

English teachers and students' perceptions on the  
feminization of English teaching

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Master's thesis

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Department of Language and Communication Studies

English

February 2020

## JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

<b>Tiedekunta – Faculty</b> Humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta	<b>Laitos – Department</b> Kieli- ja viestintätieteiden laitos
<b>Tekijä – Author</b> Annastiina Auvinen	
<b>Työn nimi – Title</b> English teachers and students' perceptions on the feminization of English teaching	
<b>Oppiaine – Subject</b> Englanti	<b>Työn laji – Level</b> Pro gradu- tutkielma
<b>Aika – Month and year</b> Helmikuu 2020	<b>Sivumäärä – Number of pages</b> 95 + 4 liitettä
<b>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</b> <p>Tämä maisteritutkielma tutkii opettajien ja opettajaopiskelijoiden näkemyksiä englannin opettamisen naisvaltaisuudesta. Opettamisen naisvaltaisuus on länsimaissa tunnustettu ja tutkittu ilmiö, mutta usein aiheen keskusteluilmapiiriä leimaa huolestunut suhtautuminen feminisaatioon niin oppilaiden, kuin opetuksenkin kannalta. Suomessa tehdyssä tutkimuksessa on selvä aukko, ja myös kansainvälistä tutkimusta juuri opiskelijoiden ja opettajien näkökulmasta on vähäisesti.</p> <p>Tässä pääosin laadullisessa tutkimuksessa pyrittiin selvittämään, mitä mieltä englannin opettajat (n=89) ja opiskelijat (n=50) ovat englannin opettamisen naisvaltaisuudesta. Heitä pyydettiin myös antamaan syitä sille, miksi Suomessa englannin opettajina naisia on merkittävästi miehiä enemmän ja lisäksi selvitettiin, mikä merkitys englannin opettajan sukupuolella on osallistujien mielestä. Aineiston keruussa käytettiin Webropol-kyselyä, joka lähetettiin Jyväskylän yliopiston englannin opettajaopiskelijoille, sekä englannin opettajille ympäri Suomea. Kysely koostui sekä suljetuista, että avoimista kysymyksistä. Kyselyn lisäksi tutkimus koostuu kahden yliopisto-opiskelijan ja kolmen opettajan yksilohaastatteluista, jokainen heistä oli myös vastannut kyselyyn. Aineisto analysoitiin pääosin laadullisen sisällönanalyysin avulla, mutta kyselystä saatua dataa muutettiin myös määrälliseen muotoon.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittavat, että opettamisen naisvaltaisuus nähdään edelleen ongelmallisena, tilanteena, joka olisi hyvä muuttaa niin, että miehiä ja naisia olisi sama määrä opettajina. Silti sekä opiskelijoille että opettajille sukupuolijaon tasoittamisessa tuntui olevan kyse ennen kaikkea monimuotoisuuden lisäämisestä kouluihin. Annetut syyt miesten vähyteen alalla vaihtelivat, mutta eniten uskottiin kiinnostuksen kohteiden, opettamisen arvostuksen vähyden, palkan ja yleisten odotusten vaikuttavan feminisaatioon. Tutkimuksesta kävi ilmi, että sekä miehet ja naiset että opettajat ja opiskelijat pitivät eri syitä tärkeinä. Kyselyn perusteella osallistujat eivät pitäneet juuri englannin opettajan sukupuolta merkittävänä, mutta yleisemmin opettajan ammatissa etenkin miehet uskoivat opettajan sukupuolen olevan tärkeä. Etenkin haastatteluissa korostui, että naisopettajat pelkäävät syrjintää työhaussa miesten vähyden vuoksi. Kuitenkaan englannin kielen opettamista itsessään ei koettu feminiiniseksi ammatiksi.</p> <p>Lisätutkimusta aiheesta olisi suotavaa tehdä vielä laajemmalla osallistujamäärällä ja osallistujilla useammista eri oppiaineista. Lisäksi etenkin opettajankoulutuksen roolista feminisaatiokeskustelussa olisi tarpeellista saada tietoa.</p>	
<b>Asiasanat – Keywords</b> Feminization, gender, English teaching, teacher training, perceptions	
<b>Säilytyspaikka – Depository</b> JYX	
<b>Muita tietoja – Additional information</b>	

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION .....	5
2 GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMINIZATION IN THE FINNISH SOCIETY .....	7
2.1 Defining gender and gender equality .....	7
2.2 Finland as one of the leading countries in gender equality.....	9
2.3 Teacher trainees and teachers in Finland and in the world.....	10
2.4 Women outnumbering men as English teachers in Finland.....	12
3 FEMINIZATION AS AN ISSUE .....	15
3.1 Feminization as a phenomenon.....	15
3.2 History of the feminization of teaching.....	16
3.3 Factors that explain the lack of men in teaching.....	18
3.4 Feminization of teaching as a problem - according to whom?.....	19
4 RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE PRESENT STUDY.....	24
4.1 Aims and research questions .....	24
4.2 Selection and collection of the data .....	25
4.2.1 Participants.....	25
4.2.2 Questionnaire and interview as data collection methods .....	29
4.2.3 Questionnaire and interview outline in the present study .....	32
4.2.4 Ethical issues .....	34
4.3 Methods of analysis - Qualitative and quantitative content analysis.....	35
5 FINDINGS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY .....	38
5.1. Analysis of answers given to closed questions .....	38
5.1.1 The results of closed questions at a glance .....	38
5.1.2 The similarities and differences between genders .....	41
5.1.3 The similarities and differences between teacher and student respondents .....	45
5.2 Analysis of the responses to the open-ended questions .....	49
5.2.1 What do men and women think about the feminization in the field of English teaching ...	49
5.2.2 What do teachers and students think about the feminization in the field of English teaching .....	54
5.2.3 Why there are so few men as English teachers – analysis of the views by men and women .....	55
5.2.4 Why there are so few men as English teachers – analysis of the views by teachers and students.....	60
5.2.5 What is the significance of teacher’s gender in teaching English – analysis of the views by men and women .....	61

5.2.6 What is the significance of teacher’s gender in teaching English – analysis of the views by teachers and students .....	65
5.2.7 Feminization of English teaching - Free speech.....	65
6 THE FINDINGS OF THE INTERVIEW STUDY .....	69
6.1 More men are <i>needed</i> .....	70
6.2 More men are <i>wanted</i> .....	74
6.3 Why are there mainly women as English teachers? .....	76
6.4 How to attract more men to teach English? .....	79
7 CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION.....	82
7.1 Discussing the results and research implications .....	82
7.2 Reflection on the research design and final note .....	89
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	93
APPENDICES .....	96

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The present study will address the phenomenon of the feminization of English teachers and student teachers in Finnish basic and general upper secondary education. It is not uncommon to hear, even today, that girls have an aptitude for learning languages whereas boys do better in hard science. However, according to Uuskoski (2011), thanks to media use and especially video games, male students in Finland have started getting better results in English compared to girls in matriculation examination. In this respect, the traditional assumption about the suitability of school subjects based on gender does not seem to apply anymore. Nor does the assumption apply that boys succeed academically better with male teachers and girls with female teachers, since English teaching in Finland is very feminized, i. e. it is dominated by female teachers. Research shows that there is no proof that a higher number of men in schools would simply result in an increased success for boys (Martino et al. 2009; Martin and Marsh 2005). However, I find it interesting that language teachers still mainly consist of women, even in English teaching. In 2016 in Finnish high schools there were seven times more female English teachers than male, and the difference just grows when looking at basic education – there, in 2016 one in every ten English teachers was a man (Vipunen 2016). The feminization of English teaching is a real and recognizable issue in Finnish schools.

There have been many studies about the feminization of teaching, especially in primary education (McGrath and Sinclair 2013; Kelleher 2011; Drudy 2008; Skelton 2002; Lahelma 2000). Previous studies (Tymms and Merrell 2013; Cushman 2008; Drudy et al. 2005; Lahelma 2000) have indicated that according to people who work in the field of education, it is believed that low pay does not motivate men and furthermore, there are strong attitudes according to which working with children is seen to be more suitable for women than men. Interestingly, the need for more male teachers, especially in primary education has been justified by arguing that boys need more male role models and that male students can relate to men better than to women (Drudy et al. 2005; Lahelma 2000). A common finding in the studies has also been that the feminization of teaching is blamed when looking at boys' generally poor success in education when compared with girls. I find this last point rather disturbing and therefore, I am very interested to find out what the people who are at the centre of this debate, teachers and students who are studying to become teachers, think about the issue.

How teachers themselves feel about the feminization is not a widely researched topic. Finding out especially English teachers and students' opinions and hearing their reasons about the lack of male English teachers in their field is an area that has been neglected as a research topic - in Finland and elsewhere. For these reasons, in this study the aim is to find out how teachers and students of English think about the gender division in their field, and what reasons they would give to this phenomenon. The objective of the present study is to find out if their reasoning of the phenomenon is in line with previous studies or whether it can shed some new light on it. In addition, my goal is to find out what the significance of an English teacher's gender is, whether a certain gender has benefits in the field of teaching, and whether gender makes a difference either to the teachers or students.

Chapter 2 will discuss the main concepts and provide background theory for the present study. Chapter 3 will add to the theory when the concept of feminization is thoroughly examined. In chapter 4 the research design of the study is presented and research aims, data collection, as well as methods of analysis are outlined. Chapter 5 introduces the findings of the questionnaire analysis of the answers from teachers and students of English. Chapter 6 continues with introducing the findings from the interviews. Finally, chapter 7 is a conclusive discussion where the key findings and implications of the study are discussed, and the present study is evaluated.

## **2 GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMINIZATION IN THE FINNISH SOCIETY**

This section focuses on gender and its significance in education. When studying the feminization of English teaching in Finland, it is essential to start from the concept of gender and gender equality, before anything else. It is also important to understand feminization from the perspective of gender equality and how it represents itself in Finnish society and also elsewhere.

Therefore, in section 2.1 the terms gender and gender equality are defined, particularly emphasizing that gender is never binary and can be perceived both on a societal and individual level. Then, in 2.2 Finland's status as one of the leading countries in gender equality is discussed on a more general level. Section 2.3 explores the gender division of teachers and teacher trainees in Finland and abroad. Finally, in section 2.4 the focus will be brought onto the gender division of the teachers of English in Finland, showing that the teaching of English is a particularly feminized field of work and, therefore, worthy of research.

### **2.1 Defining gender and gender equality**

Gender and sex are no longer seen as binary concepts. Adams and Galanes (2013: 96) define the difference of sex and gender comprehensively by connecting gender to certain characteristics and psychological features that are usually associated with femininity and masculinity. Sex, then again, is often believed to refer only to biological attributes. Measor and Sikes (1992: 5) agree with these definitions and point out that all the differences between genders are produced by the society. Lorber (1994, as cited in Fausto-Sterling 2012: 6-7) goes even deeper as she identifies multiple subdivisions of gender and states that what gender consists of depends on whether gender is being discussed as a social institution or with respect to an individual. Therefore, gender ideology is one component of a wider concept that is gender and it can be seen as both social institution and also individually. Lorber explains that an important feature of gender as a social institution is gender statuses that refer to expectations that a society has about our behaviour and how we express ourselves. Gender ideology is something that justifies gender statuses. She also describes how arguments in the justification can relate to 'natural' differences between persons, meaning, for example that there are clear differences between men and women. Then, on an individual level gender involves various factors such as gender identity and gender beliefs. Gender beliefs can either be critical of or

align with the prevalent gender ideology in a society. It can be gathered from the definitions by Syrjäläinen and Kujala (2010: 30-31), that the concept of cultural gender, that is mainly determined by gender stereotypes and expectations, is a part of gender ideology.

In the context of the feminization of teaching, it could be argued, along the lines suggested by Lorber, that a particular gender ideology relevant to it has been based on such arguments as the nurturing character of women as a defence for the feminization of teaching as well as, as a counter-position, the need of a male role model for growing boys. Therefore, the justification for women outnumbering men as teachers is achieved by relying on arguments about the allegedly natural differences between men and women. Additionally, such gender beliefs could include those by individual male teachers who can believe that they, too, can be nurturing. In this study, the term gender is used in two ways: it is seen as part of a social institution, but also relevant on an individual level. It is important to remember that while individuals are biologically female, male or something in between, they still act in the world via multiple gender conventions (Fausto-Sterling 2012: 7).

In this study, the term gender is used to describe the gender identity of a person. This involves the assumption that there are more than two genders, that gender is seen as non-binary. Therefore, the distribution of teachers by gender refers also to how a person defines oneself socially, in addition to one's biological features. More specifically, when I use the terms *male* and *female* in the questionnaire aimed at my respondents, they refer to the biological sex. At this point, only the options *male* and *female* are given, but, when I asked about the respondents' gender there is an option to choose *another* in addition to the options *woman* and *man*. This option was given in order to avoid making gender a binary concept, which, as discussed, it is not and should not be treated as such. However, in the actual study itself, I found it clearer to refer to only *men* and *women* when discussing gender, because in previous research these terms have been the only options. I have not yet encountered previous research on the topic that would discuss other genders as well.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2019) defines gender equality as “*equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys*”. It is additionally noted that this does not mean that there is no difference between men and women, but the aforementioned factors do not vary depending on gender but are the same. It is further stated that the matter of gender equality is not only a human rights issue but also a precondition for



the development of people. Furthermore, it is believed that this work even continues growing. As for the present study topic, gender equality is a topic that is tightly connected to the discussion of feminization of teaching. Therefore, next section evaluates Finland's position as a leading country in gender equality and discusses how education is a field mainly dominated by women.

## **2.2 Finland as one of the leading countries in gender equality**

Even though the state of Finnish gender equality seems excellent in international comparisons, Jääskeläinen et al. (2015: 9) point out that there still are many challenges in the realization of gender equality in Finland. The Finnish Government report on gender equality (2010, cited in Jääskeläinen, 2015: 9-11) reveals that these challenges appear in leadership, work life and pay, the division of home chores, health and wellbeing, parenting, safety, media and advertising and, last but not least, in early childhood education, general education and teaching. Jääskeläinen et al. (2015: 10-11) add that the choices based on interests at the level of basic education seem to have a connection to choices made in higher education. They may show later in life in segregated career choices. Gender segregation has, in fact, changed depending on the particular field in question, but that does not mean that it is not still present in the Finnish society. This means that men have men as colleagues, and women work mainly with women, and that, therefore, the genders work in different fields. This segregation in education is at its strictest in vocational education where women mainly lean towards the field of care and health, whereas men mainly prefer the field of technology and transport. Against this background, it thus seems logical what the statistics of completed university degrees in 2017 show: the highest number of degrees completed by women, 84.1%, was in the fields of education, whereas for men, 78.5%, were in information and communication technology (Statistics Finland 2018: 32).

Statistics Finland (2015) call equal occupation groups those occupations in which 40-60 percent of the employees are women or men. In Finland in 2013 these professions included, for example, vocational education teachers, realtors, journalists and lawyers. However, there are also fields where the proportion of women and men is not equal: in these fields the percentage of men and women was less than 40 or over 60. For example, men do more construction, farming, mining and industrial work, whereas women are more likely to work in health or social services, in education, arts or entertainment. Interestingly, according to Statistics Finland (2018: 48), in 2016 the third most common field of work for employed

women was the job of a teacher or other special tasks in the field of education. For the sake of comparison, for men teaching did not even make it to the list of most popular fields of work. Therefore, it is clear that there is strong gender segregation in the professions in Finland.

Considering the fact that Finland ranks fourth in gender equality in the EU according to the Gender Equality Index 2019, it is alarming that progress towards equality has become slower in the fields of work and health (EIGE 2019). This section has revealed how careers differ greatly depending on gender, and no major change has been noticed throughout the years. Therefore, even if the possibilities technically appear to be the same for everyone, there is still something that separates men and women as workers - they apply to different lines of work.

### **2.3 Teacher trainees and teachers in Finland and in the world**

The majority of *teacher trainees* in Finland are women. However, the percentages vary slightly depending on the class level trainees are specializing in. The percentage of women accepted to teacher training in 2016 was 91% in kindergarten teaching, 85% in basic education special needs teaching, 78% in class teaching in basic education, 70% in vocational special needs teaching, and 65% in vocational teaching (Kumpulainen 2017: 18).

Teacher training in Finland takes five years, and the majority of the class teacher applicants in primary school, 72%, and 78% of the accepted ones, are female (Kumpulainen 2017: 24). In addition, it was discovered by Kumpulainen that increasingly fewer men apply to teacher training. Because of this, the segregation of teachers based on gender continues to grow. This clear division, especially in basic education, is generally considered to be a problem with respect to conveying gender equal values to pupils. Therefore, male quotas and higher payment have been suggested as ways of improving the situation as far as the gender segregation in education is concerned (Kumpulainen 2017: 43).

Drudy's et al. (2005) table account of the feminization of teaching worldwide in the years 1970 and 1997 shows that in the year 1970 women covered 70% of *primary school teachers* in Europe. In North America, the figure was even higher, 82%. In the year 1997 the number of female primary teachers in Europe was as high as 83%, showing that the participation of women had even grown, whereas in North America it had gone down a notch, to 79%. In developing countries, the number of women in teaching has also grown over time, but the percentage in the 1970 was not high, only 40%, and in the 1997 52% on the primary school

level. However, considering the different state of gender equality in developing countries it is remarkable that the figure is as high as it is, with women then constituting over half of the primary teachers.

When looking at the recent situation, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) statistics (2017), 79.6 % of all the teachers in Finland's primary education were female and 20.4 male in 2017. For the sake of comparison, looking at other Nordic countries one notices that in Sweden there were 23.6% males and 76.4 female teachers, while in Norway there were slightly more men, 25.4 percent of the overall figure. In other words, Nordic countries are quite similar to one another in their gender segregation of teaching. Perhaps surprisingly, in the United States there were only 12.9% male teachers, whereas female teachers were the majority with as high a percentage as 87.1%. It appears that the most even number of genders of all the countries that have taken part in the comparison could be found in Turkey, with women in primary teaching covering 61.1% and men 38.9%. The lowest percentage of men appeared in Lithuania, only 3,3%.

In lower secondary education in Finland there seem to be a small increase in the number of men, there are 25.5% of men and 74.5% women. However, these figures change notably, when looking at the situation in general upper secondary education - there men represent 39.9 % of all teachers, leaving women still in the majority with 60.1%.

Considering the fact that teaching in general is rather feminized in Finland, it is worth noting that the number of *female principals* is significantly smaller in comparison to male principals. In fact, Kumpulainen (2017: 65, 214) points out that the percentage of female principals in upper grades of basic education is below average; when compared with other OECD countries nearly ten percent below in fact. Over half of the principals in high school education were men even though the number of male teachers was only around 30 percent. Vipunen (2016) confirms this with the following figures: in 2016 there were 56 male principals and only 46 female principals in high school. In basic education, there were 179 female principals and only slightly fewer, 168 male principals (Vipunen 2016). What is worth noting is also that in 2015 in Finland, only 29,0% of women were university professors, whereas 71,0% were men (Statistics Finland 2018: 36). Nevertheless, even though the number of women as principals is rather low compared to men, it is remarkable that between 2013 and 2016 the number of women had increased the most in the sector of principals, with the growth of 8% (Kumpulainen 2017: 43).

As was mentioned earlier, the fact that significantly more men are found in the higher positions of teaching is not only a Finnish phenomenon but a reality in most countries in the world.

In sum, it seems that women outnumbering men as teachers is an international phenomenon. It often happens that even if women outnumber men by far in the number of class and subject teachers, most of the administrative positions in the field of education are taken up by men. Therefore, the feminization of teaching is not at its strongest in Finland when compared to other OECD countries. At the same time, there are other countries that have a more even gender distribution in the field of education than Finland has.

## **2.4 Women outnumbering men as English teachers in Finland**

In Finland children start learning English in the second grade of comprehensive school. They continue studying it as their mandatory foreign language, EFL, throughout their basic education. Although both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to study English, there are beliefs about a different aptitude of language learning regarding gender. It is a relatively common belief that female students learn languages better than boys (Heinzmann 2009; Jääskeläinen 2015). Furthermore, girls seem to be more interested in learning languages than boys (Jakku-Sihvonen 2013). However, it has also been found by Uuskoski (2011) that boys have recently started to do better in English, and one factor that perhaps explains this change is video games. Uuskoski (2011: 31) noted that thanks to gaming, male students' English grades turned out to be higher than the girls' grades. Boys seemed to do well thanks to spending time by playing and being on a computer, whereas the factors that lead to the girls' success varied much more. A study by Dörnyei (2006, cited in Heinzmann 2009) on motivation and gender is in line with these findings. In his study girls had a more positive attitude towards their L2 and its culture, and they had more instrumental reasons for learning the language and were more eager to put effort to studying. Perhaps this explains the findings of Uuskoski (2011), too, in that the girls study English in a different, more versatile way compared to boys.

In the light of Uuskoski's (2011) findings on the boys' success in English, and considering the international status of English language, it is justified to ask why the number of male English teachers has not increased as well. It is interesting that there is such a difference when looking at English, a subject in which boys have started to do increasingly better than girls in recent years in Finland.

The division of teachers of English based on gender shows clearly in the figures provided by Statistics Finland (Vipunen 2016). When studying the figures of the personnel in either basic or general upper secondary education and in relation to English as the teacher's primary taught subject, the number of female and male English teachers can be detected. However, one has to note that approximately 90 percent of all teachers are included in the data collection and therefore these figures are not absolutely accurate representations of the teachers in Finland. In addition, these statistics include headmasters and part-time and substitute teachers of English. Still, I found that these statistics offer the most accurate representation of the teachers, since they are based on the most thorough Finnish national survey there is.

In 2016, there were 1526 female comprehensive school teachers whose main subject to teach was English (Vipunen 2016). The number of male English teachers in that same year was only 148 - therefore only 9,7 percent of English teachers in basic education were men. These statistics include also pre-primary school teachers, headmasters and part-time and substitute teachers. For comparison's sake, in mathematics subject there were as much as 635 male teachers with this subject, and 1077 female. In percentages, there were 37% men as mathematics teachers in comprehensive schools. These figures not only demonstrate the phenomenon of feminization in teaching in basic education, but also the fact how English teaching, along with other language subjects, is particularly feminized.

In general upper secondary education the overall number of teachers drop – there were 479 female teachers of English and 78 males. Here the percentage of men as English teachers was 14 of all English teachers in Finland, thus indicating there is an increase of male teachers compared to basic education, but women still hold a clear and strong majority. Again, in comparison, in high school there were only 361 women to teach mathematics, and astonishingly men even outnumbered women with the number of 383 men. Therefore, in higher education it was possible to detect some change, and the male teachers started to appear more frequently on the high school level. Still, in the subject of English, the number of men remained significantly lower than that of female teachers. Therefore, this change is rather small, especially compared with other subjects, for example, mathematics.

To date, no Finnish research on the feminization of teachers of English seems to have been conducted, even though, as was shown before, there is a notable dominance of female teachers in this field. The inequality between the number of teachers of different genders has been

touched upon in the reports of the Ministry of Education, the latest being from year 2016, and even there the different subjects of the teachers are not separated, and the feminization of specifically English teachers are not discussed at all. This gap in knowledge on this particular question is the motivation of the present study.

This section evaluated the status of Finland as an exceptionally gender equal country by shedding light to aspects that still need work in order to better equality and also demonstrating very notable gender differences in regard to work in statistics. After this, the focus was shifted onto the gender division of teachers, in Finland and elsewhere, and I discussed the gender segregation that is notable in the teaching of English in Finland. In the following section I introduce the feminization as a concept and discuss the history of the feminization of teaching as well as examine how the issue is seen today.

### **3 FEMINIZATION AS AN ISSUE**

This section focuses on the widespread phenomenon of feminization of teaching. Section 3.1 defines the concept of feminization and explains how it is used amongst educators and sociologists. In 3.2 the attention is turned to the history of gender segregation in educational occupations. Section 3.3 discusses the factors that explain the phenomenon, and finally 3.4 examines why the feminization of teaching is seen as a problem that should be solved. The voices heard in this section are those of researchers in education and gender studies, since these two fields are at the centre of the concept of feminization.

