

**Towards a Post-Heteronormative Habitus: Teachers' Perspectives on  
embedding LGBT+ inclusive Education in UK Primary Schools.**

Ben Johnson

December 2020

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Department of Educational Research,  
Lancaster University, UK.

This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for any other degree or diploma.

Word count: **45 374**

Signature..... Ben Johnson.

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores how teachers negotiate heteronormative discourse to embed LGBT+ inclusive education. It examines motivations for prioritising this work, how structural constraints are negotiated and makes recommendations for educators wanting to embed this work. It argues that more needs to be done in schools to embed LGBT+ inclusive education to reflect wider changes in UK society and to benefit LGBT+ youth who continue to be a vulnerable sub-section of society. This thesis addresses a gap in the literature by exploring the experiences of teachers driven to disrupt heteronormativity in schools over long periods of time. This thesis addresses a need to understand how teachers develop support networks to embed inclusivity work and create post-heteronormative spaces in educational settings. To achieve this aim, I use Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field to offer new insights into how heteronormativity can be disrupted in schools. A narrative inquiry methodological framework is employed with 12 UK participants interviewed. The principle findings from the research are that the participants are powerful agents in disrupting heteronormativity in schools and through critical self-reflection, engagement with wider networks they successfully build support, knowledge and strength to create LGBT+ inclusive educational cultures. Participants anticipate challenges by developing staff confidence in the wider language of gender and sexuality and develop training to challenge misconceptions around educating for LGBT+ visibility. These findings are important as they provide valuable insights into how teachers can exert their agency in disrupting heteronormativity through autobiographical self-reflection and through deploying social and cultural capital as a source of support when challenges arise.

Ultimately, participants found this work challenging but empowering helping them to align their social justice oriented values with their teaching practice.

## Table of Contents.

<b>Abstract</b> .....	iii
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	9
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	10
<b>List of tables</b> .....	11
<b>Note on terminology</b> .....	12
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	
<b>1.1. Aims and Overview of the thesis</b> .....	13
<b>1.2. Statement of subjectivity</b> .....	17
<b>1.3. Context</b> .....	18
<b>1.4. Outline of the thesis</b> .....	23
<b>Chapter 2: Finding freedom within structural constraints in the pursuit of LGBT+ inclusivity in schools</b>	
<b>2.1 Introduction</b> .....	26
<b>2.2 Can teachers educate students about LGBT+ identities in positive, meaningful ways?</b>	
<b>2.2.1 The role of strategic essentialism</b> .....	28
<b>2.2.2 The potential of LGBT+ teachers in the classroom for disrupting heteronormativity</b> .....	33
<b>2.3 Can teachers successfully actualise social justice oriented projects in schools?</b>	
<b>2.3.1 Schools perpetuating the status quo</b> .....	36
<b>2.3.2 Negotiating traditionalist discourse</b> .....	39
<b>2.3.3 Engaging critical reflection to realise social justice projects</b> .....	41

2.4	Summary.....	45
-----	--------------	----

### **Chapter 3: Theoretical framework**

3.1	Introduction.....	48
3.2	Heteronormativity and its impact in the classroom.....	49
3.3	How Bourdieu’s tools can help teachers disrupt heteronormativity.....	52
3.4	Employing capital to overcome structural constraints.....	55
3.5	The field as potential battlefield or playground.....	57
3.6	Limitations of combining habitus, capital and field to disrupt heteronormativity.....	58
3.7	Summary.....	59

### **Chapter 4: Methodological framework**

4.1	Introduction.....	62
4.2	Narrative inquiry approach.....	63
4.3	Perception.....	65
4.4	Ethics.....	66
4.5	Sampling.....	67
4.6	Questionnaire.....	71
4.7	Narrative biographical interview method.....	71
4.8	Pilot.....	73
4.9	Participants.....	74
4.10	Analysis.....	76
4.11	Summary.....	79

**Chapter 5: What are the implications of participants’ perceptions of their motivations to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity for helping others priorities this work?**

5.1	Introduction.....	81
5.2	Reflections on key moments of motivation.....	82
5.3	The influence of home life on the habitus.....	85
5.4	Entering the teaching profession.....	88
5.5	Professional benefits arising from engaging in LGBT+ inclusivity practice.....	90
5.6	Troubling the status quo.....	93
5.7	Summary.....	96

**Chapter 6: How do participants engage their agency to negotiate structural challenges when embedding LGBT+ inclusive education?**

6.1	Introduction.....	98
6.2	Negotiating heteronormativity in schools.....	99
6.3	Negotiating personal attacks and conflict.....	105
6.4	The problem of ‘no problem’.....	106
6.5	Navigating the discourse of appropriateness.....	109
6.6	Embodied heteronormativity.....	112
6.7	Negotiating neoliberalism.....	115
6.8	Employing social capital.....	120
6.9	Engaging critical reflection.....	128
6.10	Negotiating sexuality in the field.....	130
6.11	Summary.....	132

**Chapter 7: What lessons can be drawn from participants’ attempts to successfully embed LGBT+ inclusive practice?**

**7.1** Introduction.....134

**7.2** Developing an LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus.....135

**7.3** Fluency in the language of gender and sexuality.....140

**7.4** Interrupting heteronormativity.....142

**7.5** The Habitus Reflection Framework.....147

**7.6** Critical thinking as central to the collective habitus.....150

**7.7** Moving beyond tokenism.....155

**7.8** Summary.....159

**Chapter 8: Conclusion.....161**

**References.....170**

**Appendix A.....205**

**Appendix B.....207**

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my gratitude to Carolyn Jackson as throughout this research she has been a compassionate, thoughtful and friendly guide and mentor. I would also like to give my heart-felt thanks to my partner and soulmate Douglas. Your support and encouragement means everything to me. Finally, I would like to extend a debt of gratitude to all the teachers who tirelessly educate to make schools and society safer and more accepting places for those who do not fit the norm. Your work saves lives and you are an inspiration to me.

## **List of abbreviations**

**KS1/KS2:** Key Stage 1 is the term for the first two years of schooling in England and Wales.

Key Stage 2 is the name for the four years of schooling in England and Wales known as year 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**OFSTED:** Office for Standards in Education, Children's services and Skills.

**PSHE:** Personal, social, health and economic education.

**NQT:** Newly Qualified Teacher.

## **List of tables**

Table 1: Participants demographic information.

Table 2: Mapping themes onto research questions.

Table 3: The Habitus Reflection Framework.

## **A note on terminology**

**LGBT+:** This stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and the + represents all other groups that do not identify as heterosexual including asexual, intersex, questioning and queer.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Aims and overview of the thesis**

In this thesis, I explore the perceptions of teachers on their experiences of embedding meaningful LGBT+ inclusive education within UK primary schools. I argue that much practice around LGBT+ inclusivity in schools is characterised by its tokenism and to inspire more teachers to engage in robust teaching, a deeper understanding is needed of the experiences of teachers who have successfully embedded this practice over time. In this thesis, tokenism is understood as the 'practice of granting only perfunctory concessions or accommodations, particularly to minority groups.' (Thompson et al. 2014). Consequently, tokenism manifests in the curriculum through annual LGBT+ or Black history months or themed days where diversity is explored in a shallow 'saris, samosas and steel drums' (DfES, 2007) approach. This decontextualizes learning, denying children opportunities to engage with deeper issues of equality, diversity and inclusivity that can allow students deeper understanding of others. Tokenism can be damaging as it can pathologise (Ellis, 2007) minority experience thereby reinforcing stereotypes, prejudice and difference (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006). Alternatively, an embedded approach allows students to understand how their lives are interconnected with those of others and provides space to question and critique the structures responsible for oppression and inequality in society.

One of the principle reasons for this tokenism is the prevalence of heteronormative thinking in schools. Heteronormativity, or the 'organizational structures in society that support heterosexuality as normal and everything else as deviant' (Donelson and Rogers, 2004: 128),

dictates, through its all-pervasive nature, which expressions of gender and sexuality are permitted, legitimised and favoured in society. It influences the context in which teachers educate through informing which relationships are depicted in children's literature and curriculum materials, how teachers talk about their lives to parents, students and each other and distinctions made about what is a 'normal' way to act or be in the world.

To gain a deeper understanding of how primary teachers can embed LGBT+ inclusivity in schools, I argue that three areas need greater attention: firstly, an understanding of participants' motivations to embed this practice to help inspire others to prioritise this work. Secondly, a greater understanding is needed of the constraints participants face in embedding this work and how they can be overcome. Thirdly, wider recommendations must be drawn from participants' experiences that can help teachers to move beyond invisibility and tokenism towards embedding LGBT+ inclusive in their own practice. This thesis addresses an important gap in the literature in that to disrupt heteronormativity and create post-heteronormative schools there is an urgent need for understanding the experiences, thinking, motivations and processes of teachers who have worked to embed LGBT+ inclusive education over time. Their experiences must be shared as new norms are not established overnight but instead are the result of countless actions, conversations and efforts over time which work steadily to erode heteronormativity. These teachers' experiences are better placed to help understand how to negotiate, challenge and build-up support networks to embed LGBT+ inclusivity work. Tokenism is not an option when LGBT+ youth continue to suffer disproportionately high rates of mental health problems, suicide and depression compared to their heterosexual peers (METRO, 2017, Stonewall, 2017).

To gain a fuller understanding of how teachers exert agency in disrupting heteronormativity I employed Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field. The concept of habitus helps understand an agent's beliefs, values and perceptions (Bourdieu, 1986) which can help explain why some teachers come to prioritise this work. Capital provides a framework for exploring the resources (be they social, cultural or economic) that participants employ in realising their projects and provides implications for how others can mobilise their own capital to more easily embed LGBT+ inclusivity work. The field is the social arena in which participants work and is the space in which different habitus and capitals interact. The appeal of Bourdieu's conceptual tools lie in their inherently practical nature which can help uncover the wealth of agency available to teachers and practical steps they can take to effectuate change when faced with the all-pervasive and abstract threat of heteronormativity.

Additionally, an exploration of Bourdieu's concept of habitus offers insights into how tokenistic teaching perpetuates stereotypes and compounds limiting, simplistic beliefs which deny the complexity of gender and sexuality. An understanding of habitus demonstrates how these beliefs, values and perceptions around minorities are perpetuated by teachers, often unconsciously due to their own learning, family experience and teaching practice. Ultimately, Bourdieu demonstrates how this cycle can be broken through critically challenging one's assumptions in pursuit of the truly egalitarian aim of creating a curriculum that embeds meaningful engagement with a plurality of perspectives. Furthermore, an understanding of habitus which disrupts the perpetuation of stereotypes brought on by years of tokenistic teaching allows children to have a positive rather than deficit model of LGBT+ lives (Pennell, 2106). This teaching could then strengthen the social and cultural capital of LGBT+ youth who may be more predisposed to grow up feeling equal to their heterosexual peers without having

to deal with the burden of discrimination, prejudice and violence that currently characterises the identity development of many LGBT+ youth affecting their mental health and academic development (Gower et al, 2017, Kosciw et al, 2013).

I found that this approach provided new perspectives on how teachers critically reflected on their biographies to understand the impact of heteronormativity on themselves and their loved ones. It also shed important insights into how teachers are able to mobilise cultural and social capital to develop networks which can be drawn upon for support, knowledge and strength when facing challenges to embedding this practice. Consequently, I address the following research questions:

- 1) What are participants' motivations for advocating and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity?
- 2) How do participants navigate structural constraints when embedding LGBT+ inclusive education?
- 3) What recommendations can be drawn from participants' attempts to embed LGBT+ inclusive practice?

This thesis draws on data from 12 participants who have been embedding LGBT+ inclusive education within their own practice over at least two years. The research is qualitative in nature and adopts a narrative inquiry approach focusing on the perceptions and subjective experiences of participants. Before I explore the context of this research it is important to address the issue of subjectivity.

## **1.2 Statement of subjectivity**

I find that stating the subjectivity of the researcher is fundamental to understand the foundations upon which the research is built. As Canagarajah (1996: 324) reminds us, research subjectivities ‘with their complex values, ideologies, and experiences, shape the research activity and findings.’ White (in Smith, 2012: 23) adds that by calling out our own assumptions, values and beliefs we can begin to ‘decolonize’ our minds to de-familiarise ourselves and examine them with ‘fresh eyes.’ Consequently, as a gay primary school teacher and researcher the subject of how to discuss LGBT+ lives in the classroom has been an interest of mine since entering the profession seven years ago. I have always chosen to be open about my sexuality with staff as I need to feel comfortable in work environments that accept me for who I am. In the past couple of years, I have spoken about my sexuality with my students in a process of attempting to make space as an LGBT+ role model in the classroom. This has involved talking about my partner and attempting to link LGBT+ history to topics in class e.g. Harvey Milk to civil rights and Alan Turing to the Second World War. This was initially difficult as, teaching in a rural school, I agonised about the potential backlash I might encounter from conservative minded parents. However, I experienced no backlash and some support and I found my Year 6 pupils to be open, articulate and curious about LGBT+ rights often with their own insights and need to talk about LGBT+ related topics. This research has developed from my own experiences and through conversations with colleagues (both LGBT+ and non-LGBT+) who have often felt unsure about how to begin this work in their own practice. They often raise concerns about protests outside of schools in Birmingham and Manchester related to the implementation of LGBT+ inclusive curricula in primary schools specifically the ‘No Outsiders’ project. I have a strong belief in equality, human rights and a belief in the interconnectedness of humanity. Consequently, whilst my beliefs and experiences orient me

towards a commitment to LGBT+ inclusivity in schools, as a researcher, I am equally committed to a strong reflexivity throughout this study to attempt to address bias resulting from my views, perceptions and lived experience. My own experiences allowed me to empathise with the participants through being open about my own challenges and successes in implementing this work. I find that this approach helped break down the barrier between 'researcher' and 'researched' instead presenting myself as someone equally committed to the project of realising robust LGBT+ inclusive teaching in primary schools. Having examined my subjectivity, I will now discuss the background which contextualises the research.

### **1.3 Context**

Since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been a widening acceptance of gender and sexual diversity in western societies (Plummer, 2008, Weeks, 2007 and Nixon, 2006). Evolving attitudes towards LGBT+ people has made it easier for more people to be open about their sexuality. Consequently, with more people 'coming out' more people come to know and interact with members of the LGBT+ community making it less likely that they are discriminated against (Nussbaum, 2018).

During this period, there has been a steady increase in research dedicated to the study of gender and sexuality within education. Research has been carried out to explore the impact of schooling and inadequate sex education on the development of positive gender and sexual identity (Epstein & Johnson, 1998, Mutchler, 2002, Rivers & Carragher, 2003 and Renold, 2007). Furthermore, many researchers have grappled with the relationship between sexual minority status and bullying in young people in England and its later lasting impact on life satisfaction (Thurlow, 2001, Rasmussen, 2004 and Henderson, 2015). Alongside a growing

interest into the lived experience of LGBT+ youth, research has explored the plight of LGBT+ teachers, and experiences of homophobia and harassment in schools (Ferfolja, 1998 and MacKenzie-Bassant, 2007). More recently, researchers have explored the impact of LGBT+ inclusive policy in schools (Jones and Hillier, 2012) and its positive impact on student and LGBT+ teacher wellbeing (Rudoe, 2017). Additionally, Neary and Rasmussen (2020) have started to explore the impact of understanding of what marriage equality means for children and schools exploring the intersection of childhood innocence, sexuality and the state.

However, I argue that with hate crime rising sharply towards LGBT+ people in the UK over the past five years (Stonewall, 2019) and with the UK government poised to scrap reform of the Gender Recognition Act (Ward, 2020) progressive societal changes are fragile and schools are currently not doing enough to embed an ethos of LGBT+ inclusivity within their curriculum which could help embed positive attitudes towards LGBT+ people over the long term. Since the 2003 revocation of Section 28 which forbade the promotion in schools of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship, there have been some advances in equality legislation, centred around stopping homophobia (Jennett et al. 2004 and Ellis, 2007), the Equalities Act (2010) and the 2020 mandatory relationships and sex education legislation which makes schools legally required to educate about LGBT+ relationships as part of their relationships and sex education provision in primary and secondary schools (DfE, 2019). However, I find that these advances have often been tokenistic, unenforced and not reflective of wider public sentiment around LGBT+ people and issues (Stonewall, 2017a). This leads to uneven provision for children across the country in learning about LGBT+ themes, issues, histories and identities. More widely, this highlights that efforts at LGBT+ inclusive curricula rarely meet standards of social justice education as they are often surface level efforts which neglect

deeper critical conversations about how systematic oppression works and can be challenged (Snapp et al, 2015). Ultimately, embedding this practice in schools is key to normalising progress made in LGBT+ equality.

With UK schools not adequately reflecting wider changes in attitudes towards LGBT+ people, I argue that we are failing LGBT+ youth who remain a particularly vulnerable sub-section of society. Their needs are increasingly gaining the attention of the wider population as increasing numbers of primary aged trans children are actively seeking help through medical channels (Lyons, 2016). Moreover, LGBT+ youth continue to experience disproportionately high rates of bullying compared to their peers (Gower et al. 2017) which can affect their academic performance (Kosciw et al, 2013), make them more likely to engage in heavy drinking (Coulter et al 2016) and suffer from depression (Birkett et al 2009) than their heterosexual counterparts. According to questionnaire responses from 7000 LGBT+ youth conducted by the charity METRO (2016), respondents were over twice as likely to have considered suicide compared to their straight counterparts. In the United States, one third of all suicides are committed by individuals who identify as LGBT+ (Goodhand and Brown, 2016). The consequence is that as LGBT+ youth mature into adulthood they are likely to experience lower levels of wellbeing than their heterosexual peers (Schraer & D'Urso, 2017). Furthermore, almost half will experience school bullying and one in five will experience a hate crime due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity over a twelve-month period (Stonewall, 2017b). It is important to note that poor mental health rates have increased across the whole population over the past ten years (NHS digital, 2014) and more people are reporting hate crimes (Stonewall, 2017b). However, Petit et al (2012) argue that it is the relative invisibility of LGBT+ lives, themes and history in schools that has contributed to the

social isolation many LGBT+ youth feel growing up. I argue that it is clear from these findings that society needs to be doing much more to support LGBT+ youth. Moreover, these statistics highlight the important work schools need to be engaging in to create environments which celebrate LGBT+ identities and foster inclusivity to help LGBT+ youth thrive.

Teachers play a crucial role in helping LGBT+ youth navigate difficult schooling environments. I advocate a need to better understand the factors inhibiting teachers from effectively embedding LGBT+ inclusivity to understand how these barriers can be navigated and overcome. Many factors inhibit this work, starting with teacher training courses that inadequately prepare teachers for engaging in LGBT+ inclusive education (Meyer, 2008 and Richard, 2015). Ill-prepared teachers then enter educational spaces that tend to closely regulate what knowledge is right and permissible to teach in schools (Ceplak, 2013 and Ball, 2017) often at the expense of equality and diversity teaching. Wider discourses around maintaining the 'innocence' of children who need to be protected from wider society (Morgan and Taylor, 2018) or 'difficult knowledge' (Britzman, 1998) often lead to what Giroux (1996) calls a 'Waltdisneyfication' of the curriculum which, by shielding children from society, inhibits them from understanding themselves and the society in which they inhabit. Additionally, other factors influencing teacher reluctance to engage in LGBT+ inclusive education include being unsure about the language and terminology of LGBT+ issues, worry about causing offence (DePalma and Jennett, 2010) and fear of backlash from parents (Flores, 2014 and Mishna et al, 2009). In 2019, this backlash actualised through coordinated protests outside of schools in Birmingham and Manchester against the LGBT+ inclusive 'No Outsiders' project (Ferguson, 2019). These protests can foster another factor inhibiting this work; sensationalist media coverage (Morgan and Taylor, 2018) around LGBT+ education. I argue

that there is a need for more teachers to share their experiences of embedding LGBT+ education as this can help dispel apprehensions and misconceptions to inspire other teachers to apply lessons learnt from successful teachers to their own context.

With much research concerned with constraints to LGBT+ inclusivity and media representation focusing on protest around this work, there is an urgent need to re-address the balance and explore the experiences of teachers who have overcome difficulties and have successfully embedded this work. The research that has focused on the benefits of LGBT+ inclusive education has found that work to improve LGBT+ inclusivity increases the empathy and acceptance of more children (DePalma and Jennett, 2010) not just those who identify as LGBT+ (Espelage and Swearer, 2008). Embedding LGBT+ themes across the curriculum can reduce bullying and harassment allowing LGBT+ youth to feel safer and experience less victimisation (Kosciw et al, 2012, 2014). Importantly, this work can help reduce prejudice held by some heterosexual students (Fuentes et al, 2009). These projects can have a substantial impact on the wellbeing of LGBT+ youth, for example; the FAIR (Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful) Education Act in California which mandates an LGBT+ inclusive curriculum reflective of the achievements of LGBT+ individuals within a broadly non-discriminatory curriculum has seen significant improvements in rates of discrimination and prejudice in the schools in which it is taught. Crucially, sharing more experience of successful LGBT+ inclusivity programs is key if more teachers are to engage meaningfully in this work.

In this thesis, I argue that to create a society in which LGBT+ youth can thrive teachers need to engage with LGBT+ inclusivity in embedded, meaningful ways. I advocate sharing and critically reflecting upon the experiences of those who have embedded this work to help

inspire others. Furthermore, as primary school is the age when children's attitudes, perceptions and beliefs about others crystallise (Issacs and Bearison, 1986) the responsibility for this work falls largely at the feet of primary teachers who, alongside the family, have a powerful role in shaping the terms in which young people see and understand the world around them (Coutrot and Elder-Vass, 2011 and Bourdieu, 1974). Additionally, Early years and primary practitioners urgently need training to support transgender children who are becoming increasingly visible (Warin, 2017, Warin and Price, 2020). Evidently, as government legislation and policy are slow to change, teachers often must actualise LGBT+ inclusive education at the grassroots level. To enable them to make these changes there is an urgent need for the sharing of the positive experiences of teachers who have successfully embedded this work, analysis of the factors that have enabled them to overcome constraints to their projects and a need for recommendations that can help others begin or move beyond tokenistic approaches to LGBT+ inclusivity. Ultimately, schools are well-positioned to create supportive environments for LGBT+ youth they just need more guidance into how to realise that support (Goewer et al, 2017). The need to provide more guidance and support is a central aim of this thesis. After having explored the background to the research, the next section details the thesis outline.

#### **1.4 Outline of the thesis**

The thesis is split into seven chapters. The following chapter engages with the literature around LGBT+ inclusivity and heteronormativity in schools asking 'can students learn about LGBT+ identities in positive, meaningful ways?' This exploration builds a foundation upon which I develop my own research. The second question asks 'can teachers actualise social justice projects in schools?' This question is important as it engages with wider structural

issues that can often limit the effectiveness of social justice oriented projects in schools. This awareness is needed to help answer the second research question around challenges teachers face to educating for LGBT+ inclusivity.

Chapter three explores the theoretical framework that underpins this research. It involves an understanding of how Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field can be employed to provide new insights into how teachers are able to disrupt heteronormativity to embed LGBT+ inclusive education.

Chapter 4 sets out the methodological framework employed in this thesis. This chapter details why narrative inquiry was chosen as a framework for the research and defines the methods, ethics, sampling and data analysis process.

Chapter 5 grapples with the first research question which examines how participants came to develop motivation for their LGBT+ inclusivity projects and the implications of biographical reflection for developing motivation for this work in others.

Chapter 6 explores the main structural constraints that teachers face in embedding LGBT+ inclusive practice. It argues that teachers attempting this work need a clear understanding of the constraints they may face and how they can deploy their own social and cultural capital as well as their critical reflection skills to navigate these constraints. The two main structural constraints explored are the effects of heteronormativity and neoliberalism on teachers in schools.

Chapter 7 aims to bring together participants' experiences to understand the implications of their practices for those attempting this work. It considers the importance of building a collective LGBT+ inclusive habitus and how that might be actualised in meaningful, non-tokenistic ways.

The final Chapter provides a conclusion which draws together the main ideas of the thesis, reiterates its contribution and makes the case for further research to be conducted resulting from this research.

## **Chapter 2: Finding freedom within structural constraints to actualise LGBT+ inclusivity in school**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Before understanding how teachers successfully embed and advocate for LGBT+ inclusive education, I find that there is a need to explore what research has been done already around teacher attempts to educate about LGBT+ lives and disrupt heteronormativity in schools. This thesis recognises that there is still a paucity of research in this area and little concerning teachers' perspectives on educating for LGBT+ inclusivity and specifically on the experiences of teachers who have successfully navigated structural challenges to embed LGBT+ inclusivity over the long term. In this regard, the thesis provides important insights into the perspectives of teachers who have successfully embedded this work over time with the aim of presenting and analysing that experience to inspire more teachers to engage with this work. This thesis recognises that educating for LGBT+ inclusivity is fraught with difficulties and aims to better understand how teachers can effectuate and priorities social justice oriented inclusivity projects. Consequently, this literature review aims to engage with two key questions: firstly, 'can teachers educate students about LGBT+ identities in positive, meaningful ways?' This exploration is necessary to help understand research around how teachers can create embedded, meaningful practice instead of tokenistic and potentially damaging practice. The second section explores teachers' agency and their abilities to negotiate structural constraints by asking 'can teachers successfully actualise social justice projects in schools?' This section engages with the wider structural forces of heteronormativity and neoliberalism and argues that if they are to effectuate real change in schools they must both understand and reflect

upon the wider political, social and contextual factors that impact their teaching and the possibilities for resistance embedded within them.

