant masculine behaviours are unknown in the school; they just seem to have difficulty stabilising.

#### ***6.3.5 Conclusion.***

Both Epstein et al. (2001) and Morris-Roberts (2004) would argue that space has a gendered meaning and this research would agree in that sporting space at the Dutch International School still has a limited role to play. There are indications of the beginning of a formation of a potentially dominant masculinity, but one that does not, and cannot, reach its full potential. This partially agrees with the position of previous researchers (Brittan 1989; Frank et al. 2003; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003) and indeed Connell (1995), who directly acknowledges the potentially changing nature of hegemonic masculinity and the effects of different cultural influences. However, it is different in the Dutch International School in the sense that as a signifier it is more ambivalent and fractured. This links with the ideas of Seidler (2007, P.11) where he offers a partial critique of Connell's view of hegemonic masculinity, suggesting that

thinking about masculinities in terms of a hegemonic model has itself become hegemonic since its very universalism has appealed to international agencies wanting a model that can be translated across cultural differences.

Once again, the indications are that this 'third culture' is not absolute in any sense and it is this that potentially stops students from pursuing certain dominant forms of masculinity. In a sporting sense, 'third culture' masculinity really is a fragmented masculinity.

## **6.4 Conclusion.**

With regard to academic success, it clearly is important to both male and female students in the school and there is a pride which students are willing to acknowledge - they do work hard. There is no stigma attached to this and it holds true for a wide variety of students in the school. The only potentially academically elitist behaviour is exhibited by two girls, behaviour which can be described as both dominant and slightly arrogant and is, again, an indicator of the strong role girls play in the Dutch International School. There is a disruption from what has been noted in previous research, again indicating the existence of a respectful 'third culture'. Sport also appears to have a degree of importance in the school, but at a lower level than academic success and it appears that in terms of masculinity formation, the importance it holds cannot be utilised. In one sense sporting boys are popular with other sporting boys, but it does not really influence the wider school culture. The 'football boys' are a noticeable group in the school, but this is possibly because they are one of the strongest bonded groups in the year; there seems to be no real drive from the group to try to establish a dominant masculinity and their peers do not see the members of the group as purveyors of a dominant masculinity; the suggestion is that they are purveyors of 'third culture' masculinity, partially through the concept of tactical heterosexuality. Girls appear to play a slightly lesser, but not unimportant role in sport. The role of the boys is quite different from what has been found previously and is, again, suggestive that 'third culture' masculinity can be found in the Dutch International School.

## **Chapter 7. Conclusion.**

## 7.1 Introduction.

This study has explored how masculinity is formed and shaped in an international school context. This has focused on two main objectives:

- To consider how the style of masculinity influences and is influenced by the culture of the school.
- To gain an understanding of the style of masculinity being constructed in an international school, giving consideration to the primary practices that influence this and how they interact with each other.

Through these, the study has considered the nature of the culture of the school and has given an interpretation to what this means. In this study the researcher and the participants have entered into a critical relationship to describe the reality of the situation and the fact that this research has been undertaken from a socio-constructivist perspective means that the way the focus groups were constructed and the way the interviews were conducted influences the results gained. As Frosh et al. (2002, P.32) state: “the interviews themselves were sites for ‘acting’ or ‘performing’ and that the boys’ behaviour in different kinds of interview or at different times might reveal different facets of their masculinities”. The socially constructed culture within the school has been labelled the ‘third culture’. The conclusion begins by discussing how this ‘third culture’ is interpreted in the Dutch International School. Previous research suggests a number of structuralist and post-structuralist perspectives of masculinity and these have been considered in the context of the Dutch International School; none of these perspectives fully explains these students’ schooling experiences. Thus, this research has begun to theorise a concept that has been termed ‘third culture’ masculinity and this will be explored in the second section. Two aspects of ‘third culture’ masculinity will be considered. These are: ‘third culture’ masculinity as a hegemonic masculinity and third culture masculinity as a performative masculinity. Following this, consideration will be given to what constitutes ‘third culture’ masculinity. This will consider ‘third culture’ masculinity based on diversity, respect and tolerance; ‘third culture’ masculinity and tactical heterosexuality and ‘third culture’ masculinity and female masculinity.



## **7.2 The Culture of the School as a ‘Third Culture’.**

The term culture is problematic as it has a proliferation of meanings. In this study, two concepts of culture are used; one fits with the description of it being a “holistic and overarching feature of schools” (Prosser 1999, P.6) and the other with the description of it being “a combination of sub-cultures” (Prosser 1999, P.6). This indicates two different philosophical directions, where in the first case culture is seen through a structural perspective and is influenced by social practices. In the second case, the role of structure becomes more blurred and fragmented and it is suggested that performance and language become the key features of power in society and they shape and control human action.

The pseudonym, the Dutch International School, was chosen to indicate that there are a number of influences on the school and the overall effect of these varying influences is quite different from a national school, as the students and teachers overwhelmingly notice (c.f. chapter 4 section 4.2). In certain ways it fits the stereotypical international school outlined in previous research, for example when Hayden et al. (2000, P.111) state:

There seems little doubt that interaction within the globally-mobile grouping of what have been described as ‘third culture kids’ is leading to the development of young people with an international world view, perhaps irrespective of the stance of their parents.

In other ways it is unique, suggesting that only limited assumptions can be made about the sort of behaviour prevalent in the school. Hence, the explanation provided of ‘third culture’ has to explain both these facets. Overall, the Dutch International School is diverse, hosting a wide range of students from different backgrounds. To make the situation viable and for the school to operate, there is a wide degree of respect for a diversity of different nationalities and practices that are key elements in the culture of the school. This is central to the school identity and is portrayed through the behaviour of teachers, the beliefs of teachers in education and links to the basis on which the school is founded. Thus, there is a circular nature to this, where the community influences the ‘third culture’, which then influences the community. The labelling of the school as ‘Dutch International’ was chosen to highlight the tension between the

behaviours found in a national setting and the sometimes idealised roles of respect and diversity found in research into international schools.

The concept of 'third culture' has been adapted from those researching international schools, who themselves took the concept of 'third culture kids', a term originally developed by Ruth Hill Useem (Useem & Hill Useem 1993; Pollock & Van Reken 1999), as a way of looking at those students in the school who have lived in a number of different countries and moved from international school to international school (Pollock & Van Reken 1999). This research takes the idea that 'third culture kids' come from a 'third culture school' and, hence, develops the idea that 'third culture' can exist in its own right. The basic principal of 'third culture' kids is that they are living in a culture that is a negotiation between 'first' (home) and 'second' (current location of living) cultures. Previous research (Ochs 1990; Hayden & Thompson 1998; Hayden et al. 2000; Fail et al. 2004; Mclachlan 2007; Grimshaw & Sears 2008) all suggests that the concept of 'third culture' kids is positive, flexible, and interpretive, which this study makes central to the concept of 'third culture'. In defining the concept of 'third culture', this research allows for diversity in the interpretation of what this means and does not assume that international school students have a 'mono-cultural' experience. As Popadiuk & Arthur (2004, P.129) state: "Treating international students as a homogenous group ignores issues of gender, culture and power." In previous research, the culture of the school has often been interpreted under the title of an 'international school' and by a school being labelled 'international' it had certain characteristics that, in part, constituted its culture. Although MacKenzie et al. (2003) are representative of a number of researchers who suggest that the term 'international school' is not, in itself, any guarantee of a particular ethos in a school, certain cultural characteristics appear to override this. For example, Bunnell (2008) suggests there are a variety of synonyms for 'international' including 'international-mindedness', 'cosmopolitanism', 'internationally-hearted' and 'intercultural education' and although subtly different, each indicates a similar interpretation of what the culture of the school may be. However, none of them explain why the culture of the international school is as it is. The lived experiences and interpretations of students are not central to this past research. Researchers into international schools show a degree of clarity in understanding the behaviours that make up the culture of the school, but exactly what sort of culture this defines is less in evidence. Thus, in terms of international schools, there has been a struggle to explain their culture and the interrogation of 'third culture'

in this research has provided a mechanism through which this can be interpreted. In the Dutch International School, 'third culture' is considered as a homogenous, single, holistic culture and as multiple-hybrid cultures. 'Third culture' is made up of a tension between homogeneity and hybridity and both have been identified as necessary to fully interpret the behaviours within the school.

### ***7.2.1 'Third Culture' as a Homogenous Single Holistic Culture.***

The first suggestion put forward, which is suggested by Prosser (1999), is that there is an over-arching single culture in the school, with a generally dominant, but positive influence. In one sense the school is relatively homogenous. This is true in the sense that students mostly come from backgrounds where education has at least a degree of importance. It is also homogenous in the sense that there is a limited, but potentially steady, influence from Dutch culture. This is a position not radically different from research undertaken in national schools, where there is a range of cultural and social forces at work. Alongside this, there is a slightly different argument that accounts for the fact that the school can be interpreted as homogenous. Although the school has a diversity of nationalities and behaviours, which would suggest non-homogeneity, since respect is a primary factor in the school, due to the increased degree of intercultural sensitivity which itself is due to increased mobility and a larger amount of contact with other cultures, this diversity becomes sameness (Pollock & Van Reken 1999; Straffon 2003). It is also backed up by Giroux (1988, P.123/124) who suggests:

Difference no longer symbolizes the threat of disruption. On the contrary, it now signals an invitation for diverse cultural groups to join hands under the democratic banner of an integrative pluralism.

Thus, the 'third culture' is a single culture which is mainly positive, and is based on the idea of respect for the diverse practices at its core. On the surface this is a reasonable description of the Dutch International School, one that is different from a national culture and one which concurs with many of the ideas that surround the concept of 'third culture kids' as presented in previous research (Hayden et al. 2000; Fail et al. 2004; McLachlan 2007). This culture, based on the central pillar of respect, has major signifiers associated with the acceptance of diverse viewpoints and allows a significant role for the girls in the school; it is a culture where behaviours connected to a negative

style of masculinity have difficulty stabilising. From this point of view the Dutch International School is culturally stable.

Although there is homogeneity within the school, there is still limited evidence of non-respectful or non-tolerant behaviour, which does not, however, become established within the school. Even within this model of a homogenous, single culture, there needs to be an awareness of fragmentation and disruption. This research is not to be linked to an unsophisticated interpretation where both Dutch culture and international school culture are interpreted as wholly positive, unifying influences, leading to a situation where student identities are wholly based on the positive influence of the respectful, open-minded and the liberal. This research suggests that 'third culture' is not a static culture and that it has agency (Giddens 1993; Grimshaw & Sears 2008), which relates to the idea of the capability of people to do things at odds with their intentions. Giddens (1984, P.8) provides an explanation for how this works. He states:

Thus, one of the regular consequences of my speaking or writing English in a correct way is to contribute to the reproduction of the English language as a whole. My speaking English correctly is intentional; the contribution I make to the reproduction of the language is not.

In this scenario, rather than there being positive respect for diversity, there is a diversity of opinion that is part of the fragmenting process which can stop, disrupt or destabilise the impact or development of certain cultural traits. Thus, there is a constant tension over the meanings of different behaviours within the school. For example, this is demonstrated by the fact that there is quite clearly awareness within the Dutch International School that same-sex relationships are 'o.k.' This is indicated by the respect shown by students and teachers for 'different' behaviours and is possibly influenced by the fact that the school is situated in Holland, where there is a visibility and acceptance of same-sex relationships. However, this is not completely true and there are minor indicators that suggest the beginnings of the homophobic scenarios so often portrayed in previous research. The idea of fragmentation can be linked to the metaphor of disorganisation that permeates the viewpoints of the participants. This can also be interpreted in a positive way, in that there are a variety of differences in the school and because everyone around them is in a similar position, few of the students feel marginalised. Paradoxically, it provides the structure and support for a student to

negotiate his/her identity. In the Dutch International School, there is an over-arching single recognisable culture to the school, but this culture has been influenced by a number of other cultural influences and, hence, the causality so often found in previous research is replaced by a culture that is in one sense recognisable, but at the same time fluid. However, the major problem with this interpretation of 'third culture' is that it does not fully explain situations where there is a stronger sense of fluidity, for example the role of sport and academic success.

### **7.2.2 'Third Culture' as Multiple-Hybrid Cultures.**

This interpretation of 'third culture' is based on the idea that there is no such thing as a 'pure' culture, since all cultures are affected by "migration, travel and tourism, cultural exchange and communication" (Bradley 1996, P.134). This links with the views of Bhabha (1990), who suggests the idea of hybridity where people are exposed to and influenced by a variety of cultural experiences and that this space can be described as a 'third space'. The parallels to 'third culture kids' are difficult to ignore, but Bhabha (1990) suggests that 'third space' is a conceptual space drawn from different knowledge and discourses, whereas this study is based on the empirical. Of key concern is the notion of fragmentation. Bradley (1996, P.205) suggests that there are four elements to fragmentation, of which three are relevant in this scenario. Firstly, there is internal fragmentation, which is suggestive of the role of labelling in the Dutch International School. Secondly, external fragmentation arises from the interaction of the various dynamics, whereby classes, for example, are divided by gender and in this study is suggestive of the positions and stances that boys and girls take in this school. Finally, there is fragmentation as a synonym for individualism. In this scenario, collective and communal ties and identities in the school could be seen to be dissolving with the rise of individualism. Although respect dominates in the Dutch International School, it is not at the expense of individuality; difference is not only respected, but also desired.

This version of 'third culture' is conceptualised as more fragmented and more representative of the transient nature of the school population. It could be described as hybridised, leading to the idea that the Dutch International School has multiple-hybrid cultures. In this situation there are a number of inter-linking cultures existing side by side. This 'third culture' is more complex, being fragmentary, disrupted and unclear on the one hand, but at the same time fluid, tangible and dynamic on the other. This 'third

culture' does not exist in a unitary sense, leading to a multi-faceted approach to culture in the school, where many cultures co-operate. There are many influences acting on this culture and it is the way these combine that potentially allows behaviour that may lead to forms of negative masculinity, but then also stops that behaviour or does not allow it to stabilise. These behaviours could have different amounts of influence in different circumstances, but none are able to gain full dominance. For example, on the one hand the 'football boys' are a popular and dominant group, whereas on the other hand they have no power as academic success is constructed as 'more important'.

This interpretation is much more blurred and fragmented and would suggest that a variety of masculinities could exist side by side and not necessarily in a full hierarchy. However, caution must be given to this interpretation because if taken too far it would suggest there would be as many negative interpretations as positive in the school and the culture would lose an interpretation which is positive overall. This would assume that linkages have been broken and in an international school setting this is suggestive of the ideas of Bennett (1993a, P.112), who describes the:

phenomenon of an individual dealing with two or more internal cultures as cultural marginality. This individual has two competing cultural voices that are creating an internal culture shock that is independent of what the external world is presenting.

In this case the fragmentation has gone so far that it loses its positive influence and is not the situation found in the Dutch International School. This fragmentation, transivity, and hybridity are suggestive of a post-structuralist perspective. This is indicative of the ideas of Goffman (1959, P.231), who states: "We often find a division into back region, where the performance of a routine is prepared, and front region, where the performance is presented." However, the question must be asked in this scenario as to what the motivation is for these different styles of performance and this, again, returns to the role of respect, tolerance and diversity and links back to a more structured approach.

### ***7.2.3 Conclusion.***

Irrespective of which interpretation of 'third culture' is used, in neither interpretation are there any extremes. These models of 'third culture' suggest that the disruption and

fragmentation is preventing certain negative behaviours from gaining absolute dominance, while some positive behaviours do gain a degree of dominance, allowing a variety of different behaviours to exist side by side without a strict hierarchy. The degree to which this can be structured is dependent on which version of 'third culture' is used. For example, when the role of homosexuality is considered, it appears that the boys in the school are very aware of certain behaviours being problematic, but that it is difficult to fully act against the stereotype and always do what is seen as 'politically correct'. Some boys fully succeed in being 'politically correct', others do not. These situations have been noted in previous research, but what is unusual is the degree to which they exist side by side. It can also be interpreted through the idea that a student 'understands' that a negative view of homosexuality may be perfectly acceptable within the home culture, but totally unacceptable within the setting of the Dutch International School; a student may end up holding two opposing meanings in two different but equally important aspects of their lives. In both interpretations of 'third culture' there is a fragmented, disrupted element to the 'third culture', but in neither case does it lead to weakness and the 'third culture' of the school is capable of having a strong influence on students. 'Third culture' has the power to change viewpoints. This is the cultural background under which the construction of masculinity in the Dutch International School is considered and this will now be linked to the concept of 'third culture' masculinity.

### **7.3 'Third Culture' Masculinity.**

Many previous studies of gender in schools all directly, or indirectly, make reference to the idea that the 'culture' of the school influences the way the students in the school make sense of gender (Willis 1977; Connell 1995; Hey 1997; Griffiths 1995; Skelton 2001; Frosh et al. 2002). Some research considers schools as class-based cultures (Tolson 1977; Willis 1977) and focuses the research on the dominant culture in the school. Other research considers schools as structured, key sites, producing a hegemonic style of masculinity where the concept of a hierarchy is considered along with the performances of power that constitute that hierarchy (Soja & Hooper 1993; Kaufman 1994; Connell 1995). Another scenario suggests a much more fluid interpretation for the role of power and performance which can be linked to a post-structuralist perspective (Butler 1990; MacInnes 1998). There are two major differences between the situations set out above and this study. Although the locations of these

pieces of research are sometimes multi-ethnic, they are often interpreted as mono-cultural and this study is firmly placed in a multi-ethnic and multi-national setting that is clearly interpreted as multi-cultural. Connected to this, many of the studies noted above make comparisons of how gender is constructed by undertaking two or more studies within contrasting schools and, hence, theorising is often used to explain a situation where there is a dichotomy of behaviour (Connell et al. 1982; Epstein et al; 2001; Martino 2008b). This study in the Dutch International School is attempting to explain masculinity in a setting where there is a range of behaviours.

This research has treated the Dutch International School as a more complex gendered space and has indicated that the culture of the school can be determined as a 'third culture'. Two slightly different approaches have been taken to explain the culture in the school and, given that there is an assumed link between the culture of the school and the style of masculinity, this suggests that 'third culture' masculinity is interpreted in two ways: through structure and through performance. Thus, there is a tension in 'third culture' masculinity between the stable and the disrupted and fragmented and it is the negotiation through these contradictions that signifies the concept of 'third culture' masculinity. Since a number of different factors play a role in the construction of masculinity in the school, and the roles they play are neither the same nor equal, the researcher felt that different philosophical approaches to masculinity had to be borne in mind. These interpretations are 'third culture' masculinity as a hegemonic masculinity and 'third culture' masculinity as a performative masculinity.