#### **3.1 Feminization as a phenomenon**

In statistic research, feminization means an occupation in which the clear majority are women (Bank et al. 2007: 661). However, when educators and sociologists discuss feminization they essentially refer to the processes that lead towards teaching as a female dominated occupation (Drudy et al. 2005: 138). Indeed, Skelton (2003, as cited in Kelleher 2011: 20) emphasizes how it is important to go beyond the number of female teachers and pay more attention to the multi-dimensionality of identities where other factors, such as social class and sexuality, are at play as well. Skelton (2003: as cited in Kelleher 2011: 20) goes on to argue that very often these definitions, statistical and cultural, seem to collide - it is challenging to discuss one without the other. For the present study as well, both of these definitions are essential. The aim here is to study the phenomenon than can be seen in statistics, the fact that women dominate the field of teaching. However, starting from this phenomenon, my objective is to delve deeper into the cultural factors that come to play and explain the phenomenon, i.e. the processes that Drudy et al. (2005) mentioned. In addition, it is interesting to hear what the individuals who serve in the field think about feminization. Therefore, the trigger to the current study topic is in the statistics, but the sociological factors behind the numbers will also be discussed.

Besides the statistical and cultural definitions, Skelton (2002: 85-87) argues that it is also important to pay attention to political feminization. She consider this to refer to “backlash politics”. By this she means the criticism of feminism which is believed to have led to the feminization of teaching. According to these views, feminism is seen as going too far: as a result, it is argued that nowadays the school system benefits girls and works against boys so that girls succeed and boys fail. Furthermore, she see cultural feminization also entailing enforced ideas, such as that because of feminization school practices favour girls, meaning that

female teachers somehow better relate to female pupils and that benefits girls. The lack of male role models is also been considered by some to have a negative effect on boys' motivation and interaction in the classroom.

Griffiths (2006) suggests what could be considered a counterargument to backlash politics. She (2006: 387) points out that one needs to be clear about whether one is talking about the feminization of teaching in numbers or in a cultural sense. While it could be argued that, since women dominate in teaching, the teaching culture would, therefore, also be feminine, Griffiths (2006: 396) argues that it is important to apply feminist theory to the discussion of the feminization of teaching and insists that both men and women belong to a variety of cultures that are connected to practices of teaching. Therefore, feminization as a numerical phenomenon and feminized culture are two different things. Interestingly, according to Griffiths (2006: 402-405), feminist educators believe that instead of schools becoming or already being feminine, they are in fact becoming masculine, i.e. competitive, individualistic and hierarchical, and, therefore, highlighting hegemonic masculinity. In addition, Griffiths (2006: 402-405) reminds that there is no unified category of woman, so femininity cannot be dominant in teaching. Therefore, the feminization of teaching should not be condemned and seen as a threat, quite the opposite. Furthermore, she stresses that feminization as a synonym for feminized culture is really rare. Indeed, the present study aims at approaching feminization open-mindedly and finding out whether the study participants think about feminization as a threat or a possibility. The present study will explore how feminization is seen in schools by teachers and students of English, and if the answers align with Griffiths' or challenge them.

Feminization is quite naturally mostly researched in those fields in which it is actively present, such as in the fields of care and education. In the next section, feminization is looked at in the context of the present study and light is shed on to the process of education evolving into a female dominated field.

### **3.2 History of the feminization of teaching**

According to Kelleher (2011: 8), when discussing feminization of the teaching profession nowadays, feminization tends to apply to countries from the North, such as the UK, the U.S and Canada, but more recently, also to South Africa. Indeed, the statistics presented in this study represent the OECD countries and a large number of studies referred to are European,



American or Australian. This is an important factor to consider, because even though feminization can be called a worldwide phenomenon, there are countries that are immensely more influenced while there are others that are less so.

The feminization of the teaching profession has roots that go back to the history. However, Drudy et al. (2005: 19-21) point out that up to the mid-20th century, the field of teaching was very male dominated in the U.S, U.K and Ireland. Especially in the English speaking countries, already from the early nineteenth century onwards, there was a predominance of women as teachers, both in rural and urban schools (Drudy et al. 2005; Cortina and San Román 2006). This predominance of women as teachers has continued to the present day. Cortina and San Román (2006: 1-2) argue that the predominance of women as teachers in the 19th and 20th century was due to the society's consideration of women being more maternal and suited for working with children, more so than men. The strict gender patterns prevented women from pursuing other occupations and the salary of a teacher did not increase. These are, in fact, very popular reasons to explain the phenomenon. Drudy et al. (2005: 19-21) refer to the same reasons, seeing feminization as an outcome of an ideology of teaching that is seen better suited to women. They actually refer to this phenomenon as a "domestic ideology". While they address women's presumed domestic nature to explain their career choice, they also add that it has been perceived that teaching would not be suitable for a man because of his lack of strict moral codes. The latter view refers to Victorian values that were believed to apply to teaching as well in the 19th century. Additionally, it is possible that organizational changes such as the school year becoming longer whereas at the same time the salary staying the same made men look for other job opportunities in the English speaking countries (Cortina and San Román 2006: 1-2).

However, according to Drudy et al. (2005: 19-21), in the history of teaching in the United States, all these reasons for female domination in the occupation of teaching, in other words, beliefs about women's nature, the patriarchal control and the economic policy, were less dominant in rural areas when compared to urban ones. At the same time, as the percentage of men decreased in the field of teaching so did the status and pay of teaching. Miller (1992, as cited in Kelleher 2011: 17) points out that, even though in the 1870s women comprised over 50% of the teaching workforce in the United States, their field had the lowest status with the lowest pay. This indicates that women still were less appreciated compared to men: it seems to

be given that the high number of women in the teaching profession makes it an unappealing one and that only the growing number of men could increase the status of teaching.

Drudy et al. (2005: 137) note that at least in most developed countries women are dominating the primary and secondary level of teaching. Still, in school administration, the percentage of women decreases, and feminization is not a phenomenon there anymore. Women are absent from management, whereas men are absent from teaching. The next section considers the various reasons for the lack of men in teaching.

### **3.3 Factors that explain the lack of men in teaching**

Drudy et al. (2005) have conducted the largest and most detailed study ever made on the topic of gender imbalance in teaching. The study was conducted in the late 1990's Ireland, and they shed light on the reasons why women dominate the field of primary teaching. Slightly over 1000 school leavers from secondary schools, community schools and community colleges provided answers to their questionnaire. By school leavers they mean students who intended to apply to universities, colleges and other third level institutions in 1999. Additionally, almost 200 student teacher responses were collected. By its design Drudy's et al. study comes closest to the current study since in this research both teachers and students' views on the feminization of teaching were studied. However, the difference between their and the current study is that the student teachers were not interviewed, and only male teachers were studied, even though the students included both men and women. Additionally, in Drudy's et al. study other educational agents such as guidance counsellors took part in the study. Furthermore, it is essential to remember that the focus of Drudy's et al. study was on the teaching of primary school age children, and, therefore, the feminization of teaching is being observed from the perspective of teaching young children, excluding the teaching of teenagers.

Drudy's et al. (2005: 106-108) findings show that school leavers and student teachers saw the perception of primary teaching as a woman's job as the key explanation to the small number of men as primary teachers. However, what is interesting here is that it was more often female respondents who offered this explanation, not men. The second largest reason was the attraction of other careers - almost twice as many male students than women suggested this. The third biggest reason for the lack of men in primary teaching is unattractive, for example, boring and stressful. Here there were twice as many boys who offered this as a reason than girls. Low pay

was also offered as a reason for fewer men as teachers, but this answer was more offered by the student teachers than the school leavers, and there were no gendered differences in this topic. Furthermore, some girls replied that teaching would not be a socially acceptable choice for a man, and there were responses that even highlighted the association of teaching children with homosexuality. Still, it must be stressed that, based on the results of the study, boys felt that girls would “naturally” be better at working with children.

Whatever the reason for the lack of men in teaching, feminization of teaching is a common concern shared particularly in many European countries such as the UK, the Netherlands and Finland (Kelleher 2011). This widely shared concern is one of the key topics of the next section where the feminization of teaching as a problem is discussed.

### **3.4 Feminization of teaching as a problem - according to whom?**

Drudy et al. (2005: 137) discuss how the public discussion on the feminization of teaching has centred around three main issues. The first is the academic underachievement of boys in schools, the second the alleged gender differences in teacher competence and the third the status of teaching and the way in which the view of teaching as a profession has declined. What comes to the first point, there are a number of factors at play in the level of achievement of boys, but teacher’s gender has not been shown to be one of the factors, or at least its significance is unclear. As discussed in section 2.4, in Finland boys have started to get better results in English language, and the majority of English teachers are female. Still, Drudy et al. (2005: 137) argue that the relative competence of men and women teachers has been one of the issues causing worry about the feminization in schools. However, there is little research on the competence of men and women in the profession, and the research that has been conducted does not show significant differences. In fact, according to Drudy et al (2005: 137), case studies in Ireland of the most recent graduates of both primary and second level teacher education courses show that women generally had higher awards compared with men, especially in primary education. The issue of the professional status of teaching is a complex issue, and it is challenging to be clear about the effect of feminization. At least in the early 2000s Ireland, teaching did not have the same prestige as many other occupations requiring a university degree (Drudy et al. 2005: 11-12).

The professional status of teaching is intriguing and worthy of attention - since there has been a discussion whether the occupation will be less paid, the more feminized it is. Murphy and Daniels (2015) have found this to be true at least in Britain, Germany and Switzerland. They discuss a wage penalty when moving on a feminized field of work and that there occurs gender devaluation. Drudy et al. (2005: 137) also state that lower pay is related to feminization.

Drudy et al. (2005: 137) identify one more factor mentioned with respect to the worry about feminization on top of the competence and status discourse and this is the lack of male role models. The demand for more male role models originates in the perceived gender differences that pupils have in school. Jääskeläinen et al. (2015: 17) claim that without gender sensitive teaching traditional views on the differences between girls and boys, learning and also typical preferences and behaviour linked to gender might be sustained in schools. It is a common belief that boys need male role models in order to perform as well on the academic and personal level as well as girls do (Carrington et al. 2007 & Martino et al. 2009). However, in the study by Martin and Marsh (2005: 8,19) gender-invariant model appeared to be more accurate based on the results of 965 Australian high school students, meaning that girls and boys' motivation did not greatly differ depending on the teacher's gender.

Carrington et al. (2007: 400-412) conducted a study in England with the objective to find out whether the teacher's and pupil's matching gender brings out more positive attitudes amongst the pupils as has been said to happen. 413 classes for 11-year olds were studied in the research. In their data 113 pupils were taught by men and 300 by women. Their findings showed that matching teacher with a pupil by gender did not have any impact either on boys or girls, and there was no evidence that the presence of a male teacher would have somehow enhanced the performance of boys and, vice versa, of girls. However, quite interestingly, they also found that both girls and boys taught by women teachers held more positive attitudes towards school. Therefore, even though measured gender differences in pupils' performance do exist, there is no data that would indicate that these differences are due to feminization, and that the increased number of male role models would actually make things better. Rather, it was found that what truly matters to pupils, immensely more than gender, are teachers' skills.

Interestingly, Huttunen (1997: 81) points out that especially younger teachers had started to view classroom teaching in an androgyne way, appreciating both feminine and masculine qualities in teachers. Since he made this observation about Finnish teachers already twenty

years ago, it is possible that these attitudes towards the androgyny of a teacher have only increased. Indeed, Skelton (2002: 91) brings up a point of view that the whole idea of schools being feminized environments only because women outnumber men, seems to rely only on the assumption that people act accordingly their gender stereotype - women only act in feminine ways and men in masculine ways. According to her, this seems to be the core idea where the very need of male role models come from and feeds the idea of gender *--as something constructed along stereotypical lines, and located exclusively in male and female bodies--*. Skelton (2002: 92) also addresses the worry of the atmosphere in schools in the beginning of the 2000s not challenging traditional gender roles. She finds this lack of diversity worrying and sees it preventing the progress of education in the United Kingdom.

Cushman (2008) has conducted a study in New Zealand on male role models in teaching. The study participants were 169 primary school principals, 108 men and 161 women, and they answered a questionnaire about the concept of the male role model. The objective in this study was to find out whether the participants felt like primary schools need more male role models, what they understand by the term and what qualities they associate with the word. According to Cushman (2008: 129-133) there were gendered differences in the answers, for example, male respondents felt more strongly about the need for more male role models than women. The main reasons for getting more male role models was to help the situation of children who have only a single parent, also the need for “father figure” was expressed by some. The second reason was to enhance boys interest in sports, as many felt that the concept of male role model involves “sportyness”, meaning that in order to be a male role model, than man has to be interested in sports and it shows in him. There was also a great deal at play in the idea of hegemonic masculinity when talking about male role models in the study by Cushman. The male role models had to be anti-feminine, masculine and even heterosexual. The study revealed that primary school principals in New Zealand named neither academic abilities nor behaviour management skills to be immensely important. Therefore, it can be concluded based on this study as well that there is no connection with male role models enhancing pupils’ academic performance.

McGrath and Sinclair (2013: 544-555) abandon the idea that male teachers would be beneficial for the sake of academic performance and suggest that the increasing number of men might not make a difference to the underperforming of boys. However, based on their research on students and their parents in Sydney, they found that traditional ideals about the nuclear family

still lived strong in the respondents' minds; accordingly, there is no evidence in denying their effect on attitudes towards teachers, too. Further, it was discovered that both parents and students wanted more male role models, and male teachers were seen as having a positive influence especially on girls, which has not been earlier found. To sum up, their research demonstrates that there can still be benefits to children from male role models, that the gender of a teacher might matter to them.

Seeing the lack of male role models as teachers as a problem in a Finnish context, Lahelma's study is perhaps the most profound one made in Finland. Lahelma's (2000: 173-174, 183-184) study indicates that the lack of male teachers might be a problem mainly for adults, but not for younger pupils. She conducted 90 interviews of school students who were 13-14 years old in the mid-1990s and furthermore 60 follow up interviews 4 years later. In the study, it turned out that children interviewed considered a good teacher having the following qualities: fair, considerate, gentle, a good sense of humour, good at keeping order and, first and foremost, good at teaching. Interestingly, even though teachers interviewed had rather similar perceptions of what a good teacher is like, it was mainly the teachers who identified the qualities of a good teacher being connected to being male. The students' qualities of a good teacher were not projected to any specific gender, and the students did not share the fear about the lack of men with adults. Furthermore, the students did not male teachers to act as role models. Lahelma also found that some of the reasons that are presented in regard to the need for more male teachers by teachers be valid for all professions where females outnumber men and not specifically to teaching. In other words, feminization should be discussed in regard to working life in a more general way.

In the same vein the lack of male teachers was perceived problematic in an interview study by Vataja (2011:67) on the discourse of Finnish male class teachers, feminization of teaching and masculinity. Vataja interviewed six male class teachers, and the need for a certain gender balance surfaced, meaning that the male class teachers stated that a fifty-fifty division in genders would be preferable. Interestingly, it was found that the male teachers in question did not necessarily give many reasons as to why that is, they did not rationale their opinions much further. It seems as if it is merely assumed that men and women are two different groups, and everyone benefits when there are both men and women equally present.

Overall, there appeared to be a rather modest number of recent literature on the subject of feminization of teaching, especially from the point of view of the teachers and students. Research reports were found, but actual up to date, relevant books and large-scale research, core studies, conducted on the subject of feminization of teaching were scarce. Therefore, many of the sources for this research are easily over ten years old. It thus seems like the golden age of research on feminization in education was in the 90s and early 2000s. In the early 90s gender-equality was furthered globally, and the impact of that movement naturally spread to study the field of education as well. And even then, the focus was often only on basic education, as if the feminization would only be limited to or be problematic at that level only.

This lack of detailed research is interesting, since the number of women has only grown since the 1980s and 1990s and, therefore, the issue has certainly not disappeared. Nevertheless, it seems like research has not been drawn to the topic anymore, at least not from the teachers' of comprehensive and upper secondary school point of view. There is all the more reason to conduct the current study, because it can give voice to the active agents in the field of teaching and provides perspective on the reasons and effects of feminization with a specific focus in subject teaching, in this case the lingua franca status English. I find it critical to conduct the present study on this topic since attitudes towards gender are important to study from the perspective of gender equality. School is a place where children learn to view the world, and to strive in gender equality, one must understand whether gender has an impact on what people think about one another. As found in section 3.3, attitudes towards gender can have consequences as far as in the prestige of a profession. The present research is needed to understand the perceptions of teacher's gender and if teacher's gender has any significance in the field of basic and general upper secondary education in Finland.

Section 3 started with an introduction to the concept that is feminization. After this the phenomenon was observed in relation to education and the history of teaching and explaining factors were discussed through previous studies on the topic. Finally, the view of seeing feminization of teaching as a problem was paid attention to, and it was discovered that especially adults seem to think that it is necessary for pupils to see a male-role model in the classroom. In the next section the frame of the study is presented.

## **4 RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE PRESENT STUDY**

The present study is a qualitative interview and questionnaire study. The data consisted of both teachers and teacher trainees of English. The chosen method for the analysis of the data was qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Section 4.1 reveals the objectives of the study in the form of research questions and justifies the choice of those particular questions. Section 4.2 focuses on how the data were selected and later collected, and both interview and questionnaire are evaluated as data collection methods. Furthermore, the data itself and the design of both the interviews and questionnaire is described in an explicit way. Additionally ethical issues regarding the present study are briefly discussed as well. Lastly, in section 4.3 the choice of content analysis is justified and examples on the ways it was applied are provided.

### **4.1 Aims and research questions**

In order to get the richest data possible, I divided the research problem into three questions. The following questions are almost in the same form in the questionnaire's open questions.

1. What do the teachers and students of English think about the feminization of teaching in their field?

This question allowed me to gather subjective information on feminization from the informants. It is a fairly open one; this is because it is meant to allow the participants to express the initial ideas that they have on the topic, as freely as possible.

2. What reasons do the teachers and students of English give to the feminization of teaching?

To my knowledge, the second research question has not been asked in Finnish studies before. This question makes it possible to compare the data with the findings from previous international studies of the subject and also helps to get to the bottom of the phenomenon of the feminization of English teachers' in Finland. This question aims at getting both subjective points of view as well as perhaps more general, even stereotypical views that might not be their own.



3. What is the significance of an English teacher's gender to the teachers and students of English?

The third research question shifts the focus of the study onto the more general issue of the importance of gender in the classroom, which is something that has been a focus of studies before, but without any doubt still a relevant issue in the field of education.

It felt essential to have English teachers as informants since they have not been a subject of a study focusing on the feminization of teaching. To be studying or teaching English became the focus of this research because according to the statistics (Vipunen 2016), the gender segregation is very notable in this particular field in Finland, English teaching. This can be considered peculiar, given the importance of English, its spread and status as a lingua franca, and the overall good proficiency that Finnish students have in the language. For these reasons, the investigation of the gender division among teachers of other languages taught in Finland was ruled out.

Based on previous studies, it can be assumed that the respondents consider the feminization of teaching problematic but do not doubt the proficiency of women teachers. There is a possibility that the answers of student teachers could involve critical evaluation of the teacher training. However, it is possible that the teacher respondents who have completed their training perhaps over 10 or 20 years ago, might criticise the training just as well. In general, I believe that the respondents do not see a great significance of gender in English teaching but perhaps they would still like to get more men in the field of education. Presumably the question of male role models comes up but understanding of the concept might differ depending on the speaker.

## **4.2 Selection and collection of the data**

In this section the procedure of the study is explained and first information on the participants is given. Then interviewing and questionnaire are being evaluated as data collection methods and after that the interview and questionnaire outline of the present study are discussed. In the end the ethical issues that needed to be considered in this study are presented.

### **4.2.1 Participants**

The present study has two kinds of respondents: teachers and students of English. The data for this study were collected by sending out a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) to the teacher

students of English and the teachers of English. Ultimately, the questionnaire was answered by 140 people, out of which 51 were students and 89 teachers. Furthermore, in order to get a deeper understanding of the issue, more data were acquired by conducting 5 interviews of teachers and teacher trainees. However, all these interviewees had also taken part in the questionnaire. These five interviewees were given a pseudonym in order to protect their identities.

I considered it valuable to gather information from teachers, because they are the core of the phenomenon and therefore, it was seen to be the most fruitful task to find out their views. However, it was important to include students, too, since they will be future teachers, active agents in the field, and it was necessary to give them a voice as well. The topic of this study is something about which many people outside education could also have an opinion about. Still, in order to get as focused and relevant data as possible, I believed to include only the students and teachers of English.

The questionnaire distinguishes two groups of students - the ones who have completed teacher training and the ones that have not. This distinction was made in order to keep the possibility open to see if there were some systematic differences between the groups. However, as the research progressed, I decided to reject the analysis based on students completed teacher training. This was decided because it would limit the number of participants that could take part in the study. In addition, it was considered not to make a remarkable difference in answers whether a person has completed teacher training or not. University of Jyväskylä was chosen to be the location from which to recruit the student participants for two reasons. As a student of the same university, it was easy for me to send the questionnaire to multiple people. In addition, the high quality of the university's teacher training in University of Jyväskylä led me to anticipate that the students would be motivated to think about and answer to different aspects and assumptions of the teacher's profession. Furthermore, as suggested by Jankama (2004: 39) during their studies the students' professional identity is still in process, and they are also probably skilled when it comes to forming their ideas in writing. This can be taken to mean that, due to various courses and different type of work, they can express their thoughts in a more skilful way than someone who has not had the same experience. For these reasons, from early on I decided to have university students as my informants.

The questionnaire was sent to the student teachers via email using the English subject's mailing list. It is impossible to say how many students of English the questionnaire reached and, therefore, the response rate is unknown. The questionnaire was anonymous, and it was made sure that no detailed information of the participants was asked. However, in the final section of the questionnaire I asked for the informants' willingness to participate in the follow-up interview. Eventually five students wrote their email address.

The official questionnaire was sent in the 18th of February 2019 to the University's English subject's mailing list. This time 38 students filled out the questionnaire. The second round was sent the 8th of March providing only 3 more responses. In order to gather more responses, the final round to the university's mailing list was sent in the 20th of March and 8 more responses from students was acquired. That meant that I received 49 responses from students. This number I decided to be enough for the purposes of this study. Meanwhile, teachers of English were approached personally via e-mail that contained the link to the online questionnaire. Different schools from all over Finland were quite randomly chosen, both from comprehensive and upper secondary schools. In addition, I relied on some of my personal teacher connections. Despite these efforts, during the spring out of my 20 personal inquiries, I managed to get only 7 responses.

Due to the lack of success by contacting teachers personally, I decided to share the questionnaire on social media. The permission for this was acquired from a system administrator of a Facebook group of English teachers to share the questionnaire on their group page. On the 2nd of April the questionnaire was sent to the Facebook group. At the time of sending the message the group included more than 3000 teachers and students of English. In my message I stated that the questionnaire is for teachers only, since the 49 responses I had previously gotten from students was considered to be sufficient. Despite this, two more students on the English teacher group also answered, unknown from which university. Overall, sharing the questionnaire on Facebook was a success, 82 teachers answered within two days. I decided to close the questionnaire after these two days, since both the number and quality of data seemed to be satisfactory to meet the needs of the study. Furthermore, the teachers ended up being geographically spread. This I considered important, as it made sure that the questionnaire had reached participants from all over Finland.

Initially, I was aimed at having a relatively even distribution of genders in the informants. Nevertheless, I doubted that the number would be completely even, since there are significantly fewer male English teacher trainees than there are female trainees. Due to the nature of the study, the focus on the lack of male English teachers, it was nevertheless vital that there are quite a few men among the participants. Furthermore, there was a category of *other* in addition to *men* and *women* in the beginning of the questionnaire. There was only one respondent who chose that category and because of the number being so small, that one participant was excluded from the study. In the end, the overall gender division was the following: 22 men and 117 women. Out of the 50 student teachers that responded the questionnaire, 18 (36%) were men and 32 (64%) women. Out of the 89 teachers that responded, only four (4%) were men and there were as many as 85 (96%) female teachers. The lack of male respondents was unfortunate, but then again, it reflects the feminization of the profession.

Table 1. Information on the questionnaire participants

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>In total</b>
Teachers	4	85	89
Students	18	32	50
Total	22	117	139

The interviewees were chosen based on how expressive their questionnaire answers were. Expressiveness was a criterion to ensure that I could get as much information as possible during the interview. Two students of English from the University of Jyväskylä and three teachers of English from different regions of Finland were interviewed. One teacher was male as well as one student. The decision to have more women as interviewees came from practical reasons, there were significantly more women that answered the questionnaire in the first place and left their contact information - this in itself represents the feminized nature of the teaching profession.

Table 2. Information on the interviewees

<b>Pseudonym and age</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Years of teaching English</b>	<b>Year of studies</b>
Markku, 51	Eastern Finland	18	
Maria, 41	Southern Finland	10	

Sanna, 33	Southern Finland	7	
Paula, 25	Central Finland	-	7
Tommi, 23	Central Finland	-	4

I assumed that the teachers have their professional perspective, and that they might focus on the actual work more when talking about feminization, whereas for students it might be more natural to discuss more teacher training and their perceptions and preliminary ideas on the teaching profession. I also speculated that there might be some systematic differences between the answers of students and teachers who are already working, and this possibility offers an interesting angle to the research. This possible difference might be explained by, for example, the age difference of the participants, the change of teacher training over time and the change in status of teaching as a profession over time as well. Additionally, while the feminization of teaching has been a focus of many studies since the 1990s, the overall discussion around gender in the society has only become more intense and perhaps this affects the take that the participants have on the topic.