## **2.2 Can teachers educate students about LGBT+ identities in positive, meaningful ways?**

Since the repeal of Section 28, schools have not done enough to celebrate LGBT+ lives. With the many barriers teachers face in educating for LGBT+ inclusivity, Woodson's (2017) findings are unsurprising in highlighting how UK schools are generally characterised by an absence of curriculum materials around celebrating LGBT+ identities rendering teachers 'custodians of silence' (Farrley et al, 2017). Statistics around LGBT+ youth mental health problems and suicide (METRO, 2017) underline the dangers of non-action on the part of teachers and schools. This silence does not betray a neutrality but rather an act of complicity in oppression (Hooks, 1994). Where work is being done to educate for inclusivity it is often characterised by its tokenistic approach to diversity (DfES, 2007) which in its broad reach can sometimes mask specific inequalities (Warin and Price, 2020). However, I argue that blame must not be laid solely at the feet of teachers for this culture, instead their practice must be contextualised within a school system still haunted by the spectre of Section 28. One of the principle problems relates to how, since its repeal, most teachers and legislation has focused on anti-homophobic bullying, which whilst providing some visibility, continues to pathologise LGBT+ lives (Ellis (2007) as negative, only appearing in the curriculum in regards to homo, bi and transphobia. Teachers need more clear examples of how to embed school cultures that celebrate LGBT+ lives. This must be robust enough to overcome the notion that homo, bi and transphobia are cultural phenomena which enshrine LGBT+ lives within a deficit lens (DePalma and Jennett, 2010). This mentality can be counteracted through robust equalities education which celebrates LGBT+ people as part of a rich, diverse society. This process begins

the minute students walk through the school gate and to be meaningful and positive for students it needs to become part of the ethos and everyday practice of a school (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b). Evidently, to actualise this reality teachers need more examples of how to embed and engage in this work in meaningful ways and this experience comes from teachers who have grappled with these issues over time and understand the nuances of the challenges educators face and how they are best overcome. Researchers like Carlile (2019) have taken important steps to explore in more depth the experiences of teachers in faith schools reconciling their LGBT+ inclusivity with their setting and their own beliefs. Her work is important as it begins to address misconceptions teachers have around the incompatibility of religion and LGBT+ equality. Her findings reflect positive surprise amongst teachers when they find their students can talk sensitively and critically about LGBT+ lives. All of which helps illuminate the real possibilities teachers have for celebrating LGBT+ lives in the curriculum.

### **2.2.1 The role of strategic essentialism**

In heteronormative society, creating a rich curriculum that celebrates LGBT+ lives can be difficult and teachers need a roadmap to achieve this goal. Realistically, DePalma and Atkinson's advice on creating curriculums that celebrate LGBT+ lives represents an ideal and the all-pervasive nature of heteronormativity means that it remains challenging for individual teachers to actualise post-heteronormative spaces in schools. In 2009, DePalma and Atkinson launched the 'No Outsiders' project, a piece of participatory action research revolving around efforts to embed LGBT+ themes across the curriculum with the aim of highlighting the message that there need not be any 'outsiders' in the curriculum. Their efforts would go on to receive significant backlash from certain sections of the UK press. The backlash focused on attempts to 'queer' the curriculum which at the time was considered too controversial for the

public to accept at a time when same-sex marriage had yet to be legalised and attitudes towards LGBT+ people were still evolving. Whilst undoubtedly pioneering work, the media backlash to that project played a role in stalling progress in LGBT+ inclusivity in UK primary schools for the next ten years. However, a case study by Atkinson (2020) on one of the original No Outsiders participant schools found that over ten years later homophobia remained prevalent but students accepted and spoke about non-heterosexualites through sophisticated equalities discourse compared with a school that did not take part and found LGBT+ identities to be '*unacceptable, unspeakable and unintelligible*' (14-15). This research highlights both how the path to inclusivity is complex and messy but ultimately hopeful. Perhaps part of the only partial success of the 'No Outsiders' project in this school could be down to schools not having long-term support in developing their projects, once researchers and outside agencies left the project teachers may have been unequipped to continue to develop post-heteronormative spaces. Evidently, what is needed is research into how schools create and *sustain* LGBT+ inclusive cultures over the long-term. That is why, to achieve embedded, meaningful practice around LGBT+ lives teachers would benefit from a more patient approach that can be built upon over time, gently pushing the boundaries of the status quo and creating new norms around LGBT+ inclusivity. DePalma and Atkinson's work involved developing projects together through partnerships between universities and schools and together analysing the progress of their shared endeavours. What is missing in the literature are accounts from teachers who have worked to embed LGBT+ inclusivity themselves over longer stretches of time which can provide understanding of how they have negotiated challenges and built up networks to support embedded LGBT+ inclusivity work.

The notion of strategic essentialism has been developed as a pragmatic, slower approach to help teachers to start educating for LGBT+ inclusivity. Essentialising means 'reductively simplifying a complex phenomenon' (Ellis, 2007). Therefore, by drawing upon essentialist categories of trans, gay and straight to simply introduce the terms to children this helps extinguish their exotic and threatening nature (Guha and Spivak, 1988). Consequently, this requires a commitment on the part of schools to train teachers in the language of gender and sexual diversity which has often been an area which inhibits teachers from engaging in this work (Richard, 2015) so that teachers feel well equipped to use and explain this language and terminology with children in open, progressive classrooms.

I argue that this can be an essential first step in creating embedded inclusivity and in normalising gender and sexual diversity (Fuss, 1989). This approach represents a starting point for teachers to engage in LGBT+ inclusivity work and highlights how creating a post-heteronormative society takes time and sustained effort. As Luhmann (1998) notes; it's illusory to think that LGBT+ representation will result in a 'happy end to discrimination' (178). Quick fixes and tokenistic approaches like once a year LGBT+ weeks may be more detrimental than beneficial as teachers feel they have tackled intolerance in their school when real disruption of heteronormativity demands constant attention, over time, to 'wear away the spring' (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009c). Furthermore, LGBT+ inclusivity is not realised by one or two schools doing progressive, boundary-defying work around LGBT+ identities but rather all schools adopting a patient, reflective form of strategic essentialism around LGBT+ lives which can then be built upon and embedded once students, parents and teachers are acclimatised towards the presence of LGBT+ identities in the curriculum. Chambers and Carver (2008: 142) explain that:

subversion must be a political project of erosion, one that works on the norms from inside, breaking them down not through external challenge but through internal repetition that weakens them.

Then over time a generation can grow up with their identities validated, knowing it is ok to be LGBT+ as all students learn that LGBT+ people are simply a part of life as their existence is normalised in the curriculum. Before we can reach this situation, there is an urgent need to explore the experiences of teachers who have patiently eroded and replaced heteronormative norms over time to provide insights into how new post-heteronormative spaces can be successfully embedded in primary schools.

The aim of a strategic essentialist approach is to build-up over time an ethos of inclusivity and this must be complemented by wider institutional factors which can allow teachers to engage in this work successfully. School leaders play a large role in this process as they must work to create environments conducive to diversity education (Picower, 2012) as their own beliefs, feelings and thoughts around diversity play a large part in influencing the culture of a school (Sparks, 2005).

Strategic essentialism can form a necessary starting point for this work. However, I argue that it is a temporary first step and there continues to be a greater need for research around understanding the perceptions of teachers who have moved beyond strategic essentialism to having embedded LGBT+ inclusivity. This research can then provide insight into how this teaching moves from strategic essentialism into creating schools which embed LGBT+ inclusivity in positive, meaningful ways. Ultimately, if strategic essentialism is prolonged it becomes problematic. For example; strategic essentialism has been criticised as denying the

complexity of identity by defining it by key terms. This has the potential 'to doubly pathologise queer youth, increasing feelings of alienation and difference in what is perceived as the heterosexual norm' (Quinlivan and Town, 1997: 512). This could then backfire against well-meaning teachers who create 'sterile, sanitized celebratory explorations' of LGBT+ histories, issues and topics (Helmsing, 2016: 175). Nevertheless, if strategic-essentialism is a temporary measure on the road to embedded practice it can avoid 'locking' (Alexander and Yescavage, 2001) LGBT+ identities in place.

As teachers move beyond strategic-essentialism to embedding practice they must also carefully consider whose LGBT+ experience is represented in the curriculum. The trend is towards white, middle class gay men (McDermott, 2011). This is problematic as it marginalises other perspectives like those of black lesbian women whose invisibility in the curriculum has been described as 'less than a vapor' (Woodson, 2017). This lack of wider visibility of experience ends up reinforcing how white, often male knowledge and experience are privileged in school curriculums. To successfully embed LGBT+ inclusivity this work needs to be rooted in the wide range of experiences, voices and knowledge of those being studied (Apple et al, 2011). The aim of LGBT+ inclusive education is to develop children's acceptance of others and present different possibilities of being in the world and if teachers limit the experience on show they perpetuate heteronormativity by fixing boundaries around gender identity and sexual orientation. The next section explores the potential of LGBT+ teachers to help move beyond strategic essentialist teaching to more embedded practice.

### **2.2.2 The potential of LGBT+ teachers for disrupting heteronormativity**

To enable teachers to move beyond strategic essentialist teaching of LGBT+ inclusivity, the insights of LGBT+ teachers can help others understand both the importance of this work and what makes this teaching real. Their openness can be a powerful, tangible challenge to heteronormativity which can transform abstract issues into reality.

Teachers open about their sexuality in the classroom are powerful role models to all students (Atkinson and DePalma, 2009a) who can help dispel myths and uneasiness around LGBT+ identities (DePalma and Jennett, 2009). They can help prepare children for living in a diverse society inspiring them to pursue their own dreams (Snapp et al, 2015) and influence their moral views on homosexuality and acceptance of diversity (Fofes, 2000). LGBT+ teachers can be key players driving forward inclusivity work as they are often driven by their own experiences of marginalisation (Desmarchelier, 2000) which become internalised and serve as a catalyst to prevent their own students experiencing similar levels of ostracism. The openness of LGBT+ staff can help motivate others as they share their experiences and potentially inspire empathy in their colleagues through understanding, in concrete ways, how much of an impact this teaching could have on young lives.

Whilst there are clear benefits to having openly LGBT+ teachers in schools, DePalma and Atkinson (2009) found that LGBT+ teachers were generally reluctant to educate about sexuality equality in their schools. I argue that if more teachers can be motivated to engage meaningfully with embedded, meaningful LGBT+ inclusivity work it will become easier for teachers to be open about their sexualities with colleagues and students. This then increases

opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations with members of the LGBT+ community to promote understanding and acceptance.

However, the decision to come out is a personal one that involves careful negotiation of private and professional worlds (Gray, 2013). This decision can be fraught with difficulties as LGBT+ identities can be problematic in schools with LGBT+ teachers often accused of pushing an agenda which can delegitimise their professional integrity (Allam et al 2008). At its worst, LGBT+ teachers can experience silencing, marginalisation and discrimination in the workplace (Ferfolja, 2009). DePalma and Atkinson's (2009a: 96) research with LGBT+ teachers found many of them toning down their identities to make them 'safe for consumption.' Arguably, this is not just something that LGBT+ teachers do, we all to some extent self-regulate as we manage our behaviour in alignment with the behavioural standards of wider society (Bandura, 2006). However, it is particularly difficult to be an LGBT+ teacher due to the controversial nature of LGBT+ identities in schools and one's sexuality becomes a focus of the gaze of others leading it to often become either hidden or exaggerated (Patai, 1992). However, this may have been due to a lack of LGBT+ people teaching in schools. Statistically, LGBT+ teachers will likely always be in the minority but recent data released by Teach First (Lough, 2019) details the steady rise of LGBT+ professionals entering the profession which could well provide a gentle surge in visibility which could help further normalise the presence of non-heterosexual teaching staff in schools.

Fundamentally, if schools are to move towards embedding LGBT+ inclusive curriculums this cannot be the preserve of minority teachers alone and therefore straight allies are a key component in embedding LGBT+ inclusive practice. Bishop (2002:1) describes allies as:

people who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice and take responsibility for changing these patterns.

And whilst LGBT+ teachers must confront heteronormative structures to determine how open they wish to be with colleagues and students, heterosexual teachers must also engage with heteronormativity unpicking the privilege offered by their own gender and sexuality (Potvin, 2016). Some researchers have highlighted the importance of training allies, for example, Macintosh (1986) has advocated that dominant groups must unlearn their privilege through her invisible knapsack experiment which helps teachers discover and challenge unconscious bias around race. This could be employed by teachers to unpick bias around gender and sexuality helping to develop understanding, empathy and motivation to create more egalitarian classrooms. Additionally, Warin (2017) advocates the need for the recruitment and training of gender conscious practitioners who can respond to children in gender-flexible ways. These training interventions can help realise the repositioning process (Apple, 1995) whereby teachers take time to reflect on how the oppressed and dispossessed experience the world. By actualising an ideal, agents can become living embodiments of the ideal (Archer, 2003) thus challenging the status quo. If all teachers were trained to recognise and problematise their own privilege in regards to gender and sexuality schools could make rapid progress in disrupting heteronormativity. This could make it easier for LGBT+ staff to be open giving more young people visible LGBT+ role models and creating safe space for LGBT+ teachers. Ultimately, for these conditions to arise in primary schools there remains a pressing need for the sharing of long-term experience embedding LGBT+ inclusivity to help guide teachers apprehensive about starting this work.

Having considered how teachers can move from invisibility to strategic essentialism towards embedded LGBT+ inclusive practice, the next section focuses on the importance of understanding how teachers can come to actualise social justice oriented projects. It explores the wider structural challenges they face and how they may navigate them to realise their inclusivity projects.

### **2.3 Can teachers successfully actualise social justice oriented projects in schools?**

This section focuses on the need to understand both the constraints teachers face in actualising social justice oriented projects and how those constraints can be negotiated. This is fundamental to the research as it is difficult to successfully embed LGBT+ inclusive education without a wider understanding of the constraints that inhibit teachers from doing this work successfully. I argue that schools can be both resistant to and facilitative of engaging progressive change in society. I examine how the role of teacher has evolved over time and how the wider socio-political context can constrain teacher agency in enacting social justice oriented projects. I argue that whilst ‘numerous systems of oppression interact to regulate and police the lives of most people’ (Cohen, 2005: 25), the two principle structural barriers to educating for LGBT+ inclusivity stem from traditionalism and neoliberalism. The first step in understanding how these structures impact social justice education is understanding how they impact schools as institutions.

#### **2.3.1 Schools perpetuating the status quo**

One of the main barriers to encouraging teachers to engage with LGBT+ inclusive education is that through their very nature schools perpetuate the interests of the dominant (heterosexual) elite (Santomé in Apple et al. 2011). They function as ‘ideological state

apparatuses' which perpetuate the status quo (Althusser, 1971: 137) emphasising obedience and conformity (Chomsky in Giffney et al. 2009, Shelton, 2015 and Hooks, 1994). This means they are heavily resistant to change (Zucker, 1987) and are often unfit for preparing students for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Robinson, 2016) as their nature makes them structurally opposed to progression. All of which is frustrating for teachers dissatisfied with the status quo and keen to foster progressive education that disrupts heteronormativity in pursuit of a more inclusive curriculum.

This erosion of progressive education has coincided with the alignment of education with the needs of economic productivity (Ball, 2017) and private interests (Giffney et al, 2009). Furthermore, neoliberalism or the 'universalisation of the enterprise ethic' (Apple et al 2011) has reconstituted what it means to teach as education has aligned more closely with the interests of global capitalism (McLaren and Farhmandpur, 2005). This can prove difficult for those advocating for LGBT+ inclusivity in the curriculum as social justice education is often relegated at the expense of core skills linked to English and Maths which have been deemed to be profitable for the economy. Consequently, its focus on individualism and competition as opposed to communitarian values has resulted in a shift away from general social concerns and community issues towards a new moral environment in schools, a 'culture of self-interest' (Ball, 2017: 54).

I argue that the influence of neoliberalism is one of the main factors inhibiting robust, embedded LGBT+ inclusivity education as it reduces space for teachers to develop social justice projects as their attention is diverted towards being 'subject to a myriad of judgments, measures, comparison and targets' (Ball, 2017: 58) rendering teachers 'technicians' rather

than professionals (Villegas and Lucas 2002 and Hill, 2004). These teaching environments mean teachers increasingly experience spaces of examination and surveillance which Foucault (1984) has described as elements of disciplinary power. These environments encourage teachers to focus on their own accountability which discourages collaborative, explorative pedagogy (Helm, 2008, Colegrove and Zúñiga 2018). In these environments teacher agency is reduced (Adair 2011; Brown 2009) rendering them less likely to take risks to teach against the grain (Simon, 1992). This all combines to inhibit them from engaging in progressive teaching and curriculums that might interrupt the status quo. Neoliberal thought has become so all-pervasive in western society that it becomes almost impossible to think outside of it (Paraskeva, 2017) and worryingly whilst most teachers enter the profession with social justice ideals (Pantić, 2017) keen to 'talk back to' the sameness and normativity they experienced as pupils (Gray and Harris, 2015), the all-pervasive nature of constant accountability pressure resigns them to 'safe' methods of teaching (Chubbuck, 2008). The fear of being observed becomes ingrained into the teacher's consciousness as they begin to self-regulate their behaviour towards the expected social norm. The implication here is that 'panoptic' self-regulation (Foucault, 1977) reifies the heteronormative, neoliberal status quo as teachers avoid risk through fear of accountability and imagined consequences (Goldstein, 2004) reducing their capacity for social justice projects. It is within this restrictive climate that more stories are needed of teachers negotiating these constraints over time and asserting their agency to prioritise their LGBT+ inclusivity projects.

However, it is important to remember that whilst schools are influenced by wider societal and economic forces they do have autonomy in shaping school culture (Potvin, 2016). Additionally, that many teachers join the profession for altruistic reasons bound up with

making the world a better place (Pantić, 2017, Collay 1998 ,1999, Grumet, 1980, Hackney and Hogard, 1999 and Schweisfurth, 2006) means that the profession consists of individuals sympathetic to social justice oriented goals. These intentions to positively influence young lives must not be underappreciated in their contribution towards shaping school culture and promoting social justice. Consequently, there are teachers out there doing this work successfully, keen to use their role for anti-oppressive purposes (Kumashiro, 2004) and their voices need to be shared to help inspire other teachers to engage more meaningfully with this work. Indeed, many teachers find ways to incorporate robust social justice education in their practice as Schweisfurth (2006), who researched teachers educating for global citizenship, found that those who are determined to make social justice oriented pedagogy a priority find opportunities to make it happen by creatively shaping, often prescriptive, curriculum to fit their projects. The more examples shared of teachers who have negotiated neoliberal accountability systems to create embedded social justice projects the greater the chance that their experiences can inspire others that schools are not fixed in place by rigid structural forces outside of their control but that there is always space for agency.

### **2.3.2 Negotiating traditionalist discourse**

Pressures from neoliberalism are not the only ones shaping the educational landscape and creating barriers towards successful social justice education provision. The past three decades have seen a 'conservative assault' (Nicholas and Berliner, 2007) on educational practice and a 'new authoritarianism' on education (Giroux, 2004) whereby neoconservative and neoliberal efforts have sought to realign education to serve the interest of the markets (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2005). This traditionalism reinforces the stronghold of heteronormative thinking by compounding ideas about the nuclear family and gender roles.

The most visible effect of this conservatism in regards to LGBT+ inclusive education in UK schools was the implementation of Section 28 which enforced invisibility around LGBT+ lives up to and beyond its repeal in 2003. This legislation served to silence teachers and make them cautious around talking about gender and sexuality in classrooms (Douglas et al. 1998 and Epstein, 2000). This meant teachers avoiding topics related to LGBT+ people and gender identity (Burton, 1995, Ellis and High, 2004). After its repeal, it was not replaced with promotion of robust LGBT+ inclusive education legislation meaning schools still perpetuate the idea that:

Heterosexual identities are uniformly normative and socially conservative, while non-heterosexuals or sexual dissidents are constructed as radical, progressive or outside of social norms (Binnie in Giffney and O'Rourke 2009: 174).

These traditional structures do not reflect wider changes in society and impact upon teacher efforts to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity as they fear conflicts resulting from religious conservative sources (Carlie, 2019 and DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b). Blum (2010: 148) advises teachers to remember that:

respect and toleration are themselves moral values that we affirm as good ones, superior to intolerance and disrespect.

Respect and tolerance for others are fundamental values in most mainstream religions and teachers must be mindful of this whilst engaging in a process of understanding the resources traditional discourse mobilises and the connections it makes (Burrage, 2004) to find overlap and mutual agreement between LGBT+ rights and religious freedom. LGBT+ rights and religion need not be incompatible (Carlile, 2019) and teachers would be better placed to try and understand the point of view of religious conservative parents working with them rather than against their wishes. However, more research is needed to understand the experiences of

teachers who have negotiated religious conservatism in their LGBT+ inclusivity projects to provide pathways for other teachers to negotiate similar barriers in their own inclusivity work. After having explored the principle structural constraints to engaging in LGBT+ inclusivity work, the next section explores how critical reflection can be used to help teachers actualise social justice projects in schools.

### **2.3.3 Engaging critical reflection to realise social justice projects**

Despite the impact of traditionalism and neoliberalism on teaching and education, schools can still be sites of resistance which develop progressive education helping to realise one of the founding missions of education; involving students into ongoing inquiry into real social issues in the hope of creating more egalitarian societies (Dewey, 1938). Even within rigid systems of conformity teachers have power to effectuate change and their actions can transform or dismantle institutions or employ resistance (DiMaggio, 1988). Teachers need to remain mindful of how power operates not just from the top-down but also at the grassroots level (Foucault, 1998).

Many theorists and researchers have highlighted the importance of developing teacher and student criticality to realise more socially just education spaces (see; Dewey, 1938, Freire, 1977 and Schor, 1996). Teachers can draw from theorists like Freire whose concept of 'problem posing' education can enable students to grapple with their concerns and experiences of wider society in the classroom to empower them to make change in their own lives (Davis and Freire, 1981). Additionally, through developing the power of dialogue in classrooms children can develop their debate and research skills to actualise democracy in schools (Shor, 1996). This means that schools can be radical sites of transformation which

promote meaningful engagement with social justice issues when students are given the critical thinking skills to develop acceptance and 'deconstruct their social and educational locations' (DePalma & Atkinson 2009a: 47). Once developed, these skills can be used by teachers to help students critique the beliefs and worldviews that perpetuate homo, bi and transphobia (Mendoza, 2016). Nevertheless, more research is needed to share the experiences of teachers who have engaged with criticality and dialogue in the classroom to disrupt heteronormativity to help others actualise this work in their own classrooms.

To navigate structures which perpetuate the status quo and develop meaningful social justice education, teachers must develop their own critical reflection skills as well as those of their students. Kinchelo (1993: 26) explains that this can allow teachers to understand the construction of their consciousness and how institutional forces 'undermine their autonomy as professionals.' Brown (2004: 91) explains that critical reflection:

involves the examination of personal and professional belief systems, as well as the deliberate consideration of the ethical implications and effect of practices.

This highlights the need for rupture with the heteronormative status quo which first demands a clear understanding of how heteronormativity operates and then an awareness of the possible actions available to disrupt it by making space for LGBT+ inclusivity. This helps attune teachers to different perspectives creating pedagogy that reaches diverse learners (Darling-Hammond: 2000).

Whilst developing their critical reflexive skills can lead to conflict as teachers are forced to reconcile their day-to-day activities with the priorities of the hierarchies of power in which they operate (Brookfield, 1995). There are benefits as this criticality can also lead to greater

states of self-actualisation (Dewey, 1933, Schön 1996) as teachers feel empowered and more closely in alignment with their values as well as fostering an understanding of the workings of the very hierarchies of power they encounter in their teaching lives.

Consequently, with the evident power of critical reflection to help teachers rupture the status quo and actualise social justice oriented projects, there is a gap within the research to understand exactly how teachers can successfully utilise critical reflection to help embed their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. One way is by paying attention to the internal conversation which represents an inner reconciliation of their external environment and their values, beliefs and dispositions (Archer, 2003). Exploring teachers' internal conversations in regards to their LGBT+ inclusivity work could provide valuable insights into how teachers can 'mediate structural and cultural properties and also creatively contribute to their transformation' (Archer, 2003b: 38). This could help understand the type of reflection teachers who have successfully embedded inclusivity education engage in and its implication for aiding others to embed this work. Archer explains that individuals exhibit different types of reflexive personality types, the first is the communicative reflexive who talks through their thoughts and feelings to understand their place in the world. Secondly, there is the autonomous reflexive whose reflection is self-sustained and leads directly to action. Thirdly, there is the fractured reflexive whose internal conversations intensify the disorientation and distress they feel leading to inaction and finally the meta-reflexive which revolves around self-monitoring their thinking, feelings and actions. There is an idealism associated with the meta-reflexive bound to a concern for the oppressed and Archer has described them as representing the 'conscience of society' (277). Archer's work offers a needed expansion on the role of

reflection within the habitus that Bourdieu neglected and can offer a more nuanced understanding of how participants reflect upon their LGBT+ inclusivity projects.