### ***7.3.1 'Third Culture' Masculinity: A Hegemonic Masculinity.***

Previous research suggests that many interpretations of masculinity are construed as negative and there is little blurring in the negative interpretation. These would include homophobic name-calling, conscious and confirmed heterosexual behaviour and a misogynistic view of women. Specifically, when consideration is given to teachers in the research of Abraham (1995) Francis (2000) or Skelton (2001), all present examples of what has been characterised as 'laddish' behaviour, with the indication that these are male teachers who wish to either assert or reinforce their masculinity through students. This is quite different from the behaviour seen in the Dutch International School, where there are incidences of a 'low' level of solidarity between teachers and students, but not the overt 'laddish' behaviour shown in the research above. What appears to be



happening in this situation is the emergence of a tension where, in one sense, male teachers are resistant to the concept of dominant masculinity, but in another sense there is a potentially limited conformity and complicity with it. This style of behaviour has often been interpreted through the concept of hegemonic masculinity and it is clear that within the Dutch International School this particular performance of hegemonic masculinity does not work. When Connell (2008, P.133) talks about hegemonic masculinity as being “the pattern of masculinity which is most honoured”, for the teachers within the Dutch International School this does not hold true.

A similar situation exists with sport in the school, the focus of much previous research in the construction of masculinity (Hargreaves 1986; Epstein et al. 2001; Renold 2002; Ashley 2003). As Connell et al. (1982, P.174) state: “it (football) serves as a focus for a whole programme of constructing masculinity, and subordinating some forms of it to others” and this has often been identified as one of the indicators of hegemonic masculinity in a schooling situation. As with teachers, it is not as if hegemonic behaviour based around football is never seen in the Dutch International School, but it does not have the level of importance attached to it to sustain a level of power that would provide a dominant performance. Thus the situation where “skilled bodily activity becomes a prime indicator of masculinity” as described by Connell & Messerschmidt (2005, P.851) about young men playing sport is not the case in this research. Furthermore, within the Dutch International School there is clearly evidence that the ‘football boys’ are within a hierarchy, but their position is unstable and is dependent on who is viewing the hierarchy. It is further blurred by the fact that if they represent hegemony, then there is no clear concept of subordinate. In previous research, subordinate behaviour is often seen in hard-working students, but in the Dutch International School they also have a similar unstable position in the hierarchy. In one sense there is a recognisable position for sport and football, but through another lens it becomes disrupted and for some students and teachers totally unrecognisable.

Thus, the negative behaviours that contribute to the concept of hegemonic masculinity do not seem to be happening to the same extent in the Dutch International School and the behaviours that take place in situations where styles of hegemonic masculinity are often seen, seem to have a much more positive interpretation. ‘Third culture’ masculinities are being formed through the acceptance and non-acceptance of these practices and are simultaneously forming student identities. The idea that a young man

is open to, and influenced by, a series of constant ideas within a structure over a period of time, which slowly assimilates into a specific way of “doing masculinity”, cannot happen here. Through the actions of the body it is not possible to establish a school ‘norm’. The fact that parents come from an educated background, the potential for positive models from Dutch culture and the role of respect are all part of the structure of the school and the negative behaviours are controlled by this structure. For example, this structure partially explains why certain students or groups of students can gain power through academic success and why behaviour exhibiting hyper-heterosexuality and homophobia could be subordinate. However, change the location in school and the make-up of the group and some of the behaviours associated with football become hegemonic in comparison to some of the behaviours associated with academic success. The fragmentation reduces the influence further and in some cases ‘dominant’ cannot subordinate ‘other’ as they hold exactly the same position and become indistinguishable. It appears that ‘third culture’ masculinity is about holding different parts of a hierarchy as important at different times and trying to make the hierarchy balance. This partially explains why the behaviours noted in the Dutch International School are often considered to be quite benign in comparison to what has been described in previous research. The difference between hegemonic and subordinate masculinity within the hierarchy is much less than in Connell’s theoretical framework.

Thus, the concept of hegemonic masculinity appears to be slightly problematic in the setting of the Dutch International School, but it does not entirely remove the idea of some sort of hierarchy, as it is clear that certain behaviours have dominance over others, even though they may be demonstrated by both boys and girls and may change between settings.

### ***7.3.2 ‘Third Culture’ Masculinity: A Performative Masculinity.***

In post-structural theory, as with a patriarchal theory, power still has a key role to play, but it is now more widely dispersed and in one sense operates through a linguistic performance. In this situation, ‘performance’ refers “to all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (Goffman 1959, P.32). Thus, the individual construction of a masculine identity is not something that happens alone as it is the interpretation of the outside influences that form identity - the concrete

laws, policies and rules. Butler (1990, P.136) suggests that gender is expressed through acts, gestures and enactments, which are performative, thus expressing fabrications that are “manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means”. As Whitehead (2002, P.192) suggests, to some degree, “the body is a passive medium of external power relations”. When consideration was given to academic success within the balcony group, it is suggested that in a way, Amanda and Elly are the dominant boys in the group! They inhabit a masculine space and their behaviour is indicative of a ‘nice but dominant’ form of ‘third culture’ masculinity. This is indicative of female masculinity (Halberstam 1998) and ‘third culture’ masculinity appears to move beyond the male/female boundaries. Similar interpretations can be placed on boys’ friendships. There were strong indications that, like girls’ friendships, these could be intimate, but that male ‘intimacy’ is to a degree desexualised and becomes renamed ‘closeness’ or ‘mateyness’. However, there is still a caring nature to this, making it slightly different to the concept of ‘male bonding’ (Tiger 2004). It is suggested that these bodily actions contribute to the concept of ‘third culture’ masculinity by making a more intimate, caring style of behaviour between boys acceptable, while still retaining sexual boundaries. In terms of both boys’ and girls’ friendships within the Dutch International School, there are a number of examples of what could be described as dominant behaviour, but the dominance is not necessarily seen as negative and it is portrayed as much by girls as boys. In terms of behaviour indicating sexuality, there is evidence that it is the girls who ‘patrol’ the boys and ensure that extreme hyper-heterosexual and homophobic comments have no place in the school. In one sense the indication is that Halberstam (1998) is correct and these attributes become human qualities, rather than gendered qualities.

In the Dutch International School, it is argued that the disruption and fragmentation within the school’s ‘third culture’ allows masculine identities to be, to a degree, a matter of personal negotiation, in that they are defined by the discourses and performances that take place. This can be understood through Erving Goffman’s idea of individual and group performance, where appearances are usually what they might seem, but sometimes they can be managed. This is taken up by Giddens (1984, P.86), who suggests “the routinized character of most social activity is something that has to be ‘worked at’ continually by those who sustain it in their day-to-day conduct”. This also fits in with the ideas of Butler (1990), who focuses on the complexity of gender and the fact that it is performed through repetitive acts to give the appearance of a solid reality.

However, the concept of performance needs to be considered carefully and is linked to the linguistic quality of performative, where the utterance of a phrase ensures something happens (Copi 1961). In one sense the performer is constituted by the performance and the performer does not necessarily choose the act. In one sense the construction and representation of 'third culture' masculinity within the school are dependent on the performers and the performances within it.

In comparison to previous research, within the Dutch International School some boys are more 'girl like' and some girls are more 'boy like'. This is a form of 'third culture' masculinity, which neither allows certain negative behaviours to form or stabilise, nor does it have the absolute power to push through certain positive behaviours. It is a masculinity that can be defined as 'nice' and 'caring', but one where there are still aspects of dominance. However, although there is a highly fragmented approach to this style of 'third culture' masculinity, the fragmentation does not lead to weakness and the 'third culture' masculinity in the school is capable of having a strong influence on students.

As with a structural approach, this post-structuralist perspective succeeds in describing some of the behaviours seen within the Dutch International School. However, to try and interpret all behaviours through only one of the lenses produces an incomplete story. As Alsop et al. (2002) suggest, the ideas of Butler and Connell are not necessarily totally incompatible - they provide explanations in a different way and to a different degree of absoluteness. Thus, there are both structural and post-structural elements of 'third culture' masculinity, which fits with the concept of the school's 'third culture'. Consideration will now be given to specific attributes of this 'third culture' masculinity.

#### **7.4 Constituting 'Third Culture' Masculinity.**

Up to this point consideration has been given to the theoretical understanding of 'third culture' masculinity. This considers how 'third culture' masculinity fits in with previous theories of masculinity and is effectively interpreting the concept in light of current literature. However, the research has an empirical base and this research now returns to how the students make sense of 'third culture' masculinity and to the aspects of the theory that have emerged from the data. These structures and performances have been interpreted through the institution, student interactions and the curriculum and the key

results from these will now be interpreted to give an indication of what constitutes the theory of 'third culture' masculinity. There are three components to this: 'third culture' masculinity and diversity, respect and tolerance; 'third culture' masculinity and tactical heterosexuality; 'third culture' masculinity and female masculinity.

#### ***7.4.1 'Third Culture' Masculinity and Diversity, Respect and Tolerance.***

Students in the Dutch International School understand many behaviours in the school in a coherent way and, hence, 'third culture' masculinity needs to have certain areas that are more definite than others, with the concept of respect for diversity noted as being important, since this is the lens through which many members of the school community observe the school; it should be remembered that the overall perception of the school is positive.

It has already been noted that teachers do not promote a dominant style of masculinity with students in the school and the negative styles of masculinity portrayed in previous research (Riddell 1989; Cohen 1997; Skelton 2001; Reid et al. 2004), for example aggressive or hyper-heterosexual behaviour, do not happen. In most schools, teachers see themselves as the leaders and many would consider themselves to be role models of what might be called 'acceptable practice' although, as Edley & Wetherell (1995) point out, the truth of this self-perception is variable. So, although it has been established that teachers are not portraying dominant masculinity, further consideration needs to be given as to what they are portraying. Student-teacher relationships in the Dutch International School are close and seem to be influenced by the role of respect. Negative styles of linguistic behaviour and bodily actions are not unknown with male teachers, but in those cases male students often do not follow suit and it is actively resisted by many female students, again suggesting an important role for respect. However, the most common interpretation of the role of teachers in the school is that they are not seen in a gendered sense. They see themselves, and are seen by students, as being predominantly 'gender neutral'; this should not be interpreted to mean they are 'lacking in gender', but in terms of interaction with students, in a majority of cases, it is not part of the teacher's script. Overall, the teachers at the school are portrayed as respectful, inter-culturally aware and caring and the indication is that the role they play in 'third-culture' masculinity is one where they model many of the positive qualities. They are also aware of the negatives that can exist and this behaviour is only allowed to stabilise

to a very limited degree. Teachers regulate the performative 'third culture' masculinity and influence the hierarchy of structural 'third culture' masculinity.

The way sport has been set up within the school means that masculinity construction through this signifier does not have the level of importance necessary to sustain a level of power that would strongly influence the creation of either a dominant or subordinate masculinity. This is quite different from the way it is often portrayed in the context of the U.K., U.S.A and Australia. Thus, the bodily dominance of the male P.E. teacher and the boys completely sabotaging the girls P.E. lesson, seen in the research of Hey (1997); the power and statement of heterosexuality which is implied through the term 'jock' in an American sporting context (Pascoe 2003) and the importance of sport described in the research of Gilbert & Gilbert (1998) are not scenarios that can be seen in the Dutch International School. This research is not saying that sport has no influence, but suggests that respect plays a dominant role in what can happen. Students in the school are aware of the role that sport can play in the construction of masculinity, but there is a constant message communicated that this is not a school which students link to a (stereo)typical British, American or Australian school, where sport has a key role to play. The sporting actions of the male body that are noted in previous research (Davison 2000; Kehler et al. 2005), although not unknown, do not have the same degree of influence in the Dutch International School. This links back to the idea of diversity and it is the respect for difference that drives this idea. Music, sport and academic success all play an equally important part in the Dutch International School. As a student, if you do it well you are respected for it, if you do it badly it does not matter and if you don't do it at all, that is your decision. There is respect for the choices made.

A similarly disrupted situation is found when considering the role of academic success and 'hard work', although in this school it was found to have more influence than sport. Much of the previous research would suggest that this is a position which in many schools, would place students on the margins or would be tolerated, but would certainly not be a position that would lead to popularity. However, this is not the whole story and research has been undertaken where a degree of power can be found through academic success. Examples of this are provided when Connell et al. (1982) refer to the phenomenon of 'top-stream masculinity' and when Redman & Mac an Ghail (1997) note the concept of 'muscular intellectualness'. It is interesting to note that in both these labellings there is a style of masculinity ascribed within the labelling itself and, as

Redman & Mac an Ghail (1997) note, it is possible to push people around intellectually as well as physically. In previous research, academic success has also been seen through a lens of class-based masculinity, with this being significant in ruling-class schools and unimportant in working-class schools. Just as this has been questioned due to the ease with which the distinction is disrupted, there is also a slightly disrupted concept here within the Dutch International School. Academic success clearly has a degree of importance to students in the Dutch International School but there is a pride in the fact that they have to work hard for it, a fact that a range of students are willing to acknowledge, from those in the 'balcony group' to the 'football boys'. In the Dutch International School, academic success can be seen as positive in the same way as being a successful part of the football team - some students are positive about it and others are ambivalent towards it. However, the negativity often seen in previous research, where being academically successful makes you 'gay', for example, does not happen. Overall, academic success and hard work are respected.

#### ***7.4.2 'Third Culture' Masculinity and Tactical Heterosexuality.***

Much of the previous research into constructions of masculinity has found that different issues of sexuality have an influence. These include the use of homophobic language generally (Plummer 2001; Dupper & Meyer-Adams 2002), the use of homophobic language in a sporting context (Ashley 2003; Swain 2003), the attitude towards same-sex relationships (Coyle 1998; Clark et al. 2004) and the role of heterosexual relationships (Willis 1977; Haywood 1996). In this study, the styles of language are similar to what has been found in previous research, but there are indications that the meanings of these words have been, or are in the process of, changing, leading to potential differences in how power relations are negotiated and established. For example, a number of students argue quite strongly that the inappropriate use of the word 'gay' is not a problem in the school. Besag (1995) and Smith et al. (2004), for example, both indicate a situation where homophobic comments are used as an all-purpose label for aspects of non-dominant masculinity, a situation where the meaning has been displaced but still retains the negative power. What appears to be happening in the Dutch International School is more disrupted than this and in the majority of cases, potentially homophobic comments are being used as labels for something unrelated to gender or sexuality, a situation where the sexual meaning has been entirely lost. There is an indication from the students in the school that the meaning of the word 'gay' has

moved on to such a degree that its current meaning, as ‘rubbish’ or ‘stupid’, is as far removed from ‘homosexual’ as ‘gay’ is from its original meaning of ‘happy’. The split between the two meanings is in one sense absolute and the fact that ‘gay’, meaning ‘rubbish’, has a negative connotation does not mean that ‘gay’, meaning homosexual, is also negative. However, it may be naïve to argue that it has stabilised to anything so definite and an argument can still be put forward that although the meaning has changed, the negativity associated to homosexually-based insults remains, a position that would be argued by Frosh et al. (2002) and Ellis & High (2004). This is not a similar situation to the one interpreted by McCormack & Anderson (2010), who suggest that homophobic comments no longer happen.

Because the ‘third culture’ in the school can be interpreted as multiple-hybrid cultures, it makes sense to consider the fact that, in this context, the meaning of the word ‘gay’ has been fragmented and disrupted into different forms. In one sense the word ‘gay’ has become a word without power and in certain ways there is a degree of ‘normalcy’ to using it. Hence, within ‘third culture’ masculinity, the linguistic power of words such as ‘gay’, commonly seen in other performances of masculinity, is disrupted and lessened. Within ‘third culture’ masculinity, students are partially aware of the role of homophobic name-calling in constructing a dominant masculinity, but they are also conscious of the negativity and lack of respect associated to such terms and are, thus, reluctant to say them directly. This is conscious and the students, in one respect, are being tactical about what they say. This can be interpreted under the idea of tactical heterosexuality. They realise the power of heterosexuality and the lack of power of homosexuality, but they will not use either to any extreme and they understand how far they can use it. It is underpinned by an awareness of the situation and by the concept of respect, which plays a pivotal role.

Closely related to this, the negative views on homosexual relationships, prevalently noted in other research, do not happen in the same way in the Dutch International School or with the same prevalence. Thus, the suggestion of Kimmel (1996) and Frosh et al. (2002), who both note that any sort of physical closeness is a problem, and the situation discussed by Seidler (1992) and Singleton (2003), where intimacy is seen as a problem, happen in a different way; the meanings of these actions are disrupted, subjugated and influenced by other stories. For the boys this is one of the most disrupted performances in the school and the situation whereby this leads to an



absolutely subordinate masculinity does not seem to evolve. In some situations, talking about same-sex relationships is now an indicator of being part of a respectful liberal school and although the views on male same-sex relationships have not reached the stage of 'social normality', they are certainly progressing in that direction. Tactical heterosexuality is part of that journey. A number of boys in the school described homophobic scenarios of same-sex relationships, which is reminiscent of the research of Epstein (1997) and Ellis & High (2004), but were keen to distance themselves from the concept. They were happy to tell the researcher about where and when it happened, but it wasn't anything to do with them! Many conversations expressed some degree of unease on the part of the boys, where they are sometimes acutely uncomfortable about the concept, but realise that it is wrong, or politically incorrect, to say anything negative about it. Again, the suggestion is that this may be tactical, as the boys are well aware of what is 'right' and what is 'wrong', irrespective of what may be 'real' to them. A number of examples were noted of students beginning to make homophobic remarks, or starting on discourses that had homophobic overtones, but not completing these or being stopped from completing these by others. A number of interviews had conversations that clearly showed both sides of this discussion and in a small number of cases there was an attempt to adopt both stances simultaneously, again unconsciously or consciously linking back to the idea of tactical heterosexuality. The most homophobic comment witnessed throughout the research was from Matthew in response to the realisation that there were boys in the school who potentially identified as gay. The response to this was "Are you serious, I'm going to be careful." This clearly remains an uneasy situation in the Dutch International School, but the construction of masculinity in this setting is not defined by homophobia. 'Third culture' masculinity tolerates, rather than respects, homosexuality and same-sex relationships and is indicative of the tactical.

Equally, the use of language which is derogatory and demeaning to women is not unknown in the school and, again, a similar tension exists to that seen with homophobic insults. The position outlined by Willis (1977) or Abraham (1995), of boys gaining power over girls by the language they use, does not work in the Dutch International School, but this does not mean that misogynistic interpretations no longer exist or can no longer be attributed to the words. For example, there was no indication in the school that the word 'bitch' is used to gain power in a negative way (as Halberstam (1998) suggests it can be) and was used equally to refer to boys and girls, often in a friendly, joking manner; it is not a word that is used to shock or insult. However, this is less true

of the words 'slut' and 'whore'. This is reminiscent of the research of Gordon et al. (2000, P.131) who state: "girls who are assertive are called whores by boys; girls popular among boys are called whores by other girls". The overall message from students is that girls are as likely to use these words as boys, but if boys do use these words with reference to girls, then they need to be 'careful'. This is a situation where there is both a performance of what is seen as acceptable and one where the performance itself becomes the purveyor of acceptability. Linguistically this is the difference between "performing an action and simply describing one" (Fogelin & Sinnott-Armstrong 1991, P.9). 'Third culture' masculinity allows limited examples of boys negatively using power, but provides girls with the opportunity to resist power. The language of performative 'third culture' masculinity is disrupted, fragmented and presents a limited, tame and slightly covert version of what has been seen in previous research. It can also be described as tactical heterosexuality where there is an awareness of the power dynamic in the situation and students realise that in the Dutch International School they have to work within this and with the concept of respect and tolerance. However, this is not to suggest that tactical means cynical.