#### 4.2.2 Questionnaire and interview as data collection methods

Kalaja et al. (2011: 160) explain how a questionnaire is well suited for collecting data from many participants, it is time efficient and creating it is relatively effortless. In order to make sure that the questionnaire works, is easy to answer and it truly measures what it is supposed to measure. Therefore, to ensure its validity, a questionnaire should be piloted. In this study, piloting was done with the help of three persons, before the questionnaire was properly distributed. The purpose of this was to see if the questionnaire was easy to understand, logical and accurate. The focus of the questionnaire was on the participants' perceptions of the researched topic, and when designing it previous literature was used to aid in the formulation of its questions, which improved both its reliability and validity.

A questionnaire often consists of both closed and open-ended questions. This was the case in the present study, too. Popping (2015: 25) characterizes closed questions to ask, for example, limited information that is presented in a list of options for the participant. In the present study answers for the closed questions were to be chosen from a five-point Likert scale. When it comes to open-ended questions, Popping (2015: 25-26) divides them into three categories: technically open-ended questions, apparent open-ended questions and the really open-ended

questions. The first type refers to a question in which the respondent is asked to fill in a specific meaning, for example, a question of one's age. The second type means a question where the answer is supposed to be written down from a list. Therefore, the assumption is that there is a list from where to choose from and that the list itself is too long to be included in the questionnaire. Asking about someone's nationality or spoken language are examples from apparent open-ended questions. The two, technically open-ended questions and apparent open-ended questions have in common the fact that they both are alternatives for closed questions, since they too aim at getting answers for specific questions. The third type, the really open question is the most difficult one to analyze. They often require argumentations and they often start with *Why...?*. Their idea is that they can be used for the purpose of theory construction, and to possibly look for occurrences and differences of themes that surface from the answers. Still, the answers can be truly diverse and include connections to closed questions that may be challenging to truly understand.

In the present questionnaire, the technically open-ended questions are found at the beginning of the questionnaire where I ask about the age, year of study, sex and gender of the respondents. Interestingly, out of the four open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire only one is a mixture of an apparent open-ended question and a really open-ended question, that being the question number 19 "What reasons would you give to the fact that women fairly outnumber men as teachers"? All the rest of the last four open-ended questions "What do you think about the feminization in your field?", "What is the significance of teacher's gender in English teaching?" and "What else would you like to tell about the field's feminization?" are really open-ended questions. For these reasons, it was possible for me to analyze the Question 19 by coding. Furthermore, Popping (2015: 26) points out how answers might be explicit and sometimes the researcher has to read between the lines, these are challenges that one faces with open-ended questions.

Brinkmann (2013: 2-3) explains that conversation has always been a central tool for humans when they want to learn about each other. In fact, he adds that it can be argued that all human research is conversational, since the human being is a linguistic creature, and the best way to understand language is through the context of conversation. Since the early 20th century in social sciences, the conversational process of knowing has been called interviewing. The term itself reveals the interactional nature of humans, since the word literally means an interchange of views between two persons. The concept *con-versation* has Latin roots that means

wandering together with and the roots of *dia-logue* mean the talk that goes back and forth between people. All these concepts have had a very clear connection to the interaction of humans and meaning making right from the beginning then. Therefore, conversation should be considered as something much more than just merely a research method.

Taylor et al. (2016: 8-11) state that in qualitative research the focus is on the meaning people attach to their lives. It means doing research on experiencing life from one's own perspective. For a qualitative researcher there is something important and worthy of research in all groups and situations. This means that nothing is too trivial or insignificant that it could not be a focus of research. Even though the present research focuses on individual people's attitudes about their work and the teaching culture, it is believed that this research will reveal something that is strongly linked to the world around us - after all, teachers and students are active and visible, participants in the society. Considering the qualitative take of the present study, it only seems natural that interviews are used as a research method in order to go deeper from the questionnaire answers.

Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in this study. According to Brinkmann (2013: 20-21), the choice of semi-structured interviews is a justified one in that it allows the change of angles based on whatever is deemed important by the interviewer. By this method, it is possible to make the interviewer an active participant as well, instead of just someone following a strict, pre-planned set of questions. The interviewer also has a say in what to focus on in the conversation. This would not be possible in an unstructured interview where the role of the interviewer is mainly to act as a listener without interrupting or actively participating in the conversation. However, as Brinkmann (2013: 18-19) states, there really is no such thing as a completely unstructured interview. Even if there were only one statement or a question before beginning the interview, it still frames the following conversation and all questions lead the interviewee to some directions since it is preferable to get the participants to talk only about certain themes. Considering all these points, it appears that semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to be an active participant but that the structure does not prevent the free flow and new ideas that might come up in the middle of the interview.

Brinkmann (2013: 26-27) mentions the benefits of the possibility to create confidentiality, the lack of fear of interruption and also, the control of the interviewer when considering individual interviews. In the current topic it was necessary for the researcher as an interviewer to lead the

discussion and direct the interviewees' talk towards the research interests. Even though the theme of the interview was not very personal, I agreed that it would be beneficial to use individual interviews in order to create confidentiality. Finally, it indeed was considered important that the focus was on individual teachers' and teacher trainees' views on the matter under investigation, and for that purpose it was necessary that the participants could talk without the fear of interruption. According to Brinkmann (2013: 26), a group interview would enable free flow of conversation that would possibly take the participants' minds out of the study and let them participate in a relaxed, free, manner. However, as was mentioned, for this study it was important to focus strictly on the individuals and not let anything distract them. It was thus essential to discuss in depth the themes of the study, and for that to happen the interviewer needed to have control over the situation. Still, it must be pointed out that memory is not always reliable, that is certainly one of the challenges of qualitative interview research. For this study, the interviewees had not received the questions beforehand since their reactions were wanted to be as authentic as possible. Still, since they had already filled out the questionnaire, they had quite a good idea on what the interview is going to be about.

#### **4.2.3 Questionnaire and interview outline in the present study**

The questionnaire was planned and constructed by using the Webropol online survey tool and it was also used to gather some statistical data. Four background questions and 13 closed questions were set in a Likert scale and, in addition to them, the questionnaire included 4 open-ended questions that were presented at the end of the questionnaire. The language of the questionnaire was Finnish and the examples used in this research consists of translations of the original Finnish questions. In the very beginning of the questionnaire there was a cover note that briefly explained what the research was about, described the phenomenon in question and what the aim of the study is. It was clearly stated that the questionnaire is anonymous and that the participants cannot be recognized on the basis of their answers.

The 13 closed questions were in the form of attitudinal statements and the themes were selected on the basis of previous research, centring around topics that rise when discussing feminization. However, the themes were not highlighted in the questionnaire or emphasized in any way. The first four questions of the questionnaire were considered to provide necessary background information, such as whether the participant is a teacher or a student, and what their gender is. Furthermore, at this point it was asked whether the student participant had participated in the teacher training. This question was included because there was a possibility that there would



have been some systematic differences in the answers depending on whether one had completed the training or not. The next five closed questions relate one way or another to teacher training and the final eight bring up attitudes that previous studies have found people to consider important when discussing the feminization of teaching. All in all, the majority of the questions were relatively quick for the participants to answer, which is one of the benefits of closed questions. However, in order to go a little deeper in the responses, four open-ended questions were added to the questionnaire. The time for filling out the questionnaire was estimated to be between 5 and 10 minutes.

Open ended questions can offer responses that cannot be presumed beforehand. They also provide the researcher evidence in the form of quotations. Open-ended questions certainly take more time to answer and are statistically considered unreliable, but regarding this research and its qualitative nature and aim to find out how the participants perceive the feminization of teaching, the positive aspects outcome the negative ones. Three of the questions follow quite strictly the research questions and ask:

1. What do you think about the feminization in your field?
2. What reasons would you give to the fact that women clearly outnumber men as English teachers?
3. What is the significance of teacher's gender in English teaching?

In addition to these three, the final open-ended question allows the informant to add something else related to feminization that has not yet come up. The open-ended questions required the same qualitative content analysis when interpreting the data as did the interviews. However, it was possible to study the answers also quantitatively, even though no statistical analysis was conducted, and the main focus was still on the qualitative analysis. All of the questions were obligatory to answer because I strongly felt that all of the questions are equally relevant and important for the study.

The semi-structured interview for the teachers consisted of 12 pre-planned questions. The two student interviewees were presented one question less, therefore, 11 questions. The whole interview was conducted in Finnish in order to create as natural of an atmosphere as possible and ensure that there would not be misunderstandings from either part. The first three to four questions regarded background information, such as the year of teaching or studying and

reasons for becoming an English teacher. These questions were presented in the beginning of the interview. The following set of questions aimed at providing answers to the research question “*What do the teachers and students of English think about the feminization of teaching in their field*”. The third section had as its objective to examine if gender of an English teacher matters according to the participants. Finally, the participants were asked reasons that would explain the phenomenon of the feminization of English teaching. Even though these four sections remained the same for each interviewee, the students’ interviews quite logically emphasized the role of teacher training more and the questions headed at teachers focused more on the actual profession and their work experiences. Naturally, since the interview was semi-structured, more questions were presented during the interviews that were not beforehand planned, often these included clarifications or mild leading towards the topic in order to provoke opinions in the interviewees’ minds.

#### **4.2.4 Ethical issues**

The questionnaire data was collected anonymously and, therefore, the identity of the participants is unknown. All the questionnaire participants were informed both in the email that contained the questionnaire, as well as in the introduction part of the questionnaire, that their answers cannot be recognized from the questionnaire. Only basic information: age, sex, gender, year of studies or in the case of teachers, year of teaching was collected. The teachers were also asked the geographic location of teaching, this to make sure that the questionnaire has reached teachers from different parts of Finland, but that information is guarded so that specific city or town is not mentioned in the present study, overall the location information was not the focus. The data both from the interviews and the questionnaire were carefully secured, only stored on a personal computer, and were disposed of right after the finishing of the thesis.

As far as the five interviews were concerned, the procedure required the interviewees to sign a general consent form that was designed along the guidelines by the University of Jyväskylä and also to read a data protection form which explained the nature of the present research, including background information to the topic, how the data would be processed and used. In order to protect their identity and privacy, all the interviewees were given pseudonyms with which they are referred to in this study. No information that would compromise their recognition, such as location or the school they work in, was revealed in the study.

### **4.3 Methods of analysis - Qualitative and quantitative content analysis**

As Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2015: 157-158) state, neither discourse analysis nor qualitative research in general aim at an exhaustive analysis where the phenomenon in question is explained away. Indeed, the aim of the current study is geared towards shedding light onto the phenomenon that has been widely discussed and researched mainly by using similar qualitative methods. The objective is to see how the phenomenon is perceived by a group of people in a similar profession or line of study, but in a way that cannot be generalized into an absolute and never changing truth. The goals of the study can be achieved through applying qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

According to Schreier (2012: 1-3), qualitative content analysis is a method where one describes the qualitative material systematically. It is a well-founded choice if one has to use at least some level of interpretation of the data in order to find the meanings the data convey. It is important, according to her (2012: 2), that the meaning in qualitative content analysis is never given but constructed. This refers to how the researcher always interprets the results subjectively. The material for qualitative content analysis can be both verbal or visual, but in any case it is often referred to as text, mainly for the sake of convenience. For these reasons, the interviews and the open questions of the questionnaire and the interviews of the present study were analyzed by using qualitative content analysis.

Tuomi and Sarajarvi (2018: 122-127) give a coherent explanation on how to go about with content analysis of qualitative data, with specific reference to interview study. The analysis starts by listening to the interviews and writing the data down at the same time. Then one reads them carefully and starts looking for reduced expressions and doing underlining. By reduced expressions it is meant that the process involves ruling out everything irrelevant for the study. One lists the expressions that can be examples of something that the participant has gone through, and of those items that are left the differences and similarities of the expressions are looked for. By doing that the analyst can group them together and create subcategories. Then, it is possible to unite the subcategories and form them into parent categories. Finally, it is possible to unite the parent categories into bigger, main categories and possibly come up with a defining concept for that specific group.

Schreier (2012: 87) explains that when building a coding frame solely based on one's data instead of previous knowledge, one does it inductively. In the present research previous research knowledge was used to aid when forming out the questions for both the interview and the questionnaire, but when coding the data, the strategy was data-driven, really focusing on what there is to be found in the data. Therefore, the information found in the data was turned into categories, instead of deciding on the categories beforehand. Mayring (2010, as cited in Schreier 2012: 88) suggests that when deciding upon new subcategories, first the main categories are determined. Then, in order to create subcategories, one decides whether the emergent concept is a new one, and if so, it is turned into a category and if there is a category that covers it is plainly passed over. This is called subsumption of the data.

In the current research, the data from interviews and questionnaire was provoked by three research questions:

- What do the teachers and students of English think about the feminization of teaching in their field?
- What reasons do the teachers and students of English give to the feminization of teaching?
- What is the significance of an English teacher's gender to the students and teachers of English?

In the context of the present study the reduced categories could be for example conversations of the participants with colleagues about the lack of men in the workplace. Subcategories could, therefore, consist of reasons that came up, such as the lack of prestige and low pay, reasons why men do not want to become English teachers. A parent category could be negative factors of the teacher's profession and finally the main category could be called reasons for the lack of men in teaching. I applied the method introduced by Tuomi and Sarajärvi and Mayring for both the open questions of the questionnaire and all the five interviews. Furthermore, in the analysis section frequently mentioned and repeated themes are discussed but also, I found it important to bring up those views that were not supported by many if they raised a new viewpoint or introduced a completely new approach about the phenomenon.

The closed questions are suited for providing data that can be analyzed quantitatively (Kalaja et al. 2011: 19). Therefore, since the closed questions were set in a Likert scale, it was possible to transform the data into numbers and see how many, with what percentage answered each number on a scale from 1 to 5. This made generalization possible, which in fact, according to

Kalaja et al. (2011:19) is one of the objectives for quantitative analysis. They further describe the quantitative approach to be known for describing the data numerically, for example, in figures and percentages. In the context of the present study, quantitative content analysis was used when analysing the closed questions, but no statistical analysis was conducted. Furthermore, quantitative analysis was also used to support the qualitative content analysis in the questionnaire's open questions as well. This meant that, after creating categories for different items surfaced from the text, the items within each category were counted in order to provide information on, for example, how often a certain item was mentioned. However, the quantitative analysis of the open questions provided far less generalizations and the focus was on qualitative analysis, looking for meanings behind the figures.

This chapter discussed the details of the execution of the current study and explained and rationalized the choices that were made in the process. Section 5 consists of the analysis of the questionnaire and is divided so that 5.1 focuses on the results of the 13 closed questions and 5.2 targets the four open-ended questions of the questionnaire.

## **5 FINDINGS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY**

The questionnaire answers will be investigated in separate sections in order to see if there are any differences between the categories. These categories are, firstly, answers by the men and women and, secondly, by the teachers and students. In section 5.1. the results of the closed questions are presented, first by giving an overview of the responses, seeing the results of the Likert scale regardless of gender and status. This section aims at giving a clear picture of what the majority had thought about the topic of feminization. However, in 5.1.2 the results are divided between the men and women and in 5.1.3 between the teachers and students, in order to see where the similarities and differences occur. Since all the respondents' answers are shown already in section 5.1.1, I considered it sufficient to show in 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 only the means of the answers by gender and status.

In 5.2 the open-ended questions are discussed. To ensure that the processing of the results is logical, the analysis is presented question by question in the same order as the open-ended questions were presented in the original questionnaire. In each section the findings of the responses by the men and women are discussed first, and after this the analysis focuses on the teachers and students. The answers in this section were translated to English by me, and the original Finnish answers can be found in Appendix 4.

### **5.1. Analysis of answers given to closed questions**

The questionnaire was answered by 22 (16%) men and 117 (84%) women. Keeping in mind that there are significantly fewer men as English teachers in Finland this difference between the number of respondents was to be expected (Vipunen 2016). Since men represent only 9% of English teachers in general education and 16% in general upper secondary education, I thought that the number of male respondents was enough for the purposes of the present study. Furthermore, it must be remembered that all the five interviewees for this research also took part in the questionnaire and are included in its analysis.

#### **5.1.1 The results of closed questions at a glance**

When looking at the results of all the participants (n=139) regardless of their gender or status, it is evident that the participants had noticed the feminization of English teaching (see Table 3). The results show that 89% (n=114) have paid attention to the fact that there are more women in teacher training than men. However, fewer respondents have thought of reasons behind the phenomenon, 63% (n=87). Additionally, here 19% (n=26) chose option 3, meaning that they

feel neutral about the statement “I have thought about reasons that would explain women outnumbering men in teacher training”. The majority (60% (n=84)) of the participants stated that they have not had English teachers when they were in general education or in upper secondary education. However, it would have been expected to see even a higher percentage than 60, considering the national statistics of English teachers’ gender division that show how women dominate English teaching in Finland in numbers (Vipunen 2016).

Table 3. The participants’ answers to the closed questions

Questionnaire statements	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3= Neutral	4= Agree	5= Strongly agree
Gender quotas should be implemented to teacher training	<b>60 (43%)</b>	48 (35%)	23 (17%)	6 (4%)	2 (1%)
I have paid attention that there are more women in teacher training than there are men	0	7 (5%)	8 (6%)	35 (25%)	<b>89 (64%)</b>
I have thought about reasons that would explain women outnumbering men in teacher training	7 (5%)	19 (14%)	26 (19%)	<b>49 (35%)</b>	38 (27%)
I have been taught by a male English teacher when I was in comprehensive or in upper secondary school	<b>81 (58%)</b>	3 (2%)	2 (1%)	3 (2%)	50 (36%)
Teacher training needs more men	5 (4%)	14 (10%)	34 (24%)	<b>55 (40%)</b>	31 (22%)
The prestige of the field lowers the fewer men there are	<b>41 (30%)</b>	40 (29%)	29 (21%)	26 (19%)	3 (2%)
Teacher’s gender does not matter in teaching	5 (4%)	12 (9%)	34 (24%)	41 (30%)	<b>47 (34%)</b>
Higher pay could motivate men to become teachers	7 (5%)	14 (10%)	28 (20%)	42 (30%)	<b>48 (35%)</b>
Boys need more male teachers	8 (6%)	21 (15%)	34 (24%)	<b>57 (41%)</b>	19 (14%)

I believe that my gender has an effect on the kind of teacher I am	20 (14%)	24 (17%)	27 (19%)	<b>47 (34%)</b>	21 (15%)
Men are just as suited to be English teachers as women	0	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0	<b>137 (99%)</b>
Teacher is a feminine profession	<b>85 (61%)</b>	29 (21%)	15 (11%)	9 (6%)	1 (1%)
The growing number of female teachers is a problem	<b>49 (35%)</b>	43 (31%)	22 (16%)	19 (14%)	6 (4%)
Total	139	139	139	139	139

Previous research (Drudy et al. 2005) has shown that people tend to believe that more men could be lured into teaching providing a better salary, or at least that should be tried. In this study, 65% (n=90) of the respondents agreed with the statement “higher salary could motivate men to become teachers and 20% (n=28) did not have a strong opinion about it. A question that is related to the salary is the prestige of a profession. Perhaps surprisingly, the results show that a slight majority with 59% (n=81) considered that the lack of men as teachers does not lessen the appreciation of the field, while 21% (n=29) thought it does. Thus, the majority of the participants disagreed with the idea that the lack of men would lessen the prestige. This was in line with the Polish study by Smak and Walczak (2017), where the 81 interviewed teachers did not see feminization to be lessening the prestige either. Still, Smak and Walczak (2017:34) confirm that when discussing the prestige of teaching, feminization needs to be taken into account.

What was also in line with previous studies was that male teachers were considered necessary for boys. 55% (n=76) of all the respondents agreed that “Boys need more male teachers”. However, this was still just a slight majority and altogether 24% (n=32) percent were neutral about the statement. Additionally, the majority (62% (n=86)) considered that it is the teaching training that needs more men. 24% (n=34) did not have a strong opinion on the statement. However, the majority with 78% (n=108) of the respondents felt really strongly about not implementing gender quotas. Furthermore, 66% (n=82) did not see the growing number of female teachers as a problem, only 18% (n=25) did. Nearly half, 49% (n=68), considered that the teacher’s gender has an impact on the kind of a teacher identity they have. Still, the majority, 64% (n=88), considered that a teacher’s gender does not matter in teaching. What was as especially common opinion (99% (n=137)) was that men are just as well suited for English



teachers as women. Likewise, 82% (n=114) of the respondents did not consider teaching a feminine profession.

To sum up, it was evident that the clear majority of the respondents had paid attention to the feminization of teacher training and also a majority had pondered on the reasons behind the feminization. Although many of them considered that teacher training needs more men, and that boys, in particular, need men as teachers, teaching was not seen as a feminine profession. In the same way, most respondents thought that the teacher's gender does not greatly matter in teaching. Furthermore, the respondent more or less agreed that gender quotas should not be implemented to teacher training.

### 5.1.2 The similarities and differences between genders

In this section, the aim here is to compare male (n=22) and female (=117) respondents' answers to one another. The answers are analyzed separately because it is interesting to see if in a phenomenon as gendered as feminization, gender has any significance in the responses. After all, the feminization of teaching has been a phenomenon for over a century, but it is possible that differences in opinion about it still arise between men and women. However, the comparison of the answers given by male and female respondents show that there are only small gender differences.

On a Likert scale 1 refers to strongly disagree, 3 as being neutral and 5 strongly agree. Table 4 shows a mean of the men and women's answers separately and also the number and percentage of the men and women that had answered. This means that with the first question a mean for the men was 1 (strongly disagree) and the majority of the men (n=15 (68%)) had chosen number 1.

Table 4. The mean of the men and women's answers to the closed questions

Questionnaire statements	Mean of men	n	%	Mean of women	n	%
Gender quotas should be implemented to teacher training	1	15	68	1	45	38

I have paid attention that there are more women in teacher training than there are men	5	13	59	5	76	65
I have thought about the reasons that would explain women outnumbering men in teacher training	4	9	41	4	40	34
I have been taught by a male English teacher when I was in comprehensive or upper secondary school	1	11	50	1	71	60
Teacher training needs more men	<b>3</b>	10	45	<b>4</b>	42	49
The prestige of the field lowers the fewer men there are	<b>1</b>	13	59	<b>2</b>	34	29
Teacher's gender does not matter in teaching	5	8	36	5	39	33
Higher pay could motivate men to become teachers	<b>4</b>	9	41	<b>5</b>	43	37
Boys need more male teachers	4	8	36	4	49	42
I believe that my gender has an effect on the kind of teacher I am	<b>5</b>	8	36	<b>4</b>	40	34
Men are just as suited to be English teachers as women	5	22	100	5	115	98
Teacher is a feminine profession	1	14	64	1	71	60
The growing number of female teachers is a problem	1	10	45	1	39	33
Total		22		117		

What was apparent in both the men and women's answers was that both had paid attention to the fact that there are fewer men in teacher training, 59% (n=13) of the men and 65% (n=76) of women strongly agreed that they had noticed the gender division in teacher training (mean 5). Both the men and women had also thought about the reasons behind this phenomenon, but here men had thought about it more. 77% (n=17) of the men agreed they had thought about it, while the percentage for women was a smaller one, 60% (n=70). Still, the majority of both the men and women had chosen "agree" to the statement "I have thought about the reasons that would explain women outnumbering men in teacher training" (mean 4). Nonetheless, it is clear that this issue of the lesser presence of men in teacher training is not invisible but very noticeable amongst genders.

Both the men and women who answered the questionnaire were taught English by women considerably more often than by men in comprehensive and upper secondary school. 62% (n=72) of the women and 55% (n=12) of the men had not been taught English by a man. Still, even though there seems to be a gender gap in English teaching, as a solution, gender quotas were rejected by almost all the participants (mean 1). This kind of resistance to gender quotas is in line with Drudy' et al. (2005: 109) results according to which positive discrimination for the purpose of getting more men into primary teaching was supported only by 6.7% of the student teachers. Accepting lower points for males in the application process were supported slightly more, but still by only 14,4% by both men and women. In the present study, especially the men felt strongly about gender quotas: 68% (n=15) of men strongly disagreed with the statement "Gender quotas should be implemented to teacher training", whereas only 38% (n=45) of the women strongly disagreed with this statement. 38% (n=44) of the women disagreed and 18% (n=4) of the men. The women were more neutral with this statement, 18% (n=21), the men only 9% (n=2). These numbers demonstrate that gender quotas are overall rejected by both the men and women, but the men disliked the solution of gender quotas even more than women.