Additionally, attention must be paid to the biographical elements of critical reflexivity as they are key to helping teachers align their practice with their values (Brookfield, 1995). Brookfield advocates considering our own childhood experiences of learning, considering our practice from the perspective of our own students, holding reflective conversations with colleagues and using theory to help understand our practice more deeply. His approach has profound implications for helping teachers understand how to interrogate the effects of heteronormativity in their own lives as well as for developing empathy for how heteronormativity, homo, bi and transphobia impact LGBT+ students.

The benefits of developing teacher critical reflection capabilities extend out to the students they teach who tend to have more stimulating, challenging classrooms when teachers make their thinking public and subject to discussion (Osterman, 1990). This then helps teachers better understand the root causes of oppression which positions them to respond to the causes rather than treating the symptoms (Picower, 2016) through tokenistic teaching. In terms of embedding LGBT+ inclusive education this involves developing the critical thinking skills necessary to understand other forms of oppression and marginalisation in society and crucially empowering students to act to challenge injustice in their own lives and communities.

Finally, it is important to question the quality of critical reflection that teachers engage in. Brookfield (2009) argues that reflection is not by definition critical. Adding critical can often

assume that the reflection is deeper and more profound. Instead, real critical reflection pays attention to the wider power dynamics and social structures that frame a field of practice. Truly critical reflection challenges and questions hegemonic assumptions paying attention to how ideology works within us and against us whilst 'furthering the interests of others' (Brookfield, 2009:293). This research then needs to account for the ways teachers reflect upon heteronormative discourse and how they have challenge its dominance within their own lives and subvert its influence on the lives of the students they teach.

## **2.4 Summary**

This chapter engaged with two questions: 'Can teachers educate students about LGBT+ identities in positive, meaningful ways?' and 'Can teachers successfully actualise social justice projects in schools?' It consequently presented an overview of research carried out in these areas which engage with the key themes of this research.

The first section highlighted how much teaching around diversity and LGBT+ inclusivity is characterised first by its invisibility and then by its tokenism. The lack of engagement with LGBT+ inclusivity has been bound up with of the legacy of Section 28 and successive governments that have not acted enough to promote LGBT+ inclusivity in schools since its repeal in 2003. The concept of strategic essentialism was explored in understanding how teachers can begin to incorporate robust LGBT+ inclusive practice within their schools. This section emphasised the delicate nature of this work and that a pragmatic approach is initially needed before teachers can embed this work. This section highlighted how there is an absence of work in the literature around the experiences and perceptions of teachers who have moved beyond strategic essentialism to meaningfully embed this work. Another

problem around embedding LGBT+ inclusive education revolves around whose experience is represented and to have truly representative inclusivity education teachers need to reflect upon the experiences and lives presented to their students. This section concluded by exploring the potential of LGBT+ teachers as role models in the classroom whose visibility can meaningfully interrupt heteronormativity and help embed an ethos of LGBT+ equality. Fundamentally, whilst more out LGBT+ teachers provide visibility and role models for young people, it remains the choice of each individual to talk about their private lives in schools and time must be spent engaging allies to embed this work as it should not fall solely on the shoulders of minority teachers.

The second section focused upon whether teachers can actualise social justice projects in schools. It explored the wider structural influences which have impacted the role of teacher and schools within society. It examined how neoliberalism has shifted the focus of schools towards core subjects which then restrict space for social justice oriented education. With this arose an increase in accountability structures which have led to increasing pressure on teachers to perform and achieve targets related to English and Maths results. However, research shows that teachers who prioritise certain areas of social justice education are capable of adapting prescriptive curricula to achieve their goals. This section then explores how traditional structures impact teachers' efforts to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity as they fear conflicts resulting from religious conservative sources. However, schools can be spaces of resistance as well as of conformity. Critical reflection is explored as a key tool to enable teachers to promote social justice and help transform schools into more egalitarian places from the inside out.

The principle implications from this literature review are that there is a need for more research into the experiences of teachers who have successfully navigated structural challenges to embed LGBT+ inclusivity over the long term. Additionally, there is a need for research to understand and share their perspectives to help inspire others to engage with this work in their own practice. The following chapter explores the theoretical framework which underpins the research and offers tools to shed greater insight into how teachers are able to create post-heteronormative cultures in the classroom.

## **Chapter 3: Theoretical framework**

### **3.1 Introduction**

After having highlighted the need for further research into how teachers can disrupt heteronormativity over time this next section explores how Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field can shed new insights into how teachers can establish post-heteronormative cultures in primary schools. I argue that Bourdieu's concepts offer a fuller understanding of how teachers can employ their agency in disrupting heteronormativity to create LGBT+ visibility in the primary school. Above all, Bourdieu's tools provide a framework for developing practical solutions for teachers negotiating the complex interplay of individual agency and heteronormative structures. What follows is an explanation of why I find Bourdieu's conceptual tools essential in offering new insights into how teachers can disrupt heteronormativity.

In the previous chapter, I examined how some researchers (Ceplak, 2013, DePalma and Atkinson, 2009, DePalma and Jennett, 2010) have explored how teachers disrupt heteronormativity in schools. My thesis furthers their work in a number of ways. Firstly, by engaging with the experiences of teachers who have embedded post-heteronormative cultures over time and secondly through applying Bourdieu's concepts to their experiences to offer fresh insights into how they can engage critically with their own habitus to understand how heteronormativity has impacted their own lives. Additionally, I examine how they employ forms of cultural and social capital to develop networks of strength, knowledge and support to create post-heteronormative, LGBT+ inclusive cultures in schools. I argue that applying Bourdieu's concepts helps better understand how heteronormativity reproduces

inequality between different genders and sexual orientations. Through sustained interruption of heteronormativity teachers can shift the status quo developing post-heteronormative spaces through the creation of LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus.

This chapter is composed of three sections. The first section introduces the concept of heteronormativity and its impact in the classroom. The second section introduces Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field and how they can be used to help teachers disrupt heteronormativity. The final section explores potential limitations of combining habitus, capital and field to understand how teachers can disrupt heteronormativity.

### **3.2 Heteronormativity and its impact in the classroom**

Heteronormativity is a concept originating in queer theory and gender studies. The term was first used by Michael Warner in 1991 although the ideas were developed in 1990 by Judith Butler through her concept of the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990). Heteronormativity focuses on the dominant position of heterosexuality in society which favours heterosexual men at the expense of women and other sexualities. Heteronormativity is tied to ideas of lifestyle norms and the idea of the 'nuclear' family, gender roles and the performativity of gender (Butler, 1990). An understanding of heteronormativity and how it functions allows us to understand how it privileges heterosexuality as the norm (Robinson and Ferfolja, 2007). Heteronormativity causes harm to those who fall outside of the limitations it imposes onto society as it affects our perceptions of minority sexualities which are rendered abnormal. Furthermore, its rigidity reduces our collective capacity to cope with ambiguity. Heteronormativity has traditionally been promoted by the church although today it is equally

promoted through neoliberalism which perpetuates heteronormativity through marketing and commercials (Peterson, 2011).

Research around heteronormativity often employs queer theory to understand how it works and how it can be disrupted. Queer theory which 'acquires its meaning from its oppositional relation to the norm' (Halperin, 1995: 62) aims to subvert the entire concept of identity (Thurer, 2005) through resisting social norms and dominant ways of knowing (Potvin, 2016). The disruption of heteronormativity has long been one of the key aims of queer theory which seeks to break the gender binary instead promoting gender fluidity as opposed to gender essentialism (Warin and Price, 2020). This is more aligned with how sexuality is dynamic, fluid and performative (Butler, 1990). Ultimately, it seeks not just to disrupt but to transform (Do Mar Castro Vrela et al, 2011).

Schools play an integral role in perpetuating heteronormativity. As noted in the previous chapter, schools function as 'ideological state apparatuses' (Althusser, 1971: 137) which perpetuate the status quo furthering the interests of the dominant (heterosexual) elite (Santomé in Apple et al. 2011). In recent history, Section 28 has had the longest lasting effect on how heteronormativity has been upheld in UK schools. Section 28 was inspired by the reading of a children's story about a dad and his boyfriend in primary schools in the late 1980s which sparked some public condemnation leading to government intervention to ensure that children need to 'be taught to respect traditional moral values' (Thatcher, 1987). Since its repeal in 2003, there has been a steady erosion of heteronormativity in schools through initiatives to tackle homophobic bullying (Jennett et al. 2004 and Ellis, 2007) and the influence of the Equalities Act (2010). However, statistics around the continued prevalence of homo, bi

and transphobic bullying in schools as well as increased rates of mental health issues amongst LGBT+ youth (METRO, 2017) means more needs to be done to understand the corrosive effect of heteronormativity on young minds and how teachers can tackle it.

Heteronormativity is realised through individual actions in society. This interplay of subject and structure is complex and there is a need to examine how institutions and practices are used to bring heterosexuality into being and how it is rendered privileged against other forms of sexuality (Giffney and O'Rourke, 2009). It is a form of biopolitics that influences how students think and behave (MacIntosh, 2007). For teachers, this would involve an understanding of how heterosexuality is privileged in the classroom through heterocentric curricula (Mills, 2012) which excludes other identities in school contexts and serves to reify heterosexuality as the norm (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a). Heteronormativity is perpetuated through the curriculum by a perceived centrality of the nuclear heterosexual family and invisibility of non-heterosexual sexualities. At its extreme, it manifests in verbal and physical violence through acts of homo, bi and transphobia. This is not always a conscious decision on the part of the teacher as the all-pervasive nature of heteronormativity means that unless educators have been forced to confront its ubiquity through navigating their own sexualities or those of people they care about it may not be clear that the status quo systemically marginalises a significant minority of the population.

To create robust LGBT+ inclusive education there is an urgent need for a better understanding of how teachers can critically reflect upon how heteronormativity works in their own classrooms and call out its privileging of heterosexual relations above all others (Berlant and Warner, 1998). This may come from critiquing messages around gender roles in children's

literature and fairy-tales or being mindful of assumptions teachers make about ability and behaviour based upon the gender of the children they teach (Jones, 2010). Teachers then begin taking steps to disrupt heteronormativity's impact as a primary system of power structuring our lives (Cohen, 1997). Additionally, teachers must be cognisant that creating post-heteronormative spaces is not a simple process and must be prepared to sustain their efforts over time to see results (Chambers and Carver, 2008). If sustained, this 'subversive repetition' (Butler, 1990) can erode norms from the inside out but this requires patience and the ability to sit with discomfort until their ideal is actualised (Sinclair, 2017).

### **3.3 How Bourdieu's tools can help teachers disrupt heteronormativity**

DePalma and Atkinson's landmark work around disrupting heteronormativity (2009, 2010) in the primary classroom drew heavily upon queer theory to understand how heteronormativity is disrupted in the classroom. This thesis builds upon the foundation they laid through their exploration of queer theory to interrogate heteronormativity and instead employs Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field as a new theoretical lens to tease out further perspectives around how teachers disrupt heteronormativity and establish post-heteronormative cultures over time. Consequently, I argue that a deeper understanding of how teachers can challenge heteronormativity in classrooms can be reached through employing Bourdieu's tools of habitus, capital and field as they practically explore how agents can negotiate wider structural influences to effectuate change as opposed to queer theory which has been criticised for neglecting the social and institutional conditions within which LGBT+ people exist (Green, 2002). Alternatively, Bourdieu's tools can help understand how heteronormativity works at the social and institutional (school) level.

The first concept I engage with in this thesis is that of the habitus which Bourdieu (1977) conceptualises as:

a system of lasting, transposable, dispositions which, integrating all past experience, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions.

Habitus helps understand a person's values, worldview and dispositions as they act in the world. The habitus creates 'common sense' (McNay, 1999) and allows an agent to navigate the world without constant reflection on each experience (Sinclair, 2017:2). Bourdieu has stated the central role heteronormativity plays in the creation of the habitus (Bourdieu, 1991:23) and has written about heteronormativity's role within the habitus as:

a relationship of domination by embedding it in a biological nature that is itself a naturalized social construction.

The internalisation of heteronormativity through the habitus structures our perceptions of gender and sexuality. It impacts how we enact our gender and sexuality and how we react to those around us. By understanding how heteronormativity has been built into our habitus from an early age through our families, schooling and interactions in the world we can begin to understand how it impacts our views, beliefs, bias and actions. It shapes our impressions of what it means to be a boy, girl, trans or straight. Bourdieu has detailed the significance of schooling in shaping the habitus through our interaction with others (Bourdieu, 1990). Consequently, schools have a powerful influence in the formation of the collective habitus of the children in their care. Teachers can make choices that can either reinforce heteronormativity or disrupt it. If they critically reflect upon the ways heteronormativity impacts their lives and their teaching practice they are in a strong position to create more inclusive collective habitus, unsettling heteronormativity within the habitus (Sinclair, 2017). In this thesis, I aim to examine what clues the habitus gives in understanding the motivations

of teachers to embed LGBT+ inclusive habitus. What role has their family and schooling played in their motivation for disrupting heteronormativity and can they pinpoint key moments within their own biographies that signified a rupture with the heteronormative status quo?

In this thesis, I am interested in both how teachers negotiate the effects of heteronormativity on their own habitus and how they help children to develop LGBT+ inclusive habitus. Of significant interest is how teachers help children negotiate competing worldviews where the habitus developed in the family does not reconcile with an LGBT+ inclusive habitus being developed in the school. As we develop and become adults the habitus, which has a collective element (Kelly and Lusic, 2006), will have been at the mercy of competing worldviews and ideologies, some of which will have been compatible and some incompatible with LGBT+ inclusivity. With LGBT+ inclusivity work this is most likely to manifest in religious freedoms conflicting with gender and sexual minority rights (Martino and Potvin, 2016). Bourdieu (2000) describes a clash of contradictory habitus as a 'habitus clivé' where one experiences two opposing habitus at the same time. Bourdieu (2000) experienced this himself as his working-class background contrasted sharply with working in the world of academia. The habitus clivé has radical potential for teachers to both impede or facilitate change (Aarseth et al. 2016) as they can aide students in reconciling plural ontologies they may experience through learning about LGBT+ inclusivity whilst coming from a family habitus not accepting of LGBT+ lives. After having explored how habitus can be employed to better understand how teachers can disrupt heteronormativity the next section looks at another of Bourdieu's conceptual tools which is critical to this research: capital.

### **3.4 Employing capital to overcome structural constraints**

In addition to critically reflecting upon their habitus and the role it plays in teachers perpetuating heteronormativity, Bourdieu's concept of capitals can provide further insights into the resources teachers have at their disposal to interrupt heteronormativity and how they can be best deployed to achieve that aim.

An understanding of how agents deploy capitals can help to understand why some social agents exert more agency in a field than others and are better equipped to realise LGBT+ inclusivity projects. There are many forms of capital (economic, social, symbolic and cultural) which represent resources brought to a field and are indicative of how different actors are positioned with more or less power in society. The forms of capital most relevant to this research are cultural and social. Cultural capital refers to an individual's personal assets, for example; they may use academic qualifications or embodied capital derived from past work experience and cultural experience to give them perceived knowledge (Joy et al, 2018) in advocating the benefits of LGBT+ inclusivity education. Additionally, an exploration of how participants use social capital, which consist of networks, social standing and membership of social groups (Morberg et al, 2012) can help understand how teachers draw on different networks to support their projects especially when facing challenges. Social capital is particularly useful in understanding how participants negotiate structural constraints in implementing their LGBT+ inclusivity work as schools are social places where progress and action relies on smooth communication. To make progress happen, they need agreement amongst a range of stakeholders including teachers, students, leaders, parents and governors. Successful participants will need to 'enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives' (Putnam, 1995: 664) to effectuate projects they

cannot complete on their own (Minkler, 2014). Social capital is particularly relevant to this project due to the interpersonal nature of agency (Pyhältö and Keskinen, 2012) in effectuating lasting change. Smyth et al (2012) go further in arguing that little change is possible in acting individually advocating for the need to engage in collective commitment to ideas. The implication here is that for teachers to be successful in embedding LGBT+ inclusivity they must draw on networks and work as a team to implement their projects. This thesis employs the concept of social capital to better understand how those networks can support their LGBT+ inclusivity projects.

With accumulated capital comes power and influence. It dictates a teacher's position within a school or series of networks and allows them potential for greater leverage in determining the norms and values of their school. A deeper understanding is needed of how teachers develop their social and cultural capital in pursuit of LGBT+ inclusivity goals. How do they develop and mobilise networks of like-minded individuals and create a sense of shared purpose in pursuit of their projects?

However, there is need for caution around networks as a 'silver bullet' (Frankham, 2006) in educational reform and attention must be paid to how teachers mitigate against 'group think' (McCormick et al. 2010). The next section introduces the final of Bourdieu's conceptual tools which is used in this research; that of the field which helps understand how habitus and capitals interact to help afford or deny agency.

### **3.5 The field as potential battlefield or playground**

The habitus and capitals of individual teachers do not exist in a vacuum but instead are played out on a wider stage or social milieu where they must negotiate with the capitals and habitus of other agents. Bourdieu calls this space a field. The principle field for the participants in this research is the primary school in which they work. There is a need to understand the fields in which the participants teach and what affordances or constraints it offers in terms of interrupting heteronormativity and embedding their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. The field can be a site of struggle where agents compete for 'a position and place in the social structure' (Costa and Murphy, 2015: 7) and with teachers potentially negotiating parental or colleague habitus that are non-compatible with LGBT+ inclusivity they must find ways to reconcile competing belief systems. This means that a field can be a battlefield or a playground, a site of both resistance and domination (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) as actors compete for power. Evidently, as participants were recruited for this research from a range of different schools they will have all experienced different fields of practice in their careers. It is worth noting that capitals are not always equitably distributed in a field and can lead to those with less capital and power having to conform and compromise more (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). Additionally, as teachers negotiate different fields in their lives but bring the same habitus to each one (Samuel, 2013) I am interested in how each individual experiences a field in different ways dependent upon the constitution of their habitus and capitals at any point in their career. Is it easier for more experienced teachers to engage in this work as they are more likely to have built up more social and cultural capital than newly qualified teachers? Additionally, it has been noted that fields are not fixed but have a dynamic, complex nature meaning that they evolve dependent upon the characters that constitute it at any given time (Mills et al, 2019). This poses potential benefits and disadvantages to teachers who attempt

to change cultures over time due to the arbitrary nature of the rules which comprise the field having no universal value. Instead these rules are dependent upon the field itself (Riaño, 2011 and Samuel, 2013) and can change upon the arrival or departure of influential players on the field stage. Having introduced how Bourdieu's conceptual tools can be employed to better understand how teachers disrupt heteronormativity, the next section critiques these concepts.

### **3.6 Limitations of combining habitus, capital and field to disrupt heteronormativity**

The principle difficulty of combining Bourdieu's concepts to problematise heteronormativity lies in the rigid nature of the habitus itself. Coutrot and Elder-Vass (2011) argue that the habitus tends to make us reproduce the existing structure of society reproducing the status quo. This aligns with a wider critique of Bourdieu that his concept is overly deterministic (Butler, 1999, Coutrot and Elder-Vass, 2011 and Sayer, 2010). He has been criticised for neglecting the role of critical reflection in the formation of the habitus. How then can a construct which perpetuates common sense be used to disrupt the heteronormative status quo? Some argue that there is potential for critical reflection in his framework (Adkins, 2004, and Skeggs, 2004). These moments of critical reflection and rupture are integral in understanding how participants questioned heteronormativity and began to advocate for LGBT+ inclusivity. Bourdieu (1984) himself does not rule out that the habitus can be transformed within definite boundaries. He explains (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131) that it can be ruptured at:

times of crises, in which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constitute a class of circumstances when indeed 'rational choice' may take over.

The implication for teachers is that, if recognised, these moments of rupture can turn a crisis of meaning into opportunities for transformation (Costa and Murphy, 2015 and Oliver & O'Reilly 2010). This means that the habitus is not completely static and can be reconfigured in moments of change (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). However, there is a need for openness and a need to challenge one's beliefs, perceptions and values in order for these changes to emerge. This is where the role of critical reflection is asserted as a key component in rupturing the impacts of heteronormativity on the habitus. And a key aim of the thesis lies in understanding how teachers do that both for their own habitus and for the habitus of their colleagues and students.

Alternatively, queer theory has been critiqued for neglecting the role of the social which is key in participants actualising their LGBT+ projects. Green (2002: 522) describes how queer theory:

constructs an undersocialized "queer" subject with little connection to the empirical world and the social historical forces that shape sexual practice and identity.

Bourdieu's concepts can help to reprioritise the role of the social in the construction and deconstruction of sexual identities. The concept of capital, for example, can help illuminate other factors of class, race and community intersect with sexuality and exploration of individual habitus can highlight how disparate ideologies, beliefs and value systems impact our understanding of gender and sexuality in different ways.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter introduced the theoretical framework for the thesis. The first section introduced the concept of heteronormativity and how it manifests in schools. It examined the role

teachers play in (often unconsciously) perpetuating heteronormativity through their perceptions, beliefs, curriculum materials and interactions with students. I argue that to create robust LGBT+ inclusive education there is a need to better understand how teachers critically reflect upon the role heteronormativity has played both in shaping their identities and their teaching.

In the second section, I introduced Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field. I argued that heteronormativity plays a central role in the formation of the habitus informing our perceptions of gender roles and sexuality as we mature. Teachers have a crucial role in disrupting the impact of heteronormativity upon the habitus of the students they teach and this involves critically reflecting upon the role heteronormativity has played in their own lives and how it is enacted through their teaching. Additionally, I explained that there is a need to better understand how teachers help students navigate competing habitus reconciling alternate points of view around LGBT+ identities and equality. The next section explored the role of capital in helping teachers to overcome structural constraints and examined how teachers each have different amounts of capital that they can deploy to help realise their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. I argued that there is a need to understand how teachers deploy their capital to develop networks within and outside of the school they work in as sources of strength, support and knowledge when realising their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. The next section explored the concept of field which is the space in which habitus and capitals interact and compete for power and influence. There is a need to understand how the field both enables and constrains teachers in their efforts to disrupt heteronormativity.

The final section explored the limitations of applying habitus, capital and field to understand how teachers disrupt heteronormativity. I argue that the main difficulty lies in the rigid structure and deterministic nature of the habitus itself. However, if teachers are able to critically reflect on key moments of rupture within their habitus there are possibilities for real change. This would involve taking time to carefully reflect upon the impact of heteronormativity on their own lives, those of their loved ones and upon the students that they teach.

After having engaged with the theoretical foundations of the research, the next section presents the methodological framework which provides the foundation to this research and explores the methods used in collecting data and analysis.

## **Chapter 4: Methodological framework and methods**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to explore how teachers negotiate heteronormative discourse to embed LGBT+ inclusive education. It aims to understand their motivations for prioritising this work and how they negotiate structural constraints to draw out recommendations for and inspire other teachers to embed LGBT+ inclusivity education within their own practice. Heteronormativity and Bourdieu's conceptual tools of capital, habitus and field are drawn upon to help in understanding how these participants come to act and negotiate the challenges they encountered. As the research is rooted in understanding participants' values, beliefs and perceptions as well as their own lived experience, I needed a methodological framework that could help engage deeply with their stories to illuminate their unique experience and perspectives to inspire other teachers to interrupt heteronormativity in their own practice.

Consequently, due to the exploratory nature of this research a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate and a narrative inquiry framework was selected. This framework allowed space for participants to share their stories and tapped into the biographical element that was central to the aim of understanding participants' motivations to prioritise LGBT+ inclusive education within their own practice. These clues were important to me in illuminating how their motivation was born and how their stories could help encourage others to develop their own motivation for this work.

This chapter is split into eight sections. The first explains why narrative inquiry was chosen for this research and how its approach to complexity complements the theoretical framework. The second section highlights the key role of perception in this research and how it helped participants create their own meaning from their experience. Next, the ethics which underpin the research are explored. What follows is an explanation of why purposive sampling was chosen for this research which includes a table detailing demographic information about the sample. Then the research tools of questionnaire and narrative biographical interview method are presented. The following section explores what was learnt from the pilot study and how it influenced the research design. What follows is a section on how coding and thematic analysis were used to analyse the data. Finally, a summary of this chapter is presented.

#### **4.2 A Narrative inquiry approach**

For me narrative inquiry was a methodological framework compatible with an exploration of heteronormativity and its roots in queer theory as both are deeply interested in subjectivities and the way agents give meaning to their experience. Queer theory rejects what Lyotard (1979) refers to as 'grand narratives' that seek to explain how the world works and is instead interested in the social construction of life and how individuals are influenced by a myriad of social, cultural, political and historical factors which are experienced differently dependent upon factors such as race, gender, sexuality and place of birth. This is crucial in research which aims to understand how teachers can exert their agency in fields that consists of competing worldviews and ideology. By centralising experience as a unit of data and analysis I needed a research methodology that could embrace the complexity and messiness of human experience. Consequently, narrative inquiry, which has often been used to affect change and

give voice to minority populations (Bruner, 1991; Mishler, 1986) like the LGBT+ community, was chosen to best help achieve the aims of the research due to its priority of fluidity and nuance within story.