In terms of heterosexual relationships, something quite different is happening in that there is often a pragmatic nonchalance about them in the Dutch International School; having a relationship does not seem to matter outside of the relationship itself and the immediate groups of friends of those students. This is not a case of a school filled with the hyper-heterosexual boys of the research of Haywood (1996). There is no 'trophy' in sight and this appears to be one of the characteristics of 'third culture' masculinity. In one sense, this is actually less fragmented than other aspects of the culture, in that there is little indication of a negative dominant masculinity based on visible heterosexuality even starting to happen before it can be stopped. In the Dutch International School, unlike when Frosh et al. (2002, P126) suggest that: "the 'nice' ones were not boyish enough", maybe here the opposite is true and they actually are. Boys and girls appear to 'do' relationships differently in the Dutch International School and there is very little indication that heterosexual relationships are being used to ensure the boys in the school have 'enough' masculinity or as a way for girls to counter styles of dominant masculinity. Overall, a very limited encounter with heterosexuality is 'enough'. Heterosexual relationships only play a limited role in either the structure or the performance of 'third culture' masculinity. Heterosexuality can be described as tactical

in the sense that boys and girls are aware of how much is needed in differing situations and how much is 'allowed' within the school.

Overall, this suggests a fluid and changing linguistic performance which can be interpreted most successfully through a performative approach. This research began by noting that one of the things that was different about this study was the role that girls played and, hence, it seems appropriate that it is the girls who should have the last say on what influences 'third culture' masculinity.

#### ***7.4.3 'Third Culture' Masculinity and Female Masculinity.***

The role of girls in a schooling environment has been interpreted in a number of ways. In terms of friendships with each other, they are presented as intimate, based around smaller groups, private, focused on shared intimacies, incorporating the concept of the 'best friend' and physically affectionate (Griffiths 1995; Hey 1997; Chambers 2006). This has been contrasted with boys' friendships which are seen as hierarchical and competitive, based on larger groups and lacking intimacy. In this study the differences were not as stark and it has been argued that the boys in the Dutch International School produce a much more 'intimate' style of friendship. The situation found in previous research with boys producing a dominant style of friendship (Willis 1977) and girls using intimacy (Griffiths 1995), is not unknown at the Dutch International School, but what was noted was the regularity with which opposite performances took place. In the Dutch International School, one of the versions of 'third culture' masculinity has already been described as a hegemonic style, but the suggestion here is in a sense inverted, where the intimate becomes hegemonic behaviour for boys and the dominant becomes hegemonic behaviour for girls. Thus, the fragmentation in the culture of the school has the potential to reverse the signifiers of hegemonic gender and, hence, 'third culture' masculinity could in one sense be an inverted hegemonic masculinity. What is being suggested is that in certain ways the boys become less 'boy like' and it is the girls who are more 'boy like'. This fits in with the concept of female masculinity, where Halberstam (1998) suggests that women have always made a contribution to masculinity; this certainly has a degree of truth in the Dutch International School.

In a numerical sense, the year group and the teachers are female dominated and although this may have a limited effect, it is, overall, a naïve argument (although one

that has been proposed for the reason behind ‘failing boy syndrome’ in the UK). The roles of women and girls in the school are more complex than this and would agree with the work of Halberstam (1998), who suggests that masculine and feminine behaviours are not necessarily linked to the domains of males and females. Previous research (Griffiths 1995; 1997) suggests that female teachers are much less likely to demonstrate a domination or marginalisation of students, whereas Riddell (1989) suggests that there is also a female equivalent to the male teacher who plays up the macho role. A similar situation is found in the Dutch International School. It is certainly true within this research that there is relatively little domination and marginalisation shown by female members of staff, but this is also true of male members of staff. When it is shown, it is as likely to be from male as female teachers. However, the difference is that in a number of circumstances, this behaviour is portrayed as positive. Connected to this, in the situations where negative dominant behaviour was demonstrated by a man, it is clear that many of the girls in the Dutch International School have a degree of resilience to this style of patriarchal behaviour. As Halberstam (1998) suggests, in female masculinity there is no stigma for women showing masculinity and it can be both a sense of pride and power. This is most powerfully suggested when Halberstam (1998, P.4) notes that in the James Bond film, *Goldeneye*, “it is M (played by Judi Dench) who most convincingly performs masculinity...”. The indication here is that the level of respect for girls (and boys) offers a degree of protection and, hence, female masculinity is a significant part of ‘third culture’ masculinity.

The girls in the Dutch International School play a role in the construction of masculinity, not as those who potentially control or are controlled through sexuality, but through a degree of dominance. The girls in the school do not feel themselves to be in a subservient position and a common theme which runs through the research is that it is girls who are ‘policing’ conversations and behaviour and, arguably, ensuring that the boys do not become homophobic and gain dominance over girls and ‘other’ boys; the girls partially patrol ‘third culture’ masculinity. In previous research (Walkerdine 1990; Hey 1997), the role of girls has been interpreted as partially powerful and partially submissive, but in the Dutch International School it is much clearer than this; their role is pivotal and powerful. This could be interpreted as a dominant, but essentially ‘nice’ masculinity, but this is a ‘nice’ masculinity that is equally portrayed by the boys – it is not one where the girls have an illusion of control and the boys control in reality. It could also be argued that the boys ‘allow’ the girls a degree of influence, while the boys

maintain a degree of control which is not absolute – a benevolent patriarchy. In one sense this fits the concept of a ‘nice’ as well as ‘benevolent’ masculinity, but again there are many situations where ‘nice’ actually means kind and considerate and the girls in the school are able to genuinely show ‘respectful dominance’. In the Dutch International School, masculinity is no longer a synonym for men and maleness and this is most effectively described as female masculinity.

Having said this, as with other aspects of the Dutch International School, the role of girls and women remains disrupted and fragmented and this research is not suggesting that this is a case of the girls and female members of staff in the school demonstrating a hegemonic femininity, although some of the indicators of hegemony are in one sense ‘feminine’. ‘Third culture’ masculinity suggests that girls have a significant role to play in the hierarchical structure of masculinity and that they both influence the hierarchy and are protected by the hierarchy. Ultimately, this could be a more extreme case of the ideas of Brittan (1989), when he notes that not all women are oppressed by concepts including compulsory heterosexuality, hierarchic sexuality, hegemonic masculinity and heterosexualism. In this situation, very few seem to be. So maybe Pleck (1982) is right when he suggests that schools are ‘feminised’, but not in any causal sense and maybe not to the detriment of the male or female inhabitants of the institution. Overall, there is clearly a role for female masculinity as part of ‘third culture’ masculinity.

## **7.5 Conclusion.**

The past four and half years have been an eventful journey - considering, contemplating and theorising the way masculinity is constructed in the Dutch International School and working with the concept of ‘third culture’ masculinity to find a way of theorising which would fit the unusual situation found in the school. This is now summarised.

‘Third-culture’ masculinity is a theoretical concept that explains how those living in multi-cultural settings, where there is a genuine diversity of cultural background and practices potentially dependent on ethnic and class-based parameters, can construct masculinities over a range of broad social fields. It describes the power relations and the tensions that exist between what has been called the dominant and the subordinate. It is the unique and deep mixing of cultures, cultural practices, and beliefs in this scenario, what has been termed ‘third culture’, that is highly relevant in this scenario. It is also

about the fact that the roles of fighting and violence and the centrality of the body, ideas that are prevalent in much previous research are left out here.

The concept of 'third culture' masculinity is one which is fluid and socially constructed, one that is structured, but also one where young people need to negotiate masculinity within their everyday lives. This draws upon the work of Connell (1995) where he suggests that there is not just one pattern of masculinity, but a series of patterns which are differentiated, and each stands against each other in terms of power. Young people who are constructing 'third culture' masculinity clearly understand that there is not just one way of doing masculinity and that the circumstances they are in strongly influence the behaviour they demonstrate. It is both influenced by and contributes towards the setting in which it is placed.

The institution provides the material resources through which masculinities are made and in the context of the international school, one of the key discourses is that of respect. The institution within which this happens is key to this and it is the idea of respect that influences and structures the behaviour within the school. By structure this research is referring to the concept of structuring properties, which allows for similar practices to happen across space and time and for it to have a form. This structuring of 'third culture' masculinity through respect is demonstrated in a number of ways that include the school ethos and the pedagogic practices. For example, teachers at this school are fully aware of the role of respect within the school and although this does not stop aspects of what previous research would call dominant behaviour, it certainly regulates it. Teachers therefore create a particular kind of teaching relationship that involves sensitivity for the background and culture of the students and is often one where there is a keen understanding of the circumstances of these students, but not in terms of trying to be like the students or in terms of becoming friends with the students. This is different to previous research (c.f. Skelton 2001; Reid et al. 2004) where dominant behaviour by teachers is exemplified by name calling, repeated references to non-emotional behaviour, and bonding through being successful at and interested in sport, which then allows them to put certain boys and girls in positions without power and others in positions of power. Also, in this context, sport and academic success are respected and play an important role, but as a student, if you do it well you are respected for it, if you do it badly it does not matter and if you don't do it at all, that is your decision; there appears to be respect for the choices made.

Within 'third culture' masculinity the students show an awareness of hierarchy as suggested by Connell's theory on hegemonic masculinity, but 'third culture' masculinity does question the nature of that hierarchy. Unlike theorists who have questioned the concept of the hierarchy itself (Francis 2000; Martino 2008b), in this theoretical approach it is about holding different parts of a hierarchy as important at different times and for teachers and students to try to make the hierarchy balance. It is the subjective negotiation of multiple voices about gender that configure the 'third culture' masculinity in this school. For example 'third culture' masculinity in this school allows a role for both academic success and sporting success and at different times and places they hold slightly different positions in the hierarchy. Importantly, in this particular school the main discourse is one of respect and it is the notion of respect that partially structures 'third culture' masculinity. However, in different schools the discourse could be indicative of different values.

Within 'third culture' masculinity there is ultimately a tension between the stable identities that circulate through self-perception, peer groups, international, national and global discourses and the disrupted and fragmented identities where students are influenced by a whole range of different and varied cultural and media-related signifiers and it is the negotiation through these contradictions that signifies the concept of 'third culture' masculinity. This understanding suggests that structural factors impact upon the formation of 'third culture' masculinity and yet that impact is not always self-evident. In other words, the local contextual factors help shape how 'third culture' masculinities become materialised. Hence to consider 'third culture' masculinity through the concept of structure alone leaves important characteristics of 'third culture' masculinity under-theorised.

To explain this, within the structure of 'third culture' masculinity there is a strongly interpretivist element being used by students, which draws on the work of Goffman (1959), Butler (1990) and Halberstam (1998). Within this context it is no longer possible to work with a simple, oppositional binary structure where men are seen as oppressors and women as the oppressed. Thus 'third culture' masculinity is a negotiation between the institutional and the subjective; it is a matter of personal negotiation, in that it is defined in part by the discourses, performances and interactions that take place between students and teachers. In this context 'third culture' masculinity

draws on the concept of 'performance' as suggested by Goffman (1959). Performance relates to "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman 1959, P. 32). 'Third culture' masculinity does not allow certain negative behaviours that have commonly been theorised as part of masculinity to stabilise. However, it is not that these negative behaviours are totally unknown and hence 'third culture' masculinity does not have the absolute power to sustain wholly positive behaviours. For example using homophobic language and potential homophobic bullying are not commonly found in the school, but it is not like the research of McCormack & Anderson (2010) where the suggestion is that these behaviours are no longer found. As McCormack & Anderson (2010, P.850) state: "When we raised the issue of homophobia in interviews, *all* informants positioned themselves against it." This leads to a potentially unstable and not fully coherent position within the structure, one that is interpreted by the students and defined by their performance. 'Third culture' masculinity in this international school is a masculinity that can be defined as 'nice' and 'caring', but one where there are still aspects of what previous research has described as dominant masculine behaviour. As Goffman (1959, P.37) suggests the individual performance is regulated by the institution and any "given social front tends to become institutionalised."

One important aspect of 'third culture' masculinity that is explained in this way is that students in this environment are both conscious and considered about what they say, which leads to the notion of tactical heterosexuality. Students realise the power that can be gained from a demonstration of heterosexuality as noted in previous research (Willis 1977; Abraham 1995; Haywood 1996; Frosh et al. 2002). However, they are also aware of the lack of power that comes from a demonstration of homosexuality as demonstrated in the research of Boulton et al. (2002) and Reid et al. (2004). Within 'third culture' masculinity students will not use either to any extreme and they consciously understand how far they can use it. This suggests that although the concept is important it is also a concept that has a limit in that it does not allow students to necessarily construct wholly positive scenarios. The role of the institution and of respect in helping structure 'third culture' masculinity is important but not absolute. In terms of heterosexuality, existing work suggests that there this is always a negotiated and performed aspect. In this context, there is no 'trophy' in sight and although the views on male same-sex relationships have not reached the stage of 'social normality', they are certainly



progressing in that direction. A number of boys in the school described homophobic scenarios of same-sex relationships, but were keen to distance themselves from the concept. 'Third culture' masculinity tolerates, rather than respects homosexuality and this suggests the concept of tactical heterosexuality. The actions of the body, which so often are indicative of promoting heterosexuality and denigrating homosexuality, only have limited purchase within tactical heterosexuality and are replaced by a more ambiguous but conscious linguistic performance. Although it is a performed and negotiated aspect of 'third culture' masculinity, ultimately tactical heterosexuality is influenced by the level of respect for difference within the school. This connects with the ideas of Goffman (1959, P231) when he suggests: "Within the walls of a social establishment we find a team of performers who cooperate to present to an audience a given definition of the situation."

'Third culture' masculinity also appears to move beyond male/female boundaries and there is evidence to suggest that within 'third culture' masculinity, it is the girls who 'patrol' the boys. At times, 'third culture' masculinity is disembodied. Girls play a role in the construction of 'third culture' masculinity, not as those who potentially control or are controlled through sexuality, but through a degree of constant reflection and comment on practices; it is girls who are 'policing' conversations and behaviour and, arguably, ensuring that the boys do not become homophobic and gain dominance over girls and 'other' boys - the girls partially patrol tactical heterosexuality and with it 'third culture' masculinity. This is indicative of the concept of a border where often "border has stood for the politics of displacement, the hybridity of identity" (Halberstam 1998, P.171). Johnson (1997, P.12) also uses the concept of borders, which he suggests are oppressive "because they are invested with power and involve unequal conditions on either side of the borderline." In a certain sense this allows girls to show a performance of dominance, where the concept is used to indicate the idea of holding an upper hand and influencing behaviour without significant questioning, but does not necessarily imply the negative controlling aspect which is often portrayed within the concept. It is suggested that the extent to which masculinity is defined by the body is limited in the concept of 'third culture' masculinity and the words masculinity and man can no longer be read as wholly symbolic of each other. Masculinity in 'third culture' masculinity is in part defined by behaviour and linguistic discourses. This agrees with the work of Butler (1990) when she discusses a 'performative theory of gender', in which gender identity is no longer attributable to an individual, but is an act which must be repeatedly

performed and with Halberstam (1998) who suggests in particular that we need to disconnect gender from bodies. Ultimately, this is neatly summed up when Harding (1998, P. 52), describing the work of Butler, suggests gender is

the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.

In one sense ‘third culture’ masculinity can be identified through grounded theory in that much of the evidence for it has emerged from the data and it has the four interrelated properties suggested by Glaser & Strauss (1967, P.237):

The first requisite property is that the theory must closely *fit* the substantive area in which it will be used. Second, it must be readily *understandable* by laymen concerned with this area. Third, it must be sufficiently *general* to be applicable to a multitude of diverse daily situations within the substantive area, not just a specific type of situation. Fourth, it must allow the user partial *control* over the structure and process of daily situations as they change through time.

Although the notion of synthesising the structural and the post-structural is strongly rejected in some research (Whitehead, 2002), the idea is not wholly unknown and Goffman (1959) suggests that disruptions in performance influence social structures. The research of Coles (2009) suggests an interpretation of the structural and post-structural is possible through Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and fields, which this research will now consider through ‘third culture’ masculinity. According to Coles (2009, P.34) what is being suggested is the idea of “constructivist structuralism that considers how individuals support and challenge dominant social structures through their individual practices”. Bourdieu (1984, P.101) describes habitus as an objective relationship which “enables an intelligible and necessary relationship to be established between practices and a situation”. Coles (2009, P.34) suggests that this can be interpreted further by describing habitus as “the ways in which individuals live out their daily lives through practices that are synchronized with the actions of others around them.” Habitus is what allows individuals to navigate their way through individual daily situations with a degree of flexibility that is not wholly constrained by the structure. Although Bourdieu (1984, P.101) himself did not theorise masculinity in this way the

fact that he suggests structured symbolic space can be marked out by “distinct and distinctive lifestyles which are always defined objectively and sometimes subjectively in and through their mutual relationships” is indicative of the basis of much of the work undertaken on understanding masculinity. The structures are not the rigid and specific rules and norms that are often suggestive of a structured approach, but can be interpreted as guidelines which leave the person that degree of flexibility. This is exemplified through the use of potentially sexist and homophobic language, where the guidelines for what it means are structured by the concept of respect, but there is a degree of flexibility in how this is interpreted. Furthermore according to Light & Kirk (2000) habitus can also usefully be interpreted as the embodied social history of the individual and hence the actions of the body can be interpreted through this. According to Coles (2009, P.35): “Fields shape the structure of the social setting in which habitus operates and include social institutions such as law and education.” There may be a variety of fields, in this case the school itself and the role of masculinity and it is suggested that students can ‘perform’ within those fields, but that they are ultimately unable to step outside of the field. Finally Coles (2009, P.36) gives an explanation of capital as “a resource that is the object of the struggle within fields and which functions as a social relation of power.” Interpreted in this context, the idea of international schools can be thought of as a field and hence dictate a loose structure. Within these fields there are sites of domination and sites of subordination – the capital. The role of habitus is to allow interpretation by those within the fields, which allows for the negotiation of what is meant by ‘third culture’ masculinity. As Coles (2009, P.39) suggests:

The struggle for legitimacy that exists in the field of masculinity between dominant and subordinated masculinities is validated by habitus and the belief that one’s own masculinity is “natural” and “true.”

In one sense ‘third culture’ masculinity could be thought of as being in a subordinated position through hegemonic definitions of masculinity. However, within the field it could also be argued that ‘third culture’ masculinity is actually dominant as it fits the description of a style of masculinity that is wanted and desired by both boys and girls in the school. This allows for a structured approach as it is now able to take into account other dominant masculinities within the field; it allows for personal negotiation within the structure, which is how ‘third culture’ masculinity is constituted. As (Coles 2009,

P.42) states: “As there are a multitude of fields in which masculinities operate, so too are there necessary different versions of dominant (and subordinate) masculinities”. ‘Third culture’ masculinity agrees with this scenario and suggests that this incorporation of negotiation and performance within the structure needs to be a possibility. Ultimately ‘third culture’ masculinity is constituted through a combination of structural and post-structural approaches and provides a context that backs up the position that they are not necessarily totally incompatible. They provide explanations in a different way and to a different degree of absoluteness and both are necessary to gain a full picture.