Both the men and women appeared to progressively think that teachers' gender does not matter in teaching, 59% (n=13) of the men and 64% (n=75) of women agreed that it does not matter (mean 5). However, when asked about their own gender a couple of questions later, the percentages changed. The statement in question was "I believe that my gender affects what kind of a teacher I am". It is fascinating that here especially the men seemed to think that their gender matters to their own teaching (mean 5). 68% (n=15) of the men agreed with this

statement, and only 28% (n=6) disagreed. With the women, only 45% (n=53) agreed and 32% (n=38) disagreed (mean 4). Considerably more women were neutral at this point, 22% (n=26) whereas only one of the men chose a neutral opinion. What one could gather from this is that men as well as women do feel that gender is not a hindrance, one can be a good or a bad teacher regardless of gender. This can also be deduced from the answers given to the next question “Men are equally suited for teachers as women”. In their responses, both the women and men almost unanimously strongly agreed with the statement (mean 5). However, in reference to one’s own teaching, the men clearly felt that their gender has an effect on their teaching, something about being a man is perceived as more influential when discussing teaching than being a woman who teaches. This is a very interesting finding, since it reveals hidden, subconscious attitudes about teaching and gender, it seems that the men feel that gender plays a part in their teacher identity more so than the women.

Neither the women nor men considered the growing number of female teachers as a problem, only 9% (n=2) of men and 20% (n=23) of women thought of it as problematic. Both the men and women had strongly disagreed with the statement “The growing number of female teachers is a problem” (mean 1). Nor did they see teaching as a feminine profession either, in fact, 78% (n=17) of the men and as much as 83% (n=97) of women disagreed with the statement (mean 1). However, in the statement “The field’s prestige lessens the less women there are”, there were some gender differences in the answers. Overall, both the men and women disagreed with the statement, but men more so. Most of the men had chosen “strongly disagree (mean 1), while most of the women had chosen “disagree” (mean 2). Altogether 59% (n=13) of the men strongly disagreed, whereas only 24% (n=28) of the women strongly disagreed. The women were more neutral, with 24% (n=28), while only one of the men was neutral with this statement. Women agreed more than men, altogether 23% (n=27) agreeing, although only 3% (n=3) of the women strongly agreeing. Only 9% (n=2) of the men agreed, and not one man strongly agreed. The statement “Higher pay could motivate men to take part in teaching” was generally agreed rather evenly, with the men 64% (n=14) and with the women 65% (n=76). The men with 23% (n=5) were more neutral than the women, 20% (n=23). Most of the men had chosen “agree” (mean 4) while most of the women “strongly agree” (mean 5).

Additionally, differences between the men and women also came forth in the questions that related to the need of more men to schools. Interestingly, the women seemed to think that teacher training needs more men (mean 4), whereas the men did not feel so strongly about it

(mean 3). Altogether 65% (n=76) of the women agreed that teacher training needs more men, whereas only 45% (n=10) of the men thought so. Here it must be pointed out though that there were as much as 45% (n=10) of the men who chose the neutral option as their answer to this question, while only 21% (n=25%) of the women chose the neutral option. When asked about the significance of male teachers for boys, in particular, 56% (n=66) of the female respondents agreed that boys need more male teachers, while fewer men, 45% (n=10) of the men agreed with this statement. However, the majority of both the men and women had chosen “agree” to the statement “Boys need more male teachers”. Even though the gender difference in this question is not a remarkable one, it is interesting that more women thought that there should be more male teachers for the sake of boys. All in all, where the gender differences arose, were the questions of prestige, pay, one’s own gender’s influence as a teacher and the need for men for the teacher training.

To conclude, there were no major differences when analysing the means of the answers by the women and men. What can be gathered from these answers is that both men and women seem to believe that men and women are equally suited to become teachers, and that gender itself does not play a part in teaching. The slight majority of the women seem to think that especially boys need male teachers, but the men do not feel as strongly about it as women do. Both the men and women have noticed the gender segregation in teacher training but men have thought about the reasons behind the phenomenon more than the women that answered. However, gender quotas are not the right solution according to the participants, regardless of gender.

### **5.1.3 The similarities and differences between teacher and student respondents**

This section focuses on the comparison of the answers by the students (n=50) and teachers (n=89) of English. When comparing Tables 4 and 5, it appears that the two groups divided by status turned out to have more differences between one another than there was with the groups divided by gender. All the questions are examined here in the same vein as in section 5.1.2. However, it is worth pointing out at this point that there were only 4 male teachers who took part in the study. Therefore, the large majority of the teacher respondents (n=85) are women. With the students the gender division is more even - 18 men and 32 women.

Table 5. The mean of the teachers and students' answers to the closed questions

<b>Questionnaire statements</b>	<b>Mean of teachers</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean of students</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender quotas should be implemented to teacher training	2	34	38	1	29	58
I have paid attention that there are more women in teacher training than there are men	5	60	67	5	29	58
I have thought about the reasons that would explain women outnumbering men in teacher training	5	28	31	4	21	42
I have been taught by a male English teacher when I was in comprehensive and upper secondary school	1	52	58	1	29	58
Teacher training needs more men	4	40	45	3	16	32
The prestige of the field lowers the fewer men there are	2	25	28	1	23	46
Teacher's gender does not matter in teaching	3	27	30	5	21	42
Higher pay could motivate men to become teachers	5	40	45	3	15	30
Boys need more male teachers	4	47	53	3	18	36
I believe that my gender has an effect on the kind of teacher I am	4	30	34	4	17	34
Men are just as suited to be English teachers as women	5	88	99	5	49	98
Teacher is a feminine profession	1	58	65	1	27	54

The growing number of female teachers is a problem	2	31	35	1	26	52
Total		89			50	

Both groups considered men to be equally suited to be English teachers as women (mean 5). Neither the teachers nor students did consider teaching to be a feminine profession, and strongly disagreed with the statement according to which “Teacher is a feminine profession” (mean 1). Still, both the students and teachers had paid attention to the fact that there are significantly more women in teacher training, although the students slightly more, quite presumably because they still are studying and therefore remember encounters and experiences better than the teachers (mean 5). Both the teachers and students had pondered on the reasons behind this phenomenon, the students even more so. Most of the students strongly agreed to have thought about the reasons (mean 5), while most of the teachers chose “agree” (mean 4).

As was stated already in the previous sections, the participants strongly rejected the idea of gender quotas as a solution to the feminization of teacher training. Even though both the teachers and students disliked the idea, the students were even more strongly against it (mean 1), with 58% (n=29) strongly disagreed that quotas should be implemented, whereas with the teachers only 35% (n=31) strongly disagreed (mean 2). Based on solely this finding, it appears that compared to the teachers, the students think more gender equally. One factor that could explain this difference is the passing of time, the general attitudinal atmosphere in regard to gender issues is more accepting today.

The teachers felt that teacher training truly needs more men, overall 72% (n=64) agreed that it does, 20% (n=18) felt neutral and only 7% (n=7) considered it unnecessary. When comparing this with the data from the students’, only 44% (n=25) agreed, as much as 32% (n=16) chose neutral and 24% (n=12) disagreed. Most of the teachers chose “agree” (mean 4) while the students “neutral” (mean 3). This is quite a significant difference in the results. This difference continued when the respondents were asked about the prestige of teaching English. Both the teachers and students felt that the lack of men does not lower the prestige, 48% (n=43) of the teachers thought like this, while 76% (n=39) of the students were of this opinion. However, 27% (n=24) of the teachers considered that the lack of men does lower the prestige of the profession, while only 10% (n=5) of the students felt this way. The majority of the teachers

had chosen “disagree” while the majority of the students had chosen “strongly disagree”. This is another considerable difference of opinion between the teachers and students in this study. It is in line with the answers given to the previous question about teacher training needing more men and the lack of men in the field makes a profession to be appreciated less. These differences in views between the teachers and students perhaps mean that teachers have noticed the lack of prestige in practise in their own work, while students still lack the practical experience of teaching. Or, alternatively, it may be that students are merely more tolerant and could not believe that the lack of men in a field would result in lower prestige.

When asked about the need of men teachers for boys, the differences between the teachers and students’ responses was also noticeable. Overall 69% (n=61) of the teachers agreed with the statement “Boys need more male teachers” (mean 4), while only 30% (n=15) of the students thought so (mean 3). Perhaps at least partly due to the lack of male teachers for boys, also 24% (n=21) of the teachers saw the growing number of women as teachers as a problem. In contrast, out of the students only 8% (n=4) thought like this. Here it must be pointed out that while the majority of the teachers and students considered that it is not problematic at all, the teacher respondents were not as strongly against this statement with only 26% (n=23) of them strongly disagreeing with the statement. In comparison, there were as many as 52% (n=26) of the students who strongly disagreed with the statement that “The growing number of female teachers is a problem”, stating that it is not a problem. The majority of the teachers chose “disagree” while the majority of the students chose to “strongly disagree”.

As far as to ways of attracting men to become teachers are concerned, the teachers clearly agreed more with the statement that a higher pay could motivate men into teaching. There was a clear difference of mean, since the majority of the teachers chose “strongly agree” while the majority of the students chose “neutral”. Altogether 80% (n=71) of them agreed with the statement, and of them 45% (n=40) agreed strongly with it. The students’ average choice here was neutral, 30% (n=15) and only 38% (n=19) altogether agreed that higher pay would even out the gender division of teachers. When the respondents were asked if teacher's gender matters in teaching, as much as 30% (n=27) of teachers chose the neutral opinion, and 58% (n=52) felt that it does not matter (mean 3). The students felt more strongly about it, 72% (n=36) agreeing that it does not matter and only 14% (n=7) feeling neutral about it (mean 5). Interestingly, both groups still considered that their own gender has an effect to the kind of teacher one is (mean 4).



There were no major differences in the teachers' and students' views about the suitability of men to teaching. Teaching was not considered to be a feminine profession, and the respondents thought that men and women are equally suited to be teachers. Both the teachers and students felt that one's gender can have an impact on one's teaching, but there were not large differences between the two groups, nor there were many people who would strongly agree or disagree about it. Still, the results show that there were some considerable differences between the teacher responses compared with the student responses, this is clear when looking at the means of the answers (Table 5). The teachers felt that teacher training needs men remarkably more than the students did. The teachers also strongly agreed with the statement according to which male teachers would be necessary for boys, and also that higher pay would motivate men into teaching. There were significantly less students who strongly agreed with this. In the same vein, the students and teachers did not see feminization as a problem, but it was less of a problem according to the students than the teachers.

## **5.2 Analysis of the responses to the open-ended questions**

There were four open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire, and these followed the research questions of the present study almost word for word. The first open-ended question (q18) aimed at learning what the respondents think about the feminization in their field, the second (q19) looked for reasons for the lack of men in English teaching and the third (q20) asked what the significance of an English teacher's gender is. The fourth question (q21) asked if there is something the participants would like to add that had not come up before. This question was included in order to give voice to the participants themselves. All of these four questions are related to the themes discussed in section 5.1 and the same themes come forth also in this section. However, since the open-ended questions allow the participants to express themselves in a freer manner than on a Likert scale, the results from the open-ended question are worth studying in detail. The results will be examined in the same order as they were presented in the questionnaire.

### **5.2.1 What do men and women think about the feminization in the field of English teaching**

The first open question of the questionnaire was "What do you think about the feminization in your field?". It is a *really open question* that was discussed in Section 4.2.2 and due to its openness, it was challenging to analyze the answers by using coding. However, it turned out that it was possible to group the answers based on the perceived problem of feminization of

English teaching. By this it is meant that most of the answers revealed whether the participant considered the feminization of English teaching problematic or not and therefore, it was possible to quantify the answers. However, since the question itself did not ask whether the feminization of English teaching is problematic, other type of answers surfaced as well and they will also be discussed in this section.

The first open-ended question (q18) revealed that 54% (n=75) of the participants considered the feminization of English teaching as problematic, at least to some extent. The women thought this more compared to men, 56% (n=65) seeing it problematic while with the men 45% (n=10) considered it at least partly as a negative phenomenon. The phenomenon was regarded being unproblematic to 24% (n=28) of the women and 36% (n=8) of the men. It must be pointed out here that even if the person considered feminization to be even a mild problem, or a pity, it was counted as a problem by me. It was common to find answers that started by stating that it is not a big problem, but which finished by mentioning a worry regarding the phenomenon or stating that it would be better if there were more men as English teachers. The following quotation by a male 6th year student represents this strategy seeing feminization not as a problem per se, but as something that is still slightly dubious and lacking variety. Even though it is stated here that feminization is not a big problem, it would be better if there were more men in order to represent the society as truthfully as possible.

*(1) I don't see it as a big problem. Surely it is good in a society aspect if the people who act as educators would represent as big of a spectrum of society as possible, but maybe more important is that teachers have the needed proficiency and enthusiasm towards the field. This is why I would not begin to "artificially" fix this distribution for example, with quotas. Male, 6th-year student, 29*

Example (2) is also an interesting answer. A fifth-year student emphasized the importance of genuine professional expertise that is considered to be more important than anything else and that does not depend on gender. However, he also stated that male role models are necessary for male students because it helps with their identity construction. Therefore, the respondent implied that a teacher's gender does not affect their ability or proficiency to teach, but it prevents boys from having the role models they need in order to develop at school.

*(2) The most important thing is Expertise, which is not tied to gender. However, it is important that male students would be offered models of men as teachers as well. School is an important environment for the development for youngsters - where identity shapes to a great extent. I do not see a problem within feminization, but in the lack of men. Male, 5th-year student, 24*

Furthermore, it was intriguing that altogether five men (23%), four students and one teacher, recognized the benefit of feminization for themselves by pointing out that being a man in the field works for their advantage. By this they meant that they believed that it is easier for them to get a job interview than it is for women to do so. In addition, they thought that it would be easier for them to get a job, because the field is lacking men. Even though it was recognized by some that it is a privileged, even unfair, position (see Examples (3) and (4)), feminization was thought to be a positive thing, because of the advantages it has for the men themselves.

(3) (...) *I stand out, I might get different treatment and feel like being in a privileged position, which I have unfairly partly only based on my gender.* Male, 10th year of teaching, 37

(4) *It (feminization) does not bother me, and it can be beneficial when applying for work, as "quota men" would have a little bit of advantage when filling a job position.* (...) Male, 7th-year student, 27

Overall, in the men's answers there were not many strong reactions to the feminization of English teaching, either for or against. Amongst the 18% (n=4) of the men who did not side with either for or against feminization there were answers that explained the phenomenon. Amongst the 18% (n=4) there were some who explained the phenomenon by stating that women are merely more interested in university studies, or that men want to make more money.

Altogether 56% (n=65) of the women considered feminization in their field to be somewhat problematic. These women felt that it would be ideal to have different genders in teaching, not only in English teaching but in all school subjects. Interestingly, it was not uncommon to find answers such as "it is not a big problem, but..." which were then complemented by assigning the fault to schools. These comments included such assertions as "the pay remains low without men", "students lack male role models that are necessary for development" or "boys do not apply as teachers because of the lack of men in schools". These points made after the "but" clauses revealed a range of attitudes about how the field is perceived vis-à-vis gender. Compared to the men, the women thought that feminization was an issue, and they also gave more examples of why the phenomenon is something that needs to be changed or that is disturbing. Their reasons entailed the possibility for a higher pay, bringing diversity to school, both to the classroom and the teachers' workroom, providing male role models for boys, and showing that a man can also be a language teacher. The strong presence of concern in the answers was in line with the findings by Lahelma (2000) and it confirms that the feminization of teaching is still perceived as a problem by the majority of the adults.

Additionally, it was considered by some women that the challenge is not just about evening out the number of men and women, but generally making the school a more diverse place, also considering other, for example, non-binary genders, people from different ethnic backgrounds. Even though the respondents usually only concentrated on men and women, there were also some who looked past the binary gender distinction. At times there was a proper sense of need for change in the answers: it was seen to be important and even beneficial to have different kinds of people, including different genders, working as teachers.

(5) *In the field of teaching as well as in the rest of society it would be beneficial to have working many kinds of people, people of different genders.* Female, 20th year of teaching, 45

Interestingly, there were a couple of women who mentioned job seeking and how it can be unfair because of the feminization, exactly the same issue that was brought up by men. The following extracts highlight that there were concerns - it was feared that a male applicant might get the job easier than a woman.

(6) *In the situation of applying for a job a woman is an underdog. I believe that principals prefer to hire men rather than women, especially in primary and secondary schools. When men are scarce in the field, a man might get the job "over a woman" even if the man would not have more merits and not a better choice for the job.* Female, 2nd year of teaching, 33

(7) *I do not see it as a problem, and I have had colleagues who are male language teachers. A bigger problem I think is the fact that every job that I have applied to and where there have been men as interviewees, the man has been the one chosen.* Female, 5th-year of teaching, 29

Furthermore, it is worth pointing out that some women believed that the lack of men has a negative effect on the respect for women. There were women who mentioned that a man is considered a nice, easy-going teacher more than a woman, and also, alarmingly, that pupils seem to respect male teachers right from the start more than women. The following quotation demonstrates the worry that pupils do not respect female teachers in the same way as they do men, and that these attitudes might start already from home. In these cases, according to the respondent, one has to emphasize that gender simply does not matter.

(8) *In some homes there seems to be this attitude against women and it shows in the pupils' behaviour against a female teacher, in such a case one just has to demonstrate with one's actions that gender does not matter. (...)*  
Female, 30th year of teaching, 54

(9) (...) *For some students a teacher's gender matters more than to others. Some boys do not, for example, respect women the same way as they do men.* (...) Female, 18th year of teaching, 48

Opinions by the 24% (n=28) of women who considered the feminization of English teaching unproblematic were most often reasoned by stating that gender is not the defining factor of a teacher, a teacher can be either good or bad regardless of gender, and that people are generally interested in different things and there is no more to it. Still, what was striking was that, even though the formulation of the question “What do you think about the feminization in your field?” does not align with any opinion, it was frequent that the respondents used a negative noun or adjective, such as *bad* and *problem*, even in the cases when they did not even consider feminization problematic.

(10) *In my opinion the individual's suitability to a field is the defining factor instead of gender. I do not see feminization as a bad thing.* Female, 5th-year student, 24

(11) *I think that it is not problematic.* Female, 3rd-year student, 23

(12) *I see feminization but I do not think of it as a problem per se. Sure it would be nice if there were more men in the field but gender is not the most important thing.* Female, 5th year of teaching, 40

(13) *In my opinion there is nothing bad (in feminization), the field just apparently interests more women than men.* Female, 2nd year of teaching, 28

Amongst the 21% (n=24) of women who did not address the issue of feminization in regard to whether it is a problem or not it was mentioned that the respondent had not really thought about the phenomenon before or does not have an opinion. Interestingly, one of the respondents (14) who stated that she had not actively thought about the feminization of English teaching in work environment pointed out that the phenomenon is noticeable clearly when searching for a job, since most of the applicants are women. This is an interesting statement and for its part confirms that male teachers indeed might be favoured because of the field's feminized nature. There are many women applying for a job but in the school itself there is, at least nearly, an equal division of genders.

(14) *I have not noticed it in teachers' workroom so much, the teachers include women and men rather evenly in my experience. When looking for a job one notices feminization: most of the applicants I have met have been women.* Female, 2nd year of teaching, 28

All in all, there were some differences between the answers by the men and women. Generally, the men did not seem to feel as strongly either for or against feminization as women did, and

there was almost an equal number of men who felt that feminization is not a troubling phenomenon and those who felt that it is problematic. In turn, there were clearly more women who felt that the feminization of the field is negative and should be changed. In addition, there were men who stated that they do not oppose feminization at least partly because they are aware of the fact that they, being men, might benefit from it when applying for a job. This was one reason given by women why they would indeed want to change the feminization, some felt that men unfairly surpass women and get employed easier, simply because men are desperately wanted to even out the feminization. What is more, women seemed to reason more than men as to why feminization is problematic, these reasons included the chance for a higher pay, male role models for boys and representations but also there was a strong sense of yearning for diversity to school.

### **5.2.2 What do teachers and students think about the feminization in the field of English teaching**

When comparing the teachers and students of English, it appears that the teachers viewed the feminization of English teaching as more problematic than the students. This opinion was expressed by the majority of the teachers, 58% (n=52). Still, the students also saw it more problematic than non-problematic, 46% (n=23) considering it a negative phenomenon. There were thus clearly more students who viewed feminization as unproblematic, 36% (n=18) altogether. Only 20% (n=18) of the teachers did not see it as a problem.

The teachers' answers indicate that the problem is not so much that there would be something wrong about the way women teach, but simply that diversity itself is beneficial for all. In other words, having different types of models of adults, not just male role models, is a good thing. A clear qualitative difference between the answers by the students and teachers was that when considering feminization as problematic, the teachers gave more reasons as to why they think so, whereas the students more often stated that it is disturbing but left it at that.

The lack of reasoning for the benefits of more male teacher was at times scarce in the answers. Indeed, the findings by Vataja (2011, see section 3.4) showed how male class teachers prefer a fifty-fifty gender division to schools without really giving a thorough reasoning as to why they think so. This view was highlighted in the present study as well, as many respondents only stated that an equal number of both men and women would be the best situation, therefore, offering a statement lacking argumentation. The two following answers by a student and a

teacher shows how both see it troubling, but only the teacher expresses why that is the case in her opinion.

*(15) I would like to see more men in the field. At times during courses I have become aware of the fact that all the students in the group are women, and that it feels to some amount even a bit worrying.*

3rd-year student, female, 22

*(16) It affects the work community, possibly the development of pay, students and encountering them -> a certain picture and frame comes across.*

7th-year teacher, female, 32

In the first quotation (14) the student simply expresses the need for more men in the field, since she has noticed that there are few in her courses in the university. In contrast, in the second quotation (15) the teacher lists how the lack of men has an effect on the work community, perhaps even on pay, on how teachers interact with students and their overall transmission of attitudes and values. Despite these differences, it can still be stated that there were no major differences between specifically teacher and student responses.

All in all, both the teachers and students saw feminization more as a negative than a positive thing, but the difference here is that there were even more teachers who thought this, with the students the opinions either for or against were more even. Additionally, the teachers gave more reasons to back up their opinion, whereas the students on average, did not do so to the same respect. This might be explained by the experience about feminization in the field that is greater with teachers. Lastly, both the students and teachers mentioned examples of their surroundings, with the students referring to the university and classmates, while the teachers had their colleagues in mind when discussing the evident nature of feminization.

### **5.2.3 Why there are so few men as English teachers – analysis of the views by men and women**

The format of this particular question (q19) “What reasons would you give to the lack of men in the field of English teaching?” made it possible to quantify precisely the data and divide upcoming themes into separate categories. The items were, as the question indicated, reasons as to why there are so few men as English teachers. These reasons were easily grouped into larger categories, which I ended up calling *expectations, interests, pay, tradition, lack of prestige, skills and care-orientation*.

Table 6. The most common reasons mentioned by the respondents for the feminization of English teaching

Categories	Occurrences
Interests	74
Pay	36
Expectations	23
Lack of prestige	19
Tradition	18
Skills	17

When the men and women are grouped together, the most common themes mentioned were *interests* (53% (n=74)), *pay* (26% (n=36)) and *expectations* (17% (n=23)). The *interests* category means responses where it was stated that women are, for example, more interested in university education/languages/teaching/working with children, or that men are interested in more technical fields. In other words, all the mentions that described a gender difference in interest were counted in this category. *Interests* category was mentioned the most by the women, 57% (n=67) (see Table 6). *Expectations* refer to items such as “men are not expected to apply as teachers”, or “teacher profession is coded as a woman’s profession”. This was mentioned by 36% (n=8) of the men. *Tradition* is quite close to *expectations*, but it has an emphasis in the past, such as “women have always worked as teachers”, “teaching has been seen as a feminine field”. *Tradition* was mentioned the least by the women, with only 9% (n=11), whereas it was the third most common reason nominated by men 32% (n=7), alongside with interests. *Lack of prestige*, quite obviously, means items that express that a teaching profession is not appreciated or include statements such as “men want to be appreciated in their job”, etc. It was mentioned by 13% (n=15) of the women and 18% (n=4) of the men. *Pay* was separated as a category from lack of prestige even though they often have a connection. Therefore, items that only mentioned pay were counted under the category. Interestingly, no man mentioned pay whereas it was the second most popular reason when asked women, 31% (n=36). *Care-orientation* means the items such as “women are naturally better with children”, “women are drawn to teaching” and “teaching is a manifestation of motherhood”, etc. This was not mentioned by the women while only 14% (n=3) of the men brought it up. *Skills* refer to answers where it was brought up that women are better at languages than men/ women are better at multitasking/women are better at studying. Therefore, they refer to differences in



skills. Additionally, *skills* were mentioned by 14% (n=3) of the men, with the women as few as 12% (n=14).