A central aim of this research is to share the experiences of teachers who have successfully embedded LGBT+ inclusivity practice to help inspire others to engage with this practice. Narrative inquiry is particularly suited to achieve that aim. It emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and serves as an effective means of channelling experience through the principle way humans share experience: stories. I argue that through analysing the stories of how teachers came to advocate for and embed LGBT+ inclusivity practice we can begin to understand their motivations and experience negotiating constraints. Their narratives can be used to help others understand and make meaning of their own practice. Engaging with narrative is a natural and human way to interact with research participants as we all live 'storied lives' (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006: 477). A key element of narrative that interested me was in the stories participants told about their own biographies, their childhood experiences of LGBT+ issues and tracing out events that helped to understand their LGBT+ inclusivity advocacy. The use of narrative allows this spatial-temporal aspect which engages participants in exploration of different parts of their lives to reflect upon their own understanding of how they have changed. However, caution needs to be applied when engaging with narratives in that they may not always be coherent and researchers must be vigilant about ordering experience and taming it in the search for coherence (Sartwell, 2000). Additionally, attention must be paid to how narratives can only ever achieve verisimilitude (Bruner, 1991) and that stories are complex, messy and have no final point of arrival as they evolve over time (Freeman in De

Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2015) as the storyteller is influenced by new perspectives and insights.

Researchers interested in social justice narratives must be mindful of how narrators are treated. I was conscious that I did not want to treat interviewees as 'story-telling machines' (Kaźmierska in Fikfak, 2004: 157). Consequently, I endeavoured to share as much of my own experience educating for LGBT+ inclusivity in the spirit of collaboration, participants were offered links to resources that could help them improve their practice as well as the information details of networks that could help support their projects. With subjectivity a central part of narrative, the next section highlights the role of perception in the research.

#### **4.3 Perception**

From an epistemological standpoint, I consider knowledge to be subjective with each person understanding the world through the lens of their own habitus. Consequently, in conducting this research I take an anti-foundationalist approach rejecting positivism's quest for an objective, measurable reality. Through presenting the participants' narratives I am keen to stress the importance of the 'activity of human agents in constructing their meaning systems' (Freedman and Jones, 1980: 8) as they filter their senses and form their perceptions of the world. Evidently, I have no direct access to the thoughts and perceptions of the participants but instead must rely on what they choose to share with me.

#### **4.4 Ethics**

The ethics for this project were aligned with the 2018 BERA (British Educational, Research, Association) guidelines. Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter, ethical considerations informed each stage of the research process. Before I recruited participants, I considered my primary intention for the research which is to help empower others to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity in primary schools. As a researcher interested in social justice, my aim is to adopt an ethos of non-harm, empathy and respect for others in a commitment to creating a more socially just education system. I kept these intentions at the forefront of my mind throughout the research process to guide my actions as a researcher. The idea of empowerment informed the interview process as I hoped that through reflection and dialogue teachers' own practices could both benefit others, be strengthened and affirmed. Ultimately, I was mindful of Schwandt's (2007) concept that we are researching with people rather than on people. I achieved this through developing a collaborative approach to the research being open about wanting to learn from them to support the development of my own LGBT+ inclusivity practice as well as helping them develop theirs.

I recognised the potentially sensitive nature of asking teachers about their life stories which could and did involve sharing of some traumatic moments within their biographies and this was heightened when working with LGBT+ people who may have experienced marginalisation and/or discrimination. I adopted the approach of letting them share as much as they felt comfortable sharing and did not press them to reveal more. I paid attention to shifts in tone and facial expression to gauge the level of comfort of the participants and as a member of the LGBT+ community and ally I felt I could relate to LGBT+ participants and empathise with their experiences tuning in to what they felt comfortable sharing.

Before collecting data, I applied for and was granted ethical approval from Lancaster University. In terms of data management, each interview was audio-recorded, transcribed and stored on an encrypted, password protected device. Once I had transcribed the data it was shared with participants who had the option to review it and add reflections or redact sections with hindsight. These member checks helped bring validity to the research. This process was helpful as several participants added further reflections they remembered since their interview. Anonymity was guaranteed through a consent form and any information that may identify participants or their schools was removed. Pseudonyms were given to all participants and they were informed that their data would be held for ten years after the completion of the research.

#### **4.5 Sampling**

One of the aims of the thesis is to explore the experiences of teachers who have embedded, over time, post-heteronormative cultures in the schools in which they practice. I knew from engagement with the literature that there may be a limited number of teachers in this position from whom to draw data and so I employed purposive sampling which involves selecting participants based upon the potential richness of data they can offer. In total 12 participants were interviewed for this research. Evidently, with 12 participants I was unable to make generalisations about the data however, this approach allowed for more in-depth exploration of their experiences and a richer mining of their data. Each interview lasted between one and two hours. To recruit participants, I placed an advert in a union magazine with a subscription of 400 000 teachers. Also, I identified 50 schools across the UK which had

achieved a Stonewall bronze, silver or gold award<sup>1</sup> and then contacted them directly to enquire about participants. Additionally, a call for participants was issued on social media. There was one instance of a participant making a referral. The table below provides demographic information about the participants including their motivations for this work and accumulated capitals.

Participant pseudonyms	Gender	Sexuality	Ethnicity	Age	Years teaching	Motivation	Cultural capital	Social capital
Nicole	F	Heterosexual	White British	38	13	Suicide of trans union member.	Post-grad in PSHE Degree in Psychology SEN specialist.	Active union member. Bisexual daughter.
Stephanie	F	Heterosexual	White other	30	7	A strong belief in equality.	Pastoral lead	Mermaids charity links.
Charlie	M	Gay	White British	28	5	Own school experience of being LGBT+	Deputy Head	Support of Head, dioses and governing body.
Sarah	F	Heterosexual	White British	31	8	The coming out of a	Wellbeing lead	LGBT+ family members.

<sup>1</sup> Stonewall is a UK based charity which campaigns for LGBT+ equality. They work with schools and award bronze, silver and gold status to schools dependent upon evidence of efforts to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. This involves copies of anti-bullying policies, display work and lesson plans.

						family member.	Stonewall trained.	
Olivia	F	Heterosexual	White British	30	7	LGBT+ youth suicide statistics.	PSHE lead. Stonewall trained. Metro trained.	LGBT+ colleagues.
Alexander	M	Gay	White British	26	4	Own school experience of being LGBT+	Stonewall trained. Metro trained.	Links with local high school that educates for LGBT+ inclusivity.
John	Gender fluid (at the time of research used the pronoun he).	Queer	White British	24	2	A need to trouble gender norms.	PSHE lead Stonewall trained.	Strong support amongst colleagues and leadership.
Jayani	F	Heterosexual	Asian British	45	4	Support for the LGBT+ community.	Some training in LGBT+ inclusivity at school.	Supported in equality education by Head. LGBT+ family members

								and friends.
Sophie	F	Heterosexual	White British	25	2	A need to push the boundaries	Received Stonewall training. PSHE lead.	Gay head teacher.
David	M	Heterosexual	White British	32	10	A strong belief in equality.	Taught LGBT+ inclusivity across several schools.	Links with other teachers educating for LGBT+ inclusivity in other schools.
Eve	F	Heterosexual	White British	29	7	LGBT+ friends and family members.	PSHE lead.	Supportive Head.
Petra	F	Heterosexual	White other	28	4	A strong belief in equality.	PSHE lead. Inclusivity and diversity training.	LGBT+ colleagues. Supportive Head and SLT.

Table 1: Participants demographic information.

#### **4.6 Questionnaire**

Candidates were first sent a short questionnaire (see Appendix B) which aimed to collect demographic information about the participants and ask them to briefly recount their experiences educating for LGBT+ inclusivity so that I could decide which candidates would potentially yield rich data during interview. When constructing the questionnaire, I had to decide what demographic information would be relevant and useful in light of the aims of the research, these included age, gender, sexual orientation, years spent teaching and ethnicity (see table 1). All these elements can impact both upon the shaping of an individual habitus (Sinclair, 2017) and an understanding of how their social and cultural capital are affected by demographic factors. When shaping the questions, I wanted to leave them open-ended so that they could choose how to define their sexuality and gender etc., rather than having to tick a series of predefined boxes. The second part of the questionnaire involved asking them to explain in their own words how they educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. The aim of this questionnaire was to see which teachers had experiences that would yield potentially rich data. Those that did were contacted for an interview.

#### **4.7 Narrative biographical interview method**

When considering how best to conduct interviews for this thesis, I needed an interview method that would enable participants to engage in reflection across their whole lives to help understand their advocacy for LGBT+ inclusive education. Accordingly, a narrative biographical method, which was developed by Shütze (1992) and Rosenthal (2005), was chosen as it prioritises the role of an individual's biography in helping to understand their experience. It attempts to merge 'the objective features of the subject's life with the subjective meaning attached to life experience' (Denzin, 1989: 54-55). It is a powerful tool to

explore experience which has been used to explore the experiences of survivors of the holocaust and to gain greater insights into how repeat offender identity is formed (Szczepanik and Siebert, 2016).

There are three parts to the BNIM process: firstly, participants are asked to share their personal life stories with the interviewer, secondly they are asked questions resulting from the sharing of the life story and the final part revolves around questions focused on the primary subject of the research: their experiences of embedding LGBT+ inclusive education. In analysis, these elements are woven together with the biographical input helping to understand their narratives around the main subject of the research, in this case how they embed LGBT+ inclusive education.

This method appealed to me as to explore participants' habitus I needed methodology that focused on the role of biography in research. I chose BNIM as through sharing biographical information it can be used as an opportunity to look for repetition of a person's dispositions, beliefs and perceptions (Burke, 2011) to understand how their identity and habitus have developed. Admittedly, it can be difficult to locate the habitus (Bourdieu, 1987) however I find that BNIM, with its focus on biography, brings into focus repetition of actions and attitudes which are the foundations of habitus. Additionally, the storytelling resulting from BNIM results in 'thick' narrative accounts (Szczepanik and Siebert, 2016) which can help foster a sense of security in the person offering the narration and crucially offers a closer understanding of how participants arrive at their own understanding of their experiences (Riemann, 2006). However, Bourdieu (1984) has been critical of the idea of biography as he felt it neglected the play of structural elements in influencing life history and that a balance

must be sought between these influences and biographical work. The way I chose to acknowledge this was through a particular attention to how the participants perceive others opinions and effects on them, I hoped that this would reveal details about what external factors allowed or inhibited their transgression of norms through their work to interrupt heteronormative discourse through LGBT+ inclusive education. This meant an engagement with Du Bois' (1903) concept of the 'double consciousness' whereby we look at ourselves through the eyes of others paying attention to how others are presented in their biographical accounts and their impact on their actions.

#### **4.8 Pilot**

Once I had designed the interview I carried out two pilot interviews with two colleagues known to me who I had taught alongside in London. Both had some experience of educating for LGBT+ inclusivity. One had taught a child who had confided his homosexuality to her and another had taught children who had not identified with their assigned gender at birth. The interview involved testing the biographical narrative interview method and engaging with the interview questionnaire which had been given to participants prior to the interview.

Afterwards we engaged in a period of reflection about the process. It was agreed that it was useful for participants to have access to the questions before the interview as that had given the interviewees time to reflect upon their experiences and bring concrete examples to share in the interview. However, the first question about sharing their life stories was considered too open-ended and was perceived to be potentially off-putting to a stranger. It was agreed that more scaffolding should be provided asking participants to talk about significant events

in their childhood, why they became a teacher and how their attitudes towards LGBT+ people have developed throughout their lives.

It was also suggested that I share my background and intention for the research first to break down barriers between researcher and interviewee and foster a sense of collaboration. The interviews were transcribed and analysed and a couple of emergent themes emerged around growing up in conservative religious households and being educated in a liberal, cosmopolitan city. And how the two participants could negotiate two different habitus as they made friends with LGBT+ people and began to advocate for their inclusion in school curricula. Once the pilot was complete my focus turned to employing questionnaires to gather potential participants.

#### **4.9 Participants**

As narrative inquiry is concerned with in-depth exploration of the stories people tell it benefits from a smaller number of participants to avoid superficial interpretations of data. Therefore, twelve participants were chosen to be interviewed, this would ensure quality in terms of data that would yield valuable insights into how the teachers exert their agency in educating for and embedding LGBT+ education. Most participants were in their twenties which could reflect wider generational changes in regards to acceptance of LGBT+ inclusive education. All the teachers interviewed had been teaching and trained since the repeal of Section 28, a lot had leadership roles around PSHE and many had received training from Stonewall and other LGBT+ charities. It was important to have a range of gender and sexual orientations to offer different perspectives on how these elements constrained and enabled their work. However, as I adopted a purposeful sampling approach which was not focused on

studying the experiences of particular gender or sexuality experience but rather on the successful embedding of LGBT+ inclusivity I did not feel I needed to ensure that every gender and sexuality perspective was covered instead I was searching for those holding in-depth information that could achieve the aim of the research (Patton, 2002). In a wider study this would have been my preference but the main selection criteria was participants who had demonstrated a commitment to educating for LGBT+ inclusivity over time regardless of their own gender or sexuality. This ultimately meant that the experience represented was skewed towards heterosexual females. However, this is the largest demographic in primary teaching (DfE, 2020) and consequently represents the principle audience towards which this research is aimed.

Participants were interviewed in a variety of ways. Ideally all would have been interviewed face-to-face but due to their geographical location and a lack of funds for travelling as well as my own commitments as a class teacher those nearest were interviewed in person, some via skype and a couple via telephone. The participants were presented with the interview questions (see Appendix A) at least one week before the interview. The interview questions were devised in accordance with the research questions and the BNIM technique. As the questionnaire had gathered key demographic details I could use open-ended questions in the interview to allow participants space to tell their stories. I started by asking them to recount their life story with reference to their childhood, schooling and how they came into teaching. I then followed up with questions I felt were pertinent to their responses. They were then asked to tell the story of how they came to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. I then would ask a range of questions that explored their motivations, challenges they faced and how they overcame them and lessons they have learnt from their practice.

I found participants keen to share their stories. There was an openness and desire they expressed for more teachers to engage in this type of work. I found sharing my own experiences helped to break down the power hierarchy associated with my position as a researcher as my own openness about being an LGBT+ teacher educating for LGBT+ visibility created a sense of rapport through shared endeavour. Most participants had lots of information to share except one who seemed to need a lot more time to answer questions. After the interview when I listed back to our conversation I could hear that he was taking his time to think carefully about the questions before articulating his answers. I could see that he had needed more space in which to develop his answers and I noticed my own sense in myself of a desire to fill silence perhaps to extinguish feelings of awkwardness I associate subconsciously with silence. It was interesting reflecting on this experience as my own awkwardness became apparent to me along with an understanding that each person has their own pace in responding to questions and that the role of the interviewer is to allow those spaces to blossom. After having collected and transcribed the data I began the process of data analysis.

#### **4.10 Analysis**

Once the interviews had been transcribed I uploaded them to Nvivo 12.<sup>2</sup> This tool is valuable in helping to organise and code large datasets. I read through the data line by line to develop initial codes. Each line was coded with a word or phrase to capture what was happening in that line of data. e.g.

---

<sup>2</sup> Nvivo is a piece of qualitative data analysis software designed for researchers working with rich text based data.

Charlie: So I did the training with everyone and at the time I got the feeling that people paid lip service to it. (Meeting resistance).

Coding helped me to keep grounded in the data focusing on what was being said by the participants. Whilst initial coding I added memos to codes, memos were my emerging thoughts and interpretations of the data. Some were noted down during the interview process and others developed through coding the data. Once initial coding was complete I took similar codes and condensed them into categories. For example:



The initial codes on the left were condensed down into the more general category or theme of consulting parents, this helped to make the data more manageable. By allowing more general themes to emerge from the data the analysis shifted to a more conceptual level exploring the wider themes emerging from data. The categories combining the most frequent codes became the prominent themes emerging from the data. These emergent themes could then be mapped onto the research questions.

The main themes were identified and then mapped onto the research questions:

**What are participants' motivations for advocating and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity?**

- Developing LGBT+ advocacy
- Troubling the status quo
- Feeling empowered

**How do participants negotiate structural constraints when embedding LGBT+ inclusive education?**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiating heteronormativity in schools</li> <li>• Negotiating neoliberal structures</li> <li>• Employing social capital</li> <li>• Engaging in critical reflection</li> <li>• Negotiating their own sexuality</li> </ul>
<p><b>What recommendations can be drawn from participants' attempts to successfully embed LGBT+ inclusive practice?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus</li> <li>• Developing student critical thinking</li> <li>• Moving beyond tokenism</li> </ul>

Table 2: Mapping themes onto research questions.

Once the themes had been mapped onto the research questions I began to structure the thesis using the themes to decide the content of each analysis chapter. Rather than presenting data individual by individual I chose to organise it by themes this helped illustrate the similarities and differences between participants' experiences. Quotations used in the analysis were chosen because I felt they were best illustrative of a particular theme emerging from the data.

Thematic analysis helps reveal what Barkhuizen (2008) has referred to as the three levels of story. On one level, I was presented with the teacher's story (with a small s) which explores their inner thoughts, feelings and emotions related to their immediate contexts. The second level (story with a capital S) explores their wider psychological and interpersonal social

contexts, it grapples with how they explore their own agency in practice. This meant dealing with issues related to parents resisting their efforts to educate for LGBT+ inclusive education and prescriptive curriculums that make little space for social justice work. The third level of story (STORY in all capitals) refers to the wider socio-political context, for example how government legislation impacts their practice around LGBT+ inclusivity.

#### **4.11 Summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological framework I employed in this thesis. The framework is qualitative in nature embracing the complexity of life and an intention to analyse subjective experience. Next, the ethics of the research were underlined highlighting a commitment to non-harm and empowerment of participants as principle intentions of the research. Then, in terms of sampling, purposeful sampling was chosen as it was considered the most suitable method to choose participants who would elicit rich data for analysis. Following this was an introduction of the research tools of questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires allowed me to filter out participants who would potentially hold the richest data for analysis. Next, the process of the biographical narrative interview method (BNIM) was outlined and justified as necessary for the project due to its role in helping identify an individual's habitus which is key to this research in understanding participants' motivations for engaging in LGBT+ inclusivity work. Next, a pilot was presented which was used to amend the interview questions to provide more structure for participants when sharing their live stories. The final section explained the data analysis process which involved coding the data, condensing similar codes into categories or themes whilst adding memos. Once key themes were identified they were mapped on to the research questions. After having outlined the

methodology behind the research, the next three chapters present the key findings and analysis of the data.

## **Chapter 5: What are participants' motivations for advocating and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity?**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter subscribes to the notion that understanding participants' motivations is key in helping develop motivations in others to engage in meaningful rather than tokenistic LGBT+ inclusivity work. The chapter aims to achieve this through examining the experiences of teachers who have successfully embedded LGBT+ inclusive practice within their fields of practice to draw out implications for other teachers attempting or considering this work. This chapter asks participants to identify key moments throughout their lives that have provided motivation to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. It explores how they came to interrupt heteronormative discourses in their own lives and the impact that had on the development of their habitus.

This chapter is split into two sections: the first explores key moments that the participants identified within their own biographies that they felt were significant in inspiring motivation to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity within their practice. This involved reflection upon their own experiences as students and their encounters with homo, bi and transphobia, how they negotiated sexuality and the family and reflections upon the influence of wider societal issues pertaining to the LGBT+ community. This involved an engagement with Bourdieu's concept of habitus as I sought to understand how teachers rupture heteronormative habitus and reconstitute it as an LGBT+ inclusive habitus. The second section draws out the wider personal benefits teachers experienced from engaging in LGBT+ inclusive education. This involves exploration of how pushing boundaries in teaching can empower teachers in the realisation

that they have more agency to effectuate change in alignment with their values than is initially apparent to them upon entering the profession.

## **5.2 Reflections on key moments of motivation**

In their own schooling, most participants remembered learning nothing about LGBT+ people and that ‘being gay was like an embarrassing thing’ (Olivia). For the LGBT+ participants schooling had an impactful role in shaping their habitus. John described how he felt hearing homophobic language:

At school, there was a lot of derogatory and homophobic language that was used and wasn’t really viewed or dealt with very well.

Upon reflection, he understood the impact the school’s lack of action had on himself and other LGBT+ students growing up and felt a disconnect between the values of the school and his own developing identity. The participants’ experiences of LGBT+ issues at school reflected wider literature in that there was an invisibility in terms of curriculum materials (Woodson, 2017) and hostility in terms of playground, student-to-student experience (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b).

Alexander’s experience differed in that his exposure to homophobia was not limited to abuse from peers and a silent, indifferent teaching force but was actively encouraged by his teachers:

I was teased, I was mocked... I was told [by a teacher] one that I needed to expect it because of the way that I was acting and two I needed to man up. It’s something that I, as a teacher, would never dream of saying now.

The education system plays a foundational role in the formation of an individual's habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) and significantly impacts professional decision making and practice as participants become teachers (McGlynn-Stewart, 2016) being foundational in shaping teacher identity (Collay, 2010). In many ways, Alexander's experience as a child is traumatic as he was told to change who he was to fit in and not expect verbal and physical violence. Unfortunately, these types of traumatic formative experiences continue to be the norm for LGBT+ youth with nearly half still experiencing school bullying (Stonewall, 2017b) and with school playing a foundational role in how we understand the world and develop our common sense it is easy to see how these environments contribute to higher rates of mental health issues amongst LGBT+ people (Chakraborty et al, 2011). The impact of Section 28 is felt in Alexander's teacher's attitude which helped legitimise his homophobia (Forrest, 2006) and sends powerful messages to the young people in his care about how to be which evidently developed discomfort in Alexander as he developed. It is not evident here if he experienced the same feelings of guilt and shame that Verduzco and Mendoza (2016) documented amongst gay men sharing their experience of the education system. However, he would later share that he felt it was inappropriate to discuss his partner with students. What is inspiring is how he has resolved to act differently towards the children in his care and used his negative experience to ensure that his students do not feel the same sense of stigmatisation that he felt. Alexander's experience serves as an example of how teachers' internalised memories of marginalisation can lead to adult activism to help marginalised communities (Collay, 2010) compelling victims to prevent their own students being ostracised (Desmarchelier, 2000).

The implication of Alexander's experience is that teachers who have experienced marginalisation in their own youth can channel their sense of victimisation in to positive

action to provide better experiences for the children they teach. For this to happen, teachers need to engage in problematising their own school experiences (Carter and Doyle, 1996 and Brookfield, 1995) recognising the messages they received about LGBT+ people and explore the extent to which their own teaching reflects their student experiences and what they can do to break cycles that perpetuate marginalisation. This process involves confronting the role of heteronormativity within their own experience as learners, undergoing a rupture of the habitus and a crisis of meaning (Costa and Murphy, 2015) through realising that they are often unwittingly perpetuating the marginalisation they may have felt growing up. If these moments of rupture are carefully reflected upon (Nolan 2015) then they can provide insightful possibilities for transformation (Oliver & O'Reilly 2010) of both the teacher's practice and in reducing marginalisation in the student population.

Alexander's ability to rupture his habitus through reflection demonstrates how one's habitus can be durable (Bourdieu, 1990) rather than being too deterministic (Sayer, 2010). Alexander experienced a rupture in his habitus during a time of:

crises, in which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constituted a class of circumstances when indeed 'rational choice' may take over. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131).

His rational choice being that he does not want to perpetuate heteronormative thinking which led to his own sense of marginalisation growing up. Through his experience he was faced with an educational system which through perpetuating heteronormativity was incompatible with his own developing identity and consequently an inability to reconcile these two disparate realities inspired his desire to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. His feel for the game no longer fit the game itself (Bourdieu, 1990). It is through moments of reflection

and reckoning that Alexander was able to disrupt the status quo and actualise more egalitarian spaces in schools. The wider implication is that teachers need time for reflection to problematise the role of heteronormativity in their own schooling and how they can rupture heteronormative thinking in their own habitus and teaching. Carter and Doyle (1996) advocate for a greater emphasis on teachers' personal history narratives in teacher training which could allow time to collaboratively analyse and critique their own school experiences to avoid perpetuating the status quo. This space for reflection could help channel teachers sense of injustice brought on by rupture of the habitus into positive action. Alongside schooling, participants home lives often provided key moments of rupture within the habitus.

### **5.3 The influence of home life on the habitus**

Like their experience of schooling, participants found a developing habitus incompatible with the beliefs and values found in the family home. Jayani, for example, grew up in a conservative Sri Lankan family and found mixing with LGBT+ friends at college and university led to 'having big rows with my parents about homophobia and stuff.' She experienced cognitive dissonance when entering new inclusive fields incompatible with her childhood habitus. For Charlie growing up gay he found a lack of visibility at both school and home:

At home, we didn't talk about sex, sexuality, those taboo subjects and certainly at school I remember we never broached the subject of people being gay or lesbian or transgender.