Given that ‘third culture’ masculinity has both a structural and post-structural element to it, there are potentially a number of areas of current theory for which it provides a different approach. The idea of hegemonic masculinity has been at the forefront of structured theories of masculinity for over thirty years, but it is not a theory that is without its critics (Francis 2000; Beasley 2008; Anderson & McGuire 2010). This research would agree that ‘third culture’ masculinity is to a degree structured, but it offers suggestions on how we can work with the idea of exactly who demonstrates and what behaviours signify a hegemonic masculinity and that what constitutes a ‘proof’ of masculinity in one context, does not do so in a different context. The role of respect and tactical heterosexuality both suggest a way in which specific signifiers of hegemony can be altered according to situation and hence explain and allow for hegemonic behaviour which is situationally dependent. ‘Third culture’ masculinity allows for a degree of hegemonic behaviour within the structure of the institution, but due to the negotiated perspective which works within the structure and influences the students’ style of behaviour, exactly what constitutes the hegemonic in this institution and how much influence it has is open to disruption. It also provides insight into the concept of the hierarchy itself, since by allowing a degree of personal negotiation ‘third culture’ masculinity allows for a degree of flexibility in the hierarchy, which has an influence on the way in which both young men and women negotiate their identities; it considers both the structural fixed nature of the hierarchy and the negotiated need for fluidity within the hierarchy.

In terms of masculinity seen as performative or post-structural, the concept of ‘third culture’ masculinity suggests that the individual construction of a masculine identity is not something that happens alone as it is the interpretation of outside influences that form identity and these outside influences have a degree of structure to them. This

partially agrees with both Nguyen (2008) and Butler (2000) when they suggest that gender performativity “is compelled and impelled within a set of cultural constraints” (Nguyen 2008, P.669). Although there is clearly a fragmented and disrupted aspect to ‘third culture’ masculinity, the fact that the vast majority of students ‘fit’ to some degree suggests that the approach taken must consider the concept of fragmentation, but not absolute fragmentation – it is fragmentation in a structured setting. As Butler (2000, P.110) states:

To the extent that gender is an assignment, it is an assignment which is never quite carried out according to expectation, whose addressee never quite inhabits the ideal s/he is compelled to approximate.

Within this study, masculinity and femininity are not seen as simplistic concepts that dovetail with each other, but as complex intertwined behaviours that influence both structure and performance. For example, it is important to consider the role of female masculinity, but within a structured environment – the girls often ‘police’ the boys, but it is within a structure of respect that is dictated by the school. In one sense the performer is constituted by the performance and the performer is to a degree restrained by the structure. ‘Third culture’ masculinity allows for self-determination, but does so in a structured way.

Overall this has the following implications for existing research on masculinity:

1. The idea of masculinity being negotiated and performed within a structure. A structured approach is often used in consideration of masculinities and schooling and ‘third culture’ masculinity puts forward the need to consider the idea of negotiation and performance within that structure.
2. The mono-cultural nature of the work. Most of the research undertaken on constructions of gender have taken place in mono-cultural settings and ‘third culture’ masculinity offers an approach where the multi-cultural nature of the setting plays a key role.
3. The material assumptions about boys and girls and how this is different. In previous research in schooling and masculinity certain roles and assumptions are often made about girls and boys. ‘Third culture’ masculinity offers a different approach considering roles that are more fluid.

4. The role of the body in portraying masculinity. The performance of the body is often seen as central in previous research and 'third culture' masculinity suggests an approach where students do not wholly make sense of their gendered identities in this way.

This study has taken into account the views of students, teachers and parents in the Dutch International School to formulate ideas on the construction of masculinity in that scenario. For this group of students, what is theorised has a distinct bearing on the lived reality of those students. As there is a large degree of similarity within different year groups in the school, it also makes sense to talk about these results in light of the Dutch International School as a whole. However, in terms of how this study can be applied to all international schools this becomes less certain. For example, Mc Kenzie (1998) cited in Hayden et al. (2000, P.107) argues that the word "international" in international schools is used with 5 different meanings. In not all scenarios does 'international' lead to a full and deep multicultural experience. A critical realist perspective allows for there to be doubt in terms of what is produced and these theories on 'third culture' masculinity are not a wholly objective viewpoint producing an absolute version of truth that applies equally in all relevant settings. As Flyvbjerg (2006, P.223) states:

Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory and, thus, has in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context dependent knowledge.

Hall & Callery (2001, P.260) also express doubt about the extent to which grounded theory can theorise the natural world when they state: "However natural the context within which they occur, interview and observational data must be created during the process of data collection". Ultimately as Strauss & Corbin (1990) explicitly argue reality cannot be fully known but can always be interpreted.

However, while being mindful of these reservations, there is the potential to explore how young people in a variety of different educational settings work with the concept of 'third culture' masculinity. Obviously the degree of diversity and the influence of national culture may be different, but this should produce variations of 'third culture' masculinity rather than a setting where 'third culture' masculinity is inappropriate. The main signifiers may change but the idea of a fluid and negotiated masculinity within a

structure remains intact and it would be interesting to see the potentially different degrees of fragmentation and fluidity, especially in scenarios where the views of the host country may be radically different from the mission of the school. This implies that there may also be a role for the consideration of 'third culture' masculinity in more diverse settings, for example national schools with a multi-ethnic perspective, which could then lead to consideration on how developing a more multi-cultural perspective could give rise to a potentially more respectful scenario. It might also be useful to schools seeking to foster a culture of inclusivity and respect as it questions the degree to which school commitment and masculinity are fundamentally incompatible. For example when Skelton (2001) talks about some of the issues with boys in schools, the notion of 'third culture' masculinity could apply. Skelton (2001) suggests that boys in a national setting are often constituted as *Poor Boys* who are victims of female dominated schools, as *Failing Boys* who do not perform with a high enough degree of academic success or as *Boys Will be Boys* which conceives of boys in stereotypical ways and suggests that boys characteristics are "natural" and a result of biology and psychology. There is room for consideration of all of these under the notion of 'third culture' masculinity, which has the consideration of the feminine and the role of girls as one of its central characteristics and considers the role of academic success within masculinity construction.

Furthermore it is suggested that the concept of 'third culture' masculinity may have a role to play in the media interest in the falling academic performance of boys, which is sometimes interpreted in terms of masculine identity (Head 1999, Noble & Bradford 2000). Ultimately this could be considered in an even wider context and this study has the potential to make a valuable contribution to understandings of the influences and problems in schools where racial conflicts and expressions of violence need to be addressed as well as more general research into styles of teaching and teacher's behaviour. The fact that 'third culture' masculinity has a degree of fluidity within the structure should allow this concept to be applied in many school settings. However, it still needs to be stressed that this would need very careful consideration, as when the setting is changed there is the potential to change the structure. Ultimately as Glaser & Strauss (1967) state about the work of Goffman, there remains a tension in this research between what is theorised and how this describes the reality of an empirical world. It is important to remember that 'third culture' is a concept and that it can make sense to use

it in other areas of education and schooling, but that in that context it may take on different norms and values.

What is clear to me is that although there remains a tentative nature to the results, and the Dutch International School is by no means 'perfect', it is clearly doing many things right. It is a school with students who care about a whole range of ideas and activities and with teachers who care for and respect students. The masculinity on show at the school is in accordance with this. 'Difference' is so often portrayed as negative, but within the Dutch International School being 'different' clearly means something positive. This is one of the overriding concepts of 'third culture' masculinity. If nothing else, this needs to be held onto and with so much research in education focusing on what is going wrong, it is pleasing to provide research which suggests that, on occasions, education does something right. Once again this suggests that the concept of 'third culture' masculinity has something to add to both current theory and current practice.

To conclude, I return to the two critical incidents that were noted at the start of the introduction and it is now clear that what had opened my eyes to the possibility of the Dutch International School constructing masculinity differently had been, in part, related to the concept of female masculinity. To finish, I would like to refer to a quote made by Elaine when, in her interview, she reported a conversation between two mothers. The comment she reported was: "I can assure you that no son of mine will ever get in touch with his feminine side." Within the Dutch international School her son may or may not be fully in touch with his feminine side, but both he and his masculinity will certainly be influenced by the feminine and maybe that is no bad thing.



## **Appendices.**

## **Appendix A: Student Questionnaire.**

Questionnaire number

***Student Experiences of Schooling.***

.....

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

NAME:

SEX:

AGE:

The information you give on this questionnaire will be treated with strictest confidence. When this study is written up no names will be used in order to protect anonymity. The data will not be made available, except in statistical form, to anyone else. I need your name so that I can select members of focus groups and participants for one to one interviews in the future.

***Please answer all questions as fully as possible. If you cannot answer a question please state this.***

1. How many years have you been educated at an international school?

2. Write down five words or phrases that describe the atmosphere in this school.

3. Are the majority of your friends in school male or female?

Male

Female

About the same

4. Think about the person you would consider to be your best friend. Write down the most important quality or qualities that he/she has.

5. Write down up to five things that you most commonly discuss with your friends.

6. Do you have someone you would consider to be a girlfriend or a boyfriend?

Yes ☐

No ☐

7. Has having a boyfriend or girlfriend changed your friendships within school?

Give one sentence explaining your answer.

8. Without naming names, write down the qualities of the person you respect the most in a class situation.

9. Boys are more likely to be disruptive in class than girls. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

10. There is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes.  
Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. Teachers treat male students differently to female students. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

12. Write down three words or phrases that generally describe the atmosphere in a classroom in this school?

13. Where do you normally hang out at break time?

14. There is an area of school that is dominated by girls at break time. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. There is an area of school that is dominated by boys at break time. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

16. I would consider myself to be good at sport. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

17. My friendships are based around sport. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. Bullying could take place in this school because someone is not good at sport. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

19. As a girl, being good at sport makes you more popular. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

20. As a boy, being good at sport makes you more popular. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

21. How do students treat another student who is good at sport? Make sure that you explain your answer.

22. How do students treat another student who is bad at sport? Make sure that you explain your answer.

23. Strong disagreements between boys only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

24. Strong disagreements between girls only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree



25. Strong disagreements between girls and boys are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

26. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between two boys.




27. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between two girls.




28. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between a boy and a girl.




29. Are you aware of students being called names at school?

Yes ☐

No ☐

30. If yes, write down three names that boys are likely to call other boys.


31. If yes, write down three names that girls are likely to call other girls.


32. If yes, write down three names that boys are likely to call other girls.


33. If yes, write down three names that girls are likely to call other boys.


34. Are there subjects you have not chosen to study because of the teacher teaching that subject? Without mentioning names, give a one sentence explanation.

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## **Appendix B: Results of Student Questionnaires.**

## Participants

30 girls, 19 boys.

## Age.

Range 15 –17.

**Question 1.** How many years have you been educated at an international school?

2 years or less. 12, 6 male 6 female.

More than 2 years. 36, 13 male 23 female.

**Question 2.** Words describing the atmosphere of the school.

Accepting	Active x2	Airport x2		
Bitchy	Boring x2	Broad x2	Busy	Better
Bustling				
Cosy x6	Curriculum based	Chaotic x2	Complicated	Childish
Cold x2	Cultural	Competitive	Comfortable x2	Cheap
Content	Colourful	Comforting	Calm	
Disorganised x5	Diverse x2	Different	Disgruntled	Decent
Empty	Energetic x2	Enjoyable	Educational x2	
Fun x13	Friendly x17	Fake x2	Funny	Fruitful
Familiar				
Good				
Helpful	Hard x2	Humour x2	Happy	
Impersonal	Inspiring	International x6	Isolated	Interesting x3
Jovial				
Kind				
Lively x2	Laid back	Large x3	Loud x2	
Mess x3	Monotone	Modern		
Neutral	Nice x2			
Open x3	Open minded x8	Opportunity filled		
Pressured	Privileged			
Quiet				
Respectful	Relaxed x3	Routine	Random x2	
Stressful x8	Social	Strict x2	Spirited	Sporting
Social				
Tolerant x3	Tiring			
Unestablished				
Varied x2				
Work	Welcoming x3	Weird x2	Warm x2	

**Question 3.** Are the majority of your friends in school male or female?

		Sex of friends			Total
		male	female	about the same	
Sex	male	9	1	9	19
	female	4	16	10	30
Total		13	17	19	49

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.418(a)	2	.001
Likelihood Ratio	15.496	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.714	1	.398
N of Valid Cases	49		

Statistically it is significant that the sex of the majority of their friends depends on their sex. In other words most males have male friends and most females have female friends.

**Question 4.** What are the most important qualities of your best friend?

Ability to say no	Able to confide in	
Caring	Crazy x5	Cute
Close	Comforting	
Easy going x3	Easy to talk to x2	Extrovert
Entertaining x2		
Funny x14	Fun x9	Friendly x5
Forthright		
Good listener x3		
Honest x6	Have own opinions x2	Has answer to everything
Interesting	Intelligent x4	
Joking		
Know me well	Kind x3	
Likes similar things x3	Like me x5	Loyal x5
Lovable	Laughs	
Nice x2	Non-judgemental	
Open-minded x4		
Practical		
Reliable x3	Respectful x2	
Sweet	Stylish	Silly
Serious		
Trust x11		
Understanding x8		
Weird	Wild	

**Question 5.** What things do you most commonly discuss with your friends?

Boys x16	Basketball x2			
Computers	Clothes x6			
Drinking x2	Drama x2			
Events	Emotions	Experiences	Extra curricular activities	
Family x6	Friends x5	Food x4	Football x4	Fun
Free time	Fights			
Games x9	Girls x12	Going out x15	Gossip x5	
Holidays				
Interests x2	Identity			
Life x6	Lack of sleep			
Music x9	Magic	Mathematics		
News	Nationalities			
People x6	Problems x4	Personal issues	Personal interests	Plans
Philosophy				
Relationships/sex x20				
School x20	Shopping x4	Smoking x2	Sport x7	
Television x4	Teachers x4	Things that happen x3		
Work x10	Weather			

**Question 6.** Do you have a boyfriend or girlfriend?

		Boyfriend or girlfriend		Total
		yes	no	
Sex	male	6	13	19
	female	12	18	30
Total		18	31	49

No statistical evidence to suggest that girls or boys are more likely to have a partner. No informal numerical evidence to support this claim either.

**Question 7.** Has a relationship changed your friendship?

Yes x9
Lose focus on school
Spend more time with him/her x2
Prioritise differently
Makes other friendships weaker
Female respondent: I lost other male friends
In a good way
It's not official so we cannot be open
No x9
Still stay friends with old friends
Boy/girlfriend outside school x2
My friends are my boy/girlfriends friends
But it took a bit of getting used to
I always put my friends first x2

There is informal numerical evidence to suggest that this is truer for boys than girls, but it not statistically significant. The numbers in the samples of those who said yes and those who said no are too small.

**Question 8.** What are the qualities of the person you respect most in a class situation?

Accepts when they are wrong	Ambitious	Argues well	
Considerate x3	Calm x3		
Diligent	Determined		
Focussed x2	Fun		
Good listener x2			
Honest x2	Helpful x6	Humorous x5	Hard working
Intelligent x13	Interesting	Interested	Insightful
Kind x2			
Leader x2			
Modest	Make people listen x3		
Nice	Neutral	Not too serious	
Outspoken x3	Opinionated x3	Outgoing	Objective
Open			
Participate			
Quiet x2			
Reasonable	Respectful x9	Reflective	
Speaks up	Separates work and play	Sporty	
Talkative x2	Trustworthy x2	Think about what they say	Tolerant
Thoughtful	Team player		
Understanding			
Wise			

**Question 9.** Boys are more likely to be disruptive in class than girls.

Strongly disagree	4
Disagree	6
Neutral	24
Agree	14
Strongly agree	1

		Are boys more disruptive than girls					
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Sex	male	2	3	10	3	1	19
	female	2	3	14	11	0	30
Total		4	6	24	14	1	49

There is no difference between how boys and girls see this statistically. However there is informal numerical evidence to suggest that more girls than boys believe that boys are more disruptive in class. The frequencies suggest that overall, students agree boys are more likely to be disruptive in class than girls.

**Question 10.** There is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	3
Neutral	13
Agree	29
Strongly agree	3

		Are boys more disruptive than girls	Do m and f teachers control differently
Are boys more disruptive than girls	Pearson Correlation	1	-.152
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.297
	N	49	49
Do m and f teachers control differently	Pearson Correlation	-.152	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.297	
	N	49	49

There is no difference between how boys and girls see this statistically. However, frequencies suggest that overall students agree that there is difference in how male and female teachers control their classes. There is a non-significant negative correlation between students who believe boys are more disruptive than girls in class and students who believe male and female teachers control their classes differently.



**Question 11.** Teachers treat male students differently to female students.

Strongly disagree	5
Disagree	3
Neutral	14
Agree	21
Strongly agree	5

		Do m and f teachers control differently	Teachers treat m and f students differently
Do m and f teachers control differently	Pearson Correlation	1	.229
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.113
	N	49	49
Teachers treat m and f students differently	Pearson Correlation	.229	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.113	
	N	49	49

The frequencies suggest that teachers do treat male and female students differently and 4 of the 5 who strongly agreed were boys. Statistically there is no difference in how boys and girls see this and no indication that the length of time spent at an international school effects this either. There is a non-significant weak positive correlation between questions 10 and 11.

**Question 12.** What is the classroom atmosphere in this school?

Active	Accepting x2	Attentive	Annoying
Boring x15			
Comfortable x5	Crazy x2	Cold	Controlled
Disruptive x7	Didactic	Disrespectful x2	
Educational x3	Equality	Exciting	
Familiar	Friendly x3	Fun x6	
Humorous x6	Hard working x3	Happy x3	Helpful x2
Interesting x4	Ironic	Intense x2	
Loud x3	Lively x2		
Messy			
Noisy x3	Nice		
Open minded x2			
Pleasant			
Quiet x4	Quality		
Relaxed x5	Respectful x4		
Strict	Silent x3	Sleepy x5	Stressful x2
Slow			
Tiring x2	Tense		
Unengaging			
Varied			
Warm			

**Question 13.** Where do you normally hang out at break time?

The most common answer was the IB room and there is no evidence to suggest that there is a difference between boys and girls.

**Question 14.** Is there an area of school that is dominated by girls at break time?

Strongly disagree	7
Disagree	21
Neutral	13
Agree	6
Strongly agree	0

The frequencies suggest it is not true and there is no statistical difference in how girls and boys see this.

**Question 15.** Is there an area of school that is dominated by boys at break time?

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	12
Neutral	11
Agree	20
Strongly agree	2

The frequencies suggest it is true and there is no statistical difference in how girls and boys see this.