Table 7. The most common reasons mentioned by the men and women for the feminization of English teaching

Men (n=22)	Occurrences	Women (n=117)	Occurrences
Expectations	8	Interests	67
Interests	7	Pay	36
Tradition	7	Lack of prestige	15
Lack of prestige	4	Expectations	15
Care-orientation	3	Skills	14
Skills	3	Tradition	11

There were also other points that were brought up by some respondents, but they were not as common as those six aforementioned and therefore not discussed here in depth. For example, there was a male teacher who thought that girls are favoured in school, therefore, implying that the school system is unfair to boys, which leads to more women applying as teachers instead of men. The lack of representation for boys was also mentioned, meaning that if boys do not see men as English teachers, they themselves do not become English teachers either. One even seemed to think that men are more attractive to employers that are not school, and therefore, it is easier for men to find a job elsewhere, even if they have studied to become teachers.

In the following response many of the six main categories are found, and as such it sums up well the themes that came up in many other answers as well. The male student addresses expectations that are different to men and women, the idea of the fields of care being seen as feminine, possibly better skills of women when it comes to educating and also the lack of representation of men in teaching. All this leads to less men applying to become teachers, and it is seen as a vicious circle.

*(17) Teacher's profession is still somewhat coded to woman's profession, the younger the students go the more big of a reason the stereotypes of the nurture instinct and women's "natural" suitability for professions of education are to to the teaching staff being so female dominated. At the same time feminization feeds itself: if the people's teachers are mainly women, then the image of the teacher*

*profession as a women's profession grows stronger. On top of everything, in languages there are the stereotypes of men and women's differences in competence when it comes to science and subjects of communication. (...)*"Male, 8th-year student, 29

The following Example (18) draws attention to only the difference in interest, that men and women are attracted to different fields. In its shortness, it also shows the interest aspect that came forth in the data, implying that men and women are plainly interested in completely different fields and this explains the feminization of English teaching.

*(18) Women are interested in the fields of humanities, men in "real jobs".* Male, 2nd-year student, 22

The following two answers describe well the stereotypes of the allegedly different skill set and, again, seeing care taking as a women's area of expertise. Indeed, Syrjäläinen and Kujala (2010: 35) state how, according to multiple studies, both in teacher training as well as in school gender stereotypes are being enforced in multiple ways, though subconsciously. Here the first answer (18) emphasizes the subconscious nature of these shared assumptions of gender roles. The second (19) discusses the same topic, expectations based on gender roles, also emphasizes the vicious circle that is born when boys and girls are encouraged to study different subjects.

*(19) Surely in the background there are cultural beliefs about women's emotional intelligence and language proficiency and of the fact that working with children is often seen as a manifestation of being a woman/mother. So it is about, often subconscious, ways with what history and shared culture direct us to define the terms "man" and "woman".* Male, 6th-year student, 29

*(20) Perhaps languages stereotypically interest women more. In many schools this can also be because of a self-fulfilling thinking, according to which at least in my years of basic education boys were encouraged more in mathematics and girls in languages. Generally, at least for me, I got the picture that because I am a girl, I am good at languages and so on. These kinds of attitudes and presumptions experienced as a kid can affect to further studies and overall to which field one identifies with. (...)*" Female, fifth-year student, 25

An interesting difference in the answers was that while the men nominated the difference of interests as the biggest reasons for feminization, the women emphasized the low pay as reason considerably more compared to the men. Additionally, while Drudy et al. (2005: 106-108) found that it was mainly the women who considered primary teaching to be better suited for women, here it was the men who mentioned women's more natural care orientation as a reason for the lack of men, even in the field of English teaching. Furthermore, lack of prestige and pay arose immensely more with women than with men, for example in the following way:

(21) *Women have not yet voted on their feet while the demands have grown and pay remained the same: men do not stay in the field and will not educate themselves to the field, because of pay or the lack of prestige of the work, among other things.* Female, teacher, 33

According to the teacher above, there is more to be done in order for the teacher's job to become such where the high demand and meets with the pay. She suggests that men are aware of this lack of prestige and want to avoid it by applying to different fields. Also, what came up a few times amongst women was that men are taught to “aim higher” than merely teaching, to do something else with their language expertise.

The next quotation deals with expectations, the woman in question suggested that perhaps men themselves do not see an English teacher's profession enough masculine a job and that could prevent them from becoming teachers.

(22) *--Might be that there is this assumption amongst men that a man cannot be a language teacher. Although I do not know why, for example, an English teacher's job would not be suited for a very masculine job.-*  
- Female, 5th-year student, 23

The three most common reasons nominated for the lack of men in teaching in general were *interests* (53% (n=74)), *pay* (26% (n=36)) and *expectations* (17% (n=24)). However, the reasons varied to certain amount due to gender. While both the men (32% (n=7)) and women (57% (n=67)) seemed to believe that the lack of men comes down to simply different interests that direct men to different careers than that of English teacher's, the most common reason for men was *expectations*, 36% (n=8) of the men nominating that reason. This means that there are cultural beliefs about what is suitable for each gender, the significance of gender roles play a part, and that men are not even expected to become teachers. As for the women, the top three most often mentioned reasons were *interests* with 57% (n=67), *pay* with 31% (n=36) and *lack of prestige* and *expectations* both with 13% (n=15). In fact, not one man even mentioned pay, even though lack of prestige was mentioned a few times (n=4). While pay was not mentioned by the men, care-orientation did not make it to the six most common reasons by the women, while 14% (n=3) of the men mentioned that as a reason that could explain the lack of men in the field. Therefore, there were a few significant differences in the answers between genders.

### 5.2.4 Why there are so few men as English teachers – analysis of the views by teachers and students

When comparing the reasons nominated by the teachers and students, items relating to different *interests* occurred the most by both groups, 50% (n=25) of the students and 55% (n=49) of the teachers mentioned that reason. It can be interpreted that the respondents mostly considered the lack of men in the field of English teaching as a result of different interests of men and women. However, while *expectations* was the second biggest reason for the students (32% (n=16)), *pay* (38% (n=34)) and *lack of prestige* (15% (n=13)) were both clearly more important to the teachers, the students did not even mention them. Especially the fact that no student mentioned pay is interesting, since the result is entirely contrary to the findings by Drudy et al. (2005: 106-108), where it was most often the school leavers who mentioned low pay as an explanation for the lack of men in primary teaching.

Table 8. The most common reasons mentioned by the teachers and students for the feminization of English teaching

Students (n=50)	Occurrences	Teachers (n=89)	Occurrences
Interests	25	Interests	49
Expectations	16	Pay	34
Tradition	10	Lack of prestige	13
Skills	9	Expectations	10
Care orientation	8	Tradition	9
Representations	4	Skills	8

Items relating to expectations (11% (n=10)), tradition (10% (n=9)) and skills (9% (n=8)) were almost equally as often mentioned by the teachers. Additionally, what deserves attention is the fact that 16% (n=8) of the students mentioned beliefs about women's suitability to care and nurture, referring to believed biological factors and generally women's bigger care orientation, while with teachers it did not make to the top six categories arisen, only 3% (n=3) of teachers had mentioned women's care orientation. The following quotation (23) is an example of the acknowledgment that some believe that women have innate motherly qualities that are suited for teaching.

(23) *Women easily have aptitude to so called “motherly” qualities that are connected to guiding and directing in life. (...)* 3rd-year student, female, 21

Furthermore, overall four (8%) students considered representations important, a theme that did not make it to the top six most frequent reasons mentioned earlier. Additionally, there was one item that was mentioned by five (6%) teachers and this was the change of career by men, meaning that a reason for feminization is that men change careers after a while. Due to the low number of the teachers who brought it up it truly is not significant as a questionnaire result. All in all, the three most common reason brought up by the students were *interests* (50% (n=25)), *expectations* (32% (n=16)) and *tradition* (20% (n=10)) , while the equivalent for the teachers were *interests* (55% (n=49)), *pay* (38% (n=34)) and *lack of prestige* (15% (n=13)). Furthermore, while noting that care-orientation was mentioned by 16% (n=8) of the students, but not often appearing in the teachers’ answers, it can be said that there were clear differences in the answers based on the teachers and students.

### **5.2.5 What is the significance of teacher’s gender in teaching English – analysis of the views by men and women**

All in all, the majority of the responses between the men and women stated that the teacher’s gender is not significant particularly in the teaching of English: of all the participants, 51% (n=71) thought this way. However, some, 30% (n=42) considered it important in teaching in general, irresponsive of the taught subject. Those who considered it significant in specifically in English teaching, 14% (n=19) were in the minority group.

The answers show that the men did not see gender having a significance in specifically English teaching, but that it might influence teaching in general. In total 55% (n=12) of the men answered that gender does have significance in teaching in general. 27% (n=6) of the men said that gender is not significant in English teaching and only 14% (n=3) considered it having significance in English. One of the men chose not to answer the question.

However, it often came up that the men did not feel that gender affects proficiency or teaching style; instead, it was seen to affect representations, and the way in which pupils relate to a teacher of the same gender. Therefore, the answer to the question “What is the significance of gender in English teaching?” appears to be that teacher’s gender does not have a great significance in specifically English teaching, but gender might have significance generally in teaching.

(24) *I do not believe that a teacher's gender is significant when it comes to the proficiency of teaching but of course it would be better if there was not this spread in genders.* Male, 5th-year student, 25

(25) *In the quality of teaching or in the job itself I do not see a difference. Children/youngsters might relate better to a person who is the same gender with them.* Male, 2nd-year student, 25

(26) *I do not see that a gender would have any significance. Of course a more even division between genders would give the young a better model that anyone can become teachers.* Male, 10th year of teaching, 37

The two men (24, 25) who believed that a teacher's gender is significant in teaching English implied representation. Representations are here understood to mean the linking of a gender to a profession. Meaning that the more there are women as teachers, the more teaching is seen as a women's profession. The answer 26 explains this by stating that since there is a lack of men as language teachers, men do not represent language teaching the same way that women do, and this means that it will not encourage boys to apply to study languages since they feel it is not for them.

(27) *Surely the fact that there are more women supports further the idea that teaching (and especially language teaching) in women's work. This for one might lessen some male students motivation towards studying languages, if they feel that studying languages is not for them.* Male, 6th-year student, 29

Another answer (27) stated that it is easier for pupils to create stereotypes of language teachers and, also, that these stereotypes, the belief that language teaching is women's work, limit their experience with English language. Especially these ideas of stereotypes are dangerous attitudes that affect widely in the society.

(28) *Students' experience of English is left more one-dimensional if the teacher always represents only one gender. It might also in students' minds develop a caricature of a language teacher. This might have consequences to the attitudes and actions of whole school and society.* Male, 4th-year student, 23

The women answered somewhat differently compared to the men. 56% (n=65) of the women, the majority, saw teacher's gender not being significant in English teaching, however, 25% (n=29) thought that teacher's gender is significant in teaching in general. Only 14% (n=16) thought that gender is significant in teaching English in particular. The reasoning for the opinion that a teacher's gender is not significant in English teaching was both short and elaborate by the women. In the answers where reasoning was provided, it was suggested that other factors play a bigger part in teaching than gender does, such as interests, culture, identity, etc.

(29) *No significance whatsoever, the cultural context and the contents of the taught subject are at the centre.* Female, 4th-year student, 23

Only 14% (n=16) of the women considered that gender plays a part in specifically English teaching. Various reasons were offered to back this up, such as the lack of respect of boys towards female teachers, compared to the level of respect that a male teacher receives and the lack of representations of different kinds of people. These reasons were similar to those presented by the men.

(30) *At least boys do not get the example the same way (that girls do) about the importance of knowing how to speak languages. Or they might get the picture that languages are somehow unmanly.* Female, 7th-year student, 25

Additionally, there were a couple of responses that considered that the teacher's gender might have an impact on the lesson contents. These answers, however, were in the minority, but still interesting to observe here.

(31) *"Maybe (gender is significant) in choosing topics and examples to some extent."*  
Female, 34 years of teaching, 59

(32) *Difficult to say what significance could a teacher's gender have in language teaching. Perhaps it would show in the choosing of themes or in the way of speaking or communicating.* Female, 6th-year student, 26

These two quotations offer an interesting idea that gender could affect class contents and the way the teacher and students discuss in the classroom. However, Example (33) also needs to be shown here, because it points out that people in general are individuals and driven by different things, not automatically meaning that men and women differ in their interests.

(33) *"Surely the freely chosen topics can be chosen due to teacher's own interest but, then again, teachers are interested in multiple topics. (...)"* Female, 15 years of teaching, 43

25% (n=29) of the women considered a teacher's gender to be significant, not only in English but generally in the teaching of any subjects. Role models, as well as the representations of different teachers in the sense that boys would be more attracted to teaching and studying if more men were teachers were discussed in these answers. Interestingly, what was common in both the men and women's answers was that even though the sentence might start with "I do not think gender is significant in teaching" it often ended with naming at least one factor where gender plays a part. The following answers illustrate this occurrence well.

(34) *It does not matter. Individual students might find it easier to approach a teacher of specific gender. I still do not see, that it at the end of the day matters, especially in English teaching in particular.*” Female, 5th-year student, 25

(35) *I do not believe that a teacher's gender would matter when it is about teacher proficiency but it would of course be better if this spread in genders would not exist.* Male, 5th-year student, 25

Furthermore, when stating that gender affects teaching in general, altogether 18% (n=4) of the men and 7% (n=8) of the women mentioned authority and respect. Examples (36) and (37) seem to refer to a rather traditional view of gender differences and imply that men are by nature seen as more authoritative to students than women.

(36) *Male teachers are taken more seriously and listened to more easily, as men anyway in the society.* Female, 1st year of teaching, 43

(37) *In the subject teaching itself I would believe it (teacher's gender) to be minimal. In teaching in general it might be than men have more authority. (...)* Male, 2nd-year student, 21

Furthermore, what is crucial here is the fact that, even though the respondents give reasons as to why the gender of a teacher matters or does not matter, they might not share their personal beliefs. If a teacher claims that male students might respect male teachers more it might not stem from their personal experience. Still, these ideas come from somewhere and, therefore, they are significant and valid responses that always tell something about the culture and society one lives in.

The results show that the minority of both the men, 14% (n=3) and women, 14% (n=16), thought teacher's gender to be significant in English teaching. There were still differences since 55% (n=12) of the men considered that teacher's gender is significant in general in teaching, whereas only 26% (n=30) of the women thought so. A popular opinion seemed to be that gender itself is not that important, but with gender there comes diversity that is needed. It was also believed that seeing men as teachers has an impact on boys' interests in languages, and on seeing teaching as a plausible career for them as well. Having different individuals as teachers was considered necessary for all students, regardless of gender. The most traditionally stereotypical view of gender was that if there were more men as teachers, maintaining authority would be easier, that it is easier for men to be authoritative. However, this view was shared by only a few people.



### **5.2.6 What is the significance of teacher's gender in teaching English – analysis of the views by teachers and students**

Interestingly, while there were some differences in the women and men's answers, such as remarkably more men than women feeling that teacher's gender is generally in teaching more significant, the differences did not really occur when comparing the teachers and students. Only 9% (n=8) of the teachers and 14% (n=7) of the students thought that the teacher's gender is significant in English teaching. The reasons for this opinion were presented in chapter 5.2.5. 49% (n=44) of the teachers and 52% (n=26) of the students considered teacher's gender being insignificant in teaching. However, some, 35% (n=31) of the teachers and 32% (n=16) of the students considered a teacher's gender to play a part in teaching in general, regardless of the taught subject.

The level of unanimity in the answers to the open-ended questions makes it possible to conclude that different walks of life and the lack of experience by students in the career of teaching do not have an effect on their opinions about the significance of teacher's gender in English teaching. It appears that a remarkable number of both the teachers and students feel that in English teaching a teacher's gender does not matter, while some believe that when considering teaching in a wider spectrum, teacher's gender is significant and matters for example, in how the teacher is being treated by the students.

### **5.2.7 Feminization of English teaching - Free speech**

The purpose of the final open-ended question was to make it possible for the participants to address any issues they liked to comment on. Since the question was formulated as "What else would you like to tell about the feminization of the field", it served as a really-open question. Clearly, some respondents considered that they have nothing more to add, and there were thus significantly more of those who left this part either completely blank, or who briefly stated that they have nothing to add, altogether 59% (n=13) of the men and 38% (n=45) of the women. Therefore, altogether this question was answered properly by only 81 questionnaire participants. Since there were so many who left the part entirely blank or did not address any issues, this section is not divided into separate analyses of men and women's, or teachers and students' answers. I decided to highlight here particularly interesting individual comments. It must be remembered that the percentages were counted from the 81 participants that answered this final question 21 properly.

One identifiable theme that arose in the answers to question 21 was gender quotas. They were mentioned by 14% (n=11) of those who had shared their ideas on feminization. As noticed already with the closed questions (see section 5.1), all of the respondents stated that they are against such an artificial solution. Since gender quotas was an addressed theme already in the closed questions, it is remarkable that it came up yet again in the open-ended questions. Furthermore, what was a relatively common theme (11% (n=8)) in the women's responses was the lack of prestige of teaching. They mentioned this either with reference to pay - it was considered that having more men in the field would probably increase the pay. Or they described the negative attitudes by pupils, parents or even employers towards women. Therefore, the lack of prestige was not only about low pay, but also about certain hostility towards teachers, who more often than not, are women. This hostility towards women is recognized by Mills et al. (2004: 359, 366), who strongly challenge the forced and artificial recruitment of male teachers based on the supposed benefits of male role models for boys. Instead, they stress the importance of shared responsibility for children's education by both men and women. Interestingly, in Example (38) the respondent states that teacher's gender is a very visible matter, especially in the teacher's workroom and that people even group based on gender. Men decide to interact more with men in the teachers' workroom and are not interested in the same topics as women are.

*(38)As a young woman in the field I have experienced a lot of hostility and rejection from older female colleagues. Then again, the few men in the teachers' workroom rule the roost and often found a sexist man club that is not interested in so called "women's things", meaning the things that should be taken care of together. Female, 1st year of teaching, 29*

There were also some who agreed with Example (39), that they feel like that, thanks to their gender, men simply get employed more easily, than women do. There was a sense of concern about the matter in the answers. The issue of prestige, or better, the lack of it, was, in fact, one of the most popular reasons nominated when considering feminization in the earlier questions, and therefore, it is natural that some wanted to emphasize the perceived importance in this question as well.

*(39)Male teachers get tenures easier, get into job interviews and move forward in their careers - a part only because of their gender. That should be intervened. Female, 21st year of teaching, 43*

It made no sense to try to group the rest of the answers, since there were so few that addressed the exact same topic. However, below are listed some answers presented that hopefully

demonstrate the spectrum of different opinions with the final question. Still, all of them express either worry over feminization of teaching or the need for more men in the field.

*(40) Men would be needed to the field immensely in order to be realized that it is not about a very feminine field and that the mystic position of male teachers would fade.* Male, 4th-year student, 23

*(41) Increasing feminization tells about the fact that one still has not gotten rid of these gender stereotypes. Instead of focusing to discuss gender quotas or the "harmfulness" of feminization, one should pay attention to how and why these strict dichotomic gender roles are being socialized into already as children.* Male, 9th-year student, 32

*(42) I do not think that gender quotas should be implemented to the field but in the entrance exams the most qualified applicants should be chosen. Furthermore, I do not understand why teachers' salaries should be raised in order to particularly tempt men and I question it, why would men care about the job's wage level any more than women. Usually one applies to become a teacher because of a genuine interest and not pay, at least I hope.* Female, 3rd-year student, 22

*(43) Feminization itself is not a problem but the lack of diversity in general.* Female, 1st year of teaching, 25

*(44) It is boring, that we are not even close to 50/50 situation.* Female, 20 years of teaching, 50

*(45) Especially in alienated areas male teachers replace missing male models in boys' lives.* Female, 3rd year of teaching, 36

From Examples (40)-(45) one can see that other perspectives mentioned by some participants included enforced gender stereotypes, the lack of diversity in general and the need for male role models. Some believed that if there were more men in the field one would no longer perceive the profession of an English teacher, or teacher of any subject as feminine. Others thought that important is not to get only men into schools but different people in general. While others felt it is important to have more male role models, for example, for those children who do not have a father at home, and in general it was believed that it is easier for a man to be authoritative.

Still, it needs to be pointed out that there were those who wanted to emphasize that feminization is not a problem and that people have different interests and the effect of gender is not great. It can also be interpreted that since so many left the last question blank or stated that they have nothing to add or further to comment about, that might also mean that they do not necessarily feel so strongly about feminization, meaning that it does not disturb them or they have not actively thought about it.

To conclude section 5.2, the participants were generally bothered by feminization, the majority saw it troubling and worrying to some extent. However, it was discovered that men did not feel as strongly either for or against feminization, there were clearly more women who strongly felt feminization to be problematic, and women also gave more reasons as to why that is, mentioning pay, the importance of male role models as representations and the general need for diversity in schools. It was also found that it was particularly the teachers of English that gave the reasons, not so much the students. Diversity was also needed the most by female teachers. As to the reasons why there are so few men in English teaching, the three most common reasons turned out to be the different *interests* of men and women, issue with *pay* and *expectations* from people around one. Interestingly though, pay was not even mentioned by the men. Furthermore, in the students' answers *care-orientation* was present.

Despite the answers presented above, the significance of English teacher's gender was taught to be small by both men and women, regardless of being a teacher or a student. However, the men saw teacher's gender being significant in general more than women. The popular opinion seemed to be that gender itself is not considered an important factor but seeing men as teachers of English and teachers in general has positive consequences in regard to students. With the last question women repeated once more the concern for the lack of prestige in the field and generally participants returned to the issue of gender quotas and rejected them once more. All in all, it can be gathered that feminization is not a simple matter and people have mixed feelings about the phenomenon.

## 6 THE FINDINGS OF THE INTERVIEW STUDY

This section discusses the information acquired via interviewing two university students of English and three teachers of English. As discussed earlier, the questionnaire alone provided information on the study topic and the research questions were answered. However, the questionnaire as a method is such that elaborative questions are impossible to present, and therefore, interviews were chosen here as a method to delve deeper into the topic in hand. In the following section, we thus hear personal by the five participants. All the interview extracts presented in this section were translated into English by me (the original Finnish answers are found in Appendix 4).

The interviews included five people, two teacher trainees from the University of Jyväskylä who have both completed their teacher training, Paula and Tommi, and three English teachers: Markku, Maria and Sanna. Since there are no major differences between the answers that would result from the interviewee being a student or a teacher, it seemed logical to discuss all the interviews together.

Certain common topics came up when interviewing each participant. In their answers all the interviewees stated that they wanted change for feminization, a view that was supported in the questionnaire answers as well (see sections 5.1 and 5.2). Perceptions regarding wanting and needing more male teachers are discussed in two separate sections. The interviewees' suggestions for reasons that would explain the lack of men in the field is discussed in a separate section as well. I felt that it was necessary during each interview to ask for the interviewees' suggestions on what would attract men to become teachers. These suggestions will also be discussed in the final section. However, the interviewees' answers to the third research question "*What is the significance of an English teacher's gender to the teachers and students of English*" are not discussed in a separate section as it was in the questionnaire analysis, since attitudes towards gender came forth in so many different parts of the interviews. Therefore, the significance of the teacher's gender is discussed already in the same sections with the answers given to the two other research questions. Furthermore, it is worth pointing out that even though the interview questions aimed at highlighting the perspective of English teachers, the conversation very often veered towards discussing feminization in teaching in general. In the end, I did not want to control this too much.

## 6.1 More men are *needed*

What was common amongst the interviewees, very much in line with the questionnaire results (see section 5.2.1), was that the feminization of teaching is a troubling phenomenon, something that should be changed, and that more male teachers are definitely needed. Therefore, gender of an English teacher matters. A certain level of concern and dissatisfaction with the present state of teaching from the gender perspective was present in every interview. This was not surprising given the results from previous research (Drudy et al. 2005; Lahelma 2000). The reasons given to this need, however, varied amongst the interviewees. For example, when asked what comes to her mind when talking about the feminization of teaching, Paula, a seven-year student, expressed her dissatisfaction as follows:

*(46) I feel it is such a pity. Because I do believe that the role models affect and (...) I think that it is important to young children, boys, who study a language that they would see that there are male teachers, that there are men who speak languages, I mean that there are of course, but as teachers as well, or at least if those students did not have then at least there would be so many male teachers that it would be noticed. Because I believe that it has an impact on students' mindset. Paula*

She felt that the number of men as English teachers is truly scarce and that the lack of men as language teachers has a negative impact on students, the representation of men as language users is missing. During her interview she kept coming back to the importance of representations. She strongly felt that what we see around ourselves has an inevitable impact on us, no matter whether the representation is further discussed or not. The importance of having more men as teachers was in her mind comparable to the need of including people of different ethnicities in films. She strongly felt that at the moment schools are lacking diversity, with the majority of teachers, especially in language subjects, being women. Indeed, as similar point is also made by Kattelus and Salminen (2018: 60) who address the fact that children constantly adopt and repeat the models learnt from school and that, therefore, men and women should teach the same subjects in order to prevent the subject from becoming gendered.