Like Alexander and John's experience, Charlie's growing identity as a gay man conflicted with a family habitus that silenced non-normative sexuality.

The key rupture in Sarah's heteronormative habitus which inspired her motivation to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity was an experience she narrated about the coming out of her husband George's 19-year-old brother:

Alex came out to me knowing he was definitely gay for 5 years. So even in that generation, he didn't feel comfortable. And I always think of him when I am teaching this and when we talk about it in conversation [...] I think if Alex, George's brother, had that at school [an LGBT+ inclusive curriculum] maybe he would have would have come out at thirteen when he felt he was defiantly gay rather than later [...] We talk about coming out, why do you have to come out? Like, 'PS I'm gay.' I don't say oh by the way I'm straight. You feel like and I know this is Alex's point of view, when I first met George I just took him home to my parents and said, 'This is George.' Would I have done that if I was gay? Would I have brought my girlfriend home and said this is whoever? I don't know whether I would. And I know that Alex beforehand definitely would not have done that.

As she spoke about her experience I could sense the empathy she felt for Alex unable to share a key part of his identity with his family for five years. Bullough and Gitlin (2001: 223) explain how teachers filter what they learn through 'a set of biographically embedded assumptions, beliefs, or pre-understandings.' Many of these understandings are developed through family life. By imagining how she would have felt and what she would have done in Alex's position, Sarah engages in a process of repositioning (Apple, 1995). Where, to effectuate social justice, we must endeavour to see the world through the eyes of the dispossessed and oppressed. This then helps to understand how institutions work against those who are marginalised and underprivileged in society. Sarah's empathy for Alex made her question the simplicity and ease apparent in her own straight relationship and how complicating being born non-heterosexual can be. Fundamentally, her relationship with Alex and empathy towards his

situation inspired her own LGBT+ inclusive teacher activism, resolving to make life easier for other LGBT+ youth in her care.

Here the wider implication for teachers is that biographical reflection opportunities for repositioning may foster moments of habitus rupture to help develop motivation to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. This repositioning is key for heterosexual teachers who may be less personally impacted by heteronormativity and who may not have experienced marginalisation themselves (like Alexander in the previous section). Sarah's experience demonstrates our own sense of marginalisation is not the only route to become motivated to engage in this work but by taking time to empathise with the marginalisation of others can be a powerful motivator in becoming an advocate for LGBT+ inclusive education. When participants have developed an inner sense of commitment to the cause they are less likely to indulge in box-ticking, tokenistic practice.

Nicole engaged in a similar process of repositioning but through a colleague who was a fellow union member who took her life:

We also had a union member who transitioned and committed suicide because of what happened in the press, you know she committed suicide so it is remembering not from an education point of view for students, but actually the impact it has on teacher colleagues and professionals who don't feel like they can come out or feel persecuted.

Nicole's experience demonstrates that empathy can be generated both outside of the self and the family but rather in wider solidarity with LGBT+ colleagues. She took a tragic event and channelled it into a desire to play a part in ensuring that the students in her own care would be sent trans positive messages and contribute in her own way towards making society

a safer, more accepting place for trans people as they grow up. Nicole's experience highlights the wider benefits of LGBT+ inclusive work for teachers as well as students. The more work that can be done to make schools LGBT+ positive spaces the greater the chance that more LGBT+ teachers will feel comfortable to be open in the profession.

Each of the non-LGBT+ participants faced a moment whereby they questioned their perceptions around LGBT+ identities and issues and channelled it into a desire to create better educational systems for LGBT+ youth. A crucial element of this process comes from facing the privilege afforded by one's own gender and sexuality. Whether privileges of gender, class, sexuality or race, most of us possess some form of privilege which, like capital, help exert agency in the world. This process of acknowledging the privilege afforded by their gender and sexuality is crucial if teachers are to successfully disrupt heteronormativity (Potvin, 2016). To accomplish this goal teachers would benefit from engaging with the research of Macintosh (1988) who developed the idea of the invisible knapsack which is used by white teachers to unpack the privileges associated with race this can be co-opted to help teachers face the advantages and disadvantages associated with their own gender and sexuality to begin to reposition themselves through the eyes of those marginalised by heteronormativity. Some participants experienced processes of rupture with the heteronormative habitus later as adults entering the teaching profession.

#### **5.4 Entering the teaching profession**

As participants became teachers, their social justice oriented dispositions were channelled into ways they could effectuate change in accordance with their habitus. Many participants

described needing to feel part of something bigger as a principle motivation in becoming a teacher. Stephanie described how:

I wanted to be part of that wider community rather than sort of being a small person who goes to a small job who comes home again to my small little life.

Here repetition of the word small emphasises her need to contribute to the bigger picture.

The participants were keen to transform aspects of society they found unjust. They operate under the paradigmatic assumption or 'basic structuring axioms we use to order the world into fundamental categories' (Brookfield, 1995:3) which ascribe schools as democratic places. Places that prepare students for being active global citizens ready to tackle injustice and make the world a better place, rather than places designed solely to ready students for participation in a global economy (Ball, 2017). They were keen to use their roles as educators for anti-oppressive (Kumashiro, 2004) purposes that helped effectuate their social justice oriented goals. Participants illustrated their frustration towards society not being inclusive (Nicole), that someone's sexuality remains a subject of prejudice (Olivia and Petra) and that gender stereotyping remains ingrained into so many aspects of daily life, e.g., the Oscar categories of best actor and best actress (Charlie). To contribute to improving society and 'influence young learners' about promoting social justice' (Schweisfurth, 2006: 46) was a principle motivators for them entering the profession (Pantić, 2017) and was often a driving force in advocating for LGBT+ inclusive education.

For many teachers, advocating for LGBT+ inclusivity was one way to align their values with their practice. Oliva made this alignment and described how her motivation to engage in embedding LGBT+ projects stemmed from encountering uncomfortable statistics about LGBT+ youth mental health problems and suicide rates:

The biggest motivator was thinking back to children who you might have thought they may be [LGBT+] and thinking the thought of them sitting in a room at age 12 or 13 trying to commit suicide because at primary school everybody didn't challenge it... going to sleep thinking that you are part of the reason that 13-year-old committed suicide is not worth thinking about.

These statistics haunted Olivia making it feel wrong not to act. Like Sarah before, we see Olivia, who identifies as heterosexual, repositioning herself, not as imagining growing up queer, but as having been complicit in being a 'custodian of silence' (Farrley et al 2017) resulting in the death of a hypothetical student in her care. Whilst alarming, these statistics are powerful and as Flores (2014) has shown can be a valuable motivator in changing attitudes and invoking empathy in parents and teachers. Advocating for and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity became for teachers like Olivia one way of aligning their social justice oriented values and their teaching practice. Indeed, as most teachers detail commitment to making positive change as their principle motivation for entering the profession (Collay 1998 ,1999, Grumet, 1980 and Hackney and Hogard, 1999) more teachers ought to engage with LGBT+ inclusivity advocacy as a way of aligning their values and practice. Having considered participants' motivations for engaging in this practice the next section details the benefits teachers experienced from engaging in this work.

### **5.6 Professional benefits arising from engaging in LGBT+ inclusivity practice**

This final section explores how once teachers began engaging with LGBT+ inclusivity within their practice they experienced wider benefits related to their own professional development, empowerment and feeling of more closely aligning their values with their

teaching practice. I argue that these benefits provide a further layer of motivation for teachers to engage in LGBT+ inclusive practice.

As participants began to effectuate their LGBT+ inclusive practice their habitus evolved and often strengthened. This was illustrated in how they often challenged parents who were unsupportive of the initiative and wanted to withdraw their children from lessons. For many of the participants their interactions with unsupportive parents and colleagues confirmed their own fears about the lack of inclusivity and equality in society. Sophie describes her reaction to homophobic comments from parents:

I think I am quite a stubborn person and I do get passionate about things and if somebody tells me no it makes me more enthusiastic... right we are doing an hour a day and now we are doing two let's do more of this! This is obviously what the children need if they are hearing this [homophobic language] at home... we need to kind of educate and show them that there are other ways of responding to people who are maybe a bit different than you.

Rather than yielding to parental demands or being put-off by their response they strengthened her resolve to work harder to establish equality education to counteract the negative messages children were receiving at home around gender and sexuality. Sarah had a confrontation with a parent whose daughter had insisted that the bible forbids gay relationships. She said:

I totally disagree with you, that is not why I disagreed with what your daughter said, I disagreed because I don't believe what your daughter said was correct, that is my belief...I did feel nervous, internally I did. But then I felt like actually quite empowered, you know what? I am going to have this out with you, I am going to stand my ground, and the Head

was so supportive... and I logged it all and actually this parent and I have had a really good relationship since... she seems much kinder and more open.

Sarah described being nervous before the encounter but upon reflection felt empowered and challenging the parent's views eventually led to a better, more transparent relationship. Sarah's experience demonstrates how dispositions (a key component of the habitus) can evolve over time (Bourdieu in Costa et al. 2015) and they can be strengthened through exposure and practice. Sarah's key disposition here is determinism in effectuating her project and challenging prejudice and through exercising that determinism she felt empowered meaning that with experience and reflection subsequent challenges may prove easier to negotiate.

Sarah's experience worked in her favour but it could have ended differently and it would have been interesting to see how her confidence would have been affected by a negative outcome. In this scenario, Archer (2003: 6) offers sound advice when faced with problems in that, 'agents can act strategically to try to discover ways around it or to deliver a second-best outcome.' Sarah could have prepared for this eventuality by thinking through what concessions she could offer the parent as compromise to mitigate accusations of pushing an 'agenda.' This is a common discourse encountered when challenging heteronormativity and discussed more in the following chapter. With the strengthening of their social justice oriented dispositions through the concrete realisation of their LGBT+ inclusivity projects many of the teachers who had been actively promoting this work for longer periods were empowered by their abilities to shift the status quo to more openly embrace inclusivity and equality.

## 5.7 Troubling the status quo

Rather than waiting for the conditions to improve ready for LGBT+ inclusive teaching in all primary schools the teachers in this study understood that change would have to come from the grassroots level. They employed a Foucauldian view that power is not only exerted from the top-down but is everywhere and 'comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1998: 63) with transformations taking place 'on the level of social micro-structures through counter-knowledge, counter-practice and strategies of equivocation' (Do Mar Castro et al. 2011:59). This exertion of power manifested in a desire to push boundaries. Jayani described 'relishing the more probing and intimate questions' and the opportunities afforded to question taken for granted assumptions about gender, sexuality and race. Nicole described the necessity of school as a safe space to talk and develop ideas:

I push boundaries and take risk with young people... because working in schools we are a safe environment where they can make those mistakes. So yes, you do have to think about the correct language and the correct terminology, but if they are going to make mistakes it is much better to do it in the school environment where we can teach rather than to be outside in society. And then also there are so many cuts that have happened to the youth services that actually youth clubs and the different outlets that people will possibly be able to go to talk about these things... they are not there anymore. They need those opportunities within a school setting.

Nicole recognised how problematic homo, bi and transphobic language can be and instead would rather children talked openly about the language of gender and sexuality in class so that they are better prepared for entry into wider society. John queered the status quo not just through his teaching but through his appearance:

I paint my nails or wear make-up sometimes. I refuse to wear a suit to work... I feel that it's important to show the children that just because I might appear like a male member of staff it doesn't mean I have to wear a suit or tie.

John's habitus is embodied through his appearance and he shows resistance to heteronormativity as he consciously chooses to disrupt normative ideas about masculinity demonstrating the arbitrary nature of gender signifiers that need not be inevitable (Bragg et al. 2018) and further demonstrating the possibilities for gender-flexibility in primary schools (Warin, 2017).

Fundamentally, a commitment to educating for LGBT+ inclusivity propels the participants through challenges in the implementation of their projects. They understand that a desire to challenge the status quo to effectuate change and improve lives for LGBT+ youth will involve navigating challenges. Stephanie succinctly details ongoing resistance from staff towards LGBT+ inclusive teaching:

A good proportion were quite closed-minded and worried about what was going to happen so I sort of fire fought that one along with the Head as best we could to sort of say this is you know this is the law we cannot tell other people, we cannot you know, we can't disadvantage this child's education if the child is presenting as this gender, he is this gender, we will do what we can to make this child comfortable.

Stephanie is driven by a particular child in the school's care and wants to ensure that the child is comfortable and she understands that challenging the status quo is an integral part of enacting democracy (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2002). Teachers like Stephanie have to question what Brookfield (1995: 40) refers to as 'intuitional definitions of appropriate teacher and student roles' if they want to construct more democratic curricula. However, this is inevitably

‘threatening a way of living and thinking that is comfortable for many of our colleagues’ (41). For all these participants, a motivation to ‘go against the tide’ (Archer, 2003b: 267) is an important element of their habitus. A key feature of a meta-reflexive personality is to follow their intellectual conscience even though this can sometimes prove to be a hard and lonely journey. They keep their goals in sight and endure risk, uncertainty and challenge to keep themselves in alignment with their social justice oriented habitus.

It is important to emphasise how difficult changing the status quo can be. With Section 28 continuing to cast a shadow over education and with schools ‘highly resistant to change’ (Zucker, 1987: 446) being structured in such a way that they serve to perpetuate the status quo (Giddens, 1984) it is not an easy task to challenge years of practice which has compounded heteronormative thinking. These participants, at least in the beginning, largely act alone recognising that if they wait for government legislation to mandate meaningful and embedded LGBT+ inclusive curricula it would never happen. Instead, they must navigate institutions that ‘emphasize obedience and conformity’ (Chomsky in Giffney et al, 2009) of both students and teachers, redefine the status quo and take steps to actualise it. However, after the initial rupture of starting this work in schools teacher often found that with time their projects become easier to effectuate. They noticed the status quo shifting as norms changed and drew strength from what they had accomplished. David described how:

I have learnt that I am a lot more open than I thought I was. Do you know what I mean? It’s almost like before I would feel really uncomfortable talking about stuff whereas now I’m just like yeah... I’ll talk to you about it. It has taken the awkwardness out of it. It has made me stronger as well because the thing is will teaching you can kind of get

thrown into a situation and you think oh my god how do I deal with this situation you know?

His perceptions about his capability to do this work are stronger and now as a teacher feels more comfortable taking risks in other areas of his profession. Sophie described how:

The first year is always the hardest but when they pluck up the bravery to push through the barrier... you take a stand and then people kind of respect that and they back off and respect it and there are only the odd ones that push it.

She talks about pushing through the barrier and then, after that, challenges become easier to navigate. She also demonstrates that the rigid conformity of schooling that Chomsky detailed is fragile and with sustained effort and a clear goal schools can become places of resistance (Ceplak, 2013: 165). Her experience demonstrates what Chambers and Caver (2008: 142) refer to as 'subversive repetition' whereby old norms are worn away through a 'politics of erosion.' It is the participants' willingness to persevere with this work year after year in the face of wider structural challenges that has afforded them success. This ultimately results in the emergence over time of more democratic and egalitarian school environments. And with patience the 'rules of the game' (Bourdieu, 1977: 201) which govern the field can shift in favour of LGBT+ inclusivity. Fundamentally, the implication here is for how teachers frustrated by the rigid conformity of schooling and slow pace of change can learn a lot about both how the status quo is structured and how it can be deconstructed from engaging in work to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity.

## **5.8 Summary**

The first section explored the key moments participants highlighted in their own biographies which they pinpointed in being critical in developing their advocacy for educating for LGBT+

inclusivity. This section engaged with participants' reflections about their own schooling experience around LGBT+ issues, engagement with the family and as an adult in the teaching profession to pinpoint moments of rupture in the heteronormative habitus. This section argued that teachers need space and time to engage in autobiographical reflection to find sources of motivation which can inspire the meaningful realisation of LGBT+ inclusive practice. This could be through exploration of one's own experience of marginalisation or through repositioning and developing empathy for LGBT+ family and friends who may have experienced marginalisation growing up. Also, it can be fostered through exploration of the links between teachers' motivations for entering education and LGBT+ inclusivity.

The second section argued that there are wider professional and personal benefits for teachers engaging in this work in that it helps them to align their values and beliefs with their practice. It demonstrated how engagement in this work can help them act as institutional agents whose knowledge, understanding and interest have real potential to transform institutions (DiMaggio, 1988). It can also empower them by encouraging them to take risks in their teaching and it can help teachers develop their own agency understanding that power can be effectuated not just from the top-down but from a grassroots level.

The next chapter of this thesis explores the wider structural challenges facing teachers who advocate for LGBT+ inclusivity. It focuses in on the impact of two principle structures: heteronormativity and neoliberalism and draws out implications for how teachers can navigate structural challenges to their LGBT+ advocacy.

## **Chapter 6: How do participants negotiate structural challenges when embedding LGBT+ inclusive education?**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter explored the implications of participants' perceptions of their motivations to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity for other teachers wanting to engage in this work. This chapter seeks to build upon the previous one by arguing that for LGBT+ inclusive education to be embedded and taught successfully motivation and commitment to promoting social justice are not sufficient on their own. Teachers need a comprehensive awareness of the main challenges they will face in implementing this work and an understanding of how other teachers have successfully navigated such challenges before them. Archer (2003) reminds us that constraints and enablements:

Derive from structural and cultural emergent properties. They have the generative power to impede or facilitate projects of different kinds from groups of agents who are differentially placed.

Consequently, the first section of this chapter examines how each teacher's individual habitus must negotiate challenges to the values, beliefs and perceptions that constitute it. These challenges are structural in nature and derive from the influence of heteronormativity and neoliberalism in school fields. Heteronormativity relates to the 'organisational structures in schools that support heterosexuality as normal and anything else as deviant.' (Donelson & Rogers, 2004: 128) and neoliberalism is defined as the 'universalization of the enterprise ethic' (Apple et al. 2011).

The second section explores the principle tools participants use to negotiate these structural constraints. The first being an engagement with Bourdieu's conceptual tools of capital. Capitals are resources agents bring to the field and are indicative of how an agent is placed within a hierarchy. The possession or lack of capital can help position one with more or less influence and power in their place of work. Secondly, building on the work in the first chapter, I explore how critical reflection is applied when actualising LGBT+ inclusive education and its potential to help negotiate structural constraints.

The final section of this chapter explores the complex negotiation of one's own sexuality within the school and classroom and asks if openness about one's sexuality can help or hinder LGBT+ inclusivity education.

## **6.2 Negotiating heteronormativity in schools**

This thesis recognises that teachers are not independent agents acting autonomously but instead must negotiate their habitus within a wider field full of other habitus which sometimes align and sometimes collide with their own. Consequently, their position as teachers is contextually influenced by the wider sociological, political, cultural and historical circumstances in which they find themselves. The wider educational field they must navigate is structured by a multiplicity of power relations (Apple et al 2011) and in our society, there are many centres of power (Do Mar Castro et al 2011) which teachers must engage with in a reality where Joy et al (2018: 5) explain:

Multiple fields coexist in a social context which may be nested in others... Each field, and nested sub-fields, have their own rules. The rules of the game in different fields

may reinforce or contradict each other, affecting values of individuals' capitals in complex ways.

How teachers negotiate these structural influences is a key aim of this research. This chapter seeks to grapple with the structural challenges participants faced whilst trying to realise their LGBT+ inclusivity projects in the field.

All participants encountered some form of resistance to their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. There is a critical moment for some who wish to rupture the status quo where they are put-off by the first signs of conflict and opposition and retreat from further actualising their social justice projects. This was not the case for the participants in this study who endured conflict, criticism and ambiguity in the pursuit of their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. Of the challenges they faced most came from heteronormative discourse which is tightly bound with issues of tradition, morality and what is deemed to be natural (Moran, 2009: 291).

The principle way in which participants encountered a heteronormative discourse was in parents feeling that teaching children about LGBT+ people and issues was incompatible with their religious views. This experience is reflective of literature (Martino, 2014) detailing conflicts arising from the intersection of religious freedom, gender and LGBT+ rights. Religious views often uphold heteronormativity as the moral choice about how to exist in the world. Chambers and Caver (2008:121) highlight how heteronormativity:

Draws attention to those deviant, abjected or marginalized individuals who are somehow stigmatized or discriminated against by the dominant sexual norm.

This often manifested in parents wanting to withdraw children from the lesson, children voicing views in class that reflected their religious beliefs 'one boy turned around and said

that he can't have a boyfriend because he will burn in hell fire' (Alexander). Their experiences reflected wider concerns teachers hold around fear of disapproving or committed Christian and Muslim parents in inhibiting many teachers from embedding LGBT+ inclusivity education.

Some of the participants dismissed the complaints of religious parents attributing it to their own 'ignorance and bigotry' (Sophie, Olivia and Petra) positioning themselves as morally superior. However, if teachers are to engage parents and colleagues who have doubts about LGBT+ inclusivity in classrooms it would be beneficial to understand their arguments rather than dismissing them outright. Burrige (2004: 327) implores us to understand where the resistance is coming from:

If one wishes to resist something, it seems sensible to try to understand it first, not simply in the sense of trying to 'appreciate its point of view' but perhaps more importantly, trying to come to terms with how it operates – the connections it makes and the resources it mobilizes. It is insufficient to simply assume that it is wrong, and that others will recognize this – the success of moral conservatism in a variety of spheres demonstrates that insufficiency.

Alongside the rise of moral conservatism, the mainstreaming of far-right ideology over the past decade (Mudde, 2020) renders her advice even more pertinent for teachers attempting to embed LGBT+ inclusive education. They must take time to explore why certain members of religious minorities hold resistance to their children learning about LGBT+ identities and find ways to engage with them. For example, Muslim parents could see mandatory LGBT+ education as part of a wider process of enforcing western ideals onto religious minorities, as an attack on values that are already under attack through islamophobia, the war on terror, media and escalating hate crimes (Dodd, 2019). Teachers could explore the work of

academics like Professor Omid Safi (2003) and Scott Siraj al-Haqq Kugle (2010) who reconcile Islamic teachings with LGBT+ and gender equality. This knowledge could then be used by teachers to provide a bridge between ideals which can, on the surface, appear incompatible.

Additionally, it is important to avoid negative generalisations about religious parents. In fact, several participants found that religious parents and colleagues were allies in effectuating this work. John reflects on the importance of not assuming prejudice based on religious beliefs:

I think, as teachers, we have to understand that you know so many different types of people are homophobic or transphobic and not sort of panic and think those people are religious and that they are going to have a prejudice. I have worked in faith schools and they have been so welcoming and supportive of me.

Sophie and David also found support from religious parents who thanked them for their work, realising how it helps their children understand wider society. Charlie worked in a church school and was encouraged by his local diocese in starting work to tackle homophobia as the diocese was keen to value 'all of god's children.' Although, on the other hand, Charlie works with other local schools which fall under different dioceses and they have refused point blank to engage in anti-homophobia work. This again highlights the affordance of some fields over others (Mills et al. 2019) and how subjective interpretations by key individuals constrain or enable teacher agency. Ultimately, teachers must be wary of preconceptions and remain open-minded. Whilst teachers anticipated resistance from religious parents they were shocked to receive resistance from groups of parents they deemed unlikely to have a problem with LGBT+ inclusivity. Sophie was surprised that her parents, which consisted of 'doctors, teachers, those kinds of careers,' would take issue. She falsely projected progressive views on

to them based on her own assumptions and highlights how it is very difficult to predict which parents will have a problem with LGBT+ inclusivity education.

Their open approach highlights the importance of transparency and outreach with parents when beginning this work. They provided plenty of opportunities for parents to ask questions, see resources and feel consulted in the process. Participants described inviting parents in to classrooms and holding workshops for them to see what they would be teaching their children. For some this helped ease parents' apprehensions but for others, like Sarah, frustratingly no parents came. Some (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a) have questioned whether parents should be engaged at all as the act of doing so implies that this work is controversial or out of the ordinary when schools have a duty to promote equality and tackle homo, bi and transphobia (Equalities Act, 2010). However, Flores (2014: 118) who worked extensively to create LGBT+ inclusivity in her own practice reminds teachers to:

simply remember that a parent's fears sometimes develop into irrational behaviour.

Never lower your face in shame; hold your head high with confidence in knowing you are adding to children's cultural knowledge base and building strong character.

One of the most important steps teachers can take is to keep true to their ideals and not give in to protests. Sophie describes the thinking amongst staff about a pride walk the school was intended to stage and had been met by some protest by parents:

It was a decision about the pride walk about whether we were going to go through with it or not but I just think that if you bow down and you back pedal you have lost - you know - any possible kind of authority and you know it is our school and we are doing this and we all kind of stood behind him [the Head] and said, 'No we will do this and it will be fine

and we will get through it,' and they can just realise that it is something we will be teaching.

Sophie understands that her own habitus and those of her colleagues will not always be aligned with everyone in the field. However, by engaging, not bowing to pressure and adapting to challenges they can move their projects forward. Once again a disposition towards perseverance in pursuit of wider goals of equality and inclusivity propels teachers forward as they endeavour to erode heteronormativity in schools.