**Question 16.** I would consider myself to be good at sport.

Strongly disagree	6
Disagree	5
Neutral	15
Agree	13
Strongly agree	10

The frequencies suggest this is true and there is informal numerical evidence to suggest that boys are more likely to consider themselves good at sport rather than girls.

**Question 17.** My friendships are based around sports.

Strongly disagree	23
Disagree	12
Neutral	6
Agree	7
Strongly agree	0

Overall the frequencies suggest the students do not agree with this and there is no difference in how girls and boys see this.

**Question 18.** Bullying could take place in this school because someone is not good at sport.

Strongly disagree	18
Disagree	21
Neutral	4
Agree	4
Strongly agree	1

Overall the frequencies suggest the students strongly disagree with this. There is no indication that length of time at an international school effects and there is no difference in how girls and boys see this.

**Question 19.** As a girl does being good at sport make you more popular?

Strongly disagree	9
Disagree	20
Neutral	10
Agree	6
Strongly agree	2

		Recoded 19			
		overall disagree	neutral	overall agree	Total
Sex	male	7	5	5	17
	female	22	5	3	30
Total		29	10	8	47

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.049(a)	2	.080
Likelihood Ratio	5.010	2	.082
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.806	1	.028
N of Valid Cases	47		

		Bullying because of sport	Girls good at sport more popular
Bullying because of sport	Pearson Correlation	1	.503(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	48	46
Girls good at sport more popular	Pearson Correlation	.503(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	47

		Girls good at sport more popular	Sex
Girls good at sport more popular	Pearson Correlation	1	-.379(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	47	47
Sex	Pearson Correlation	-.379(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	47	49

		Girls good at sport more popular	Friendship based around sport
Girls good at sport more popular	Pearson Correlation	1	.296(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.046
	N	47	46
Friendship based around sport	Pearson Correlation	.296(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.046	
	N	46	48

Overall students do not agree. There is informal numerical evidence to suggest the people who think they are good at sport are more likely to think it makes girls more popular and those who are not good are more likely to think it doesn't make you more popular. There is strong informal evidence to suggest that boys are more likely to think this than girls, but the result is not statistically significant. There is a strong positive correlation between the results here and those of question 18, which is statistically significant. There is weaker negative correlation between this and sex, which is also statistically significant. Finally there is a positive correlation between this and question 17, which is statistically significant.

**Question 20.** As a boy does being good at sport makes you more popular?

Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	7
Neutral	11
Agree	21
Strongly agree	6

From the frequencies, overall the students agree and there is no evidence to suggest that girls and boys see this differently. Informal numerical evidence suggests if you are good at sport then you are more likely to think it makes you more popular, but that it is not true that if you are bad at sport it doesn't make you more popular.

**Question 21.** How do students treat another student who is good at sport?

The most common responses were 26 who say no different and 11 who say with respect. There is informal numerical evidence that boys are more likely to think more highly of someone who is good at sport than girls. However the result is not statistically significant.

**Question 22.** How do students treat another student who is bad at sport?

30 say no different and 8 say worse. There is no evidence to suggest that boys and girls see this differently.

**Question 23.** Strong disagreements between boys are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	16
Neutral	15
Agree	14
Strongly agree	1

The frequencies suggest that the results are evenly spread. There is informal numerical evidence to suggest that boys are more likely to agree with the statement than girls.

**Question 24.** Strong disagreements between girls only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	4
Neutral	11
Agree	23
Strongly agree	7

Overall the frequencies suggest a strong agreement with the statement. There is no evidence to suggest that boys and girls see this differently.

**Question 25.** Strong disagreements between girls and boys are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	4
Neutral	6
Agree	23
Strongly agree	16

The frequencies suggest that overall there is very strong agreement with the statement and there is no evidence to suggest that boys and girls see it differently.

**Question 26.** Causes of disagreements between boys.

Attitude x2			
Basketball	Bullying x3	Bragging x5	Betrayal
Culture x4			
Dishonesty	Dominance x2		
Football x5	Friends x2	Fashion	
Girls x43	Games		
Lack of respect x8	Lies		
Mean jokes	Money x3	Music x3	Misunderstandings
Not keeping secrets			
Personal opinion x3	Personality x2	Previous insults	Proving yourself right
Religion			
Sport x13	School work x4	Stupidity x2	
Testosterone x2	T.V.		
Unfair treatment			

**Question 27.** Causes of disagreements between girls.

Attitude			
Boys x38	Backstabbing x8	Bitching x2	Betrayal x2
Bossy			
Drama queen x2	Disrespect x2	Dishonesty	
Friends x13	Fashion x11		
Gossip x9			
Ignoring			
Jealousy x4			
Looks of another girl x7			
Money	Mean jokes		
Pre-menstrual tension x4	Personal opinion x2	Personality	
Stress	Smoking	Sport	

**Question 28.** Causes of disagreements between boys and girls.

Annoying behaviour x3			
Bullying	Behaviour x3	Backstabbing x2	Betrayal
Cheating x5	Cars		
Drama	Difference in taste	Disrespect x6	Difference of opinion
Friends x16	Flirting x2	Food x2	
Gossip	Gender related jokes		
Intelligence x2	Innuendo		
Jealousy x5			
Lies	Lack of attention	Loneliness	
Mean jokes	Male/female beliefs	Music x2	
Personal opinion x3	Personality x2		
Relationships x26			
Sexism	Sport		
View of the world			
Work			

**Question 29.** Are you aware of students being called names in school?

**Name calling**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	32	65.3	65.3	65.3
no	17	34.7	34.7	100.0
Total	49	100.0	100.0	

**Sex \* Name calling Crosstabulation**

Count

		Name calling		Total
		yes	no	
Sex	male	12	7	19
	female	20	10	30
Total		32	17	49

This was not always interpreted in a negative sense which is what was meant. Hence this skews the results. There is no evidence to suggest that boys and girls view this differently.

**Question 30.** The names that boys are likely to call other boys.

Asshole x6	Ass				
Bastard x4	Brother x2				
Cunt					
Dude x3	Douche bag x2	Dickhead x5	Dumbass	Dick	
Fuck face x2	Fucker x4	Fag x7	Fat x2	Fatass x2	Fat shit
Gay x7					
Idiot					
Legend					
Man x2	Mother fucker				
Nigga x2					
Paki	Pussy				
Retard					
Stupid x4	Small penis x2	Son of a bitch x2			
Ugly fuck					
Weak x2	Wanker				

**Question 31.** The names that girls are likely to call other girls.

Attention seeker	Arrogant	
Bitch x27	Babe	
Fat x7		
Girl		
Honey x3		
Player x2		
Slut x19	Sweetie x3	Selfish
Tom-girl		
Ugly x9		
Whore x14		

**Question 32.** The names that boys are likely to call other girls.

Attention seeker			
Bitch x19	Baby	Beautiful	Babe
Fat x7			
Girl			
Hot			
Like my mother	Like your mother	Love	Lesbo x2
Liar			
Slut x19	Self-centred	Sweetie	Sexy
Sister			
Trollop			
Ugly x6			
Whore x10	Weird	Woman x2	



**Question 33.** The names that girls are likely to call other boys.

Asshole x14	Arrogant	Annoying	
Bastard x5	Bitch x2	Brother	Boy x2
Cock sucker			
Dickhead x7	Dumbass x4	Dude	
Fucker x2	Fag x2	Fuck up	Fat
Gay x3			
Hottie			
Idiot x2			
Jerk off	Jerk x5		
Man			
Player x3			
Retard x3			
Selfish x2	Stupid x5	Sexy	Small penis
Ugly x4			
Weak			

**Question 34.** Are there subjects you have not chosen because of the teacher teaching that subject?

22 say yes and 25 say no. There is no evidence of difference in the way boys and girls see this.

<b>Reasons for yes.</b>
Too strict
Too old
Bad teacher
Did not like them x2
Teacher made me hate subject
Puts in no effort
Teacher was moody
Teacher is no good
We did not get on
Teacher is evil
Subject given but no reason x3
Teacher sent me to sleep
But I had to take the subject anyway
Badly organised
Teacher was not fair
<b>Reasons for no.</b>
New to school x5
But I should have done x2
I choose the subjects over the teacher
I like all my teachers
Teachers have no big flaws

## **Appendix C: Teacher Questionnaire.**

Department of Education, Communication and Language Sciences  
Joseph Cowan House  
St. Thomas St  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
United Kingdom  
NE1 7RU

11<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

To all teaching staff.

My name is Bill Roberts and I am working as a researcher based at the University of Newcastle in the United Kingdom. I also work for the International Baccalaureate as an examiner and a trainer, and spent eighteen years working in secondary education as a teacher. As part of my work at the university, I am assessing the influence that an international school and an international curriculum have on the gendered and sexual identities of students. Within this, it is important to consider the views of teachers and I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions as fully as possible. Thank you for your time. I am in the school from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February until Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February and would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire in this time period. It can be returned either directly to me or via Peter Kotrc.

Bill Roberts.

Researcher.

University of Newcastle, United Kingdom.

Questionnaire number

.....

***Teacher Experiences of Schooling.***

.....

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

NAME (Optional):

SEX:

The information you give on this questionnaire will be treated with strictest confidence. When this study is written up no names will be used in order to protect anonymity. The data will not be made available, except in statistical form, to anyone else.

***Please answer all questions as fully as possible. If you cannot answer a question please state this.***

1. How many years have you been teaching?

2. How many years have you taught at an international school?

3. Write down five words or phrases that describe the atmosphere in this school.






4. In your opinion what are the five most important features of a good school?






5. Good academic grades are the most important thing that a student gains from school. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

6. This school is sensitive to dealing with students from diverse backgrounds.

Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7. This school is sensitive to the different linguistic requirements of their students.

Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8. The classes in this school are well disciplined. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

9. In this school, boys are more likely to be disruptive in class than girls. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

10. In this school there is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. Do you treat male students differently to female students? Give one sentence explaining your answer.

--

12. Write down three words or phrases that generally describe the atmosphere in a classroom in this school?


13. There is an area of school that is dominated by year 12 and 13 girls at break time. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

14. There is an area of school that is dominated by year 12 and 13 boys at break time. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. The school places a lot of emphasis on sport. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

16. In this school girls who are good at sport are more popular than girls who are not. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

17. In this school boys who are good at sport are more popular than boys who are not. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. Bullying has taken place in this school because someone is not good at sport. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

19. I am aware of physical bullying taking place within this school. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

20. I am aware of verbal bullying taking place within this school. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

21. In your opinion, in general, bullying is most common between

Boys only.

☐

Girls only.

☐

Boys and girls.

☐

There is no distinction.

☐

Unable to comment.

☐

Tick the box or boxes which apply.



22. I would consider that bullying is a problem at this school. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

23. In general, strong disagreements between boys only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

24. In general, strong disagreements between girls only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

25. In general, strong disagreements between girls and boys are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

26. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between two boys.

27. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between two girls.

28. Write down what you consider to be the three most likely causes of disagreement between a boy and a girl.

29. Are you aware of students being called names in this school?

Yes

☐

No

☐

30. If yes, write down three names that boys are likely to call other boys.

31. If yes, write down three names that girls are likely to call other girls.

32. If yes, write down three names that boys are likely to call other girls.


33. If yes, write down three names that girls are likely to call other boys.


34. In this school, do you think that students may not choose to study a subject because of the teacher teaching that subject? Without mentioning names, give a one sentence explanation.

--

35. In this school, do you think that students may not choose to study a subject because of other people taking that subject? Without mentioning names, give a one sentence explanation.

--

36. In general, I think that some subjects are more popular with girls than boys. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

37. Students in this school often give their opinion in class. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

38. When students in this school give their opinion in class, other students listen. Please indicate your response to the statement by ticking the appropriate shaded box.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

39. In this school, are girls are more likely to give their opinion in class than boys?  
Give one sentence explaining your answer.

40. In this school, are students more likely to listen to the opinion of boys in class?  
Give one sentence explaining your answer.

## **Appendix D: Results of Teacher Questionnaires.**

## Participants:

### Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Female	10	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

## Question 1. How many years have you been teaching?

### Years teaching

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 to 9	2	13.3	15.4	15.4
	10 to 12	5	33.3	38.5	53.8
	13 to 15	2	13.3	15.4	69.2
	19 to 21	1	6.7	7.7	76.9
	25 to 27	2	13.3	15.4	92.3
	31 to 33	1	6.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	86.7	100.0	
Missing	99.00	2	13.3		
Total		15	100.0		

**Question 2.** How many years have you taught at an international school?

Years international school					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 to 3	3	20.0	21.4	21.4
	4 to 6	2	13.3	14.3	35.7
	7 to 9	3	20.0	21.4	57.1
	10 to 12	2	13.3	14.3	71.4
	16 to 18	1	6.7	7.1	78.6
	22 to 24	2	13.3	14.3	92.9
	28 to 30	1	6.7	7.1	100.0
	Total	14	93.3	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	6.7		
Total		15	100.0		

**Question 3.** Write down five words or phrases that describe the atmosphere in this school.

Ambitious				
Busy x4				
Chaotic x7	Caring x2	Colourful x2	Creative	Chatty
Cooperative				
Disorganised x2	Diverse	Dutch		
Engaged	Enthusiastic	Energetic		
Friendly x10	Full of possibilities			
Happy				
Improving				
Learning				
Multi-cultural x2	Motivated	More action		
Open x9	Organic			
Positive energy x3	Patient	Protected	Peaceful	
Relaxed x4	Respectful			
Stimulating	Student centred			
Tolerant x3	Trust			
Understanding				
Welcoming				

**Question 4.** In your opinion what are the five most important features of a good school?

Atmosphere x2	Attractive	Accepting		
Community	Curriculum	Caring	Challenging	Collegial
Dynamic				
Enthusiasm	Excellence	Education		
Focus x3	Friendly x5	Flexible	Fair	
Guidelines				
Helpful				
Independence				
Learning environment x3				
Management x2				
Open x4	Organised x3			
Possibilities	Professional			
Respect x3	Relationships	Resources	Reflective	Responsibility
Security x2	Supportive x2	Safe x4	Stress free	Structure x2
Students x3	Successful			
Transparent x2	Tolerant x4	Teachers x2	Trust	
Understanding				
Welcoming x2				

**Question 5.** Good academic grades are the most important thing that a student gains from school.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	8
Neutral	4
Agree	3
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded5 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded5			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	0	0	5	5
	Female	3	4	3	10
Total		3	4	8	15



**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.563 <sup>a</sup>	2	.038
Likelihood Ratio	8.510	2	.014
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.000	1	.025
N of Valid Cases	15		

a. 5 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

It is interesting to note here that all the male teachers disagree with the statement, but the result is not statistically significant.

**Question 6.** This school is sensitive to dealing with students from diverse backgrounds.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	0
Agree	10
Strongly agree	5

There is agreement from all 15 participants, backing the idea of a tolerant and respectful school. This is in strong agreement with the parents where 98% agree or are neutral (78% agree)

**Question 7.** This school is sensitive to the different linguistic requirements of their students.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	1
Agree	11
Strongly agree	3

There is agreement from all 15 participants, again backing the idea of a tolerant and respectful school. This is in strong agreement with the parents where 98% agree or are neutral (78% agree)

**Question 8.** The classes in this school are well disciplined.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	4
Agree	9
Strongly agree	2

**Sex \* Well disciplined Crosstabulation**

Count

		Well disciplined			Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	
Sex	Male	1	3	1	5
	Female	1	6	3	10
Total		2	9	4	15

There is no difference in how this is seen by male and female teachers. All participants in this case agree or are neutral. It is interesting to compare this to what parents think. 87% of parents agree or are neutral.

**Question 9.** In this school, boys are more likely to be disruptive in class than girls.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	5
Neutral	6
Agree	3
Strongly agree	1

		Boys disruptive than girls				Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	
Sex	Male	0	1	1	3	5
	Female	1	2	5	2	10
Total		1	3	6	5	15

There is no difference between how male and female teachers see this. It is interesting to note that overall almost equal numbers agree and disagree.

**Question 10.** In this school there is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	6
Neutral	6
Agree	3
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Difference male/female teachers Crosstabulation**

Count

		Difference male/female teachers			Total
		agree	neutral	disagree	
Sex	Male	0	2	3	5
	Female	3	4	3	10
Total		3	6	6	15

There is a difference here between how male and female teachers see this, although the result is not statistically significant. All the male teachers disagree or are neutral. This again mirrors what parents think although teachers are more likely to disagree with the statement than parents.

**Question 11.** Do you treat male students differently to female students?

- (i) I hope I don't but know that all information on a student affects the way of interaction. I might approach girls on a more supportive level, when I feel they lack confidence maybe due to their cultural background.
- (ii) No they are either nice or disruptive – both get the appropriate response.
- (iii) I try not to and generally I don't, but sometimes I tend to be more careful with correcting a girl. Maybe I tend to be more direct with boys.
- (iv) No, I attempt to treat them alike as young learners.
- (v) No. Education is about what they learn, not what they are.
- (vi) Possibly, girls argue a lot more.
- (vii) No, not consciously. I would be more likely to treat boisterous versus quiet students differently.
- (viii) No. A teacher should teach minds and not bodies.
- (ix) Yes, sometimes. When the hormonal clocks cause havoc, you sometimes have to "protect" girls against boys and the other way around when remarks are made.
- (x) No. I treat both genders as young adults.
- (xi) No. I view my students as individuals with individual masculine/feminine traits.
- (xii) Possibly. Boys respond better to gentle teasing which I often do.
- (xiii) Yes, at times. As boys and girls tick differently at times.
- (xiv) No - not appropriate and not necessary.
- (xv) No. I try not to treat boys and girls differently.

The answers here are either no, or yes with a good reason. Some teachers assume that there is a gendered difference in behaviour between boys and girls.

**Question 12.** Write down three words or phrases that generally describe the atmosphere in a classroom in this school?

A	Active x2			
B	Busy x2	Buzzy		
C	Concentrate	Calm	Chaotic	
D	Dynamic			
E	Enthusiastic x2	Engaged x4		
F	Friendly x2	Focused x2	Fun	
H	Help	Hard-working		
I	Inquisitive			
L	Lively	Learning		
O	Open x2			
P	Positive x3	Pleasant	Productive	Passive
R	Relaxed	Respectful		
S	Serious	Studious	Safe x2	
T	Tests the teacher			
U	Untidy			
W	Work			

The most common words used in this context are all positive. In fact there are only two potentially negative words. One is chaotic which is in keeping with what has been said before and the other is 'tests the teacher' which could be interpreted positively or negatively. The most common words used by students to this question were boring (15), disruptive (7), fun (6), and humorous (6). Unsurprisingly these did not figure on teachers' lists.

**Question 13.** There is an area of school that is dominated by year 12 and 13 girls at break time.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	4
Neutral	6
Agree	3
Strongly agree	0

#### Sex \* Recoded13 Crosstabulation

Count		Recoded13			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	2	2	5
	Female	2	4	4	10
Total		3	6	6	15

The results to this question are mixed. There appears to be no difference in how this is interpreted by male and female teachers.