Sanna, a teacher of English, also thought it essential to get more diversity in schools. The diversity itself was more important, it was not about male role models but providing altogether a range of role models, different individuals. Therefore, Sanna's idea of male role models did not appear to be the one that would include hegemonic masculinity - contrary to the features that came up in a study by Cushman (2008) when he did a questionnaire study on male role models from school principals' perspective (see section 3.4). Instead, what was more important

for Sanna were the representations of different type of men in schools, to show that a man can be sensitive and soft too. What is more, equally important in her mind was to show the students different women as well.

Maria, a teacher of English, brought up another factor that is connected to diversity. According to her, there should be more men in order to show male students that they themselves can achieve different things, that teaching is not only for women. This means that if girls only see women as language teachers, they might think that they have to do the same as well, become language teachers instead of applying to do something else with their language skills. Additionally, this indicates that boys would not be encouraged to become language teachers because they do not see themselves represented in that field. She found the representations to definitely influence the students' identities and capability to do different things.

*(47)(...) the fact that a teacher is very much the personification, or the representative of their subject might strengthen the thinking that certain things are more for women and some more for men. (...) (Boys) do not necessarily see that, like, these things are important to someone else also, not just for these older ladies that hang around here. And the same of course applies to girls. That they too (students) see that here are only women, this is my future. Instead of seeing that there are different kinds of people doing different things. Maria*

Furthermore, almost all the interviewees thought that, while diversity is important everywhere in the school world, it is especially important in primary schools, for the young pupils' sake. Interestingly, this view was not in accordance with previous studies about the need for father figures for young students, at least not for the women interviewed. When asked about the fatherly role of a male teacher, for example, Paula disagreed strongly. She did admit that at least in some way working in a primary school involves educating, but she did not feel that teachers would even in primary school equal parents - teachers do not have a parenting role. She discarded the idea that a teacher should act in a different way depending on their gender, women do not need to be motherly figures nor do men need to be fatherly. Sanna agreed with Paula, as she did not even discuss the parent role of a teacher. However, Sanna did mention single mothers when discussing male role models but it could be interpreted as an example with which she emphasized the need for different role models.

*(48) (...) I do feel like everyone needs all role models in their life. We have a lot of single mothers and others in the society so what is super positive in my opinion is that girls as well as boys get those male role models and safe male role models that normally and hopefully the grownups in schools are. Sanna*

In another teacher's, Markku's, view, in turn, male teachers are needed in the classroom as authority figures - he had found that students tend to obey male teachers better, merely because of different gender roles. This view was supported in passing by a student of English, Tommi, too. Markku emphasized that in the past it used to be so that a father's word meant more than a mother's, and that this is still what students believe, and that is partly why feminization is not a preferred state in teaching in his mind.

*(49)(...) At least back in the old days when I was a child, I don't know about the present day since the society is so shattered but at least back then it was so that it was the father whose word was the last one in the family. Markku*

Interestingly, a similar finding was suggested by Helamaa's (2008: 66) study, which revealed that pupils found men to be stricter than women as teachers, but that this did not automatically mean that they have more authority. According to the Finnish sixth graders interviewed in the study, the stronger physical habitus of male teachers made them seem stricter. In addition, Helamaa found that strictness comes forth more in how things are handled - not how often. However, this issue of men teachers as authority keepers came forth only in Tommi's and Markku's interviews, the female interviewees did not bring this up, neither was it one of the most popular themes in the questionnaire answers either, although authority was mentioned in the open questions by some.

Maria believed that gender is a transparent factor, especially to children and that pupils as well as the whole school would benefit from different people. She stressed that many schools in Finland truly need more diversity and that while school is a model in its subject and in gender, meaning that teachers always work as role models for children, school could also be a model in the whole society's diversity.

*(50)(...) sometimes it is easier to face as one's educator that kind of people who you feel you have more common with. And gender is very clear and visible most of the time (...) so that in a way also adds the kind of diversity and variety that is needed in so many schools. Primary schools are in a way very conservative in many ways. So, what I would need would be that a school could be a model in its subject and in people's genders but also in the diversity of a society and humanity. Maria*

When asked if Tommi agreed with the studies that people find male teachers important because they then provide male role models, he said that he agrees with this claim, but that he had not dared to bring it up earlier because he considered this view to be old fashioned. This fear of saying something because it is assumed to be a sensitive topic, is an important factor to consider



when analysing both the interviews and questionnaires. The participants' views might be shaped by the dominant attitudes about gender equality. The recent lively discussions in the media about gender roles and gender equality, together with education, can be considered to be factors that divide opinions. The participants in this study might indeed have been afraid that they come across as narrow minded or even sexist in their answers. This might have prevented them from expressing their honest, heartfelt opinions on the topic, and this is emphasized in an interview when one faces each other, compared to anonymous answers in a questionnaire.

Some participants were really careful and stated outright that they do not want to sound stereotyping or sexist. The following Example (51) shows how Maria stresses the importance of having different people as teachers, mentioning that her current more mixed school has even been a nicer place for her to work, compared to some of her earlier workplaces where the majority of the teachers have been women.

*(51)(...) so when I have been in those schools where there are the two quota men and then in schools where there is a wider spectrum of different people, people with different genders, other genders, I have found these two places very different workplace work communities to work in.*

Interviewer: *In what ways?*

*I don't want to fall into those stereotypes but of course when in contact in communities where there are a lot of the same kind of (people), people thinking the same way, for example women of the same age, we might not, like, support each others strengths if we all have the same strengths and the same interests. I don't know if this is just a gender-phenomenon -- but the difference is obvious. Maria*

Tommi also mentioned the importance of having different perspectives to teaching, and he felt that male presence helps with achieving this. He here focused only on men and women but brought forward the idea that teachers are the decision makers in schools. Therefore, balancing the staff so that there would be an equal number of both men and women would be important in order for procedures and the ways of doing would become more versatile and therefore, better than what would be with only one gender dominating in school.

*(52)(...) If teachers have a lot of autonomy and it, you are alone with the class then as a result the activities the teachers plan and execute form a big part of what you do at schools, and if you presume that men and women would have differences as teachers, which is not necessarily so, then it, like, does matter, whether you have men or women in there (as teachers). Tommi*

These findings show that all the participants felt that the feminization of English teaching is worrying and a phenomenon that should be changed. They felt that there definitely should be more male English teachers, but not necessarily just as male role models. The importance of diversity came forth in the interviews, but as linked to a more general idea than just the diversity of gender. In other words, according to the interviewees, schools definitely need different people as teachers generally, be it of any gender, personality and ability to express oneself matters. Representations were considered very important for students, the presence of seeing different teachers encourage students into seeing themselves in teachers and not reject teaching as a possible career choice. Still, an idea of the traditional male role model also came clearly forth by the two men interviewed, and they also saw a male teacher as someone bringing more authority to the classroom than what women teachers perhaps would.

## **6.2 More men are *wanted***

While the participants felt quite strongly about the need to get more men into teaching, the topic also unravelled opinions of the benefits of being a man in the field of teaching. The participants truly seemed to believe that men not only are *needed* in the field but also *wanted* by employers, for example. When asked if gender was discussed already in teacher training, Sanna claimed that it was not thoroughly discussed by either the students or teachers, but that she still recalled a couple of instances where gender had come up by her teacher trainers. These teacher trainers expressed that it is beneficial to be a male teacher, it is a positive thing.

*(53) That way (gender was discussed in teacher training) that some teachers I think just said that it is beneficial to be a man (in teaching). It is brought up in the sense that you stand out positively if you are a man in this field (teaching). Sanna*

Sanna elaborated the topic of job search as a teacher and considered gender to be something she actively thinks about when going to a job interview. Whenever she had known that there were male applicants for the job, she had been afraid that the employer would give the men extra credit, only because of their gender.

*(54)(...) it did even come up that it is a benefit to be a male teacher so I understood it that way that if you want to get hired it is a benefit to be that then... and really I have been, when leaving the job interview and seeing a next in line to be a man, I have always been worried. (...) Sanna*

Paula was asked if she felt that it would benefit men in job searches because there are fewer men as teachers, and whether that would affect her negatively. Paula had not actively thought

about it in the same respect as Sanna, but she still added that she is somewhat concerned that there is still subtle discrimination of women not only in the field of teaching because of the lack of men there but also elsewhere in the society. By this she meant that she would not be surprised if there were discrimination, especially because she is a young woman applying for a job. Still, she rather confusingly stated that she wanted to think that gender would not matter.

Maria felt even more strongly that it is a head start to be a male teacher. When talking about the fears of being in a competition with men she responded as follows:

*(55)(...) and then if 90% of the applicants are women, and if to the interview are called let's say 10 interviewees from that hundred it is likely that there is not one man and nine women there. Maria*

She described quite sceptically, or even cynically that even though male English teachers represent the minority of all teachers, there still are proportionally many men in the job interviews, and she believes that men are favoured due to their gender. Interestingly, she felt strongly that it is not only in a job interview where gender matters but also in the university. She recalled incidents during teacher training in lectures where it was not unusual for the professor to ask for a male point of view, even though women teachers represented the majority, 90% of the students in the hall. It was quite worrying that she felt that not only was the male point of view repeatedly elicited, but it was also the one that was the most appreciated at the time. Surely, times have changed since the time of her training in the 90s, but the notion is still relevant because of her and Sanna's constant worry of male job seekers in the teaching job market.

Tommi admitted that it is possible for the employer of a feminized school to hire a man if the two applicants in question, a man and a woman, would have just graduated and have an identical previous career. However, he emphasized the role of personality, too. It seemed as if he had not thought about the issue previously, therefore, he has not considered himself possessing a position of privilege being a man.

Almost all the interviewees recognized the possibility of women English teachers being discriminated in job search because of the lack of men as English teachers. One interviewee even had heard a university teacher in her training to say that it is beneficial to be a man in this field. Therefore, the participants observed that men are truly wanted as English teachers, even though they personally believe that what matters is proficiency and personality, not gender. It

can be concluded that the idea that there is a demand for men has come from outside, either explicitly stated by someone in the same field or it being just a strong feeling the interviewees have.

### **6.3 Why are there mainly women as English teachers?**

The second research question focused on the reasons that would explain the feminization of English teaching. It is an interesting question since only a few previous studies have focused on the teachers' opinions on the factors behind the phenomenon. In accordance with previous research (Drudy et al. 2005), the first factors mentioned by Maria were the lack of prestige and low pay. But a particularly significant factor according to her was men's career changes meaning that men tend to shift to a different job. Particularly as far as teaching profession is concerned. She was able to give reasons as to why men change careers more often than women; according to what she had heard from her male colleagues, the main reason behind their career change often was the bureaucracy that regulated teaching. Teaching itself, according to her male colleagues, is "fun" but there seems to be "so many rules" that the men want to "do something new and experimental" instead. Therefore, the school structure, be it bureaucracy or a set of rules, seems to prevent men from being as creative and free as teachers as they would wish to be. She considered this to be a pity.

Markku agreed with the lack of prestige of teaching, he emphasized that men probably appreciate teaching less than women and, therefore, do not choose to become teachers, or change careers when already in profession, just like Maria mentioned. Career change as a reason for the lack of men was also visible in the study by Drudy et al. (2005: 106-108), as discussed in section 3.3.

*(56) I don't know if it is the same with language teachers but at least for class teachers it is so that the men graduate from teacher training and then they are set somewhere else (instead of teaching). So they went to the sales business or to marketing or somewhere, they don't work as class teachers at all. Markku*

However, he also argued that, according to his friends, teaching is not seen as a sufficiently challenging profession - it can in fact, feel numbing with the repetition of the same things year after year. In his view, the reason for career change is, therefore, slightly different than the one that Maria gave, but it still leads to the same result. It is also possible that when Maria described her colleagues saying that there are "so many rules", and Markku said that his friends feel that

teaching can be numbing they could both be referring to the same reason. Perhaps the high number of rules within the profession leads to the feeling of numbness.

(57)(...) *and then when I ask people where are you going and why and so on (the answer is) that “teaching itself is alright but then there are so many rules and we cannot deal with this bureaucracy and I want to do something new and experimental” where there is room in teaching itself surely but not in the structures. (...) Maria*

(58)(...) *it (teaching) is not experiences that challenging and not appreciated because you repeat the same year after year, new pupils come, again you teach the same things, sure you can change things but maybe it is still seen from a man’s perspective as standing still... Markku*

Sanna offered a point of view that was quite different from the others. She mentioned how it is possible that school as an institution has in a way softened because of feminization and that possibly because of this change, it now feels more and more alienating to men. She emphasized that all this is merely speculation and the following Example (59) expresses her thoughts on the reasons behind the absence of men.

(59)(...) *We have come a long way in a totally different direction in a very short time. But that is why I believe that also the teacher, how one acts as a teacher, and school world over all has softened a lot and I believe that that is because of women. But then I do not know whether it has all the time estranged from what men think, does it feel like, the school is all the time more foreign to them.*

Interviewer: *That the nature of teaching is becoming feminized?*

*Yes, yes. So I have thought about that if, like, one does not like feel one self at home at first in school and then that way it feels like a women’s world or something. But these are that sort of speculations that I don’t know. Sanna*

Paula believed that at least a part of the reason to the situation is the, mostly subconscious, differentiation of boys and girls. According to her, society still believes that different things are suitable for girls and boys and that this becomes the reality and it is reinforced. The end result thus is a vicious circle. However, she said that she was never explicitly told in her educational career that languages are for girls and not for boys, but she still believed that this view is transmitted and enforced in a more subtle way.

(60)*In a way there is the society, a proper vicious cycle, because in a way it is thought that languages are for girls and then, for example, physics for boys so then it gets divided so that women become language teachers. Paula*

An utterly different perspective to the topic came from Tommi, since he could not think of an answer as to why men do not apply to or become teachers. When asked if it could possibly be because of teaching is considered similar to the field of care, or because of the low pay, he admitted that these reasons do sound plausible. Then again, personally he had never thought about the teacher's pay as an issue, nor the whole feminization issue before applying to study.

*(61)-- personally I have not been thinking about the pay or, or beforehand I have not thought about the feminization (of teaching) when applying here.*

Interviewer: *Okay! So it didn't even occur that it might (affect)?*

*No no, no. Tommi*

This is a very interesting point, because it may be that his view is explained by his young age and lack of experience in teaching. In contrast, the teachers who were interviewed for this study had all witnessed the feminization of teaching on a daily basis for quite some time. Still, since Tommi was not affected by the assumed lack of prestige and pay, perhaps other future teachers are not either. This is a positive scenario, the idea that young students applying to teaching are not intimidated or depressed by the idea of teacher profession's possible lack of prestige.

One more explanation (Example (59)) for the lack of men teachers came from Markku and that is the difference in gender when it comes to study motivation and skills. Markku stated that he believed that boys and girls simply are interested in different aspects of language and different study techniques, and it is easier for girls to study English both in the school world as well as in university level and, therefore, there are more women as teachers as well. Interestingly, though, according to Syrjäläinen and Kujala (2010: 37), while in general the entrance exams to teacher training might have favoured hard working girls leading the demand for more male teachers to increase, the entrance exams have been renewed and that still has not drastically changed the gender division in the university. The majority of teachers still are women.

*(62)(...) boys are not really that interested in the structure of the language and these things that would belong to the school world and that is emphasized in the study world as well. So you don't only cope with language skills because there (at the university) are these language structures, exams and all.*

Interviewer: *And girls would be more interested in structure?*

*Well, I could imagine that girls have the potential for long term studying more (than boys). Markku*

When considering the reasons for the feminization of English teaching, it was apparent that the reasons nominated were varied and reached outside the traditional conversation of only prestige and pay, and this finding is in line with the questionnaire results of the present study (see section 5.2.3). According to one interviewee, the numerical dominance of women has slowly changed the school so that men do not find teaching as appealing. Some believe that certain attitudes of what is more natural to one gender and not the other are still transmitted subconsciously, for example, girls are encouraged to study languages more than boys and this is one of the reasons behind the scarce amount of men in the field. Representation was also believed to be an issue, interestingly since it was not strongly present in the questionnaire answers. This means that boys do not see themselves as language teachers, while it is all that girls see for themselves when in school because teaching is so female dominated. Additionally, one concrete explanation to the lack of men in teaching is men's career changes. Some interviewees brought up the possibility that men want to do something more experimental with their skills than teaching. It was also believed by one interviewee that men might consider teaching as numbing after a while and also the lack of prestige would be one reason for the complete change of career. Men's career change appeared to be the reason most repeated by different interviewees.

#### **6.4 How to attract more men to teach English?**

When the interviewees were asked for ideas on how to get more men to the classroom, they were again unanimous in not having many concrete ideas on how to achieve this, even though they all felt that there should be more men in the classroom. Paula was asked if the advertising of teaching could be changed to appeal to boys more, or if she had some other ideas on what could be done. Interestingly, she brought up the influence of student counsellors as guides for the students when thinking about their future plans.

*(63) I do believe that there is (room for improvement). I would very much like to know the student counsellors' point of view, how many of them recommend teaching, for example, to boys. Because when many students go like "I don't know what I want to study, tell me or help me", how many are recommended teaching? Because if I remember correctly, I feel like for me it was like how about teaching. Not as an only option but... Yeah, but I don't know about the advertising, sure in general only in recent years one has started to pay attention to the content of advertisements, for example, in the university. Paula*

Tommi did not have any ideas on how to change the situation but when he was asked if it is a question of improving the university marketing to high school students, he did say that it would feel peculiar to market teaching specifically to boys. However, he admits that he had not encountered any marketing of teaching so there could be something improved there.

Markku struggled with giving clear suggestions on how to attract more men into teaching but expressed the need to perhaps change the way in which students are elected to university to become teachers, to somehow shape it so that men could also shine. He did not elaborate on the idea but previously in the interview he had emphasized that in his opinion one of the negative aspects of university for men is the study method, in other words, the focus on studying language structures in an uncreative way.

Here again, one needs to pay attention to the decade in which he did his teacher training, the 90s when skills required in the entrance process to the teacher training and studying in general possibly differed. Nowadays, university studies have surely changed from that time - there is an increasing emphasis on communicative skills in them, instead of on passively sitting in lectures. Still, his views on the nature of studying are understandable, as even nowadays studying can involve a lot of more theoretically oriented topics. Whether this lack of practical applicability of the syllabus is an aspect that only hinders men is, however, questionable.

In the same way as Markku, Sanna did not give any concrete examples on what to do to the current situation. However, she said that in her opinion boys are given increasingly more opportunities to be the way they want to be and that enables them to be teachers as well if they so choose. Thereby, the situation is changing by itself all the time.

*(64)(...)I feel like our society is constantly transforming in the direction that there are more and more possibilities for boys to be diverse. You don't have to be a basic worker or someone who just wants to make a ton of money (...). You are sort of given more and more those male models that mean which means that you can be the kind of man that you want. If you are interested in studying then go ahead and study.*  
Sanna

In her reply, Maria brought up again the change in the prestige and pay of a teacher's profession and in relation to her previous answers, it seemed to her that if the school structures could be changed so that teachers' would in some way have more freedom in how to teach, perhaps men would be attracted to teaching more. All in all, in all of the interviewees' minds the feminization of English teaching appears to be a confusing phenomenon and tools to "fix" the gender division were scarce.

To conclude chapter 6, based on the interviews, it seems that gender of a teacher matters. All of the female informants were to some extent afraid of discrimination in the field of English teaching because of the lack of men in English teaching, this finding appeared in passing also



in the questionnaire answers (see section 5.2.7). Two of the women interviewed even recognized that already in the university a male point of view, and generally being a man as a teacher, was much appreciated. While not discussing the discrimination, one of the male interviewees recognized that the teachers' low pay reflects the low prestige of the profession. All the five participants agreed that feminization is not a preferred state of English teaching, and that a more equal gender distribution would be beneficial to everyone. Therefore, feminization was considered negative, not because of a difference in competence between genders, but because of the lack of diversity. It is important to note here however, that especially in the women's answers the need for diversity in general was highlighted, not only gender but, for example, race and age as well. As to reasons why there are so few men in English teaching the participants offered various explanations, and interestingly, different from one another. Still, the main reasons offered seemed to be the lack of prestige and men's career changes. Alongside with career changes they highlighted the belief that men "feel alienated from teaching" and that a teacher's job is "numbing" and that there are "so many rules". One also believed that behind the phenomenon of feminization is a differentiation of pupils based on gender, and beliefs about what is suited for boys and girls. Additionally, the importance of representations was mentioned when thinking about why it is important to get more men into teaching. It was believed that if one sees only women teaching English, it sends a message that teaching is a woman's job.

## 7 CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION

In section 7.1 the findings of the current study are further discussed and elaborated on. In addition, I will reflect on the implications of this study with respect to the field of English teaching and gender studies as well as education studies based on the findings. In section 7.2 section the design and operations of this study will be evaluated.

### 7.1 Discussing the results and research implications

The objective of the present study was to find out what teachers of English (n=89) and students of English (n=50) think about the feminization of the teaching of English as a school subject. Furthermore, they were asked to name reasons as to why there is a clear shortage of men in the profession of English teaching and, finally, what the significance of an English teacher's gender is. Evidence for their views was sought with a help of a questionnaire (n=139) and interviews (n=5). Altogether there were 117 women and 22 men who took part in the study. The data were analyzed mainly by using qualitative content analysis, but especially with the closed questions and even partly with the open-ended questions of the questionnaire it was possible to transform the data into a quantitative form. The interviews were analyzed purely qualitatively.

The first research question was "*What do the teachers and students of English think about the feminization of English teaching?*". The results show that the feminization of teaching is viewed as problematic; this is very much in accordance with previous studies (Kelleher 2011; Martino et al. 2009; Cushman 2008; Drudy et al. 2005; Lahelma 2000). Based on the answers from the first open-ended questionnaire question, slightly over half of the participants saw something negative in the feminization of English teaching (see section 5.2.1) Interestingly, women considered feminization to be negative more than men, as well as teachers more than students. Based on the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the interviews, the chance for a higher pay, male role models for boys and representations of different people altogether were mentioned when discussing the problem of the feminization of English teaching. It came across from the answers that it was not only important to increase the number of men in schools, but rather it was more generally diversity that was emphasized. Pay and male role models have been at the centre of the discussion on the feminization of teaching, but the desire for more diversity has not strongly surfaced from previous studies. Generally, in the open-ended questions teachers were more vocal about their opinions than students, as to whether or not

they wished for more men as English teachers. However, no matter how strongly the participants were against feminization, they were strictly against gender quotas.

All the five interviewees considered feminization as a negative phenomenon, a finding that again aligns with previous studies as discussed in section 3.4. Here, as well as in the questionnaire answers, it came across that more English teachers are definitely needed for the sake of diversity. It was argued that different people are important as representations for students - if one encounters only women as language teachers, it might be discouraging for boys to engage in languages and teaching. In the same vein, it was believed that simply by seeing more men as English teachers, the number of men would increase. While male teachers as part of more general diversification of the teaching staff was a popular view, two male interviewees also highlighted the traditional view of men as male role models for schools important. This finding of particularly male respondents considering male role models important aligned with the findings by Cushman discussed in section 3.4.

Contrary to the results from interviews and questionnaire's open-ended questions, the questionnaire's closed questions showed that the feminization of teaching was not seen as a big problem and it seemed to be even less of a problem to the students than teachers (see Tables 4 and 5). It was believed by all the respondents that a teacher's job is equally suited to any gender, and that gender does not have significance in teaching. Additionally, English teaching was not considered a feminine profession. However, a view according to which especially boys need male teachers surfaced from the closed questions, and the point was raised especially by female teachers. Gender quotas were rejected by all the respondents as a possible means for improving the imbalanced situation. As a finding, the resistance to gender quotas is once more in line with Drudy' et al. (2005: 109) results, according to which very few primary teachers and student teachers support gender quotas. Still, in the present study, the gender segregation was noticed by all the participants when in teacher training, but especially the men admitted to have thought about the reasons behind the phenomenon. This gender difference is intriguing and can possibly be explained by the fact that men are the clear minority in teacher training - it makes them notice the gender division easier. Furthermore, especially the teachers thought that teacher training needs more men. The last point is interesting, since as discussed already in section 3.4, there are no studies that would confirm that male teachers make boys more motivated or academically more successful than female teachers (Martino et al. 2009: 265). Still, teachers in this study considered male role models essential.