On a deeper level, conflicts can be reframed as opportunities to challenge teachers' own perceptions of parents and see that conflict is often a visible sign that their work is making an impact. By bringing these issues to the surface teachers are forcing their colleagues and parents to form an opinion on an issue that they may not have had to think about beforehand. Participants advocating for LGBT+ inclusivity play a key role in forcing moments of rupture in the habitus that can galvanise support for or opposition to LGBT+ inclusive education. The more prepared and supported they are the greater their capacity to deal with conflict and frame the debate in ways that generate sympathy and support for their work.

The implications for teachers attempting this work is to understand that encountering challenge is more likely than not. However, there are certain approaches that work best to navigate those challenges: firstly, engage in dialogue with parents, colleagues or students who disagree with LGBT+ inclusivity. Secondly, attempt to understand where their apprehensions are coming from and thirdly, be prepared to provide counter-arguments related to the school's duty to reflect the full diversity of society, the impact visibility can have on LGBT+ youth and the role this teaching plays in developing student empathy and

understanding of difference. Unfortunately, sometimes parental conflict morphs from airing ideological concern into personal attacks against staff.

### **6.3 Negotiating personal attacks and conflict**

The teachers' LGBT+ inclusivity projects became more challenging when parents did not just disagree with the work but targeted and attacked participants and their colleagues. Participants described parental attacks as personal and coordinated. Several of the participants detailed attacks against themselves because of their sexuality and in relation to LGBT+ inclusive education. Sarah explains how parents had made unpleasant remarks to a gay teacher:

I know he was really, really upset, he was really professional, I know he felt like that because I have known him for seven years and I could see it in his face. I think for an external person they wouldn't have been able to tell. I think they would have just thought he was professional but he was really, really hurt by it.

Whilst traumatic for those involved, these personal attacks can have a positive effect in rallying staff around a cause and solidifying the collective habitus and activist dispositions of other staff who may not have been as committed to the project. Sophie explains:

I think with the parents who reacted badly it did create a sort of them and us so that automatically threw staff members together in saying right we are not happy with how we are being spoken to. We are not happy with how you have been treating our colleagues. We are going to stand together and we will make sure that this happens because we think it is important.

Her repetition of the word 'we' frames how this shifted from an individual attack to a collective call to arms. Rather than deterring the staff from teaching LGBT+ inclusive practice,

the parental attacks helped to galvanise the teaching staff to stand united against their behaviour fostering solidarity and increased activism. This nurtured a sense of collective agency where 'participants achieve unity of effort in common purpose' (Bandura, 2006: 131). The common purpose being to tackle the concrete discrimination emanating from certain parents. Meyers (2008) details how in cases of harassment against teachers based on gender or sexual orientation there is a need for institutional support in the form of policies, robust training and consistency in terms of how the school responds to those parents. Evidently, preparation is key to minimise such conflicts and a school planning to effectuate LGBT+ inclusivity needs to proactively have these elements in place before encountering parental resistance to ensure the well-being of potentially vulnerable members of staff. Nonetheless, what Meyers neglects to anticipate is that no amount of forethought can necessarily protect staff and that reactions of parents and teachers are often unpredictable as these schools can still be caught off guard by parents coordinating specific attacks against individual teachers.

Essentially, teachers attempting this work must be cognisant of the fact that personal attacks can happen however, this can serve as a valuable opportunity for staff to rally together and as the data shows can reinforce collective determination to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. Another problem faced by teachers negotiating heteronormative discourse was the idea that there is 'no problem' so no need to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity.

#### **6.4 The problem of 'no problem'**

Aside from personal attacks, an equally frustrating discourse encountered by some participants was that of there not being a problem (regarding gender identity and sexuality) in the first place. This came mostly from parents and some staff advocating that as there is

'no problem' (with homophobia etc.,) there is no need to explicitly tackle LGBT+ equality in schools. This discourse emerges from a habitus which has not been ruptured in the face of a need to advocate for LGBT+ equality. There is often a generational element as Olivia highlights:

I spoke to my grandparents they were like, 'Really, you are getting gay children when they are at primary school?'

And this was repeated in many cases in the fields in which participants worked. Charlie explained:

There were lots of people, mostly those who had been teaching for a very long time who were like, 'Well I have always said good morning boys and girls and I don't see the problem with that they are only children, they are primary school children, they are not thinking about their sexuality, they are not thinking whether or not they will be transgender and you are making an issue out of it where it doesn't need to be an issue...' It upset some people in the sense that they didn't see there was a problem in the first place.

Sarah encountered colleagues who expressed a feeling of, 'Should we really be teaching this?' These comments tended to be, but not exclusively, from older colleagues and those who had been teaching in the same field for extended periods of time. This could be reflective of how the habitus contains a generational element (Bourdieu, 1977: 78) which is:

Produced by different modes of generation, that is, by conditions of existence which, in imposing different definitions of the impossible, the possible, and the probable, cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, and vice versa.

Some older teachers would have grown up in and had their own childhood and schooling habitus filtered by heteronormativity which informs their views of LGBT+ people.

Additionally, many of these teachers will have taught during the implementation of Section 28 which forbade the promotion of homosexuality in schools as a pretended family relationship. Also, it is understandable that if an issue has not already affected the self or family members it can be understandable why it might not be at the centre of your consciousness or an issue presenting as immediately problematic. Again, this underlines the importance of teachers critically reflecting upon their own biographies to examine the way heteronormativity has impacted upon their own practice and what they can do to challenge it.

The key to negotiating a traditional habitus is to understand that people brought up in heteronormative societies who have not had to question their own sexual identity or those of those around them will see the world through a heteronormative lens which appears as their 'common sense.' A lack of criticality of a field's practices often means individuals getting caught up in it both intellectually and emotionally and they begin to inhabit the field 'like a garment' (Bourdieu 2000: 143). The role of social justice oriented teachers is to provide compelling evidence of the necessity for LGBT+ inclusive practice to help rupture their habitus jolting them out of their heteronormative worldviews by calling it out and interrogating its impact on LGBT+ people. Teachers who want to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity must be vigilant about what they understand as common sense and help colleagues to unpick their own understanding of heteronormativity and how it has been developed through social environments (Bourdieu, 1991) at various points in history and serves certain interests at the expense of others. Gramsci (1971) highlights how our common sense or hegemony is often linked to our 'spontaneous consent' given over to bourgeois ideas and values which are produced through media, politics, religion and culture as common sense. Therefore, for those

educating in conservative fields social capital fostered through links with progressive colleagues and networks are even more valuable. Through this unpicking they can start to help colleagues explore how their own silence is an act of complicity (Hooks, 1994) in LGBT+ marginalisation and oppression.

Subsequently, through encountering these discourses, many of the participants documented a sense of frustration upon emerging from teacher training and encountering educational systems that are slow to change and less progressive than they anticipated. However, to interrupt heteronormativity it is important to firstly explore how it impacts one's own life and then begin the process of challenging it in the classroom. Then, teachers can begin to make others aware and engage them in the same process. This is a slow process but as the next chapter illustrates small changes build-up over time to create new norms transforming educational spaces. As well as challenging perceptions of there being no problem, teachers had to engage with wider discourses around the appropriateness of educating about LGBT+ inclusivity.

### **6.5 Navigating the discourse of appropriateness**

Alongside the discourse of no problem the participants spoke of a more problematic discourse which is used to avoid tackling issues related to gender and sexuality in schools: the discourse of what is appropriate to teach children in primary schools. 'They just said it was inappropriate to be teaching their children' (Sophie). Sarah had colleagues ask, 'Should we really be teaching this?' Their experiences reflect how supposedly controversial issues (Richardson, 1986), including those related to sexuality and gender (Elia 2000) are subjected to vigilant monitoring by the expert and public. These controversies are concerned with what Richard (1986: 27)

details as ‘different opinions, values and priorities, and, basically and essentially, with different material interests.’ They are the subject of vocal public discussion about what is considered ‘right, permissible, acceptable, and healthy, and what is not.’ (Ceplak, 2013: 164). And whilst hysteria over same-sex relationships has died down in recent years through widening acceptance of gender and sexual diversity (Nussbaum, 2018) the same desire to deem what is appropriate now focuses around children learning about transgender rights.

This discourse of appropriateness which stems from the hetero/homo binary which privileges heterosexuality at the expense of the ‘deviant’ other (Donelson and Rogers, 2004) can be so all-pervasive that it characterises how teachers think about LGBT+ inclusivity even whilst they advocate for it. Here Sophie demonstrates how this discourse subconsciously affects her thoughts and actions as she describes the ‘appropriateness’ of the resources made available to her students:

To make it appropriate for reception children all the way through to Year six, so that everyone could access something but it was to an appropriate level... so obviously, we weren’t going to reception and going into detail about the terminology of different things, you know we, as educators, know what is appropriate.

A similar vigilance was recounted by Olivia:

I remember the first time we watched *And Tango Makes Three*<sup>3</sup>, me and my teaching assistant being more like, ‘Huuuh’ [worried about their reaction] and all the kids just watching it and not caring and we were all like waiting for a reaction.

---

<sup>3</sup> Richardson, J. (2015) *And Tango Makes Three*. Little Simon. A children’s book based on the true story of two male penguins in a New York zoo who adopted and raised an abandoned egg/chick.

On an intellectual level, Sophie and Olivia understand that this work is necessary to help young people understand that LGBT+ people exist in society and can help erase feelings of stigma, shame and guilt about non-normative identity yet emotionally they display a hypervigilance about just how 'appropriate' that teaching is. Unconsciously, they are affected by what Giroux (1996) has referred to as a 'Walt Disneyfication' of school culture whereby students must be sheltered from the real world and injustice which deprives them of opportunities for developing empathy, understanding of the world and how to change it. Ultimately, as Olivia found in the children's reactions, it was rare that the children had a problem with the LGBT+ inclusive teaching rather the adults are the ones projecting a sense of apprehension and uncertainty.

Sophie and Olivia's examples highlight how structures and agents are ontologically inseparable as each enters into the other's constitution (Mouzelis, 2000) often producing complexity and confusion. They constantly imagine the perceived reaction of hypothetical other adults to their work and moderate themselves accordingly. To counteract this, teachers must grapple with their own internal conversations (Archer, 2003) reflecting upon their own reflections and asking if their thinking aligns with their intentions to embed LGBT+ inclusivity or with the aims of heteronormativity to fix into the place the universal, timeless nature of heterosexuality, the family and typical gender roles (Dowson in Giffney et al. 2009). They would also be well placed to counteract negative voices in the head with those of LGBT+ youth, LGBT+ friends and family, same-sex parents and progressive voices all of whom derive enormous value from inclusivity education.

Ultimately, Sophie expressed hope in the new generation of teachers:

The more new teachers that come into education, I think it will be something that is just accepted to have that older generation who are like, 'Oh we don't talk about that.'

It is important to remember that changing the heteronormative status quo will not happen automatically, instead it is brought into reality day by day by teachers willing to push boundaries through repetition of acts which deconstruct the hetero/other binary to actualise new possibilities in the classroom. After having explored how heteronormative discourse dictates which teaching and curriculum content is deemed appropriate. The next section explores further how even whilst advocating for LGBT+ inclusivity participants continued to embody heteronormativity.

## **6.6 Embodied heteronormativity**

As we have seen through the participants' data and due to its all-pervasive nature, heteronormative discourse affects each habitus. The wider effect is that it can silence teachers (Douglas et al, 1998), perpetuating discourses of invisibility around non-normative sexuality (Ladson-Billings, 2003) and make them cautious about engaging in LGBT+ inclusive education (Epstein, 2000).

In the previous section, Sophie described walking a tightrope with what she taught worried that if she got the teaching wrong she would 'get parents coming in raging.' She is vigilant of what she teaches always imagining the actions and thoughts of those who are resistant to this work within her own mind. This results in her constant policing of her language and behaviour in fear of imagined consequences (Goldstein, 2004) in what Foucault (1977) has described as a panoptic effect in which teachers regulate their behaviour in anticipation of

observation. This panoptic effect can result in participants regulating their own sexualities in the classroom. Whilst Charlie was out to his students and even brought his partner in to the classroom, this wasn't the case for the other LGBT+ participants. Alexander explained how:

I would never go into a classroom now or in the future and say ok you said that but one day I would like to find myself with a husband, I would never do those conversations as I don't think that's appropriate.

Interestingly, Alexander advocates and educates for LGBT+ inclusivity but deems his own sexuality inappropriate for the classroom. He appears to exhibit a double-consciousness (Du Bois, 1903) which continues to regard his sexuality through the eyes of the teacher who told him to 'man up' in his own childhood (see previous chapter). This reaffirms the impact of early schooling on the development of the habitus. It could be argued that Alexander's self-regulation makes him complicit in his own subordination (Bushnell, 2003) colluding in his own invisibility (Patai, 1992). On the other hand, the decision to reveal one's sexuality is a personal one and much has been written about benefits and disadvantages of coming out in the classroom (e.g. Gray, 2013). Evidently, teachers are entitled to boundaries between their public and private lives. Whilst no teacher (LGBT+ or not) should feel obliged to discuss their sexuality or relationship status, DePalma and Atkinson (2009a) remind us that what is worth Alexander, and other teachers in his position, considering is how much children benefit from the openness of LGBT+ role models in the classroom and the hope and reassurance their visibility can provide.

Charlie also exhibited regulation of his own sexuality even though he is open to both staff and students about being gay:

It's not the first thing I say when I introduce myself to people. I am very open with it. On the other hand, I am not someone who would rub it in their faces and talk about it all the time and never get off my high horse about it, it is just a part of me.

He responds to a common trope that gay people want to 'rub people's face in it' or flaunt their sexuality and must thus appear 'acceptably gay' (Gray, 2013:707). It reinforces how heteronormativity categorises the other as deviant and provocative. Instead what Charlie does is 'tone down' his sexuality to make it safer for public consumption (DePalma and Atkinson 2009a). However, this could also be viewed as a conscious or unconscious strategy by Charlie to help effectuate his LGBT+ inclusivity work as Bandura (2001: 8) highlights how:

Agents are not only planners and fore thinkers. They are also self-regulators. Individuals manage their behaviour by self-sanctions within a self-governing system. They do so by adopting behavioural standards against which they evaluate their performances. They respond with positive or negative evaluative self-reactions depending on how well their behaviour measures up to their adopted standards.

Charlie is aware of the difficulty of the work and adopts a strategic essentialist approach to his own sexuality to help ensure the implementation of his LGBT+ inclusivity work and if that includes some (perhaps temporary) regulation of his own sexuality that is a sacrifice he is willing to make to actualise his goals.

Heteronormativity, as one of the 'primary systems of power structuring our lives' (Cohen, 1997: 446) can be so all-pervasive that even advocates of LGBT+ inclusivity can still subconsciously manifest heteronormative discourses. Sophie's account of a serious case of homophobic bullying, which resulted in some children being excluded from the school,

illustrates how heteronormative discourse still manifest within those who advocate LGBT+ inclusivity:

We did have quite a bad case of homophobic bullying and it was then the Head had just taken over. He had to deal with it and he had to exclude some students because of it... because we had a boy in Year 6 who was quite erm quite a character you know he was overly dramatic and we had a group of boys, all your typical sporty boys erm who used to pick on him.

Sophie is keen to challenge homophobic bullying but the way she characterises the victim as 'quite a character' and 'over dramatic' insinuates campness or femininity in his behaviour. Contrast this with the antagonists a group of 'your typical sporty boys' it almost implies that their behaviour is normal (typical) and that by transgressing gender norms the victim was 'asking for it.' There is a need for constant vigilance in how we speak as heteronormativity is so pervasive that even allies passionate about this work can unconsciously describe these issues in ways that reinforce gender norms and privilege heterosexuality. After having explored the, often subconscious, effects of heteronormativity on the participants, the next section explores how neoliberalism presents another principle structural barrier to teachers keen to embed LGBT+ inclusivity education.

### **6.7 Negotiating neoliberalism**

As well as contending with heteronormativity, the other principle structural challenge teachers face when implementing social justice orientated pedagogy comes from the increasing alignment of neoliberal market forces with the education system (Ball, 2017, Apple et al, 2011). What I found from participants was that the effects of neoliberalism were not as overt as those of heteronormativity. I had anticipated time, bureaucracy and administration

being significant barriers to effectuating their LGBT+ projects. Evidently, neoliberalism has become so integral to our ways of thinking that as Paraskeva (2007) has described it becomes almost impossible to think outside of it. However, upon closer inspection it became evident how neoliberalism impacted their efforts in more subtle ways. Austerity and a lack of funding for education was one way neoliberal processes impacted their projects. Sophie describes:

The only trouble with the school is funding, so, I actually went out and bought some books that teach that people are different.

Nicole recognised how spending cuts in wider society meant schools are one of the only places where this kind of work can be done properly with young people:

There are so many cuts that have happened to the youth services that actually youth clubs and the different outlets that people will possibly be able to go to talk about these things, they are not there anymore. They need those opportunities within a school setting.

Another impact of reduced financial resources meant that training in LGBT+ equality and inclusivity would be affected. Stephanie lamented how:

Using the Stonewall resources was quiet daunting and I can imagine that if you haven't had a really good trainer... then you could easily get yourself tangled up in knots with what you are saying.

There are many charities out there like Stonewall and Mermaids which provide excellent resources. Nonetheless, schools must still pay for their services and with endemic budget cuts to education and high-stakes league tables does a school choose to spend its tight budget on training on social justice issues or academic ones that will improve the school's OFSTED rating and test results in the end of key stage SATs?

Furthermore, the participants' prioritising of LGBT+ inclusivity stemmed from a personal conviction and sense of wider responsibility towards the plight of marginalised groups which did not necessarily naturally spur their colleagues to the same level of action. An explanation for why wider social justice projects remain fringe projects in schools aligns with how neoliberalism prioritises our autonomy at the expense of responsibility towards one another (Pendenza & Lamattina, 2019). The logical consequence means that teachers in performative cultures are encouraged to put themselves first as they compete to survive in high pressured, performance driven cultures. It follows that as the wider struggles of marginalised groups are not measured or part of teacher performance management targets their plight can fall off the school radar. With the challenge towards heteronormativity diminished the system can go on perpetuating the status quo. Therefore, it takes tremendous will to both advocate for LGBT+ inclusivity and persuade others that our responsibility to one another is a fundamental priority not just as teachers but as members of society. Moreover, this greater understanding of difference contributes to a smoother social fabric which in turn benefits all individuals. This need not be the case with Durkheim highlighting that the moral obligations between citizen and the State should not merely be a spectator of individuals engaging in social life but rather should be "the very organ of social thought" (Durkheim, 2003, 1950: 51). Henceforth, such a society could very quickly put into place frameworks and infrastructure to support the disruption of heteronormativity and promotion of LGBT+ inclusivity massively increasing the agency of individuals to enact this work. However, obviously as has been seen throughout history such power can equally be wielded to suppress and erase non-heterosexual identities.

Consequently, the participants found themselves in a complex, contradictory historical context whereby neoliberalism has arguably made space for increased personal and financial

freedom which has played a significant role in enabling the LGBT+ movement to develop and prosper (D'Emilio, 1993) as it has allowed young people to leave the family home (which usually only happened to enter marriage) and be themselves. However, at the same time, its oppressive, all consuming individualising force significantly reduces agents' abilities to challenge and rewrite the status quo through its suppression of the idea that we have mutual responsibilities towards one another.

Their experiences highlight how schools have increasingly prioritised preparing students for the world of work, competitiveness and productivity for 'the knowledge economy' (Ball, 2017). In the process, social justice projects which are not deemed to have economic value are deprioritised meaning teachers must compile resources, schemes and teaching materials sometimes spending their own money to ensure this work is done. Neoliberal thought is the reason many teachers struggle to align their social justice values with an educational field focused on accountability and attainment in English and Maths. Colegrove and Zúñiga (2018: 189) describe this as putting:

teachers in situations in which how they are expected to teach is at odds with how they understand strong pedagogy and intuitively would like to teach.

The reason participants are able to effectuate their LGBT+ inclusivity projects is because they prioritise them in the face of accountability structures. They demonstrate an ideological commitment to realising social justice oriented projects in their fields of practice. The participants were not content to be mere 'technicians' who 'apply rules and procedures uncritically accepting standard school practices' (Villegas and Lucas 2002: 54) but instead were 'change agents,' (Burns Thomas and Niesz, 2012: 683) who saw schools as potential sites for promoting social equality.

I found it interesting how, rather than being constrained by neoliberal accountability structures, teachers appropriated these tools to advance their LGBT+ inclusivity projects.

Sarah described how:

We also record all of our incidents on [a behaviour management database] we have added homophobic language, transphobic language, biphobic language and we have actually separated those as well. So, it is just clear to see what sort of behaviour is reoccurring. [when asked if this has seen a decrease in incidents] Yes, yes we have.

And Sophie described analysing questionnaire data:

We do questionnaires every year, 'Have you heard this word or that word on the playground?' So, we are keeping an eye and making sure that it's not being used if we aren't hearing it.

Olivia and Eve used monitoring of planning and display work and lesson observations to ensure that the other teachers were teaching her LGBT+ inclusivity work consistently and meaningfully across the school. Participants often noted a correlation between their LGBT+ inclusivity work and decreases in homo, bi and transphobia, 'We haven't had a single incident since.' Research supports their findings with LGBT+ students experiencing less victimization when learning from LGBT+ inclusive curriculums (Kosciw et al 2012, 2014) and experiencing less violence and bullying (Thapa et al 2013: 814). There is growing evidence that inspectorial regimes like OFSTED which have been criticised for contributing to the accountability culture of education are now using their inspection frameworks to fail schools that refuse to tackle homophobia (Pells, 2017). The implication here is that teachers can use the very structures that limit agency and reduce the scope of the curriculum to their advantage which is reflective of how Gramsci (1971) has argued that to create counter-hegemonic education it is futile to

erase elite knowledge but instead it must be transformed to serve more progressive needs. Therefore, rather than teachers expending energy and time creating alternate realities they adapt the structures they are most familiar with to meet their needs. Having explored how participants negotiated neoliberal and heteronormative structural constraints, the next section explores the resources they drew upon to negotiate these constraints.

### **6.8 Employing social capital**

Having spent time understanding the constraints participants faced in realising their LGBT+ inclusivity projects, I was keen to explore what they considered to be the factors that helped them overcome challenges and realise their visions. After having engaged with Bourdieu's concept of habitus in the first chapter and how it can be analysed to understand participants' motivations for engaging in LGBT+ education, the concept of capital could be applied to understand how participants actualised their projects in the face of constraints.

The most prominent form of capital exercised in this study was social capital which can be described as comprising of social networks or 'relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 112) which comes from membership of a group:

Which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.

The participants deployed social capital in various ways. A principle one was through alliances with key authority figures in the field. Jayani knew that having support from the Head made actualising her inclusivity work easier:

The Head would support you with anything to do about equality. You never felt that the school wouldn't stand up for you with parents who were trying to stop conversations about ways of being.

Others, like Sophie, arrived in fields where key players (in her case the Head) had started the work and she could build upon the foundations and embed it further. Nicole used her contacts in the union to keep her up-to-date on policy and correct terminology, her links often signposted her to appropriate resources which informed her practice and training of staff back at school. Other participants drew on work with charities who provide talks, training, workshops and assemblies in schools.

David, who identifies as heterosexual, was initially unsure of how to begin teaching about LGBT+ inclusivity which he felt was outside his own lived experience so he drew upon the support of a mentor in another school who taught LGBT+ inclusive schemes with calmness and confidence:

It was with kind of a calmness almost, you know, with the mass hysteria that has descended. I kind of adopted his kind of calm, open, chilled approach. It's just a natural progression, when I was doing supply I then would carry on with that approach.

Drawing on that contact and the example he set helped David to continue the work when media attention started to cause hysteria around the scheme the school was using. He drew upon a role model and as McDermott (2011) highlights this work can be psychologically and socially demanding but sharing the work with others makes it easier.

As well as establishing networks within school, participants were equally adept at establishing networks outside the school field and used them to help realise their projects. These networks

consisted of other schools, charities and outside agencies. Charlie used his relationship to normalise the idea that LGBT+ people exist throughout the community:

All the children know that I am gay and my partner Jamie... the children know him quite well. He comes to school and helps out. He's a scientist. He works in medical research in London so when we do a topic on antibiotics and antibiotic resistance he comes in and does a session with the children and brings all his laboratory work in.

Bringing his partner into the classroom accomplishes two goal, the first showing students that LGBT+ people exist in all areas of the community, doing all sorts of jobs. Successful LGBT+ people can be role models inspiring all students to pursue their dreams (Snapp et al 2015). Secondly, he de-essentialises the teaching of LGBT+ equality. The fact that his partner is gay is secondary in relation to the Science he is teaching the children. Charlie, through his openness about his sexuality with the children and the presence of his partner, benefits his pupils through his openness as he prepares them for a diverse society (DePalma and Jennet, 2007). However, bearing in mind the steps Charlie took to normalise LGBT+ identities as a valid and valuable part of the fabric of society, it could be that the traditionally masculine domain of science allows more affordance to Charlie's partner than if he was a dancer or drag queen.

A combination of social capital from different sources helps teachers effectuate their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. Stephanie described:

I have built a relationship with the local secondary school which is very keen on diversity, sort of awareness and LGBT+ rights... I know I have backup, it sounds militant... in the support from the secondary school... I have support from Stonewall, I can say we are school champions we are you know. I have support and resources from Mermaids too.