**Question 14.** There is an area of school that is dominated by year 12 and 13 boys at break time.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	4
Neutral	4
Agree	5
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded14 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded14			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	2	2	5
	Female	4	2	4	10
Total		5	4	6	15

It is interesting to note in questions 13 and 14 that the same number disagree with the statements, but that more are neutral about girls dominating a certain area than boys. There appears to be no difference in how this is seen by male and female teachers.

**Question 15.** The school places a lot of emphasis on sport.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	2
Neutral	7
Agree	6
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded15 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded15			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	2	2	1	5
	Female	4	5	1	10
Total		6	7	2	15

It is interesting to note that 13 out of the 15 teachers are either neutral or agree. There is no difference in how this is seen by male and female teachers. This is quite different from what the students talk about in their interviews. It is also quite different from what parents think, where approximately a third agree and a third disagree.

**Question 16.** In this school girls who are good at sport are more popular than girls who are not.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	6
Neutral	9
Agree	0
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded16 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded16		Total
		neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	2	3	5
	Female	7	3	10
Total		9	6	15

All teachers here disagree or are neutral. There is no difference between male and female teachers as to who is neutral and who disagrees.

**Question 17.** In this school boys who are good at sport are more popular than boys who are not.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	4
Neutral	8
Agree	3
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded17 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded17			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	2	2	5
	Female	2	6	2	10
Total		3	8	4	15

It is interesting to note the difference here between question 16 and question 17. The majority still remain neutral or disagree, but in this case three agree with the statement. There still appears to be no difference between how it is viewed by male teachers and how it is viewed by female teachers.

**Question 18.** Bullying has taken place in this school because someone is not good at sport.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	10
Neutral	4
Agree	0
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded18 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded18		Total
		neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	4	5
	Female	3	7	10
Total		4	11	15

All participants are either neutral or disagree, with the majority disagreeing. Again there is no difference between male and female teachers.

**Question 19.** I am aware of physical bullying taking place within this school.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	9
Neutral	2
Agree	2
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded19 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded19			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	0	4	5
	Female	1	2	7	10
Total		2	2	11	15

**Recoded18 \* Recoded19 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded19			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded18	neutral	0	0	4	4
	overall disagree	2	2	7	11
Total		2	2	11	15

There is no difference in how male and female teachers view this. When compared with question 18, unsurprisingly, the majority of teachers disagreed with both statements.

**Question 20.** I am aware of verbal bullying taking place within this school.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	4
Neutral	2
Agree	8
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded20 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded20			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	2	0	3	5
	Female	6	2	2	10
Total		8	2	5	15

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.850 <sup>a</sup>	2	.241
Likelihood Ratio	3.368	2	.186
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.355	1	.244
N of Valid Cases	15		

a. 5 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .67.



#### Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.311	.259	-1.180	.259 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.291	.263	-1.095	.294 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		15			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

It appears that female teachers are more likely to agree with this than male teachers. However, the result is not statistically significant and there does not appear to be a correlation. Far more teachers agree with this than parents when the latter were asked about bullying in general. This is not surprising as potentially parents are less likely to know.

**Question 21.** In your opinion, in general, bullying is most common between

Boys	1
Girls	0
No distinction	12
Unable to comment	2

#### Recoded20 \* Reasons for bullying Crosstabulation

Count

		Reasons for bullying			Total
		Boys only	Boys and girls	Unable to comment	
Recoded20	overall agree	1	6	1	8
	neutral	0	2	0	2
	overall disagree	0	4	1	5
Total		1	12	2	15

There is no evidence to suggest that it this is interpreted in a gendered way.

**Question 22.** I would consider that bullying is a problem at this school.

Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	8
Neutral	4
Agree	0
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded 22 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded 22		Total
		neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	4	5
	Female	3	7	10
Total		4	11	15

Although 8 teachers state they know verbal bullying takes place at the school, clearly none of these 8 teachers believe that bullying is a problem at the school. There is no difference in how this is seen by male and female teachers.

**Question 23.** In general, strong disagreements between boys only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	7
Neutral	5
Agree	3
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded23 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded23			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	1	3	1	5
	Female	2	2	6	10
Total		3	5	7	15

**Recoded19 \* Recoded23 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded23			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded19	overall agree	1	0	1	2
	neutral	2	0	0	2
	overall disagree	0	5	6	11
Total		3	5	7	15

Interesting to note that nearly half the participants disagree with the statement. Of the three that agree only one of those agrees with question 19.

**Question 24.** In general, strong disagreements between girls only are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	4
Agree	11
Strongly agree	0

**Sex \* Recoded24 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded24		Total
		overall agree	neutral	
Sex	Male	2	3	5
	Female	9	1	10
Total		11	4	15

**Recoded20 \* Recoded24 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded24		Total
		overall agree	neutral	
Recoded20	overall agree	7	1	8
	neutral	1	1	2
	overall disagree	3	2	5
Total		11	4	15

**Symmetric Measures**

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.298	.242	1.127	.280 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.310	.241	1.174	.261 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		15			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

There is no indication that there is any difference in how male and female teachers see this. When this is compared to question 20, the indication is that there is a correlation between the two. Many of those who agree that girls are more likely to give a verbal response also agree that verbal bullying takes place in the school. This is not surprising as the majority of teachers agree with both.

**Question 25.** In general, strong disagreements between girls and boys are more likely to result in a verbal response than a physical response.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Neutral	2
Agree	11
Strongly agree	1

**Recoded20 \* Recoded25 Crosstabulation**

Count		Recoded25			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded20	overall agree	7	0	1	8
	neutral	2	0	0	2
	overall disagree	3	2	0	5
Total		12	2	1	15

**Sex \* Recoded25 Crosstabulation**

Count		Recoded25			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	2	2	1	5
	Female	10	0	0	10
Total		12	2	1	15

There appears to be no correlation between this and question 20. However, there is a difference in how male and female teachers appear to see this. Female teachers wholly agree with the statement whereas male teachers are much more ambivalent.

**Question 26.** The three most likely causes of disagreement between two boys.

A	Activity	Abusive comments	Appearance	
C	Cultural background x2	Competition		
D	Different tastes x2			
F	Friends	Football x3		
G	Grades x2	Girls x5		
J	Jealousy			
L	Linguistic differences			
M	Music x2			
N	Name calling			
P	Property x3	Physical contact x2	Pride	Personality
R	Relationships			
S	Sport	Status	Size	
T	Teasing			

Although there was only a limited response from teachers there is a degree of agreement with what students said, with girls being mentioned as the most common cause by both groups and football being noted by both groups. It is interesting to note that sport was mentioned predominantly by students but not by teachers. Lack of respect figured highly in the response from students and not at all in the response from teachers.

**Question 27.** The three most likely causes of disagreement between two girls.

A	Activities	Appearance		
B	Boys x5			
C	Cultural background x2	Clothes x3	Changing plans	
D	Different tastes			
F	Friends x4			
G	Gossip x3	Grades x3	Girls x2	
J	Jealousy x2			
L	Lack of loyalty			
M	Music			
N	Name calling			
P	Property x2	Popularity	Pride	Personality
R	Relationships			
S	Status			

When the students answered this question, the most common responses were boys (38), friends (13), gossip (9), backstabbing (8), and girls (7). Although the response from teachers was again limited, there is a fairly high degree of similarity.

**Question 28.** The three most likely causes of disagreement between a boy and a girl.

C	Cultural background			
D	Different tastes			
F	Film	Friendship		
G	Grades x2			
H	Hobbies			
I	Internet			
J	Jealousy			
M	Music			
N	Name calling			
O	Opinion x2			
P	Property x2	Pride	Physical contact	Personality
R	Relationships x5			
S	Status			
T	Teasing			
U	Unsolicited attention			
W	Work			

When the students answered this question, the most common responses were relationships (26), friends (16), jealousy (5), and cheating (5). The degree of similarity between teachers and students was not as good as with question 27, but relationships came out top for both.

**Question 29.** Are you aware of students being called names in school?

Yes	No
4	10

This was not always interpreted negatively. Hence this skews the results. There is no difference in how female and male teachers view this. Students' results were skewed the opposite way, but the same problem existed as to whether name-calling is positive or negative.

**Question 30.** Name Calling. Boys versus boys.

D	Dumbo		
F	Fat		
L	Loser	'Lijpo'	'Lul'
S	Stupid		
W	Wally		

Too little information was provided to make a meaningful comparison with what students say.

**Question 31.** Name Calling. Girls versus girls.

B	Bitch
F	Fat
S	Stupid

Too little information was given to compare it to what the students say.

**Question 32.** Name Calling. Boys versus girls.

F	Fat
N	Nerd
S	Stupid cow

Too little information was given to compare it to what the students say.

**Question 33.** Name Calling. Girls versus boys.

D	Dope
L	Loser
M	Macho
S	Stupid x3

Too little information given to compare it to what the students say.

**Question 34.** In this school, do you think that students may not choose to study a subject because of the teacher teaching that subject?

- (i) No, teachers change.
- (ii) Unlikely, but sometimes a change of class is requested.
- (iii) Yes, they don't like the teacher.
- (iv) I think this is less likely in an international school and because of the timetabling they very often do not know which teacher they will get.
- (v) I have not experienced that but there are more 'popular' subjects each year.
- (vi) No. It is our school policy that the classes are based on clusters and not on students' wishes.
- (vii) Yes. A teacher's input into the subject is important to some students and if the teacher does not teach well, students drop out.
- (viii) Possibly, but because of the timetable they do not know who will be their teacher until they start the subject. Very occasionally they will try to swap groups then.
- (ix) Yes.
- (x) Possibly yes. Not so much gender, rather personality.
- (xi) Possible but rare as a group of teachers are responsible for a subject.
- (xii) Yes, if students don't like the teacher or think he can't teach, they are less likely to choose his/her subject.

This is a fairly mixed response, which models what the students say.

**Question 35.** In this school, do you think that students may not choose to study a subject because of other people taking that subject?

- (i) Yes, if students hate each other it might influence their choice for a subject.
- (ii) No.
- (iii) Possibly but I don't really think so.
- (iv) Yes.
- (v) No, I haven't heard of that happening.
- (vi) No. When the classes are made, it is too late to change classes.
- (vii) No.
- (viii) No.
- (ix) No. As there are often more groups of the same subject. In lower years, sometimes a mentor group change is requested as mentor groups have most lessons as a group.
- (x) No

The most common response is that students are not influenced by who else is taking a specific subject.

**Question 36.** In general, I think that some subjects are more popular with girls than boys.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Neutral	4
Agree	7
Strongly agree	1

**Sex \* Recoded36 Crosstabulation**

		Recoded36			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	Male	2	1	2	5
	Female	6	3	1	10
Total		8	4	3	15

More teachers agree with this statement than disagree, and there is no difference in how this is seen by male teachers and by female teachers.



**Question 37.** Students in this school often give their opinion in class.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	1
Agree	10
Strongly agree	4

**Boys disruptive than girls \* Students give opinions Crosstabulation**

Count

		Students give opinions			Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	
Boys disruptive than girls	strongly agree	0	1	0	1
	agree	1	2	0	3
	neutral	2	3	1	6
	disagree	1	4	0	5
Total		4	10	1	15

Extremely strong agreement with this statement. There is no correlation between this and the opinions on whether boys are more disruptive than girls.

**Question 38.** When students in this school give their opinion in class, other students listen.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	2
Agree	12
Strongly agree	1

Again there is strong agreement with this statement.

**Question 39.** In this school, are girls are more likely to give their opinion in class than boys?

- (i) No. They might be more verbal, but boys in the older years are outspoken too.
- (ii) No.
- (iii) No, not in my experience. Both sexes are equally verbal.
- (iv) No, as seen in classes doing visits.
- (v) Not in my experience, but again it very much depends on the dynamics of each group.
- (vi) No. Giving opinions is a matter of personality, not of sex.
- (vii) Depends on the year group; in younger years, girls are more expressive.
- (viii) They are neutral; it depends on the personality/sensitivity of the speakers rather than the gender.

- (ix) No. It depends on the individual's strength of personality.
- (x) Some girls more than some boys, but culture and personality play a big role.
- (xi) No.
- (xii) No, not usually.
- (xiii) No.

All participants stated no, which is different to what is often found in previous research into girls' schooling.

**Question 40.** In this school, are students more likely to listen to the opinion of boys in class?

- (i) No. Smaller groups and also students in the DP allow for open discussion.
- (ii) No
- (iii) No, not in my experience. Both sexes are equally verbal.
- (iv) No evidence for me.
- (v) I disagree.
- (vi) No. Giving opinions is a matter of personality, not of sex.
- (vii) Don't think so, especially not in higher years.
- (viii) They are neutral; it depends on the personality/sensitivity of the speakers rather than the gender. Also, if the student (male/female) is very able, the rest tend to follow their lead.
- (ix) No. It depends on the individual's strength of personality.
- (x) Don't think so.
- (xi) No
- (xii) Depends on question asked or answer answered.
- (xiii) No.

Again an overwhelming response of no.

## **Appendix E: Topic Guide for Focus Groups.**

### **Opening Questions.**

- Brief introductions. Your name and something you want to share with us.
- Introduction from me on what this is all about.

### **Introductory Questions.**

- Tell me a 30 second story about your first day in DIS.
- Tell me something about DIS and what you think of DIS.

### **Transition Questions.**

- What is the best thing about DIS?
- What is the worst thing about DIS?
- Agreement/disagreement on this.

### **Key Questions.**

All discussions begin with a very open question on the subject to see where students take it. The questions/topics listed are for prompts if necessary.

### **Topic 1.**

#### **The Role of Sport.**

- This appears to be different from that perceived in the UK.
- Overwhelming evidence that bullying does not take place on the grounds of someone not being good at sport. This is backed up by the results to the question about how do you treat someone who is bad at sport.
- Evidence that for girls being good at sport does not make you more popular and evidence for boys that it does. Evidence that this is true if their friendships are based around sport.
- Anecdotal evidence that boys treat someone who is good at sport “better.”
- Anecdotal evidence that boys are more likely to consider themselves good sportsmen than girls.

- Little evidence to suggest that friendship is based around sport.
- Anecdotal evidence that sport plays a different role for boys than girls. Overall agreement that it make boys more popular, but overall disagreement that it makes girls more popular.

### *Questions.*

- Tell me about sport at DIS. Difference between competitive and non-competitive sport for boys and girls? Is sport a ‘boy thing’ at this school?
- Tell me about competitive teams at the school. Who plays on them, are they more respected? Tell me about the last tournament that was played here at school?
- Tell me about the people who play sport.
- It was stated on the questionnaire in relation to sport that you are not the American school. What do you think was meant by this?
- Tell me about being bullied for being bad at sport. Some of you say it can happen in other schools, but not this one. What is different about this school that means it does not happen? Is this something to do with the school being international? What was the last case of bullying that you can remember here at the school?
- The most common word for boys to call boys is gay. What does this mean? Does this happen in relation to sport?
- Do girls and boys see sport differently in this school?
- Tell me whether it is more likely that boys consider themselves to be good at sport as opposed to girls. What do you think the reasons behind this are?
- There is a suggestion that boys think more highly of people who are good at sport. Do you think this is true? Can you give me an example?
- Tell me about supporting school teams. Who supports them? What influences people to support them? Tell me about when you last supported a school team.
- Tell me whether sport or work is seen as more important? Does it make a difference as to whether you are a boy or a girl?
- Tell me about friendship and sport. Do you make friends through sport?

## Topic 2.

### Friendships and Relationships.

- The most important qualities of a friend are fun, funny, trust, crazy, like me, loyal and understanding.
- The most important qualities of someone you respect in class are helpful, humorous, intelligent, and respectful.
- Little evidence to suggest that friendship is based around sport.
- Relationships, sex and the opposite sex seem to be some of the most commonly talked about things with friends.
- Evidence that a majority of you are not in relationships. However there are still a significant number of you who are.
- Equally split in terms of those who do have a relationship as to whether it makes a difference and equally split as to whether it is positive or negative.

### Questions

- Tell me about some one you respect being trustworthy. Is this important? This was rated quite lowly in terms of someone you respect in class, but quite highly in a quality of a best friend. Tell me why you think there is a difference. How do they demonstrate that they are trustworthy? Is this in any way gender related?
- When you were asked about the person you respected most in class, one of the most common descriptions was respectful. What do you think was meant by this? Is there a gender issue here?
- When you were asked about the person you respected most in class, two of the most common descriptions were intelligent and helpful. What do you think was meant by this? Is there a gender issue here?
- However some of you used the words opinionated and outspoken. How does this fit in with the words given above? Is there a gender issue here?
- The most common thing you talk about with your friends is relationships, boys and girls. Tell me about this. With who do you talk about it? How would homosexual relations fit in with this? Would you class this as gossip? What would you class as gossip? Do boys and girls talk about this differently?

- Do you think that boys and girls talk about different things? What do you think makes the things you talk about different/same?
- One of highest rated qualities of a best friend is crazy. What do you think is meant by this? Is this equally true for girls and boys?
- When you describe your best friend as fun or funny do you mean the same thing? What does it mean? Is this different for boys or girls?
- Are most of your friends male or female? Does this depend on whether you are male or female? Does it depend on which classes you take? Does the answer to this question change with the context?
- Do you think that being in an international school effects the gender of your friendships? Does this depend on your parents/upbringing/where you were brought up?
- A significant number of you have partners. Is there pressure to have a partner? From where does this pressure come from?
- Does a relationship affect the idea that the school is friendly or tolerant?

### Topic 3.

#### Disagreements, Bullying and Fighting

- Overall there is a slight majority who think that boys are more disruptive than girls in class.
- There is anecdotal evidence that bullying based on sporting success depends on the type of school. Mention was made of the American school.
- Rather mixed results on whether disagreements between boys only are likely to result in a verbal or physical exchange.
- Strong agreement that disagreement between girls only is likely to results in a verbal exchange.
- Strong agreement that disagreement between a boy and a girl is likely to results in a verbal exchange.
- Reasons for boys only disagreements are: bragging, culture, football, girls, sport and school work. Girls by far the most common reason.

- Reasons for girls only disagreements are: boys, backstabbing, friends, fashion, looks of another girl and gossip. Boys by far the most common reason.
- Reasons for boy/girl disagreement are cheating (in the sense of relationships) disrespect, friends, jealousy and relationships. Relationships by far the most common reason.
- Name calling in a negative sense seems to be based on sexuality, race and genitalia for boys. It is based on words like bitch, slut, whore, fat and ugly for girls. Exactly the same for boys name calling girls. For girls calling boys the most common are asshole and dickhead.