Overall, there was an interesting level of juxtaposition between the closed questionnaire questions and answers from the open-ended questions. It turned out that the respondents did not always stay in line with their views, and some had chosen quite the opposite views in closed questions compared to their answers in open questions. For example, when bluntly stated “teaching is a feminine profession” almost all respondents chose “strongly disagree”, a considerable number of them still saw differences between genders that they gave as reasons as to why there are significantly more women teachers of English. Especially when studying attitudes, one has to take into consideration that people can have opinions that sometimes contradict one another, and attitudes can be so subconscious that one does not pay attention to them. Therefore, this can well explain the differences between the closed question answers and the answers from open questions. One can be very open to diversity when asked about it in one way, for example, by using fairly strong attitudinal statements like in the present study, and suddenly possess very stereotypical views when simply asked about the same topic in a slightly different matter. The current questionnaire consisted of attitudinal, even provocative statements and only after them came the open questions where one could really express themselves.

The second research question asked “*What reasons do the English teachers and students give to the feminization of English?*”. This was specifically answered in the open-ended questions of the questionnaire since one of the questions was this particular research question. When it came to reasons for the scarce number of men in the field of English teaching, there were themes that were repeated despite the gender or status of the respondents. The most common reason given was plainly that men and women are interested in different things (see Table 6). However, the lack of prestige of the teaching profession as well as expectations were represented in the answers as well. Furthermore, skills and tradition were brought up. This meant that there were beliefs according to which women just excel in languages and perhaps studying in general. Furthermore, it was thought that since there have always been relatively more women as teachers, it is almost inevitable that there are more women as language teachers still today. Some differences between the genders emerged, and these included that considerably more women mentioned the importance of pay and lack of prestige as an explanation for feminization whereas men considered reasons relating to expectations and tradition significant, and men even mentioned women’s larger care orientation. Interestingly, while pay was the second most mentioned reason by the teachers, no students mentioned pay, instead, reasons relating to expectations were the second most popular with the students after interests. The interviewees also gave multiple reasons for the feminization of English teaching.

While the same reasons were repeated, the career change of men was emphasized clearly more in the interviews than in the questionnaire. Reasons for the career change of men included the beliefs that men more often than women find a teacher's job dissatisfying and are even restricted by the set of rules in the school system. One interviewee even suggested, without further elaboration, that the feminization of schools has changed schools to somehow feel alienating to men and this would in part explain the career change. These comments on the bureaucracy and the change of schools as a result of feminization are definitely interesting claims that would benefit from further research.

Comparing these results with those in the study by Drudy et al. (2005), some similarities can be noticed. Drudy et al. (2005: 106-108) studied the reasons for the lack of men in primary teaching by school leavers and student teachers, and it turned out that low pay together with considering primary teaching unattractive or uninteresting were the biggest similarities with the present research. Furthermore, in the study by Drudy et al. women's natural care orientation was mentioned by a larger number of participants than in the present study, but it is remarkable that it was still mentioned, twenty years later in one of the leading countries in gender equality. Nevertheless, the results of the two studies cannot really be compared with one another in a detailed way, since the focus of Drudy's et al. study was on primary school teaching while here the focus was on English teaching from basic to general upper secondary education. It was surprising to see that based on the current study, it appears that care orientation is connected to all teachers regardless of the taught subject. Overall, the view that was raised by the women in particular was that teaching is undervalued both in prestige and pay which makes the profession unattractive in the eyes of especially men, is a rather disturbing one. It raises the question whether a teacher's profession lacks prestige because it lacks men, and is, therefore, feminized. Indeed, some studies exist that serve to support this possibility (Drudy et al. 2005; Murphy and Daniels 2015).

The final research question asked "*What is the significance of an English teacher's gender to the teachers and students of English?*". It turned out that based on the third open-ended questionnaire answers, very few considered gender to be of importance. The most common opinion was that an English teacher's gender does not matter, that it is not significant in any way. However, 50% of the men felt that a teacher's gender is important in teaching in general, outside of English teaching too. Only 25% of the women agreed with this view. Nonetheless, it is crucial to point out that the exact wording of the questionnaire question was "What is the

significance of an English teacher's gender in teaching?", and, therefore, if one answered only along the lines of "It is not significant", it is impossible to know whether they meant that it is not significant in English or in teaching in general. Therefore, there might be a lot more of those who still see a teacher's gender significant in teaching in general, regardless of the taught subject. Still, in the third open-ended question only those who explicitly said that in teaching in general teacher's gender significant were counted in this study. However, in the previous open-ended questions it came up that some teachers have noticed that pupils respect male teachers more, and that women fear discrimination when applying for a job because the lack of men is that great (see section 5.2.1). Indeed, some men addressed women's possible discrimination as well.

Interestingly, when looking at the interviews, all of the female interviewees considered gender meaningful. Especially the worry that employers would appreciate male teacher applicants more because of the lack of men in the field came across. The fact that job discrimination was seen as a threat by all the women interviewed is an alarming finding. The men considered teacher's gender significant as well but perhaps more related to the need for male role models, and one considered men important for the prestige of the field. It cannot be stressed enough that still based on all the interviews, it was the need for diversity in teaching that was the most sought after than anything else, gender being only one aspect that can add to heterogeneity.

Overall, the finding of the need for diversity that was repeated both in the questionnaire as well as in the interviews was an intriguing addition to the discussion when compared to previous studies. In the present study male teachers were not perceived to be needed only for higher pay or better prestige but as such to bring diversity into schools and this has not been strongly highlighted in previous studies made on the feminization of teaching. It might be that it is explained by the passing of time - people nowadays are more aware of different genders and in schools as well individuality is stressed and encouraged in a way that is different from the late 90s or early 21st century. Vataja's (2011) study on the ways of speaking about male class teachers offers an interesting comparison to the present study. It was found that men are needed for schools to lift the field's prestige and get variety to the work community. Furthermore, male role models for pupils were considered extremely necessary amongst the interviewees. Interestingly in the present research, though prestige was still very much discussed, male role models as understood in the research by Vataja (2011: 71) "strong, tough and hard-working" did not appear in the present study to the same respect. Often even when talking about male

role-models, diversity in itself was emphasized and such stereotypical views did not, at least not often, occur. Of course, discourse was not the focus of the present study as with Vataja but even so this difference can be considered rather significant.

From the interviews it was found that no matter how apparent, worrying or controversial the phenomenon of feminization is, it was not much discussed already in teacher training. Only two out of five interviewees had heard their teacher or instructor bring it up, and even then, it was not about the feminization of teaching per se. Instead, the respondents' answers emphasized the importance of being a man in the field of teaching, therefore, handling the topic was not constructive nor open-minded. Based on the questionnaire answers and the interviews gathered in this study, feminization is a phenomenon noticed and pondered by most English teachers and student teachers, and it might indeed be beneficial if it, therefore, were discussed more in the teacher training. Sharing one's views about the gender gap in teaching brings attention to the matter and perhaps by doing that reasons for feminization and suggestions on how to change it will arise. Not recognizing the feminization or merely emphasizing the discrimination female teachers of English encounter in working life as a fact without concrete action does nothing to broaden the view of teachers as versatile individuals. Instead, it repeats the idea of a teacher being of a certain type and further highlights the binary view of gender, the difference between men and women. On the basis of these insights, it is justified to suggest that the issue of feminization of teaching should be discussed constructively already in teacher training.

The general assumptions that girls are more interested in languages and are linguistically more proficient than boys, which was also highlighted in the questionnaire answers of the present study (see section 5.2.3), do not seem to align with the reality anymore, at least not in Finland. Jääskeläinen et al. (2015: 11) states that male students of the general upper secondary education have recently started to receive the highest grades in English in their final exams more than girls do. This has been rationalized by the change of their learning environments. Uuskoski (2011) has observed the same phenomenon in his research on the connection of playing English video games and getting good grades in English. Regardless of these findings, the assumptions of what men and women, girls and boys are like, remain strong. These assumptions such as having a good proficiency level in languages are presented to be something innate in genders, and in these discussions, gender is seen as a binary concept, with masculine and feminine features. The questionnaire answers of the present study show that students and teachers are

aware of these assumptions, and indeed recognize them to be historically transmitted beliefs instead of reality. This awareness seems to me as positive. Still, as long as there are repeated assumptions according to which, for example, language learning, is more suitable for a specific group of people they remain, and affect one's ideals. These ideals surely guide one's behaviour in many aspects of life, one of them being career choices.

The idea of feminization of teaching as an explanation for the uneven success in school between girls and boys should be rejected. Blunkett (2008, cited in Tymms and Merrell 2013) briefly mentions "Laddish culture", which means that underachievement in schools is a part of the culture of boys. Kimmel (2008: 73-74) also offers a similar explanation to boys' underachievement in school that has nothing to do with the gender of their teacher. According to Kimmel (2008: 73-74), it is not that a school as an institution would be doing something wrong or non-beneficial to boys, but it is the guy-culture itself, the attitudinal and behavioural atmosphere that is within the male student groups that is preventing the boys from doing well in school. Boys simply consider studying and doing well in school feminine, and therefore, reject it. Ideas recognizing this guy-culture came forth also in the interviews of the present study (see section 6.3). Following this idea, it is safe to assume that it is certainly not the case that female teachers would merely favour girls, in the questionnaire of this study this was not believed to be true. It is more so about the lack of male students' motivation to be successful in school since it is considered an unaccepted quality amongst the boys, and it belongs to a guy-culture that boys partly themselves enforce. This culture that prevents boys achieving at the same level or putting an effort to school is a question definitely worth considering and looking into in more depth, as a topic of research on its own, but it is not the focus of the present study and therefore only presented as a side note. Boys' underachievement in school and the increased differences between girls and boys is a problem for the whole society but cannot be explained by the feminization of teaching. The present study in mind, it might nevertheless be immensely beneficial to get more male teachers, different individuals, to work as teachers in order for the boys to see that teaching, studying and school in general are not feminine but something that is for everyone.

It is interesting that the same observations that were made already over ten or twenty years ago and are acknowledged by previous research seem to be alive and well in this day in Finland. By these assumptions I refer to the beliefs discussed in chapter 3 according to which it appears that women's dominance in a field lessens its prestige and the status is thought to go up with



increasing the number of men. The lack of men is still seen as a problem, even though at the same time it is believed that women do not differ from men as teachers. The participants of the current study had difficulty in explaining exactly why they deem it so important to have more men as English teachers. Even in some individuals' answers had great controversy also, and one of the explanations for this is that even in 2019 people have subconscious assumptions that have an impact on their ideas on men, women and the society and these assumptions are denied when challenged. I believe that these ideas of gender and teaching need to be challenged and discussed without the debate of how to get more men attracted to teaching, whether in the form of pay or other changes. Instead, we need to do more research on attitudes and concentrate on the aspect of *why*, why would we need to entice only men with the pay? Perhaps the low pay is an issue that should be changed as itself, with men being in the profession or not.

All in all, the perception that came across from the present study was that gender does not turn a profession into a namely feminized one but that it affects us indirectly in the representations and shows in prestige. Gender is not considered to be significant as such, but diversity is needed for everyone's good. Gender is only one provider of diversity.

## **7.2 Reflection on the research design and final note**

If a similar study were to be conducted again, I would encourage researchers to open-mindedly rely on social networks such as Facebook as a portal through which possible informants can be found. With the present study it took me some time to comprehend exactly how the informants needed would be gained. Finally, after posting the questionnaire onto a Facebook site of a group for English teachers consisting of over 3 000 members, within two days a sufficient number of answers had been received leaving me with a total of 139 answers altogether. Therefore, social media turned out to be a very efficient way for collecting the data. However, what might influence the quality of the answers was the brief information in the beginning of the questionnaire which stated that it takes approximately 5 minutes to answer the questionnaire. I received a couple of remarks about this that stated that answering the questions took longer than was advised. Therefore, if a participant was in a hurry they perhaps did not answer as thoroughly as they might have, had they known that it takes more time to answer the questionnaire. With that in mind, it would have been safer to announce that it might take longer to fill out the questionnaire.

Furthermore, there was a sense of caution throughout the interviews because of the sensitive nature of the study topic. People did not want to seem sexist which perhaps censored their authentic responses to some extent. This is necessary to note when considering the reliability of the present study, since the possible withholding from participants, them censoring themselves can indeed manipulate the data. This, however, is always a risk when doing interview studies, as one simply has to trust that the participants are authentic in what they are saying. Furthermore, even though in the interviews as well as in the questionnaire mainly the terms man and woman were used, the interviewees were aware of the complexity and variations when it comes to defining and using gendered terms. Some participants clearly stated that the things she said about men and women were generalizations and stereotypical views. One interviewee in particular actively used the plural form of gender, therefore, looked past the binary view of gender. In most of the interviews there was a sense of need to move away from the traditional juxtaposition of genders, and criticism towards the traditional categorisation of men and women was presented, which was interesting to see.

It must also be pointed out that even though one's opinions would appear to be narrow-minded this is a study of attitudes and when researching attitudes the way the questions are formulated is of an enormous significance, i.e. how one asks them and with what wording. It truly matters in the way something is asked and the answer can depend on that. This is one of the risks when doing a qualitative interview and questionnaire study but, however, the objective here is not to generalise, especially with the interviews, only to focus on the attitudes of this relevantly small group of participants.

Although the focus of the study was on the teachers and students of English and teaching English, in the interview the interviewees easily drifted away from this focus and typically started discussing teaching in general. This can be due to the fact that all the teachers had also taught other subjects, some of them even more than English, or that feminization is just as a concept something that is impossible to look through the lenses of merely one particular subject. Even though that happened I believe their answers are still relevant with reference to English teaching as well. After all, the participants are teachers and university students of English and, therefore, described and interpreted the phenomenon from their professional point of view. Therefore, the answers are relevant and in fact give a lot of information of the state of feminization on a larger scale, even if the concrete examples with the focus of English are scarce.

What the present study succeeds in showing is that there still are fundamental beliefs about the differences between men and women in our society. These beliefs affect where men and women apply to study and eventually where they are situated in the working life as well. A concern that was voiced about the topic was that there will be something profoundly missing in teaching if there are only women who work as teachers, be it versatility or something else. Additionally, it just seems simply wrong that teaching is not given the same appreciation as an occupation because it lacks men. As discussed already in section 2, the number of men as principals is considerably high considering that there are so few as teachers. Yet, it does seem that men are needed as teachers in order to gain prestige for the occupation. It is surely not a modern finding, but it does seem to be one of the reasons teaching is looked down in the Finnish society, even though perhaps not to the same respect in Finland as internationally.

This study contributes to the field of education since something different compared to previous research was done - the voice of the feminization of teaching was given entirely to teachers and future teachers. Additionally, the focus was on the students and teachers of a world language, English. Gender in teaching, feminization as a phenomenon amongst teachers, has been studied before, but for some reason there seems to be only one leading researcher in Finland that I have encountered who has focused on the feminization of teaching with multiple participants (Lahelma 2000). And even in that study the opinions of pupils were asked and the focus was not strictly on teachers. I felt that it definitely should be, since they know the field the best and can give ideas about the field professionally, as students, jobseekers and employees, as it turned out.

It can be gathered that the present study has a great deal of relevance since, firstly, no such research has been conducted in Finland and even internationally the research on the significance of teacher's gender is scarce, and secondly, because of the eagerness of the Finnish teachers of English to get involved in the study. Within two days after the questionnaire was made available on social media, I needed to close it – by that time, it had stimulated over 80 responses by teachers from all over Finland. It thus became clear that the topic was intriguing and has been pondered by the majority of the respondents. Therefore, the present study contributes in giving answers to the questions on the significance of teacher's gender and opinions on the whole phenomenon of feminization in teaching, and in that way adds reliable knowledge to the discussion about the perceived negative feminization researched.

While there was a considerable number of participants (n=139) in the study and the data was gathered in more ways than one, solid generalizations on the topic are not possible. There definitely is room for further research on the feminization of teaching. It would be particularly fruitful to extend the number of participants and conduct a broader study with students and teachers from different subjects in addition to English. Furthermore, it would be important to have research subjects from outside the gender binary. Lastly, based on the present study it would be important to gather more information on the role of teacher training in the discussion about the feminization of teaching. Above all, it is essential to do more research where one hears from the active agents in the field of teaching on the matters regarding gender and teaching.

This study explicitly shows that gender does matter in Finnish education in 2019. We as a society are not past gender and definitely not gender neutral, not necessarily meaning that we should be. The unequal treatment of genders is most apparent in the lack of appreciation of the teaching profession as a feminized line of work but also in the level of concern there is about the feminization of teaching. This is something that cannot be turned away from, neither by the Finnish education system nor the whole society.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The original questionnaire in Finnish

### **Kysely englannin opettamisen naisvaltaisuudesta**

Opettamisen feminisaatio eli naisvaltaisuus on maailmanlaajuinen ilmiö. Suomessa naisia etenkin englannin kielen opettajina on merkittävästi enemmän kuin miehiä. Opettamisen naisvaltaisuutta ei ole kuitenkaan kovin paljoa tutkittu Suomessa, etenkin opettajien näkökulmasta.

Gradututkielmani tavoitteena onkin tutkia näkemyksiä liittyen englannin kielen opettamisen naisvaltaisuuteen (feminisaatioon) ja sen syihin sekä sukupuolen merkitykseen englannin kielen opettajana. Kyselyssä kysytään niin englannin opettajien (opetusasteena peruskoulu tai lukio) kuin opettajaopiskelijoiden näkemyksiä aiheesta. Kyselyyn voivat vastata hyvin myös ne opiskelijat, jotka eivät ole vielä opeharjoittelua suorittaneet, riittää että on opettajalinjalla!

Vastaaminen vie viisi minuuttia.

Vastaukset käsitellään anonymieina, eikä sinua voi tunnistaa tutkimuksesta.

Lisäksi haen myös vapaaehtoisia haastatteluun, joten jos olet kiinnostunut osallistumaan, jätä sähköpostisi kyselyn loppuun!

Kiitos paljon vastauksista!

HUOM.

Jos olet opiskelija, aloita kohdasta 1 ja siirry kohtaan 3.

Jos olet opettaja, aloita kohdasta 2.

1. Opiskelijalle

Ikä

Olen suorittanut opetusharjoittelun

Opiskeluvuoteni

2. Opettajalle

Ikä

Opetusvuosi

Paikkakunta jossa työskentelen

3. Sukupuoli

Mies

Nainen

4. Sukupuoli-identiteetti



Mies  
Nainen  
Muu

	1 Täysin eri mieltä	2	3	4	5 Täysin samaa mieltä
5. Opettajankoulutuksessa tulisi ottaa sukupuolikiintiöt käyttöön					
6. Olen kiinnittänyt huomiota siihen, että naisia on opettajankoulutuksessa enemmän kuin miehiä.					
7. Olen pohtinut syitä sille, miksi naisia on opettajankoulutuksessa enemmän kuin miehiä.					
8. Minua on opettanut miespuolinen englannin opettaja kun olin peruskoulussa tai lukiossa.					
9. Opettajankoulutus tarvitsee lisää miehiä.					
10. Alan arvostus heikkenee, mitä vähemmän alalla on miehiä.					
11. Opettajan sukupuolella ei ole opetuksessa väliä.					
12. Korkeampi palkka voisi motivoida miehiä opettajiksi.					
13. Pojat tarvitsevat lisää miesopettajia.					
14. Uskon, että sukupuoleni vaikuttaa					

siihen, millainen opettaja olen.					
15. Miehet ovat yhtä sopivia englannin opettajiksi kuin naiset.					
16. Opettaja on feminiininen ammatti.					
17. Naisopettajien kasvava määrä on ongelma.					

18. Mitä mieltä olet feminisaatiosta (naisvaltaisuudesta) alallasi?

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19. Mitä syitä antaisit sille, että naisia on englannin kielen opettajina reilusti enemmän kuin miehiä?

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20. Mikä merkitys opettajan sukupuolella on englannin kielen opetuksessa?

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21. Mitä muuta haluaisit kertoa alan naisvaltaisuudesta?

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22. Tutkimuksen toinen osa koostuu yksilöhaastatteluista, joissa keskustellaan näistä samoista teemoista. Jos olet kiinnostunut osallistumaan haastatteluun, jätä sähköpostiosoitteesi tähän. Kiitos paljon!

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## Appendix 2. The original interview outline in Finnish and its English translation – Students

Ikä:

Opiskeluvuosi:

### **Taustatiedot:**

1. Milloin hait opiskelemaan ja milloin suunnittelet valmistuvasi?
2. Oletko suorittanut aineopintojen opetusharjoittelun? Jos olet, niin mitä luokka-asteita olet opettanut?
3. Miksi halusit englannin opettajaksi ja miten päädyit opiskelemaan?

### **Mitä englannin opiskelijat ajattelevat alan feminisaatiosta?**

4. Mitä mieltä olet opettamisen feminisaatiosta?
  - Entä erityisesti englannin kohdalla, mitä mieltä olet juuri englannin kielen opettajien sukupuolijakaumasta?
5. Näkyykö feminisaatio kielten opiskelijoiden keskuudessa? Jos näkyy, millä tavalla?
  - Millainen tilanne on mielestäsi juuri englannin kielen kohdalla?
6. Puhutaanko feminisaatiosta opettajankoulutuksessa? Jos puhutaan, millä tavalla?

### **Onko englannin kielen opettajan sukupuolella väliä?**

7. Millainen merkitys opettajan sukupuolella englannin kielen opetuksessa on?
8. Eroaako miesten ja naisten englannin kielen opetus toisistaan ja jos eroaa niin miten?
9. Toivoisitko, että englannin kielen opettajina olisi saman verran kumpaakin sukupuolta? Miksi, miksi et?
10. Mitä mieltä olet sukupuolikiintiöistä?
  - Tulisiko ne ottaa käyttöön, jotta opettajiksi saataisiin enemmän miehiä?

### **Mitä syitä englannin opiskelijat antavat opettamisen feminisaatiolle?**

11. Mitä syitä antaisit sille, että naisia on huomattavasti enemmän englannin kielen opettajina kuin miehiä

Age:

Year of study:

### **Background information:**

1. When did you apply to study and when do you plan on graduating?
2. Have you completed the subject studies' teacher training? If you have, what class levels have you taught?
3. Why did you want to become a teacher and how did you end up studying?

### **Mitä englannin opiskelijat ajattelevat alan feminisaatiosta?**

4. How do you feel about the feminization of teaching? Mitä mieltä olet opettamisen feminisaatiosta?

- How about specifically English teaching, how do you feel about the feminization of English teachers?

5. Does feminization show amongst the language students? If yes, then how?

- What is the situation like with English language in particular?

6. Is feminization discussed in teacher training? If yes, then how?

### **Does English teacher's gender matter?**

7. What is the significance of teacher's gender in the teaching of English?

8. Are there differences in how men and women teach English and if there are, what are they?

9. Would you hope there to be an equal number of both teachers in English teaching? Why, why not?

10. How do you feel about gender quotas?

- Should they be implemented in order to get more men into teaching?

### **What reasons do the students of English give to the feminization?**

11. What reasons would you give to the fact that there are considerably more women as English teachers than there are men?

## Appendix 3. The original interview outline in Finnish and its English translation – Teachers

Ikä:

Opetusvuosi:

### **Taustatiedot:**

1. Milloin hait opiskelemaan opettajaksi ja milloin valmistuit?
2. Kuinka monta vuotta olet ollut opettajana?
3. Mitä luokka-asteita olet opettanut?
4. Miksi halusit englannin kielen opettajaksi ja miten päädyit opiskelemaan?

### **Mitä englannin kielen opettajat ajattelevat opettamisen feminisaatiosta?**

5. Mitä mieltä olet opettamisen feminisaatiosta?
  - Entä erityisesti englannin kielen kohdalla, mitä mieltä olet juuri englannin kielen opettajien sukupuolijakaumasta?
6. Näkyykö feminisaatio kielten opettajien keskuudessa? Jos näkyy, niin millä tavalla?
  - Millainen tilanne on mielestäsi englannin kielen kohdalla?
7. Puhuttiinko feminisaatiosta ollessasi opettajankoulutuksessa? Jos puhuttiin, niin millä tavalla?