Knowing resources and support is out there helps teachers feel more confident and better prepared in effectuating their LGBT+ inclusivity work. Many of the teachers had received training from LGBT+ charities which gave them confidence as well as providing networks to support their work. These teachers capitalise on their social capital whether for knowledge, support or to actualise their projects. The implication for teachers considering this work is that working with like-minded individuals can validate the work and creates a sense of shared endeavour. Networks can be tapped into to draw strength, knowledge and support when adversity arises. The relationship Stephanie had with the secondary school is an example of what Portes' (1998) refers to as instrumental social capital where a development of relationships is beneficial to both sides achieving their own goals. In Stephanie's case, she is provided with affective and cognitive support through dissemination of knowledge and the building of relationships whilst the high school benefits from primary schools making firm foundations to this work which makes it easier to embed once the pupils reach the secondary school. They can work together to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 1995).

Charlie was an example of a participant who had developed strong relationship with all the key players in his school and was easily able to realise his LGBT+ inclusivity project. Indeed, Charlie had the most accumulated combined capital of the participants, having robust social capital in the support of leadership, governors, colleagues and the dioses. His social capital extended out to networks and charities who he worked with to advance his projects and legitimise his work. Additionally, he employed cultural capital in his role as Deputy (a privileged position within the field), and was pursuing his own postgraduate work which all afforded him the ability to hire new staff who are habitus-compatible:

I was very lucky in a sense that I had a Head teacher and a governing body that were fully behind me and therefore everyone else had to step into line more or less and the vast majority of people were very happy to go along with it.

Charlie is a good example of how capitals can be mobilised to achieve projects. It is worth noting that his role as Deputy affords him influence in the recruitment process at his school where he describes being on the lookout for like-minded teachers who will strengthen and perpetuate the LGBT+ inclusive ethos of the school field. Charlie experienced first-hand how, through careful leveraging of social capital, new norms can be established making the field more easily malleable meaning for Charlie it has become 'a playground' rather than a 'battlefield' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). It is important to understand that other forms of privilege are also at play, as a confident, middle class, white man with a degree in Maths these are also advantageous forms of cultural capital at Charlie's disposal that may not be readily available to others. However, his commitment and relentlessness in creating a field that reflects his own habitus shows what can be possible when accumulated capitals are deployed in receptive fields of work.

On the other hand, Stephanie had less accumulated capital than Charlie and her experience contrasted sharply with his demonstrating how different agents have different amounts of capital and capacity for using it in the field (Morberg et al, 2012). She was keen to develop LGBT+ inclusive work due to her own interest in student mental health issues and wellbeing and leveraged her cultural capital in the form of being pastoral lead and having a degree in psychology. However, she did not have senior leadership experience and worked in a field of staff sceptical of her LGBT+ inclusivity plans. She described how networks with LGBT+ charities who supported her in the realisation of her work:

It can get lonely when you are in your own school doing your own thing and it is sort of nice to know there are other people out there who think it is a good idea.

Eventually, it took the visit to the school of a member of a LGBT+ charity to help highlight the importance of this work to her colleagues:

When this person, lovely perfectly reasonable person, turned up and was just really good at communicating, very personable, very likeable, very lovely and just happened to be a lesbian with a transgender child nobody batted an eyelid because she was able to just communicate with them and what was slightly irritating was that she said nothing different to what I had said at the staff meeting a few months before! But they wouldn't take my word for it [laughs]. I felt that they needed to see a real-life member of the LGBT+ community [laughs]! To sort of change their view, which I thought was interesting.

The development of social networks has been criticised by some like Frankham (2006) as a 'silver bullet' or panacea for education reform, but experiences like Stephanie's highlight just how invaluable networks are to developing agency in less supportive fields. These networks can provide crucial support and encouragement especially for teachers working in less supportive fields. Stephanie and Charlie's experiences highlight how whilst each participant may have the same ideal, the fields in which they operate often differ in the affordance they offer and thus how effective the employment of their capitals can be.

Furthermore, access to outside resources can be a lifeline for teachers like Stephanie who are less supported in their field. Lipponen and Kumpulainen (2011) explain how professional communities and programs can help teachers avoid the isolating nature of teaching practice and provide them with space to develop sustained dialogue and interaction rather than

didactic processes. Teachers trying to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity in fields that are less supportive of their projects can benefit from developing links with outside agencies to gain the support and encouragement lacking in their own context. This can help them to accomplish projects they might not achieve on their own (Minckler, 2014). Additionally, Bourdieu (1977) reminds us that capitals take time to accumulate and that we must not get disheartened if we perceive ourselves to lack social capital, it can be built up as teachers gain more experience increasing the quality and quantity of their networks (Minckler, 2014, Ball, 2017 and Halpern, 2005) offering greater scope to realise their projects.

Whilst Charlie experienced a field receptive to his projects and Stephanie had to work hard to accumulate and deploy social capital to effectuate change, sometimes participants came up against others deploying their own capitals with opposite aims which attempt to sabotage or erase their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. These competing values can lead to a constant competition for power (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Olivia encountered resistance from her Deputy, a position of significant cultural capital in the field, when trying to install a gender-neutral toilet in the school:

She went and looked at the health and safety regulations and quoted them in bold err, I had lots of lovely emails [sarcasm] where they were highlighted, 'It's against health and safety regulations,' we don't know what the issue was...even though, the Head teacher is really involved but it's almost like that's been done it had to be really errm not secretive but like you know it's happened but we haven't made a big song and dance about it.

Even though the Head is supportive of the project, the Deputy carries enough capital within the field that this project could be significantly challenged and impeded in its realisation. This example emphasises how fields are often:

Sites of struggle where social agents strive for different forms of capital that gives them a position and a place in the social structure (Costa and Murphy, 2015: 7).

Without the support of the Head, Olivia, who does not have enough cultural capital of her own, may have had to backtrack on the gender-neutral toilet, but with the support of her Head (who by status will possess the most capital of an individual within the school) she could engage her social capital part way towards realising her project. At some point, it appears there was a breakdown in communication or a lack of leadership on the part of the Head. A team needs to be on the same page to effectuate this work and must be able to trust one another. A trust which Putnam (1995) argues, is essential to effectively engage social capital in the realisation of shared objectives.

It is clear from these participants' experiences that mobilising their cultural and social capital facilitates the enactment of their agency in pursuing their LGBT+ inclusive projects. The relationships they build in and outside of school are key in developing the collective knowledge and activist potential of a field. The more social capital is fostered in pursuit of their LGBT+ inclusive goals the more new shared norms can be established with the values of equality and inclusion reinforced in the field. Nonetheless, Stephanie's experience demonstrates that capitals have no universal value and are dependent upon the social context and structures of the field (Riaño, 2011) but by developing wider links inside and outside of a school field teachers can better position themselves to start this work. The more successfully participants mobilise social capital to strengthen the commitment, knowledge and advocacy of staff towards LGBT+ inclusivity and are thus better prepared to face the wider structural challenges they will encounter once they actualise their projects.

Subsequently, teachers attempting to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity ought to take stock of the social and cultural capital they have at their disposal and reflect upon how it intersects with issues of gender and power and how it can be best employed to advance their projects. They must develop networks outside their own field to help develop the knowledge and skills of those around them and mitigate against 'group think.' Wider social networks then can often provide a safety net when challenges arise. The next section explores another powerful tool teachers engaged to actualise their projects: critical reflection.

### **6.9 Engaging critical reflection**

Another powerful tool teachers had at their disposal to negotiate structural challenges was a strong commitment to critical reflection. Teachers critically analysed their practice from a range of perspectives which helped them to enact their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. This criticality was transformative as teachers grappled with their ideals, what they stand for and what they are learning about themselves. The participants in this study grappled with and reconciled the influence of the personal on the professional. John described an instance of suffering a personal attack because of his sexuality from a parent:

I know I am still quite young, I think had I been quite a bit older I think I would not have taken it personally as I used to. I just had to put on my professional front and refer back to the school's policies, promoting our duty to promote British values of acceptance and tolerance.

He had felt personally attacked by the incident but instead of allowing it to negatively impact him and his work he drew in wider perspective from his critical reflection. Also, he anchored his work within the wider structure of the school field which has policies in place which

supported him and his work. Sarah also drew on perspective to learn from her biography as a student about how she would treat a friend differently now:

[talking about a 'tomboy' friend in her youth who was often called a lesbian] I felt sorry for her all the time and also for me I told her, 'Natalie maybe change your hair so that people don't think that.' How ridiculous and that's what we don't want the children to think to change yourself so that people don't have an opinion of you. But now with this knowledge, when the children in my class grow up I hope the way they help their friends wouldn't be the way that I had done it and I did it out of you know... out of love and looking after my friend and I didn't know any different but... the way we would educate them now would be different.

Sarah scrutinised the assumptions underpinning her actions (Brookfield, 1995) and critiqued how she played a role in perpetuating heteronormativity and was the only participant to openly critique the privilege afforded to her by her heterosexual identity. She used her own self-dialogue to acquire self-knowledge (Myers in Archer 2003). This self-dialogue is key, as her reflections are a crucial step before she can change her actions and thinking to disrupt the heteronormative discourse she once perpetuated. Her reflections are symptomatic of someone engaging with their internal conversation (Archer, 2003) rewriting it in alignment with their values and using this new knowledge to transform themselves and their work environment. Fundamentally, training in enquiry is crucial for teachers to enable them to recognise how their words and actions can both perpetuate and disrupt heteronormativity. Darling-Hammond (2000) explains how learning to look at the world from multiple perspectives is crucial if we are to develop meaningful pedagogy that can reach diverse learners and in this case support LGBT+ youth. At this point in the research, I was keen to

explore how this well-developed critical reflection as applied to their understanding of their own sexualities in the field.

### **6.10 Negotiating sexuality in the field**

This internal deliberation and reflection extended into how teachers negotiated the enablements and constraints afforded by their own sexualities whilst attempting to realise their LGBT+ inclusivity projects. Some of the participants were aware that they may be accused of 'pushing an agenda.' This is a powerful tool forming part of a heteronormative discourse which discredits those who seek to change the status quo, it creates suspicion and implies shady, ulterior motives. It suggests manipulation and forcing others to take on their opinions. These discourses emerge when 'powerless and marginalized groups challenge the expectation that they should be invisible and silent' (Patai, 1992:1). Consequently, as soon as an LGBT+ teacher steps into a classroom they are faced with questions about how they choose to negotiate their own sexuality. They are instantly confronted with a habitus that is not prepared for their existence. Therefore, I wanted to see if there were any affordances their sexualities provided the participants as they carried out their projects.

Some of the participants detailed how they or their colleagues had been targeted because of their sexuality. Sophie described how her new Head was attacked for his LGTB+ inclusive curricula advocacy in the school:

It was under him that the Stonewall and the LGBT+ work was rolled out and I think another thing that makes me so passionate about it was that a lot of them kind of attacked him. He is gay and they saw it as him trying to brainwash their children.

This taps into a common discourse around LGBT+ enforcing an 'agenda' onto the mostly straight population. She went on to describe the impact of the attacks on him:

He was upset by it and you could tell it affected him. It affected all staff members actually, they kind of picked out that they could kind of tell the ones who were more supportive of the [LGBT+] week and kind of picked those out for special treatment. You could kind of see them, you know when your shoulders go kind of heavy, preparing yourself for the next thing when you go out and collect your children first thing in the morning. It was all very much we had maybe three weeks of that in the lead up and it was very unpleasant looking back now.

These attacks are embodied in how their colleagues are described as moving; their shoulders holding tension. For the LGBT+ staff this weight is heavier as their very existence and identities are being challenged.

Interestingly, Sophie described how attacks were not just aimed at the gay Head but at the straight Year 6 teacher reinforcing the idea that straight allies are not exempt from verbal abuse and harassment when implementing LGBT+ themes in the classroom (Flores, 2014). Indeed, there are complications both for straight allies and LGBT+ teachers as each must grapple with being accused of either pushing an agenda (Martino and Potvin, 2016) or not having the lived experience to be informed enough to teach this work (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009c). Ultimately, heterosexual teachers are crucial allies in helping effectuate LGBT+ inclusive practice. Allies, which are defined by Bishop (In Potvin, 2016: 13) as those who recognise their 'unearned privilege' from society and take responsibility for changing these patterns, are crucial in demonstrating that LGBT+ inclusivity is not just a minority issue or part of 'an agenda'. Sarah describes:

I think with me talking about LGBT openly [as a heterosexual woman] and clearly encouraging questions. I think it made them realise that actually straight people talk about it as well it's not just the gay community that talk about being gay. It is in our everyday lives.

Olivia adds how from her perspective 'I think it is easier for the parent to kind of go, 'Oh ok. She just wants everyone to get on.' Consequently, heterosexual teachers, as key allies, need to be as visible doing this work to challenge the idea that this work is only perpetuated by LGBT+ people as part of a wider 'agenda.' Consequently, teachers should prepare themselves for criticism and not anticipate immunity instead focusing their efforts into centralising their commitment to social justice and creating strong arguments in defence of their projects. Alternatively, one's sexuality can also function as a form of embodied capital derived from lived experience of being part of a minority which can help legitimise and provide authority to what a teacher is saying. Alexander could do this as he used his sexuality to teach others in college about being LGBT+ and those experiences went on to inform his work as a teacher in primary schools training staff and students. Out members of the LGBT+ community like Charlie also provide a human face to what can be an abstract issue particularly in smaller towns and rural areas.

### **6.11 Summary**

This chapter explored the impact of heteronormativity and neoliberalism; two structural constraints that impacted upon the realisation of the participants' LGBT+ inclusivity projects. Section one explored how to counter resistance from parents or colleagues based on religious belief, teachers must engage in dialogue and try to understand their reasoning and be prepared to offer counter-arguments emphasising the school's role in reflecting the full range

of diversity of society and its responsibility towards LGBT+ youth. This chapter explored how personal attacks can happen but may be opportunities for staff to come together and reinforce their commitment to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. This chapter also engaged with how heteronormativity manifests in different ways and that critical reflection and vigilance are key tools to challenge the 'common sense' ideals about what is appropriate to teach. The chapter also explored how teachers negotiate neoliberalism in the classroom and how structures of accountability can be co-opted to actualise social justice oriented goals.

The second section of the chapter explored how teachers must reflect on the capitals available to them and be readily prepared to employ them in the realisation of their goals. Teachers are advised to develop their social capital through strong networks inside and outside of their field of practice to develop knowledge and skills and provide a safety net when encountering challenges. Next, the importance of critical reflection was highlighted in how it can empower teachers to question the status quo and develop self-knowledge. Finally, the chapter explored the potential difficulties and benefits from being an openly LGBT+ teacher in the classroom and the positive impact that can have on LGBT+ youth. The next chapter asked the participants to reflect upon the impact of their LGBT+ teaching and how it has changed their schools and how their practice has developed. In analysing the participants' stories recommendations emerged for other teachers considering or attempting to implement LGBT+ inclusivity within their own practice. The final chapter explores the wider recommendations that can be drawn from the participants' experiences to help inspire other teachers to advocate for and embed LGBT+ inclusive education.

## **Chapter 7: What lessons can be drawn from participants' attempts to successfully embed LGBT+ inclusive practice?**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter explored the wider structural challenges teachers faced in implementing their LGBT+ inclusivity work. It engaged with how these structures impacted upon their practice and the strategies they drew upon to negotiate these challenges. A principle aim of this thesis is to explore the experiences of teachers who have been successful in embedding their LGBT+ inclusive education over time in their practices. Consequently, this chapter focuses on how teachers have embedded this work as opposed to teaching it in a more tokenistic manner. It returns to many of the themes already explored in this research so far and analyses them from the perspective of what recommendations can be drawn. The chapter starts by exploring the notion of creating an LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus oriented around celebrating LGBT+ identities with a focus on language and terminology usage. It returns to the concept of interrupting heteronormativity through exploration of narratives that illustrate how that interruption happens in practice. Additionally, the concept of the habitus reflection framework is presented drawing upon the participants' experiences which can be used by teachers to help locate and reflect upon key moments in their own biographies which may help teachers to develop motivation to prioritise LGBT+ inclusive education within their own practices. The next section explores the role of critical thinking in developing a mindset which challenges injustice and oppression in society as well as helping some students to reconcile contradictory habitus. This section draws upon Freire's concept of 'problem posing' education to engage students' criticality in making this teaching relevant to their own lives. The final section explores how teachers can move beyond essentialist

teaching and embed LGBT+ inclusivity within the wider ethos of the school it also asks where next for those that are successfully embedding this practice.

## **7.2 Developing an LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus**

Primary school is a crucial age in a child's habitus development and teachers have a crucial role in shaping their values, beliefs and perceptions about others. Participants recognised that children learn to be homophobic, biphobic and transphobic and are not born that way. Many participants described their younger students as blank canvases, describing how it was unusual for younger children to be homophobic unless they are exposed to it in the family. They described how homophobic language is part of 'learnt phrases from home' (Nicole). John described reading *And Tango makes Three* to a group of six-year-olds and how they reacted to the two male penguins adopting a baby penguin:

I shared a story a few years ago with them and it was really interesting. I was just reading it like any other story and the children just really don't even sort of notice [its LGBT+ theme] in a way which is really nice.

Their experiences are reflective of wider literature which finds that from age six upwards children's perceptions, beliefs and values about others crystalize (Issacs and Bearison, 1986). On the other hand, Stephanie's experience differed from the other participants finding that fixed gender stereotypes were already apparent within her Year 1 children (aged five to six). Her experience suggests that we must not be too hasty in deciding that all young children are free from prejudice and her experience underlines just how receptive children are to outside stimuli and how work to challenge gender stereotypes and prejudice must begin as soon as children enter the school environment.

Whilst some have criticised schools as being a drop in the ocean in terms of child development unable, as Bernstein (1970) writes, to compensate for society or as Luhmann (1998: 143) more critically states; that representation will not necessarily lead to ‘the realization of the latter’s normalcy, and finally a happy end to discrimination.’ Bourdieu (1974) has written extensively about the impact schooling makes in nurturing the habitus. Whilst the habitus can be individual it can also be a collective phenomenon (Kelly and Lusi 2006). Consequently, teachers have an active role in shaping the collective habitus of the pupils they teach at school. Ceplak (2013: 167) argues that school:

Has an influence on the child’s value system already with the selection of facts which it mediates, and with the implicit value judgments about them.

And whilst research has found that as early as KS2 children can internalise the idea that being gay is something wrong or to be laughed at (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a) there is research that suggests that if this work is started early enough in schools real change can be made. One prominent example is the FAIR act in California where the research of Snapp et al 2015 into schools that had embedded robust LGBT+ inclusive education, found they had great reductions in LGBT+ related bullying compared to those not engaged in such initiatives. This research is enhanced by the findings of Kosciw et al (2012, 2014) and Thapa et al, 2013) who find that LGBT+ inclusive curriculums reduce victimisation, violence and bullying towards LGBT+ youth.

Charlie, who had been teaching LGBT+ positive curriculum for over five years, found a gradual change in the whole ethos of the school. He details how change is almost taken for granted and only noticed upon the presence of a new child, not accustomed to the norms of the school’s LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus:

I think it's because of the reaction of the other children, they [the new pupils] feed off the other children and when you come into a culture of 'that's just normal' and 'that's just accepted' you then have nothing but to fall into that, you can't make an issue out of that, you can't then you know have a problem with it because no one else does, you fall into that ethos.

The new children entering the field soon start to accommodate to its inclusive norms which are then internalised into their own habitus. Costa and Murphy (2015:23) explain that:

The dialectical confrontation between habitus and field - other than the field of origin – results in a degree of accommodation, where the habitus accepts the legitimacy of the new field's structure and is, in turn, structured by it, thus enabling a modified habitus.

This process is then perpetuated in Charlie's school because enough work had been done that a tipping point had been reached whereby traditional heteronormative structures had been eroded to be replaced with an ethos inclusive of LGBT+ identities.

Evidently, minority teachers or motivated allies can't achieve hegemony on their own and need to gain a majority consensus to create the LGBT+ inclusive habitus. Participants agreed that all staff need to be trained to tackle homo, bi and transphobia and need a competent knowledge of language around gender and sexuality. This ensured that children experienced a consistent positive message from all staff. Charlie detailed a process that was typical of many of the participants:

Everyone has to be involved; cleaners, kitchen staff, caretakers, office staff, all the teachers, all the LSAs [Lunchtime Supervisor Assistants]. I want everyone involved as if we are doing safeguarding training... Everyone has to be singing from the same song sheet.

We can't have people in the office saying different things than the people in the classroom. You have got to have it across the board.

The teachers understood that achieving hegemony depends upon consensus production (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) and that to achieve an LGBT+ inclusive habitus means getting everyone on the same page, presenting facts and knowledge, challenging misconceptions and appealing to their emotions and ideals of justice and equality. School wide support is crucial to effectuate this work as minority teachers are not numerous enough to effectuate it on their own and it must not fall solely on their shoulders (Richard, 2015).

Whilst participants took steps to erode heteronormativity and create LGBT+ inclusive habitus in their schools more work could be done to extend the LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus outside of the school particularly to feeder secondary schools. There is a need for successful schools to partner with other schools and develop networks through expanding their social capital. This is especially true for feeder primary schools as some participants worried that their hard work would be undone when students entered the new collective habitus of secondary school. Charlie commented:

I do worry that the secondary school will undo a bit of what we have done and you do hope that if you have put that message in there early enough and if they have that understanding it sort of stays with them and then they might be able to impart that on to different people.

Networks amongst feeder schools could be crucial in establishing an LGBT+ positive habitus amongst primary cohorts who will join the same secondary school at the same time and mean that the work started in primary school carries on into secondary. These networks could also be developed through academy chains or cluster schools where knowledge and best practice

is distributed. Nicole had made efforts to extend networks and had used social media to raise awareness of LGBT+ equality issues through the schools Facebook page getting over 7000 likes in the process.

Some participants noted how this work had then left the classroom to characterise relationships students have with their family and friends outside of school thus perpetuating work done in the classroom. Charlie shared how his students had chastised their parents for using terms like 'you're gay' and reflected upon them being proactive with the work rather than reactive and described the children as seeing themselves as 'agents of change,' able to make the world more equal through their words and actions.

It is important to recognise the need for flexibility in the new collective inclusive habitus participants seek to forge. There is always a risk it can become dogmatic which can harden opposition at a time when dialogue and understanding are needed. Participants may then find themselves in what Bourdieu (1992: 248-253) describes as the 'double bind' where, as researchers employ academic tools to break from common senses, they must be wary of simply replacing lay common sense with academic or learned common sense. For Bourdieu, the key to escaping this 'double bind' is through constant critical reflection (Burke 2011). The double bind for the participants involves creating a new LGBT+ inclusive status quo and not questioning and critiquing it to ensure it is fit for purpose, adaptable and flexible. A counter-habitus must always remain in negotiation with changing fields and cultures and historical contexts. It must allow for teachers and parents to express frustrations and doubts and remain adaptive to shifting fields. The next section explores the key role of language and terminology in the inclusive collective habitus.

### **7.3 Fluency in the language of gender and sexuality**

To create an inclusive collective habitus, all staff need to be fluent and confident in the discourses surrounding gender and sexuality. Participants described how a fear of saying the wrong thing was often a main concern colleagues had when this work was introduced in their schools and just as a traditionalist discourse can be internalised so can a discourse of political correctness. Consequently, teachers must regulate their speech to accommodate competing ideologies. This is difficult and a key block in engaging colleagues in this work. Speaking terminology with ease gave staff confidence when challenging prejudice and empowered teachers afraid of using the wrong words or offending. Participants spoke fluently in the language of gender and sexual orientation and recognised the power of words. They critiqued words like tolerance and found them lacking as Sarah explained it is about 'being open-minded, accepting of other people and we also say it's not a choice.' Crucially, John insisted that a sound understanding of language could help students understand terms they might not come across at home or worse might be being used in a derogatory way outside of school. Interestingly, none of the participants had been taught how to negotiate this language through their teacher training but instead proactively developed it themselves.

Another way teachers slowly changed the hegemonic order was through their speech. Some teachers gave mantras or phrases to colleagues to help tackle misconceptions and help speak LGBT+ inclusivity into existence. Olivia reminded colleagues having trouble with parents to say 'it is the law and it is school policy.' Sarah described how giving out scripts to help staff deal with homo, bi and transphobic language made staff feel confident and helped promote

consistency across the school. These mantras were common across schools and as Jayani noted they helped reinforce the 'culture of our school':

I always wanted to normalise, so whenever we talked about equality between genders I tried to bringing in sexuality as well. I would say you know what our values are, 'We are not sexist, we are not racist, we are not homophobic.'

These mantras which are easily memorised and repeatable are an effective way to erode heteronormativity which needs constant repetition to be troubled (Butler, 1990). Teachers cannot afford to be complacent and must maintain this constant repetition which must be sustained until new norms are forged and even then they are still vulnerable to the all-encompassing nature of heteronormativity.