### *Questions.*

- Tell me about behaviour in a typical class. Who does what? According to the questionnaire boys tend to be more disruptive than girls. What does this mean? How are they disruptive and how does disruption take place? Describe an incident where disruption has taken place.
- Are there absolutes in terms of behaviour within a class? What would these be?
- When you say boys are more disruptive than girls, what do you mean? Why do you think this is the case?
- The most common disagreement between boys is over sport? Give me an example of a disagreement between 2 boys over sport.
- Tell me about bullying. Can you think of an incident of bullying that has happened in this school? If not, why do you think there is no bullying? According to the questionnaire you use the words gay, pakki, fag, bitch, slut, whore and nigga to describe people. Would this constitute bullying?
- Girls use the terms jerk and jerk off to describe boys. What do you think this means?
- A questionnaire said that you talk about fights? Does this make sense? When was the last fight in school?
- Is there a difference between disagreements between girls only and disagreements between boys only? Can you describe an incident that would highlight the difference?
- Back stabbing seems to be an issue between two girls, but not between any other groups. Can you explain this with an example?



- According to the questionnaire boys disagree about sport whereas girls disagree about the looks of another girl or fashion? Is this true? How does it work in this school?
- Three of you in the questionnaire mentioned annoying behaviour as being a source of disagreement between boys and girls? What do you mean by this?
- When I asked about calling names in the questionnaire some of you interpreted this positively and some of you interpreted this negatively. What do you think I meant? Would boys and girls see this differently?

#### Topic 4.

#### The International School as a Concept and the International School as a Reality. The Building. Space. Classrooms. Teachers.

- Indication that students talk about family.
- Indication that they see the school as different from other schools – comments like we are privileged and we are not the American School.
- The most popular words to describe the school were cosy, friendly and fun. There are indications from the research that the new building has an effect. Use of the words cold, large, modern and unestablished. Most popular word is friendly.
- Most common words used to describe classroom atmosphere are boring, comfortable, disruptive, fun, humorous, relaxed, and sleepy.
- Students quite strongly agree that male and female teachers control their classes differently. Those who think boys are more likely to disrupt than girls are less likely to think that male and female teachers control differently.
- Students quite strongly believe that teachers treat boys and girls differently. 4 of the 5 who strongly agreed were boys.
- Suggestion that there is an area where boys hangout, but not where girls hangout?
- Suggestion that a significant number of students have not chosen subjects because of teachers.

## *Questions*

- Tell me about the new building. How does this compare to the old building? Has the new building changed anything?
- When you describe the school as disorganised, a mess and chaotic what does this mean? Does this effect your studies and your friendships?
- The school is also described as being boring and cold. A number of you also used the words comfortable and cosy? What do you think these words mean and how would you explain the dichotomy? Does this effect your studies and your friendships? None of you described a class as cosy, but you did describe the school in that way? What do you think is the reason behind this?
- When you describe the school as being like an airport, what does this mean? Does this effect your studies and your friendships?
- A number of you described the school as international. What does this mean for you? How does this work within Dutch culture? Is it the school that makes you international or is it something else. Does the length of time you have been in an international school affect things? Does attending an international school make you different? In what ways?
- The most common word to describe a class in this school is boring? What does this mean? Do you think it is different for boys than girls?
- Some of you describe a class as happy and loud and others as quiet and sleepy. What does this mean and is this the same for boys and girls?
- I am giving you a copy of the mission statement. Is this the school that you are in? How important do you think the mission statement is? What is the effect of the mission statement? Do you think it effects boys and girls differently?
- I am giving you a copy of the school rules. What do you think to them? How important are they? Do you think that it influences behaviour? Do you think they effect boys and girls differently?
- Questionnaires mentioned the word tolerant as a description of the school. What does this mean to you? Give me examples of how the school is tolerant.
- Would you consider yourself to be privileged? In what sense? What difference does this make?

- Tell me about the curriculum. Has this changed you as a person? Do you think it is biased towards either boys or girls? Is this more or less influential than your family?
- What is the difference between how male and female teachers control their classes? What effect does this have?
- How do teachers treat boys and girls differently? Is there a reason for this? Are boys or girls more likely to believe this?
- Tell me about Social and Personal education. What does it say?
- Do other students affect your choice of courses? In what way?

### **Ending Questions.**

- Ask students to sum up their final views on the 4 key topic areas.
- Give a summary of this and ask if this is accurate.
- Ask if there has been anything missed out.

## **Appendix F: Student Interview Guide.**

Statement at the start of the interview:

I am looking at the schooling experiences of students at DIS, which is the focus of the interview. All of the information in this interview will be treated in the strictest confidence and anything quoted from the interview will ensure that you cannot be identified. Also I will be happy to discuss the interview with you afterwards and will also be checking back with you to see if you agree with the representation I have made of your comments and impressions.

**Questions are often prefaced with explanations as to why the questions are being asked.**

**Questions may be rephrased depending on the interviewee.**

**Themes.**

1. Self
2. Space
3. Friendships
4. Sport
5. Sexuality

***Exploratory Indirect Questions.***

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. Tell me about your schooling experiences.
3. Do you enjoy school?
4. How do you fit in socially at school?

5. How well do you feel you get on with people your own age at school?
6. What are considered the norms at DIS?
7. What things do you feel that you have to conform to?
8. Are you seen as academically successful?
9. Have you ever been afraid to go to DIS?
10. Describe a powerful person at DIS.
11. What makes that person powerful?
12. What does the word tolerant mean to you?
13. What makes this school tolerant?
14. Is the school responsible for making you tolerant?
15. What does the term 'manly' mean?
16. Are there boys in the school who would be termed 'manly'?
17. Describe generally how boys treat girls in this school. Is it different from how boys treat boys?

***Direct General Questions on Self***

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. Tell me about the language used to describe you by others.
3. Who do you get on best with?

4. Describe the people in DIS?
5. Where do you hang out when you are not in class?
6. Would you describe yourself as masculine/feminine? What does this question mean for you?
7. Would you describe yourself as international? What does this question mean for you?
8. Would you describe yourself as confident?

***Direct Questions on Teacher and Classroom Spaces.***

1. Do any of your teachers act as a role model for you? How?
2. What are the attitudes of male teachers towards you and are they different from how they treat your peers?
3. What are the attitudes of female teachers towards you and are they different from how they treat your peers?
4. Are the attitudes of male teachers different from those of female teachers and if so, how?
5. Tell me about the last class you attended. Was anyone dominant in the room? Is this typical or not?
6. How do you generally get on with your teachers?
7. Tell me an anecdote/story/gossip of a teacher you get on well with.
8. Tel me an anecdote/story/gossip of a teacher you get on badly with.

***Direct Questions on Friendships and Peers.***

1. Describe the characteristics of your friends.
2. Describe a recent typical thing that you and your friend(s) did and the role that you played in that event.
3. Is there a dominant person in any of your friendship groups? How does this dominance show itself?
4. Are friendship groups important to students in this school?
5. If so, can you give names to them?
6. How rigid are friendship groups? Are some more rigid than others?
7. There are many different groups of friendships here in the school. To which group do you belong?
8. Do these friendship groups interact? Is one group dominant over another?
9. In what group do people here hang out? Are these divided by sex in any way? (cultural groups?)
10. Where do you hang out?
11. Is there a space in school that is occupied more by boys than girls?
12. Tell me about the person you most admire in school.
13. What would earn the respect of your peers in this school? Why?
14. Do you see yourself as different from your peers in any way?
15. Most people are teased at school.



- a) Who gets teased?
- b) Tell me about a significant event that you remember?
- c) To what extent?
- d) How did it start?
- e) When did it start?
- f) Why do you think it started?
- g) Tell me about the reasons behind this, from your own perspective.

16. Is there a line when teasing becomes bullying? Has this ever applied to you or to anyone you know?

17. What words would you use to describe your friends?

18. How important are looks in terms of friendship?

19. Does the disorganisation of the school affect this?

20. Is there any pressure to be in a relationship? Is it different for girls or boys?

21. Would it be seen by anyone as cool to have a boyfriend or a girlfriend?

22. Tell me about the group of girls who play hockey.

- a) Are they a group?
- b) Are they exclusive?
- c) Is it possible to say how they behave stereotypically?
- d) How do they relate to the rest of the year?
- e) Is this group dominant or important?

23. Tell me about the group of boys who play football.

- a) Are they a group?
- b) Are they exclusive?
- c) Is it possible to say how they behave stereotypically?
- d) How do they relate to the rest of the year?
- e) Is this group dominant or important?

24. Tell me about the group from the boarding house.

- a) Are they a group?
- b) Are they exclusive?
- c) Do the girls and boys in this group split into separate groups?
- d) Is it possible to say how they behave stereotypically?
- e) How do they relate to the rest of the year?
- f) Is this group dominant or important?

25. Tell me about the group of “Goths”.

- a) Are they a group?
- b) Are they exclusive?
- c) Do the girls and boys in this group split into separate groups?
- d) Is it possible to say how they behave stereotypically?
- e) How do they relate to the rest of the year?
- f) Is this group dominant or important?

### ***Direct Questions on Sport***

- 1. Tell me about P.E lessons.
- 2. Are P.E lessons important?
- 3. Are your friendships based around sport at all?

### ***Direct Questions on Sexuality***

- 1. Homophobia does not appear to be a problem at this school. Why do you think this is?
- 2. Would you describe your peers as being tolerant of issues of sexuality?
- 3. Can you think of anyone in school who makes homophobic remarks? Do they mean them?

4. If homophobic remarks are made, but not meant homophobically, do you think this is a problem for someone who identifies as gay or lesbian?

***Probing questions.***

1. Could you tell me about a specific incident that happened to you?
2. Can you give me an example of this?
3. How did that make you feel?
4. Exactly what happened?

***Specifying questions.***

1. Could you tell me about a specific incident that relates to ...?
2. Tell me about your reactions to one of these incidents/experiences?

***Structuring questions.***

1. I would now like to move on to...

***Interpreting questions.***

1. How do you think this has affected you ?
2. Is it fair to say that...?
3. What advice would you give to other young people who find themselves in a similar situation?
4. If you could have the time again, what would you do differently?

## **Appendix G: Teacher Interview Guide.**

## **Interview Guide.**

Statement at the start of the interview:

I am looking at the schooling experiences of students at DIS, which is the focus of the interview. One of the influences on students is teachers and hence I need to gain an understanding from this perspective. All of the information in this interview will be treated in the strictest confidence and anything quoted from the interview will ensure that you cannot be identified. Also I will be happy to discuss the interview with you afterwards and will also be checking back with you to see if you agree with the representation I have made of your comments and impressions.

**Questions are often prefaced with explanations as to why the questions are being asked.**

**Questions may be rephrased depending on the interviewee.**

### ***Themes.***

1. Teacher perception of self
2. Teacher perception of space
3. Teacher perception of student interaction
4. Teacher perception of sport
5. Teacher perception of student personality.

### ***Exploratory Indirect Questions.***

1. How long have you been at DIS?
2. How long have you lived in Holland?

3. How would you describe DIS?
4. Do you enjoy working at DIS?
5. What is the best thing about working at DIS?
6. What is the worst thing about working at DIS?
7. Would you describe DIS as an academically successful school?
8. What does the word tolerant mean to you?
9. Would you describe the students in this school as tolerant?
10. What do you think makes the students tolerant/not tolerant?
11. Would you describe the teachers in this school as tolerant?
12. What do you think makes the teachers tolerant/not tolerant?
13. Would you describe DIS as a Dutch school?
14. Would you describe DIS as an International school?
15. Do you think that there is a dominant culture in this school? If so, how is it shown?

***Direct Questions on Teachers' Perception of Self***

1. How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
2. You are teaching in an international school? Does this make any difference and what would those differences be. Are they all positive/negative?

3. Would you describe yourself as international? What does this question mean for you?
4. Would you say that your personality influences the atmosphere in your classroom? Can you give me an example or an anecdote that demonstrates this?
5. What are the characteristics of the teachers you get on best with?
6. What is the thing that most annoys you in a classroom situation? Give me an example.

***Direct Questions on Teacher and Classroom Spaces.***

1. How does the IBDP curriculum influence students in this school?
2. How does the IBDP curriculum influence teachers in this school?
3. Describe generally how boys treat girls in this school. Is it different from how boys treat boys?
4. Describe generally how girls treat boys in this school. Is it different from how girls treat girls?
5. As a male/female teacher do you feel that you treat male and female students differently?
6. Would you say the same is true for your colleagues?
7. Tell me about the last IBDP class you taught. Was anyone dominant in the room? Is this typical or not?
8. How would you generally describe one of your year 13 classes?
9. In your year 13 classes is it possible to say whether boys or girls dominate?

10. How do you generally get on with your students?
11. How would you describe the organisation of DIS?
12. Does the organisation have an effect on students?

***Direct Questions on Teachers' Perceptions of Student Interaction.***

1. Are there dominant students in year 13? How does this dominance show itself?
2. Do students in year 13 belong to identifiable groups?
3. If so, can you give names to them?
4. For each of those groups of students:
  - a. Are they an exclusive group?
  - b. Is it possible to say how they behave stereotypically?
  - c. How do you think they relate to the rest of the year?
  - d. Is this group dominant or important?
5. In what groups do students here hang out? Are these divided by sex in any way?  
(cultural groups?)
6. Where do students hang out?
7. Are you aware of whether there is a space in school that is occupied more by boys than girls?
8. Are you aware of students being teased at this school? If so:
  - a) Can you tell me who gets teased?
  - b) Can you tell me about a significant event that you remember?
  - c) Can you tell me about the reasons behind this, from your own perspective?
9. Do you think there is bullying in this school?



10. When do you think teasing becomes bullying?
11. Is there any fighting in this school?
12. Do you think there is any pressure for students in year 13 to be in a relationship?  
Is it different for girls or boys?
13. Is there any homophobia in this school? Why do you think this is?
14. Would you describe students here as being tolerant on issues of sexuality?
15. Can you think of students in school who makes homophobic remarks? Do they mean them?
16. From a student perspective, if homophobic remarks are made, but not meant homophobically, do you think this is a problem for someone who identifies as gay or lesbian?
17. If you heard students using the word “gay” as in the sense of “stupid” would you say anything to them?

***Direct Questions on Sport***

1. Do you think sport is important in this school?
2. Do you think students see sport as important?
3. Are students here bullied/teased for not being good at sport?

***Direct Questions on Teachers’ Perception of Student nature/Culture***

1. How would you describe a typical student in this school? (Will they agree that there is such a thing?)

2. What effect do you think having a wide mix of cultures here has on students?
3. Is having a wide mix of cultures always a positive thing?
4. What would you describe as the most important quality that a student should have?
5. Research talks about students at international schools being “third culture kids.” Do you understand what this means and can you identify students in year 13 who are this?

***Probing questions.***

1. Could you tell me about a specific incident that demonstrates the point you have just made?
2. Can you give me an example of this?
3. How did that make you feel?
4. Exactly what happened?

***Specifying questions.***

1. Could you tell me about a specific incident that relates to ...?
2. Tell me about your reactions to one of these incidents/experiences?

***Structuring questions.***

1. I would now like to move on to...

***Interpreting questions.***

1. How do you think this has affected you?

2. Is it fair to say that...?
3. What advice would you give to young people who find themselves in a similar situation?
4. If you could have the time again, what would you do differently?

## **Appendix H: Parent Questionnaire.**

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Bill Roberts and I am working as a researcher based at the University of Newcastle in the United Kingdom. I also work for the International Baccalaureate as an examiner and a trainer, and spent eighteen years working in secondary education as a teacher. As part of my work at the university, I am assessing the influence that an international school and an international curriculum have on the identities of students. Over the past year, I have been working with Year 13 students here at DIS. Within this, it is important to consider the views of parents and guardians and I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions as fully as possible. Thank you for your time.

Bill Roberts.  
Researcher.  
University of Newcastle, United Kingdom.

.....

Questionnaire number

.....

***Parent Experiences of Schooling at DIS.***

.....

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

NATIONALITY:

SEX:

OCCUPATION:

I HAVE A **SON/DAUGHTER** IN YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ AT THE SCHOOL. (Please delete and complete as appropriate)

The information you give on this questionnaire will be treated with strictest confidence and the data will not be made available, except in statistical form, to anyone else.

*Please indicate your response to each by ticking the appropriate shaded box.  
If you feel unable to respond to a statement, then leave it blank.*

1. I think that DIS is a good school for my son/daughter.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

2. I think that DIS is a friendly and welcoming school.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

3. I think that DIS is influenced by Dutch culture.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

4. Good academic grades are the most important thing that my son/daughter gains from DIS.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

5. DIS is sensitive to dealing with students from diverse backgrounds.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

6. DIS is sensitive to the fact that students have different language needs.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7. My son/daughter has made some good friends at DIS.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8. The classes in DIS are well disciplined.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

9. In DIS, there is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

10. Teachers in this school do not discriminate between students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. DIS places a lot of emphasis on sport.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

12. It is important that my son/daughter is good at sport.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

13. My son/daughter's friendships are based around sport.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

14. I believe that bullying takes place at DIS.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. There are subjects that my son/daughter has chosen not to study because of the teacher teaching that subject.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

16. There are subjects that my son/daughter has chosen not to study because of other students taking that subject.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

## **Appendix I: Results of the Parent Questionnaires.**



## Participants Nationality

		Nationality			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	British	11	20.0	20.4	20.4
	French	2	3.6	3.7	24.1
	German	5	9.1	9.3	33.3
	Tunisian	1	1.8	1.9	35.2
	Dutch	18	32.7	33.3	68.5
	Italian	2	3.6	3.7	72.2
	Polish	3	5.5	5.6	77.8
	Iranian	1	1.8	1.9	79.6
	Ethiopian	1	1.8	1.9	81.5
	Spanish	1	1.8	1.9	83.3
	Swiss	2	3.6	3.7	87.0
	Norwegian	1	1.8	1.9	88.9
	Romanian	1	1.8	1.9	90.7
	Swedish	1	1.8	1.9	92.6
	Indonesian	1	1.8	1.9	94.4
	Indian	1	1.8	1.9	96.3
	Canadian	1	1.8	1.9	98.1
	Greek	1	1.8	1.9	100.0
	Total	54	98.2	100.0	
Missing	99	1	1.8		
Total		55	100.0		

Seven out of the 11 parents in year 11 are either British or Dutch. This is more than in any other year group. Sex of parents reasonably well spread through year groups. No dominant patterns in year 11 in terms of parental employment.

Men, Women.