**Onko englannin opettajan sukupuolella väliä?**

8. Millainen merkitys opettajan sukupuolella on englannin kielen opetuksessa?
9. Eroaako miesten ja naisten englannin kielen opetus toisistaan ja jos eroaa, niin miten?
10. Toivoisitko, että englannin kielen opettajilla olisi saman verran kumpaakin sukupuolta? Miksi, miksi et?
11. Mitä mieltä olet sukupuolikiintiöistä?
  - Tulisiko ne ottaa käyttöön, jotta opettajiksi saataisiin enemmän miehiä

**Mitä syitä englannin kielen opettajat antavat opettamisen feminisaatiolle?**

12. Mitä syitä antaisit sille, että naisia on huomattavasti enemmän englannin kielen opettajina kuin miehiä?

Age:

Year of teaching:

**Background information:**

1. When did you apply to study and when did you graduate?
2. How many years have you worked as a teacher?
3. What grades have you taught?
4. Why did you want to become an English teacher and how did you end studying?

**How do teachers of English feel about feminization of teaching?**

5. How do you feel about the feminization of teaching?
  - How about with English in particular, how do you feel about the feminization of English teaching?
6. Is feminization shown amongst the language teachers? If yes, then how?
  - What is the situation like in English teaching?
7. Was feminization discussed when you were in teacher training? If yes, in what ways?

**Does English teacher's gender matter?**

8. What is the significance of teacher's gender in English teaching?
9. Are there differences in the teaching of English between men and women? If there are, how?
10. Would you hope there was an equal number of genders as English teachers? Why, why not?
11. How do you feel about gender quotas?
  - Should they be implemented in order to get more men to become teachers?

**What reasons the teachers of English give to the feminization of teaching?**

12. What reasons would you give to the fact that there are considerably more women as English teachers than there are men?

#### Appendix 4. The original Finnish quotations from both the questionnaire's open-ended questions and the interview responses

- (1) En näe sitä suurena ongelmana. Toki on yhteiskunnallisesti hyvä jos kasvattajana toimivat ihmiset edustaisivat mahdollisimman suurta poikkileikkausta yhdyskunnasta, mutta ehkä tärkeämpää on se että opettajilla on tarvittava osaaminen ja innostus alaa kohtaan. En siksi lähtisi "keinotekoisesti" korjaamaan jakaamaa esim. kiintiöillä. Mies, kuudennen vuoden opiskelija, 29
- (2) Tärkeintä on Ammattitaito, joka ei ole sukupuoleen sidottu. On kuitenkin tärkeää, että poikaoppilaille olisi tarjolla malleja miehistä myös opettajina. Koulu on tärkeä kehitysympäristö nuorille, jossa identiteetti muokkautuu suuresti. En näe ongelmaa naisvaltaisuudessa, vaan miesten puutteessa. Mies, viidennen vuoden opiskelija, 24
- (3) (...)Erotun joukosta, saan kenties erilaista kohtelua ja koen olevani etuoikeutetussa asemassa, jonka olen tosin saanut epäoikeudenmukaisesti osittain vain sukupuoleni kautta. Mies, 10 vuotta opettajana, 37
- (4) Se ei minua vaivaa, ja voi olla hyödyksikin töitä hakiessa, mikäli "kiintiömiehillä" olisi hiukan etua työpaikkaa täyttyessä. (...)Mies, seitsemäs opiskeluvuosi, 27
- (5) Opetusalalla varsinkin kuten muuallakin yhteiskunnassa olisi hyötyä siitä että töitä tekisivät monenlaiset, monensukupuoliset ihmiset. Nainen, 20 vuotta opettajana, 45
- (6) Työnhakutilanteissa nainen on altavastaajana. Uskon, että rehtorit palkkaavat mieluummin miehiä töihin kuin naisia, varsinkin ala- ja yläkouluissa. Kun miehiä on alalla vähän, saattaa mies saada työpaikan "naisen ohi", vaikei mies olisikaan meriiteiltään parempi vaihtoehto työhön. Nainen, kaksi vuotta opettajana, 33
- (7) En koe sitä suureksi ongelmaksi, ja kollegoita minulla on ollut kieltenopettajamiehiä. Suurempana ongelmana näen sen, että jokainen työ, johon olen hakenut ja joissa on haastateltu myös miehiä, on mieshakija ollut se joka on tullut valituksi. Nainen, viisi vuotta opettajana, 29
- (8) Joissakin kodeissa tuntuu olevan naisvastaista ilmaa ja se näkyy oppilaan käytöksessä naisopea kohtaan, silloin on vain omalla toiminnalla osoitettava ettei sukupuoli merkitse. Nainen, 30 vuotta opettajana, 54
- (9) Joillekin oppilaille opettajan sukupuolella on enemmän merkitystä kuin toisille. Jotkut pojat eivät esim. kunnioita naisia samoin kuin miehiä. Nainen, 18 vuotta opettajana, 48
- (10) Mielestäni yksilön soveltuvuus alalle on sukupuolen sijaan määrittävä tekijä. En näe naisvaltaisuutta pahana asiana. Nainen, viides opiskeluvuosi, 24
- (11) Olen sitä mieltä, että se ei ole ongelmallista. Nainen, kolmas opiskeluvuosi, 23
- (12) Näen feminisaation, mutta en pidä sitä varsinaisena ongelmana. Toki olisi kiva, jos alalla olisi enemmänkin miehiä, mutta sukupuoli ei minusta ole tärkein asia. Nainen, viisi vuotta opettajana, 40
- (13) Mielestäni siinä ei ole mitään pahaa, ala nyt näköjään sattuu houkuttelemaan enemmän naisia kuin miehiä. Nainen, toinen opiskeluvuosi, 28
- (14) En ole opettajanhuoneessa huomannut sitä niinkään, opettajakunta koostuu kokemuksieni mukaan aika tasaisesti miehistä ja naisista. Työnhaussa feminisaation huomaa: suurin osa tapaamistani hakijoista on ollu naisia. Nainen, toinen vuosi opettajana, 28
- (15) Mielestäni olisi mukavaa nähdä alalla enemmän miehiä. Olen välillä havahtunut kursseilla siihen, että kaikki ryhmän opiskelijat ovat naisia, ja se tuntuu jossain määrin jopa vähän huolestuttavalta. Nainen, kolmas opiskeluvuosi, 22
- (16) Vaikuttaa työyhteisöön, mahdollisesti palkkakehitykseen, opiskelijoihin ja heidän kohtaamiseen -> välittyy tietynlainen kuva ja kehys. Nainen, seitsemän vuotta opettajana, 32
- (17) Opettajan ammatti on edelleen jokseenkin koodattu naisten ammatiksi, mitä nuoremmaksi oppilaat menevät niin stereotypiat hoivavietistä ja naisten "luonnollisesta" soveltuvuudesta kasvatusammatteihin ovat varmasti iso syy siihen miksi opettajakunta on suhteellisen naisvaltaista. Samalla naisvaltaisuus ruokkii itseään: jos ihmisten opettajat ovat lähinnä naisia, silloin mielikuva opettajan ammatista naisten ammattina helposti vahvistuu. Kielissä on varmaan vielä päällä stereotypiat miesten ja naisten kompetensseista tiede- ja kommunikaatioaineiden välillä. Mies, kahdeksas opiskeluvuosi, 29
- (18) Naisia kiinnostaa enemmän humanistiset alat, miehiä "oikeat työt". Mies, toinen opiskeluvuosi, 22
- (19) Varmasti taustalla on kulttuurisia uskomuksia naisten tunneälykkyydestä ja kielten osaamisesta, sekä siitä että lasten kanssa työskentely nähdään naiseuden/äitiyden ilmentymänä. Kyse on siis, usein

- tiedostamattomista, tavoista joilla historia ja jaettu kulttuuri ohjaavat meitä määrittämään termit "mies" ja "nainen". Mies, kuudes opiskeluvuosi, 29
- (20) Ehkä kielet kiinnostavat stereotyyppisesti naispuolisia enemmän. Monissa kouluissa tämä voi myös johtua itseään toteuttavasta ajattelusta, jonka mukaan ainakin minun peruskouluaikoinani poikia rohkaistiin enemmän matemaattisissa aineissa ja tyttöjä kielissä. Yleisesti itselleni ainakin tuolloin tuli vähän sellainenkin kuva, että koska olen tyttö, olen hyvä kielissä jne. Tällaiset jo lapsena koetut asenteet ja oletukset voivat vaikuttaa jatkoopintoihin ja ylipäätään siihen, minkä alan kokee omakseen. (...) Nainen, viides opiskeluvuosi, 25
- (21) Naiset eivät ole vielä äänestäneet jaloillaan työn vaatimusten kasvaessa ja palkan pysyessä ennallaan: miehet eivät alalla pysy eivätkä alalle enää kouluttaudu, mm. palkan ja työn alhaisen arvostuksen vuoksi. Nainen, opettaja, 33
- (22) Voi olla, että miesten kesken vallitsee jonkinlainen näkemys siitä, että mies ei voisi olla kielten opettaja. En tosin tiedä miksi, mutta se voisi hyvinkin olla yksi syy, että englannin opettajan työ ei jotenkin koettaisi kovinkaan maskuliiniseksi työkse. Nainen, viides opiskeluvuosi, 23
- (23) Naisilla on helposti taipuvaisuus ns. "äidillisiin" ominaisuuksiin, joihin liittyvät elämässä opastaminen ja ohjaaminen. (...) Nainen, kolmas opiskeluvuosi, 21
- (24) En usko, että opettajan sukupuolella on väliä kun kyseessä on opettajan pätevyys, mutta olisi tietenkin parempi, että tätä hajontaa sukupuolissa ei olisi. Mies, viides opiskeluvuosi, 25
- (25) Opetuksen tasossa tai itse työssä en näe eroa. Lapset/nuoret saattavat samaistua paremmin samaa sukupuolta olevan kanssa. Mies, toinen opiskeluvuosi, 25
- (26) En näe, että sukupuolella on mitään merkitystä. Tietysti tasaisempi jako sukupuolten kesken antaisi nuorille paremman mallin, että kuka tahansa voi ryhtyä opettajaksi. Mies, kymmenen vuotta opettajana, 37
- (27) Varmasti se että opettajina on enemmän naisia tukee ennestään ajatusta että opettaminen (ja varsinkin kielten opettaminen) on naisten työtä. Tämä saattaa puolestaan syödä joidenkin miespuolisten oppilaiden motivaatiota kieltenopiskeluun, jos he kokevat ettei kielten opiskelu ole heitä varten. Mies, kuudes opiskeluvuosi, 29
- (28) Oppilaiden kokemus englannista jää yksiulotteisemmaksi, jos opettaja on aina yhden sukupuolen edustaja. Se voi myös olla omiaan kehittämään oppilaiden päässä karikatyyrisen kuvan kielenopettajasta. Tällä voi olla seurauksia koko koulun ja yhteiskunnan asenteisiin ja toimintaan. Mies, neljäs opiskeluvuosi, 23
- (29) Ei minkäänlaista, kulttuurinen konteksti ja opetettavan aineen sisällöt ovat keskiössä. Nainen, neljäs opiskeluvuosi, 23
- (30) Ainakaan pojat eivät saa yhtä lailla esimerkkiä siitä, että on hyvä osata kieliä. Tai heille saattaa jäädä kuva, että kielet ovat jotenkin epämiehekkäitä. Nainen, seitsemäs opiskeluvuosi 25
- (31) Ehkä aiheiden ja esimerkkien valinnassa jonkin verran. Nainen, 34 vuotta opettajana, 59
- (32) Vaikea sanoa mitä merkitystä opettajan sukupuolella kielen opetuksessa voisi olla. Ehkä se näkyisi käsiteltävien teemojen valinnassa, tai puhe- ja kommunikointitavoissa. Nainen, kuudes opiskeluvuosi, 26
- (33) Varmasti vapaasti valittavat aiheet voivat painottua opettajan omien kiinnostuksen kohteiden mukaan, mutta toisaalta opettajat ovat kiinnostuneita monista aiheista. (...) Nainen, 15 vuotta opettajana, 43
- (34) Ei sillä ole merkitystä. Yksittäisten oppijoiden mielestä saattaa olla helpompi lähestyä tietyn sukupuolista opettajaa. En silti näe, että sillä on loppupeleissä merkitystä, varsinkaan spesifisti englannin opetuksessa. Nainen, viides opiskeluvuosi, 25
- (35) En usko, että opettajan sukupuolella on väliä kun kyseessä on opettajan pätevyys, mutta olisi tietenkin parempi, että tätä hajontaa sukupuolissa ei olisi. Mies, viides opiskeluvuosi, 25
- (36) Miesopettajat otetaan vakavammin ja heitä kuunnellaan helpommin, kuten miehiä yhteiskunnassa muutenkin. Nainen, ensimmäinen opetusvuosi, 43
- (37) Itse aiheen opetuksessa uskoisin että minimaalinen. Yleisessä opetuksessa voi kuitenkin olla että miehillä enemmän auktoriteettia (...). Mies, toisen vuoden opiskelija, 21.
- (38) Nuorena naisena alalla olen kokenut paljon vihamielisyyttä ja torjuntaa vanhemmilta naiskollegoilta. Toisaalta taas opettajanhuoneen harvat miehet ovat "kukkoina tunkiolla" ja perustavat usein seksistisen

- mieskerhon, jota eivät "akkojen jutut", eli monet yhteisesti hoidettavat asiat kosketa. Nainen, ensimmäinen opetusvuosi, 29
- (39) Miespuoliset opettajat saavat helpommin virat, pääsevät työhaastatteluihin ja etenevät urallaan - osa vain sukupuolensa takia. Siihen pitäisi puuttua. Nainen, 21 vuotta opettajana, 43
- (40) Miehiä kaivattaisiin alalla paljolti siksi, että kävisi ilmi, ettei kyse ole itsessään mitenkään järin feminiinisestä alasta ja että miesopettajien mystinen asema karisisi. Mies, neljäs opiskeluvuosi, 23
- (41) Lisääntyvä feminisaatio kertoo siitä, että näistä sukupuolisteretytioista ei olla päästy vieläkkään eroon. Sen sijaan, että keskityttäisiin keskustelemaan sukupuolikiintiöistä tai feminisaation "haitallisuudesta", pitäisi kiinnittää huomiota siihen, miten ja miksi tiukkoihin dikotomisiin sukupuolirooleihin soisalistutetaan jo lapsena. Mies, yhdeksäs opiskeluvuosi, 32
- (42) Mielestäni alalle ei tulisi laittaa sukupuolikiintiöitä, vaan pääsykokeissa tulisi aina valita pätevimmat hakijat. En lisäksi ymmärrä, miksi opettajien palkkaa pitäisi nostaa juuri miesten houkuttelemiseksi ja kyseenalaistankin sen, miksi miehet välittäisivät työn palkkatasosta enemmän kuin naiset. Yleensä opettajaksi hakeudutaan kuitenkin aidon mielenkiinnon eikä palkan takia, ainakin toivottavasti. Nainen, kolmas opiskeluvuosi, 22
- (43) Naisvaltaisuus ei itsessään ole ongelma, vaan moninaisuuden puuttuminen ylipäänsä. Nainen, yksi vuosi opettajana 25
- (44) Tylsää se on, että ei olla lähellekkään 50-50 tilanteessa. Nainen, 20 vuotta opettajana, 50
- (45) Etenkin ns syrjäytyvillä alueilla miehet korvaavat puuttuvia mieshahmoja poikien elämästä. Nainen, kolme vuotta opettajana, 36
- (46) Mun mielestä se on tosi harmi. Koska kyllä mä uskon siihen että ne roolimallit niinkun vaikuttaa ja (...) Mun mielestä se olis tärkeätä niille nuorille lapsille, pojille, jotka opiskelee kieltä että ne näkis että on miesopettajakin, tai että on miehiä jotka osaa kieliä, tai siis niitä on totta kai mutta että se opettajakin vois olla, tai just ainakin vaikka just heillä ei ois niin sit yleisesti ois sen verran että niinkun näkis. Koska kyllä mä uskon että se vaikuttaa kuitenkin jonkun verran niinkun siihen ajatusmaailmaan. Paula
- (47) (...) se että opettaja on hyvin pitkälti oppiaineensa henkilöitymä tai edustaja vahvistaa sitä sellaista että tietyt asiat on enemmän naisten tai tietyt asiat on enemmän miesten. (...) Että hekin näkevät tavallaan niinkun että täällä on pelkkiä naisia, tää on mun tulevaisuuteni. Sen sijaan että he näkisivät että, et on erilaisia ihmisiä tekemässä erilaisia asioita. Maria
- (48) (...) Kyllä mun mielestä kaikki tarvii niinkuin kaikki roolimallit elämäänsä elikkä kumminkin meilläkin on paljon yksinhuoltajaitejä sun muita yhteiskunnassa niin mikä on mun mielestä ihan superpositiivista että niin tytöt kuin pojatkin saa niitä miesten malleja ja tuota turvallisia miehen malleja joita yleensä sitten toivottavasti koulussa ne aikuiset on. Sanna
- (49) Koska monesti ainakin entisaikaan milloin minä olin lapsi niin en tiä enää nykypäivästä nyt tää on niin pirstaloitunut tää yhteiskunta mutta ainakin silloin kyllä se oli se isä jonka sana paino ihan eniten siinä perheessä. Markku
- (50) Joskus on helpompi niinkuin kohdata kasvattajanansa sellainen ihminen jonka kanssa kokee olevan enemmän yhteistä. Ja niinkun sukupuolihan on hirveen sellainen selkeä ja näkyvä useimmiten -- niin sekin tavallaan sit lisää sellaista moninaisuutta ja monimuotoisuutta mitä monissa kouluissa tarvitaan. (...) Niin, niin se mitä mä kaipaisin ois niinkun se että, et koulu voisi olla malli paitsi niinkun oppiaineessa ja ihmisten sukupuoleessa niin myös sellaisessa yhteiskunnan ja ihmiskunnan moninaisuudessa. Maria
- (51) Niin tavallaan sitten se että kun olen ollut sellaisissa kouluissa joissa on tasan kaks kiintiömiestä ja sitten sellaisissa kouluissa joissa on niinkun laajempi leikkaus ehkä sitten niinkun erilaisia ihmisiä eri sukupuolisia ihmisiä, muunsukupuolisia ihmisiä niin mä olen kokenut nää hyvin erilaisiksi työyhteisöiksi työskennellä.

### *Millä tavalla?*

Mä en halua sortua niihin stereotyyppioihin mutta totta kai niinkun vuorovaikutus sellaisissa yhteisöissä missä on hyvin pitkälti samantyyppisiä, samalla tavoin ajattelevia ihmisiä niinkuin esimerkiksi saman ikäisiä naisia niin se on erilaista ja me nähdään siinä, me ei niinkun ehkä tueta toistemme vahvuuksia jos kaikilla on samanlaiset vahvuudet ja samanlaiset kiinnostuksenkohteet. En tiedä onko tässä niinkun, että



- onko se pelkästään sukupuoli-ilmiö tai siis sukupuoleen liittyvä asia, mutta niinkun että, se ero on hyvin selkeä. Maria
- (52) Jos opettajilla on kuitenkin suuresti, tosi suuresti autonomiaa ja se, siellä toimitaan paljon niinku yksin sen luokan kanssa niin niin sit tuloksena sillä opettajien suunnittelemalla ja vetämällä toiminnalla on niinku, se muodostaa ison osan siitä mitä siellä kouluissa tehdään niin jos olettaa että miehillä ja naisilla opettajina keskimäärin ois sitten eroa siinä opettajuudessa, mitä ei välttämättä oo, ookaan edes, mut kuitenkin niin, niin silloin sillä on niinku väliä että onko siellä, onko siellä miehiä vai naisia. Tommi
- (53) (...) Sitä kautta just että saatto mun mielestä jotkut ihan opettajat sanoo että on etu olla mies. Se tuodaan nimenomaan sitä kautta että positiivisella tavalla erottuu kun jos olet mies tällä alalla. Sanna
- (54) Kyllä siellä tuli ihan puheeks että on etu olla miesopettaja eli kyllä mä ymmärsin sen kautta että myös siinä kun jos haluat tulla palkatuks niin on myöskin etua silloin olla... ja kyllä mä oon ollu oikeesti kun mä oon vaikka työhaastattelusta lähtenyt ja siellä on odottanut seuraavana haastateltavana joku mies niin mä oon aina ollut huolissani. Sanna
- (55) Ja sitten jos 90 prosenttia hakijoista on naisia ja haastatteluun otetaan vaikka niinkun 10 haastateltavaa sadasta hakijasta niin todennäköisesti siinä ei ole yhtä miestä ja yhdeksää naista. Maria
- (56) Mä en tiä onks se kieltenopettajilla sama mut ainakin luokanopettajilla miehillähän on se että ne valmistuu OKL:stä ja sittenhän ne sijoittuu jonnekin muualle vaan sitten. Eli menevät myyntitehtäviin tai johonkin markkinointiin tai jonnekin että ne ei luokanopettajana sitten toimi sitten. Markku
- (57) Ja sitten niinkun se että, et kun mä kysyn ihmisiltä että, et mihin sä lähdet ja miksi sä lähdet ja näin niin tota tavallaan se (vastaus on) että "opetustyö itsessään on kivaa, mut sit kun näitä sääntöjä on niin paljon niin me ei jakseta tätä byrokratiaa ja mä haluan tehdä jotain uutta ja kokeilevaa" mihin opetustyössä itsessään ois varmasti tilaa mutta niissä rakenteissa sit ei. Maria
- (58) Sitä ei koeta niin haasteellisena eikä arvosteta koska sä toistat sitä samaa vuodesta vuoteen, tulee uudet oppilaat, taas opetat periaatteessa samoja juttuja, voithan sä muutellakin tietenkun mutta se koetaan ehkä kuitenkin se miehen näkökulmasta niinkuin tällaisena paikalleen jäämisenä... Markku
- (59) Niin onhan siinä menty tosi pienessä ajassa ihan eri suuntaan. Mutta sit sitä kautta mä myöskin uskon että just myös se opettajan, niinkun tavallaan millainen opettaja on ja koulumaailma yleensäkin on on pehmentynyt tosi paljon ja mä uskon että se on sitten taas naisten ansiosta. Mut sit mä en tavallaan tiedä että onks se ehkä koko ajan vieraantunut siitä mitä miehet ajattelee että tuntuuks se niinkun, että tuntuuko se koulu koko ajan niille vieraammalta... Sanna
- (60) Mut kyl mä uskon että siinä on tavallaan se yhteiskunta, semmoinen kunnan noidankehä, että koska tavallaan ajatellaan että kielet on tytöille ja just vaikka joku fysiikka pojille niin sitten se jakaantuu silleen että naiset tulee kielenopettajiksi. Paula
- (61) (...) henkilökohtaisesti en oo miettinyt palkan tai, tai etukäteen en miettinyt sitä naisvaltaisuutta mitenkään silloin kun tänne hain. (...) Se ei niinkun tullut mieleenkään, että saattais (vaikuttaa). Tommi
- (62) (...) ei niitä poikia silleen kiinnostusta se kielen rakenne ja siis tällainen mikä nyt kuuluis niinkun koulumaailmaan ja mikä tuolla opiskelumaailmassakin korostuu, nimenomaan sekin... Et ethän sä pelkällä kielitaidolla pärjää vaan siellähän on nämä kielen rakenteet ja tentit ja muut. (...) Noh, näin mä voisin kuitenkin kuvitella että niillä tytöillä riittää sitä potentiaalia siihen pitkäjänteiseen opiskeluun enemmän. Markku
- (63) Kyllä mä uskon (että on parantamisen varaa). Mua kiinnostais hirveesti tietää niinkuin vaikka opojen näkökanta että kuinka moni opo suosittelee opettamista vaikka pojille. Koska kyllähän sit kun aika moni opiskelija menee mä en tiä mitä mä haluan opiskella kerro mulle tai auta, et kuin monelle sit suositellaan pojista opettamista. Koska jos nyt en ihan hirveesti valehtelee niin musta tuntuu että mulle kyl oltiin silleen että no oisko opettaminen. Ei niinkun ainoana vaihtoehtona mutta niinkun... Niin, mutta en mä sit oikeen mainontaa varsinaisesti, toki ylipäätään nyt vasta viime vuosina on alettu kiinnittää huomiota siihen että mitä mainoksissa on, esim. yliopistolla. Paula
- (64) (...) musta tuntuu että koko ajan meidän yhteiskunta muuttuu siihen suuntaan että pojille aukee koko ajan enemmän mahdollisuuksia olla monenlaisia. Että sun ei tarvii olla se tavallinen duunari tai sitten joku semmoinen joka vaan tahkoo hirveen määrän rahaa -- Että niinkun annetaan mun mielestä koko ajan enemmän ja enemmän just niitä miehen malleja että sä voit olla ihan minkälainen mies sä haluat. Ja jos sua kiinnostaa opiskella niin antaa mennä ja opiskella. Sanna