**Sex**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid male	22	40.0	40.0	40.0
female	33	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

Occupation

**Occupation**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Education	7	12.7	14.3	14.3
Finance	4	7.3	8.2	22.4
Consultant	4	7.3	8.2	30.6
Translation	3	5.5	6.1	36.7
Geologist	2	3.6	4.1	40.8
Foreign Service	6	10.9	12.2	53.1
Work in the home	6	10.9	12.2	65.3
Retired	1	1.8	2.0	67.3
Engineer	2	3.6	4.1	71.4
Personel	1	1.8	2.0	73.5
Civil Service	2	3.6	4.1	77.6
Medical	4	7.3	8.2	85.7
Technology	1	1.8	2.0	87.8
Police	1	1.8	2.0	89.8
Engineer	2	3.6	4.1	93.9
Bookseller	1	1.8	2.0	95.9
Self employed	1	1.8	2.0	98.0
18	1	1.8	2.0	100.0
Total	49	89.1	100.0	
Missing 99	6	10.9		
Total	55	100.0		

## Year group

		Yeargroup			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Year 7	8	14.5	15.1	15.1
	Year 8	5	9.1	9.4	24.5
	Year 9	9	16.4	17.0	41.5
	Year 10	7	12.7	13.2	54.7
	Year 11	12	21.8	22.6	77.4
	Year 12	5	9.1	9.4	86.8
	Year 13	7	12.7	13.2	100.0
Total		53	96.4	100.0	
Missing	9	2	3.6		
Total		55	100.0		

**Question 1.** I think that DIS is a good school for my son/daughter.

		DIS is a good school			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	13	23.6	23.6	23.6
	agree	30	54.5	54.5	78.2
	neutral	11	20.0	20.0	98.2
	strongly disagree	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	55	100.0	100.0	

## Sex \* DIS is a good school Crosstabulation

		DIS is a good school			
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	strongly disagree
Sex	male	4	14	4	0
	female	9	16	7	1
Total		13	30	11	1

### Yeargroup \* Recoded1 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded1			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	6	2	0	8
	Year 8	5	0	0	5
	Year 9	9	0	0	9
	Year 10	6	0	1	7
	Year 11	7	5	0	12
	Year 12	4	1	0	5
	Year 13	5	2	0	7
Total		42	10	1	53

There is clearly strong agreement that DIS is a good school. There is no evidence to suggest that this is seen differently by men and women. Interesting to note that there is quite a difference with year 11 students and that in the later years of schooling it becomes more 'neutral'. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 2.** I think that DIS is a friendly and welcoming school.

### DIS is friendly and welcoming

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	19	34.5	34.5	34.5
	agree	28	50.9	50.9	85.5
	neutral	5	9.1	9.1	94.5
	disagree	3	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total		55	100.0	100.0	

There is strong agreement to the fact that DIS is a friendly and welcoming school. No difference seen across the year groups. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 3.** I think that DIS is influenced by Dutch culture.

**DIS influenced by Dutch culture**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	7	12.7	12.7	12.7
agree	30	54.5	54.5	67.3
neutral	15	27.3	27.3	94.5
disagree	3	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Nationality \* DIS influenced by Dutch culture Crosstabulation**

Count

		DIS influenced by Dutch culture				Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	
Nationality	British	2	6	3	0	11
	French	0	1	1	0	2
	German	1	2	2	0	5
	Tunisian	0	0	1	0	1
	Dutch	3	11	4	0	18
	Italian	1	1	0	0	2
	Polish	0	1	2	0	3
	Iranian	0	1	0	0	1
	Ethiopian	0	0	0	1	1
	Spanish	0	1	0	0	1
	Swiss	0	0	1	1	2
	Norwegian	0	1	0	0	1
	Romanian	0	1	0	0	1
	Swedish	0	1	0	0	1
	Indonesian	0	0	0	1	1
	Indian	0	0	1	0	1
	Canadian	0	1	0	0	1
	Greek	0	1	0	0	1
Total		7	29	15	3	54

It is interesting to note that there is fairly strong agreement about the influence of Dutch culture. The highest number of parents who answered this questionnaire are Dutch. It is interesting to note that 14 out of the 18 Dutch parents agree with the statement. No difference in how this is seen across the year groups. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 4.** Good academic grades are the most important thing that my son/daughter gains from DIS.

**Good academic grades important**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	5	9.1	9.1	9.1
agree	24	43.6	43.6	52.7
neutral	16	29.1	29.1	81.8
disagree	8	14.5	14.5	96.4
strongly disagree	2	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Recoded4 \* Recoded11 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded11			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded4	overall agree	13	9	6	28
	neutral	4	7	5	16
	overall disagree	1	3	6	10
Total		18	19	17	54

**Son or daughter at school \* Recoded4 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded4			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	5	1	2	8
	daughter	9	10	2	21
	3	8	2	4	14
Total		22	13	8	43

There is fairly strong agreement that good academic grades are important. In one sense, however, there were quite a number who did not agree – more than might be expected from this type of school. It is interesting to note that those who disagree that good grades are important often disagreed with the idea that sport is important. There is more agreement that good grades are important than sport is important. No difference in how this is seen across the year groups. Far higher percentage of boys' parents agree with this statement than girls' parents, but the result is not significant.

**Question 5.** DIS is sensitive to dealing with students from diverse backgrounds.

**DIS sensitive to diversity**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	9	16.4	16.4	16.4
agree	32	58.2	58.2	74.5
neutral	13	23.6	23.6	98.2
disagree	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Yeargroup \* Recoded5 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded5			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	7	1	0	8
	Year 8	4	1	0	5
	Year 9	7	2	0	9
	Year 10	6	1	0	7
	Year 11	8	4	0	12
	Year 12	2	2	1	5
	Year 13	6	1	0	7
Total		40	12	1	53

### Son or daughter at school \* Recoded5 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded5			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	8	0	0	8
	daughter	15	5	1	21
	3	9	5	0	14
Total		32	10	1	43

Parents overall seem to agree with this statement. Almost 75% of parents agree with this statement. There is quite a difference in how parents of year 11 students see this. Far more universal agreement from the parents of boys but again the result is not significant.

**Question 6.** DIS is sensitive to fact that students have different language needs.

### DIS sensitive to language

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	13	23.6	24.1	24.1
	agree	29	52.7	53.7	77.8
	neutral	11	20.0	20.4	98.1
	disagree	1	1.8	1.9	100.0
	Total	54	98.2	100.0	
Missing	9	1	1.8		
Total		55	100.0		

### Sex \* DIS sensitive to language Crosstabulation

Count

		DIS sensitive to language				Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	
Sex	male	8	8	6	0	22
	female	5	21	5	1	32
Total		13	29	11	1	54

In this case over 75% of parents agree with the statement. There is no evidence to suggest that this is seen differently by men and women. No difference in how this is seen across the year groups. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.



**Question 7.** My son/daughter has made some good friends at DIS.

**Good friends**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	20	36.4	36.4	36.4
agree	26	47.3	47.3	83.6
neutral	8	14.5	14.5	98.2
disagree	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Recoded 7 \* Recoded13 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded13			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded 7	overall agree	3	15	28	46
	neutral	2	2	4	8
	overall disagree	0	0	1	1
Total		5	17	33	55

There is very strong agreement with this – nearly 84%. The comparison of good friends with the idea that good friends come though sport seems to demonstrate that this is not the case. No difference in how this is seen across the year groups. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 8.** The classes in DIS are well disciplined.

**Classes are well disciplined**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	1	1.8	1.8	1.8
agree	23	41.8	41.8	43.6
neutral	24	43.6	43.6	87.3
disagree	5	9.1	9.1	96.4
strongly disagree	2	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

### Sex \* Classes are well disciplined Crosstabulation

Count

		Classes are well disciplined					Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	
Sex	male	1	11	8	2	0	22
	female	0	12	16	3	2	33
Total		1	23	24	5	2	55

### Yeargroup \* Recoded8 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded8			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	5	3	0	8
	Year 8	3	2	0	5
	Year 9	6	3	0	9
	Year 10	4	2	1	7
	Year 11	2	4	6	12
	Year 12	2	3	0	5
	Year 13	2	5	0	7
Total		24	22	7	53

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.893 <sup>a</sup>	12	.021
Likelihood Ratio	23.524	12	.024
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.580	1	.032
N of Valid Cases	53		

a. 20 cells (95.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .66.

Interestingly only 44% of parents agreed with this statement although the same amount were neutral about it. There is no suggestion that men and women see this differently. Although it is not statistically significant, there is informal evidence to suggest that there is an issue with year 11 parents. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 9.** In DIS, there is a difference in how male and female teachers control their classes.

**Difference between M/F teachers**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	4	7.3	7.8	7.8
	agree	7	12.7	13.7	21.6
	neutral	26	47.3	51.0	72.5
	disagree	13	23.6	25.5	98.0
	strongly disagree	1	1.8	2.0	100.0
	Total	51	92.7	100.0	
Missing	9	4	7.3		
Total		55	100.0		

**Sex \* Difference between M/F teachers Crosstabulation**

Count

		Difference between M/F teachers					Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	
Sex	male	2	2	10	7	0	21
	female	2	5	16	6	1	30
Total		4	7	26	13	1	51

**Yeargroup \* Recoded9 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded9			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	3	2	2	7
	Year 8	1	2	1	4
	Year 9	1	4	4	9
	Year 10	1	4	2	7
	Year 11	2	6	3	11
	Year 12	0	5	0	5
	Year 13	2	2	2	6
Total		10	25	14	49

**Son or daughter at school \* Recoded9 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded9			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	2	4	1	7
	daughter	3	11	6	20
	3	4	4	4	12
Total		9	19	11	39

Almost as many parents agree with this as disagree with this – 22% agree whereas 28% disagree. Over half of those questioned were neutral about this. Again there is no suggestion that male and female parents see this differently. There is informal evidence to suggest that year 7 and year 13 parents are more likely to agree with this statement, but the result is not statistically valid. Parents of daughters are more likely to disagree with this, but again the result is not statistically significant.

**Question 10.** Teachers in this school do not discriminate between students.

**Teachers do not discriminate**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	10	18.2	18.2	18.2
	agree	32	58.2	58.2	76.4
	neutral	12	21.8	21.8	98.2
	disagree	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Sex \* Recoded10 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded10			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	male	16	5	1	22
	female	26	7	0	33
Total		42	12	1	55

**Yeargroup \* Recoded10 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded10			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	5	2	1	8
	Year 8	4	1	0	5
	Year 9	8	1	0	9
	Year 10	6	1	0	7
	Year 11	10	2	0	12
	Year 12	2	3	0	5
	Year 13	5	2	0	7
Total		40	12	1	53

Virtually all parents either agreed with this statement- 76% or were neutral- 22%. Again there is no suggestion that male and female parents see it differently. No real difference across the grades except for year 12. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 11.** DIS places a lot of emphasis on sport.

**Emphasis on sport**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	1	1.8	1.8	1.8
	agree	18	32.7	32.7	34.5
	neutral	19	34.5	34.5	69.1
	disagree	13	23.6	23.6	92.7
	strongly disagree	4	7.3	7.3	100.0
Total		55	100.0	100.0	

**Sex \* Emphasis on sport Crosstabulation**

Count

		Emphasis on sport					Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	
Sex	male	0	5	9	5	3	22
	female	1	13	10	8	1	33
Total		1	18	19	13	4	55

### Sex \* Recoded11 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded11			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	male	5	9	8	22
	female	14	10	9	33
Total		19	19	17	55

### Yeargroup \* Recoded11 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded11			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	1	5	2	8
	Year 8	4	0	1	5
	Year 9	4	3	2	9
	Year 10	2	4	1	7
	Year 11	6	1	5	12
	Year 12	0	3	2	5
	Year 13	2	1	4	7
Total		19	17	17	53

### Son or daughter at school \* Recoded11 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded11			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	3	5	0	8
	daughter	6	8	7	21
	3	6	3	5	14
Total		15	16	12	43

There is no clear pattern here. The parents split into thirds in terms of agreement, disagreement and being neutral. There is no difference in terms of how this is viewed by male or female participants. Different grades see this quite differently, but there does not appear to be a pattern. It appears to be much more likely that a parent will disagree if they have a daughter in the school, but again the result is not significant.

**Question 12.** It is important that my son/daughter is good at sport.

**Important that student is good at sport**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	3	5.5	5.5	5.5
agree	25	45.5	45.5	50.9
neutral	17	30.9	30.9	81.8
disagree	9	16.4	16.4	98.2
strongly disagree	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

**Sex \* Important that student is good at sport Crosstabulation**

Count

		Important that student is good at sport					Total
		strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	
Sex	male	1	12	6	3	0	22
	female	2	13	11	6	1	33
Total		3	25	17	9	1	55

**Recoded13 \* Recoded12 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded12			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
Recoded13	overall agree	4	1	0	5
	neutral	13	4	0	17
	overall disagree	11	12	10	33
Total		28	17	10	55

### Son or daughter at school \* Recoded12 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded12			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	6	1	1	8
	daughter	10	8	3	21
	3	6	6	2	14
Total		22	15	6	43

A majority of parents agree with this. There appears to be no difference between what male parents think and what female parents think. There is a relationship between it being important that a son/daughter is good at sport and the idea that DIS places emphasis on sport, which is unsurprising. There is no difference with how this is seen across the year groups. Those parents with daughters in the school appear to be much more likely to disagree.

**Question 13.** My son/daughter's friendships are based around sport.

### Friendships are based around sport

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	5	9.1	9.1	9.1
	neutral	17	30.9	30.9	40.0
	disagree	26	47.3	47.3	87.3
	strongly disagree	7	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	55	100.0	100.0	

### Sex \* Recoded13 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded13			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	male	0	10	12	22
	female	5	7	21	33
Total		5	17	33	55



The majority of parents disagree with this, but there is a significant minority who do not. Those who agree are all female. There is no difference with how this is seen across the year groups. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 14.** I believe that bullying takes place at DIS.

Bullying					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	2	3.6	3.8	3.8
	agree	10	18.2	18.9	22.6
	neutral	23	41.8	43.4	66.0
	disagree	12	21.8	22.6	88.7
	strongly disagree	6	10.9	11.3	100.0
	Total	53	96.4	100.0	
Missing	9	2	3.6		
Total		55	100.0		

**Recoded13 \* Recoded14 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded14			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Recoded13	overall agree	1	2	1	4
	neutral	3	5	9	17
	overall disagree	8	16	8	32
Total		12	23	18	53

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.058 <sup>a</sup>	4	.398
Likelihood Ratio	3.974	4	.410
Linear-by-Linear Association	.840	1	.359
N of Valid Cases	53		

a. 4 cells (44.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .91.

### Sex \* Recoded14 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded14			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Sex	male	4	10	8	22
	female	8	13	10	31
Total		12	23	18	53

### Yeargroup \* Recoded14 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded14			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	2	5	1	8
	Year 8	3	0	1	4
	Year 9	2	4	2	8
	Year 10	2	2	3	7
	Year 11	1	7	4	12
	Year 12	1	1	3	5
	Year 13	1	2	4	7
Total		12	21	18	51

### Son or daughter at school \* Recoded14 Crosstabulation

Count

		Recoded14			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Son or daughter at school	son	0	1	7	8
	daughter	6	9	5	20
	3	5	6	3	14
Total		11	16	15	42

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.850 <sup>a</sup>	4	.019
Likelihood Ratio	12.828	4	.012
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.934	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	42		

a. 4 cells (44.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.10.

23% of parents believe that bullying takes place whereas 34% believe it does not. It is interesting to note that 8 parents believe that their child's friendships are not based around sport, but agree that bullying takes place at DIS. There is no suggestion that the result is significant. There is no indication that this is viewed differently by male parents than female parents. There is more disagreement with this statement as the year group of the child increases. No evidence however that the result is significant. Parents of girls are far more likely to agree and the result shows some significance – sample is too small.

**Question 15.** There are subjects that my son/daughter has chosen not to study because of the teacher teaching that subject.

**Subjects not studied because of teacher**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	2	3.6	3.8	3.8
agree	13	23.6	25.0	28.8
neutral	13	23.6	25.0	53.8
disagree	19	34.5	36.5	90.4
strongly disagree	5	9.1	9.6	100.0
Total	52	94.5	100.0	
Missing 9	3	5.5		
Total	55	100.0		

**Yeargroup \* Recoded15 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded15			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	1	3	2	6
	Year 8	2	0	3	5
	Year 9	0	2	6	8
	Year 10	3	1	3	7
	Year 11	5	3	4	12
	Year 12	0	2	3	5
	Year 13	2	2	3	7
Total		13	13	24	50

Fairly equal numbers agree and disagree on this. 32% agree against 46% who disagree. The results vary across the year groups, but there does not appear to be any overall pattern. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Question 16.** There are subjects that my son/daughter has chosen not to study because of other students taking that subject.

**Subjects not studies because of student**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	3	5.5	5.8	5.8
	neutral	13	23.6	25.0	30.8
	disagree	26	47.3	50.0	80.8
	strongly disagree	10	18.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	52	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	3	5.5		
Total		55	100.0		

# **Yeargroup \* Recoded16 Crosstabulation**

Count

		Recoded16			Total
		overall agree	neutral	overall disagree	
Yeargroup	Year 7	3	0	3	6
	Year 8	0	1	4	5
	Year 9	0	3	5	8
	Year 10	0	1	6	7
	Year 11	0	3	9	12
	Year 12	0	2	3	5
	Year 13	0	2	5	7
Total		3	12	35	50

The majority of parents disagree with this. The results are similar for all years apart from year 7. All three who agree with this statement have children in year 7. No difference between whether they have a son or daughter in the school.

**Appendix J: Classroom Observation Form.**

Number of students in class:	Subject being taught:
Sex of students: Male =      Female =	Sex of teacher:      Male      Female
Date:      /      / 2008	Time: From      until
Friendly gesture	
Friendly comment	
Student disorganisation	
Teacher disorganisation	
Non-directed question answered by a boy	
Non-directed question answered by a girl	
Directed question answered by a boy	
Directed question answered by a girl	
Humour	
Outspoken Comments	
Opinionated Comments	
Respect shown for opinions of others	
Disruptive behaviour	
Teacher control	
Student disinterest	
General statement on whether there is a difference in the teacher controlling girls and boys.	
General statement on classroom atmosphere	
General statement on relationships between students	
General statement on relationship between students and teacher.	

When tally is being used, M means made by a male and F means made by a female.

## **Appendix K: The Research Timetable.**



Year	Task
September 2006 – October 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search current literature</li> <li>• Identify methodology</li> <li>• Identify school with which to work</li> <li>• Write literature review chapter</li> <li>• Form questionnaire guidelines</li> <li>• Conduct practice questionnaires</li> <li>• Undertake further training in quantitative and qualitative methodology.</li> </ul>
November 2007 – February 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 2007. Three day period in school to meet with all stakeholders and to conduct initial student questionnaire</li> <li>• December 2007/January 2008. Analyse questionnaires, write topic guide for focus group interviews and begin write up of methodology.</li> <li>• February 2008. Two one-week periods in school to conduct focus group interviews with students, conduct initial teacher questionnaire and to undertake classroom observations.</li> <li>• March/April 2008. Analyse focus group interviews and in conjunction with the questionnaire results, form interview guide for students. Create interview guide for teachers. Begin analysis of documentation.</li> <li>• May 2008. One-week period in school to begin student interviews and continue classroom observations.</li> <li>• June 2008 – August 2008. Continue analysis of documentation. Begin analysis of student interviews and of lesson observations.</li> <li>• September 2008. One week visit to school to continue classroom observations and student interviews and to start teacher interviews.</li> <li>• October/November 2008. Continue analysis of results</li> </ul>

	<p>and begin writing up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 2008. One week visit to school to finish classroom observations and student and teacher interviews and to conduct the parent questionnaire.</li> <li>• February 2009. A three-day visit in this period to clarify any final points.</li> </ul>
March 2009 – April 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue analysis of interviews.</li> <li>• Write up final analysis.</li> </ul>

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