Despite the participants' successes with the use of mantras there is a need for caution in their use as controlling how teachers speak can undo the very teacher agency and critical thinking these projects seek to foster. Additionally, not all teachers may appreciate being given scripts and may see this as further evidence of how education has become 'de-theorized, technicized [and] deintellectualized' (Hill, 2004: 517). However, repeatedly using these mantras, which are powerful, memorable and concise, helps create new discourses that confront the dominant assumptions implicit in heteronormative thinking. Also, participants must reflect upon how they reconcile these mantras if they don't hold these views about gender and sexuality themselves this work can then impact on the agency of other teachers. Although arguably, if teachers do not support the ethos of a school and its values they have the choice to find a school more compatible with their values.

A principle preoccupation of participants in terms of language was the use of the term 'boys and girls'. Charlie explained:

We need to avoid as much as possible saying, 'Good morning boys and girls and we need to say instead, 'Good morning children.' In the same way that we wouldn't say, 'Good morning blacks and whites' or 'Good morning Muslims and Christians.'

These binaries reinforce the idea that there are two types of children perpetuating the idea that acting outside of predetermined roles can be dangerous as it violates deep cultural, religious and societal standards (Giffney et al. 2009). However, Charlie questioned the common sense which constructs the collective habitus challenging it as not fit for purpose or inclusive. He is determined to move beyond what Carlson (2002) describes as the 'safe harbours' of settled educational practice. This queering of the status quo leads to new possibilities for ways of talking, acting and thinking in schools and erodes heteronormative ideals which preference one gender over another. Over time, these efforts build-up to create post-heteronormative space in schools.

#### **7.4 Interrupting heteronormativity**

As normalisation is spoken into actuality through small acts of interrupting hegemonic heteronormativity so too can the new collective LGBT+ inclusive habitus be spoken and acted into actuality. Participants who had been embedding LGBT+ inclusivity over several years noticed changes in how children spoke about gender and sexuality. Alexander explained the openness in students' abilities to talk about LGBT+ issues:

There's a little boy in my class now who will say that his cousin is gay, his cousin has a boyfriend and is gay so he got involved in the conversation and it just becomes a conversation.

A celebratory approach to LGBT+ identities allowed Charlie to come out to his pupils and now they recognise his relationship through everyday talk that normalises his relationship. This would happen through casual Monday morning conversations about what students got up to at the weekend where he would share what he got up to at the weekend for example telling them he had been to see a new film and the children would ask if his boyfriend had enjoyed the film too. These casual exchanges are evidence of how these participants have reached a moment whereby the habitus created in the school is inclusive enough for these normalising conversations to happen. They have, as DePalma and Atkinson (2009c: 884) show, allowed these identities to be 'talked into a state of ordinariness.' Do Mar Castro et al (2011) detail how these transformations do not happen overnight but take place on the level of social microstructures through counter practices, strategies of equivocation and counter knowledge. This means teachers creating safe space to discuss LGBT+ identities, learn about LGBT+ history and issues and constantly challenge gender stereotypes through their talk and appearance. Charlie demonstrated the results of a steady, constant approach to interrupting heteronormativity and normalising LGBT+ identities over a sustained period of time. He and his colleagues were committed to 'troubling' traditional gender constructs (Butler, 1990) and sexual orientation representation and their efforts reveal that 'all the distinctions and rules that compromise social fields are fundamentally arbitrary' (Samuel, 2013: 401). This can be positive news for those committed to changing the status quo in pursuit of more egalitarian schooling.

David drew parallels between work to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity and how wider societal expectations around gender, teachers and education had changed giving more affordance to teachers to push the boundaries in terms of LGBT+ representation:

When I first started teaching I was one of the first males in a predominantly female industry, I felt quite a lot of kind of... almost, 'Hang on wait a minute you are a male, in a classroom with kids, can we trust you?' But that has kind of died a death a lot because there are more and more male teachers now... I mean five or seven years ago, mention the word gay in the classroom and there would be absolute uproar. It has changed a little bit, it is actually ok, it's not a swear word, I mean it has always meant happy and it has kind of become a lot more normal.

David's experience is reflective of how men once had to navigate parental suspicions about their presence in the classroom (Martino and Berrill, 2003) in what has traditionally been a female domain. Experience that could end in abuse towards male practitioners (Sumison, 1999). His experience is one of hope as it illustrates how norms can shift over time. Ultimately, David links his work to wider societal change and utilises it to support the actualising of his project. He draws support from the idea that his school environment is evolving and must reflect the times in which we live.

Sophie also witnessed a wider change in norms after just one year of LGBT+ inclusive teaching. The first year saw protest and teachers personally attacked for attempting this work:

There have been less issues this year. Actually, looking back to last year, we have had a lot of issues compared to this year. They [the parents] have kind of accepted that we aren't teaching anything inappropriate.

Sophie and her team demonstrated a disposition for perseverance for once they initiated the work, overcame challenges from parents and colleagues and continued to teach, they reached a space where their projects started to actualise in meaningful ways. DePalma and Atkinson (2009c) describe this process as 'gradually wearing out a spring' if we see the spring

as characterised by its resistance. Additionally, this result can be incredibly empowering which Dewey (1933) and Schön (1996) describe helps individuals towards greater states of self-actualisation as they discover within themselves their own potentiality to effectuate real change in their field of practice.

Fundamentally, the teachers were pragmatic in realising that boundaries are eroded slowly over time. They understood that there is no quick fix and that schools need to be proactive rather than reactive. Alexander described a local secondary school completely unprepared for a male student who appeared in makeup and a dress one day at school. Charlie expressed his frustration at a local school that had not laid any LGBT+ inclusive foundations:

They want a quick fix, 'We have this child who is transitioning,' they have come to us and asked, 'What do we do?' You think, well it is really difficult, we have been doing this for five years and we would find that a challenge we would have to think about how we adapt and change and support the family and that child but we are five years down the road, we have the ground work and foundations there.

The teachers in the partner school do not realise that both their teachers and students need to, as Smyth et al (2012:19) point out, learn and acquire:

Dispositions and understandings about how to relate to people, how to experience and inhabit institutions [like schooling] how to relate to their environment, communities, neighbourhoods, regions and the nation, globally, as well as to 'big ideas' long after the content they learn in classrooms is obsolete.

If they have not taken the time to build a foundation of collective LGBT+ inclusive habitus with their pupils and teachers, then when faced with the challenge of accommodating a child who is questioning their gender identity they are evidently going to flounder. This further

highlights how important pre-emptive work around LGBT+ inclusivity is crucial in all primary schools. Eventually, this means that students who identify, or will go on to identify, as LGBT+ will have an easier road during a difficult and often traumatic moment in their development.

Disruption of heteronormativity happens in a variety of ways not just through the language teachers use. The participants were not just critiquing the system but were actively articulating and creating the alternate reality they sought. Some, like John, used their appearance to challenge heteronormative ideals about gender. This is a powerful way to disrupt heteronormativity as it is a constant visual reminder of the alternate ways of expressing gender that exist outside the norm:

For a large part of the year I have had painted nails [...] you know that caused a lot of inquisitiveness with the children but I feel like they are very, they asked once and I said, 'What do you think of them?' and they said, 'Oh yeah they look nice,' and that was it. That was the end of the conversation.

John's appearance ruptures heteronormativity by challenging hegemonic ideals of masculinity which often erases and stigmatises certain ways of being a man (Sinclair, 2017). His appearance (his embodied habitus) provides windows of possibility of gender expression for his students. Through his being, he is deconstructing the hetero/other binary resisting heteronormativity. His clothes and painted nails invoke what Pennell (2016) refers to as a constant passive resistance which can invoke change in the classroom. Youdell (2006a) would refer to John's as an 'impossible' body in an educational space which has great potential for disrupting dominant discourse. Although described as passive resistance there is no doubt that this act is a brave one, one that has led to conflict with parents about the 'appropriateness' of his attire an example of how 'gender norms exert violence on those

bodies that violate such norms (Chambers and Carver, 2008: 76) but this is a risk John is prepared to take. As he has gotten older he noticed the subtle ways that parents accepted him for who he is and forefronts those encounters at the expense of the negative ones. Fundamentally, the more work that is done in his school to promote LGBT+ inclusivity and challenge persistent heteronormative ideals the more the physical aspects of his habitus and the habitus of other gender non-conforming teachers will harmonise with the field in which he teaches. The implication here is that if teachers are persistent in their interruption of heteronormativity in schools then LGBT+ inclusivity eventually becomes a natural part of the school's ethos. However, teachers must be proactive in this work not reactive so that when faced with children who do not conform to gender stereotypes they are prepared to help feel included, safe and nurtured in their development. Teachers benefit from creating a clear vision of the reality they want to create and take steps to achieve it sometimes, like John, using creative ways like their appearance to disrupt norms. After having considered how teachers interrupt heteronormativity through creating LGBT+ collective inclusive habitus the next section explores the Habitus Reflection Framework and how it can be utilised to help inspire LGBT+ inclusivity advocacy work in other teachers.

## **7.5 The Habitus Reflection Framework**

Through conducting this study, I found that underlying all the participants' efforts to create LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus is a rigorous commitment to critical reflection which I argue is fundamental to embedding meaningful LGBT+ inclusive education. Chapter 5 explored how participants could pinpoint moments and experiences throughout their lives that had a direct impact upon their motivation to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. Participants highlighted certain events that had ruptured their habitus and reoriented their thinking to engage with LGBT+

inclusivity in schools. The participants' experiences demonstrated that there are many routes to becoming motivated to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity one does not have to have experienced marginalisation to becoming motivated to engage in this work. Indeed, many participants were empathetic about the experiences of others around them they could reposition themselves to engage with the experiences of people close to them. However, the key factor that linked all these experiences was that participants had time to carefully reflect on key experiences in their lives and could reconcile those experiences with their own habitus. This involved a process of rupturing the habitus or their 'common sense' view of the world, especially for those participants who identify as LGBT+. I argue that more teachers would better engage with LGBT+ inclusive education if they were given time to reflect upon their own experiences as learners, teachers and adults to locate key points of motivation throughout their biographies that can help them affix LGBT+ inclusivity within their own habitus. They need to be encouraged to rupture their own habitus and its complicity with the status quo to engage meaningfully in this work. Consequently, from the participants experiences I developed the Habitus Reflection Framework (HRF) designed to help teachers reflect on their experiences to forge links between LGBT+ inclusivity and their own values, perceptions and reasons for becoming teachers (habitus).

The Habitus Reflection Framework combines the thinking of Bourdieu and his conception of the habitus and Brookfield's (1995) theories around critical reflection which focus on exploring biographies as learners, experiences as teachers and knowledge of educational theory. I argue that this reflective approach is necessary for teachers to begin to understand how heteronormativity has shaped their lives and teaching practice and has the potential to bring about a rupture of the heteronormative habitus in creation of an LGBT+ inclusive

habitus. The HRF takes the key moments the participants identified as motivating their resolve to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity and works by asking key reflective questions for teachers to consider relating to LGBT+ equality and their own biographies. The aim is to find at least one anchor which can help serve as motivation for this work. Ideally, the more anchors that can be made the greater potential for this work being meaningful to teachers engaging with the framework.

<b>Habitus Reflection Framework</b>
<p><b>1.1 Childhood and schooling</b></p> <p><i>What was your own childhood experience of learning about LGBT+ people and issues at school and at home?</i></p> <p><i>Did you or someone close to you experience homo, bi or transphobic bullying at school?</i></p>
<p><b>1.2 Community connections</b></p> <p><i>How might an LGBT+ inclusive education have helped you, your friends or family members growing up?</i></p>
<p><b>1.3 Teaching</b></p> <p><i>What inspired you to become a teacher?</i></p> <p><i>What experience do you have teaching an LGBT+ (or potential LGBT+) child?</i></p> <p><i>How would you describe your own practice around LGBT+ inclusivity?</i></p>
<p><b>1.4 Theory</b></p> <p><i>How does educating for LGBT+ inclusivity align with your values as a teacher?</i></p> <p><i>How does LGBT+ inclusivity education align with your own understanding of child development?</i></p>

Table 3: The Habitus Reflection Framework.

Evidently, some teachers engaging with this framework may have beliefs, religious or otherwise, which render the concept of educating for LGBT+ inclusivity incompatible with their values. However, what this framework attempts to do is to help teachers reposition themselves to develop empathy through recognising the benefits of this practice on the children they teach. There were other questions that I considered adding to the framework however, to be successful I find it needs to be short and user-friendly due to the many daily demands placed on teachers. Ideally the HRF would be used before a school begins to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity to set firm foundations upon which the teaching can be built. Once critical reflection has been developed amongst staff to foster their motivation for this practice this same critical consciousness (Freire, 1977) can be applied to their classrooms.

### **7.6 Critical thinking as central to the collective habitus**

Just as critical reflection is a crucial aspect of this work so too is critical thinking. It can help prepare children for the complexity of the world and teaches them to question the limited perceptions of a heteronormative society. Students and teachers need to be equipped with the tools and language to tackle homophobia, challenge heteronormativity and promote equality which then has the potential to better enable LGBT+ youth to articulate their experiences. The development of critical thinking skills in young people is essential for helping students to understand the causes of oppression, learn about human rights, experience democratic practices and promote social justice (Smyth et al. 2012 and Mills et al 2019). Giroux (1988) describes the need for 'the language of critique' and 'the language of possibility' which form the heart of critical thinking education and must be developed through questioning, exploring intent and motivation, challenging sources and agendas. This can begin

to help allow students to challenge the structures around them that they find to be lacking or not designed with their wellbeing in mind.

Teachers were clear that they needed to be prepared to talk about these issues as 'kids want to talk about these things all the time' (Nicole). For Stephanie, the most important aspect was developing their dialogue and questioning skills to make sure they could talk about these issues 'sensitively and effectively.' Events happen in their lives, in media, in the wider world that children want to talk about and teachers owe it to them to understand the issues and be prepared to speak about them in open discussions whenever they arise. Indeed, many of the participants encountered students fluent in the language of gender and sexuality. David recounted a conversation with a Year 1 child (a five-year-old), a boy who identified as a girl, keen to talk about 'trans and gender-neutral.' It was evident that the student's family habitus was open and supportive of this child which married perfectly with the inclusive habitus the school sought to provide meaning this student could talk openly and even enthusiastically about their developing identity.

David recognised that a safe space is needed where children feel they can be open, ask questions and discuss issues of gender identity and sexual orientation without risk of harm. His experience reflects those of Bragg et al (2018) who found that students often have expanded vocabularies of gender identity and expression and need an outlet in which to reflect upon their positions and grapple with the rights of gender and sexual minorities. Dialogue is crucial to this process as Hooks highlights (1994: 38) it can be difficult to shift paradigms so students and teachers both need spaces to 'voice fears, to talk about what they are doing, how they are doing it and why.' Traditionally, schools have not been places that

have developed critical thinking and have instead maintained the existing social order by using what Freire (2003) refers to as the 'banking method' of education where pupils are conceptualised as passive receptacles of knowledge to be filled up with whatever those in power deem necessary to both perpetuate the status quo and feed the economy. This model manifests itself in neoliberal accountability systems that primarily value test scores and quantitative data (Freire in Colegrove and Zúñiga 2018). The concern with the banking method is that it 'undermines students' creative and transformative capabilities' (Hung, 2018: 170) which are needed to understand the ambiguity and complexity often associated with understanding gender and sexual orientation identities. Evidently, the lack of critical thinking in schools is not explicitly the fault of teachers as teacher education has been purged of 'critical, sociological, and political examination of education and society' (Hill, 2004: 516) meaning that teachers often have no choice but to take responsibility for educating for critical thinking themselves

It is crucial that the critical thinking and discussion happens not just with students but with parents as well. They have a right to know what their children are being taught and understand why this work is being done. This can also give teachers opportunities to demonstrate their respect for and consideration of parental rights about how their children are educated. Many teachers described setting up opportunities for parents to come into school to observe lessons, read through teaching materials and ask questions. Although some participants expressed frustration that these events were often poorly attended their existence provides transparency and opportunities for misconceptions to be addressed. Stephanie underlined that this openness was about changing 'the culture of the school rather

than bullying people into thinking what I think.’ This happens through dialogue and understanding.

Another reason why critical thinking skills are integral to LGBT+ inclusivity projects is that some children, often from conservative religious backgrounds, will at some point have to reconcile two contradictory habitus; one accepting of LGBT+ inclusivity and one not. They then exist as members of different ‘cross-cutting normative circles’ each of which tends to influence their behaviour in certain ways (Coutrot and Elder-Vass, 2011: 133). Bourdieu (2000) labelled the phenomenon as having a habitus clivé which he describes enduring himself as he struggled to reconcile his academic achievements with his working class background. John’s conversation with a child on the playground who felt like he could not play with anyone was illustrative of children trying to reconcile two contradictory habitus as well as the delicate dance the teacher must negotiate to help offer up new points of view whilst not condemning the beliefs of the child’s family:

He said, ‘Because I like to play with my friends at school who are girls and my parents have said that because I am a boy I should be playing with the boys but I don’t feel like I fit in with the boys.’ It is really difficult because you feel like you don’t want to completely undermine their parents by saying, ‘Oh, what they are saying is wrong’ because that is inappropriate and then they say, ‘Oh, my teacher says you are wrong.’ But then at the same time trying to say to him, ‘Oh, well errm you know that actually if you feel that is where you feel comfortable, you feel that they are your friends.’

John is engaging sensitively with a child who is experiencing a habitus clivé. To help reconcile the two contradictory habitus John subtly tries to give the child the tools necessary to think critically about what they are being told by family, school and the wider society so that they

can make informed decisions about what they think and feel. Teaching critical thinking skills may enable students to reconcile contradictory messages about gender and sexuality from school and from home. Aarseth et al (2016: 149) write that the habitus clivé has radical potential in that, it can 'impede change, facilitate change, or simultaneously impede and facilitate.' Other participants had come across children with habitus clivé on numerous occasions and detailed how they helped children reconcile two contradictory habitus. Alexander explained:

I think, as well, it is just opening up that other side of a different point of view that they may take on in the future. Because at the moment the two places where they are going to learn things are at school and at home. So, if school and home are challenging each other I think that is very confusing for the child. It's not so much saying your home values are wrong as that is inappropriate but what it is saying is that's a point of view and that's another point of view that you will hear.

For John, it was about helping empower children to develop their own views by presenting them with different views points, a proliferation of epistemologies (Tompkins, 2002) to help them draw their own conclusions. For Alexander, the key was not to say that home values are wrong but rather helping the child to understand that there are different points of view available to them. This then helps prepare students for a society that is not necessarily reflective of their family habitus. David adopted a more direct approach with his students telling them that 'just because your parents believe one thing, negatively or positively you don't have to believe it.' Whatever their approach, the key factor is that these participants engage in dialogue with their students about their experiences a dialogue which Shor and Freire (1987:98) find to be crucial in helping 'humans to meet to reflect on the reality as they make and remake it' helping them to collectively create new imaginaries and possibilities for

ways of being in the world. Crucially, teachers make their own thinking and reasoning public. Their role as ‘transformative intellectuals’ (Giroux, 1988) mean they do not shy away from complexity but instead grapple with it openly with their students. Teachers who make their thinking public in this way are, according to Osterman (1990), more likely to have stimulating, challenging and interesting classes for their students. They are contributing to both the intellectual and spiritual growth of their pupils (Hooks, 1994) by embedding critical thinking as a key element of this work.

This section has explored how critical thinking skills are integral to educating for LGBT+ inclusivity as they help students understand the complexity of the world around them. Teachers have a key role in helping students raise their critical consciousness through a beginning awareness of how wider structures of oppression work and what potential there is in their own lives to challenge them. Critical thinking skills can also help students reconcile contradictory habitus and develop their own perspectives about LGBT+ people. The final section considers how teachers move beyond tokenism to embed this practice in meaningful ways.

### **7.7 Moving beyond tokenism**

Once an LGBT+ inclusive habitus is embedded, schools can focus on challenging and moving beyond essentialist teaching. Many of the teachers in this research had been embedding this practice for several years. Those with more established LGBT+ inclusive practices were in positions whereby they could begin to look at ways to better embed and de-essentialise their teaching. Sarah and John both described using same-sex parents within modelled story texts and maths problems, not as the focus of the text but as an incidental detail. This provides

normality in a lesson otherwise unconcerned with gender and sexual identity. Olivia taught about same-sex relationships throughout the curriculum as and when they became relevant. John also wanted to work more on unpicking gender stereotypes apparent in fairy tales:

All of these feminine characteristics which we associate with female characters. That is something that I think we reinforce. We need space to explore. All of the big bad characters, characters like that are perceived as male and the mean strong characters are male which I would agree and I think our children don't really realise it sometimes.

He is weary of the subconscious messages fairy tales send and how troubling them offers an opportunity both to challenge heteronormativity and to develop critical thinking skills. David highlighted how his 'No Outsiders' work lent itself to developing an ethos whereby there are no outsiders in the school, it found its ethos becoming apparent in everything the school does from bullying to teaching, learning and assessment.

These participants' descriptions of their efforts at embedding LGBT+ inclusivity demonstrated that rather than taking a dichotomised approach to LGBT+ identities which results from essentialist teaching they took a dialectical approach which conceptualises the world as 'a layered system, a totality, a chain of relationships and processes' (Apple et al, 2011). This makes explicit the relationships between LGBT+ and others focusing on what Allman (2007: 58) explains how:

When we conceptualize entities as internally related and focus on the ways in which within an internal relation the entities mutually and reciprocally shape and determine one another i.e. the movement and internal development of one another, we begin to understand the world and our experiences within the world in a more complex and comprehensive manner.

Therefore, when attempting to move beyond essentialism; it is important to consider that teachers need 'the pedagogical apparatus to make it work as anything other than an essential categorization' (Ellis, 2007: 24). Time and effort needs to be expended by all staff to ensure teachers understand when their teaching is tokenistic and when it is embedded, eroding heteronormativity and promoting social justice. Ultimately, through a habitus either shaped by their own experiences of marginalisation or time spent reflecting upon the privilege of their own sexuality can help teachers understand root causes of oppression and act appropriately rather than taking a surface level, tokenistic approach.

A further way of moving beyond essentialism described by participants was incorporating children's ideas, thoughts and perceptions into adapting this work making it more meaningful to their own lives and needs. Alexander described how:

I also like to make it child led so if there's an opportunity [...] if a child makes a comment about something then that will be a discussion point.

Alexander understands that children's own backgrounds and perspectives can be key sources of learning and may shed new insight onto these issues. He is leaning into the often neglected notion that the school structure must adapt to the students rather than them to it (Souza et al, 1999 in Ayers, 2009). Additionally, teachers must also conceptualise themselves as students too (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005) as their students, with more connections to social media and technology, may be more aware of current cultural shifts in gender and sexual orientation and will be able to broaden the teachers own knowledge and perceptions.

Ultimately, a school that has moved beyond essentialist teaching has LGBT+ positive policies in place, homo, bi and transphobic behaviour tracked, integration of LGBT+ lives across the

curriculum alongside teaching students critical thinking skills to challenge injustice and negotiate complexity, links are made with LGBT+ people within the wider community and schools challenge misconceptions of parents and colleagues and support one another in completing this work. Teachers constantly reflect together upon how heteronormative practices are impacting students and take steps to disrupt it. Then teachers slowly reorient the collective inclusive habitus towards one that embraces and celebrates non-normative gender and sexual identities actualising post-heteronormative spaces. Essentially, teachers start to cease focusing on particular instances of oppression and instead look at problematising the wider structures that result in marginalisation. They can then critique them alongside students, parents and colleagues which further actualises their transformational teaching as they seek 'to change values, definitions, and laws which make these institutions and relationships oppressive' (Cohen, 1997: 444-5). They can then transfer their collective energy towards other areas of social justice oriented pedagogy. Indeed, as Hung (2018: 171) eloquently states:

When an educator creates a learning environment reflecting the political complexity of the real world and accepts the school as a sphere of cultural politics, his/her pedagogy can then demystify the false imagination of a neutral curriculum and open up a dialectical space for both teachers and students to ponder upon struggles over economic, political and social injustices.

Evidently, the participants spoke with passion and enthusiasm about realising their projects and the logical next step is to channel this activist potential and build upon this momentum by reflecting on the skills they have learnt (research, action planning, strategically overcoming conflicts, compromising and implementing projects) to transfer these social justice oriented

dispositions to other areas of social justice education like ensuring that the poorest pupils in schools get the most out of their educational experiences.

## **7.8 Summary**

This chapter aimed to explore lessons learnt from participants' attempts to successfully embed LGBT+ inclusive practice. Firstly, it analysed how through vigilance and effort over time teachers can realise an LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus which involves a proactive approach to training staff around the language and terminology of gender and sexual orientation. Secondly, it emphasised how sustained interruption of heteronormativity over time creates a more inclusive ethos in schools which better prepares schools to support children who question their gender identity. Thirdly, it introduced the Habitus Reflection Framework which I developed from the participants' stories of how they became motivated to educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. I argue that such a framework is necessary for teachers about to begin this work as it can help them to understand how heteronormativity has worked in their own lives and develop empathy for LGBT+ people and students. To channel these dispositions most effectively teachers need space within their training and practice to reflect upon their experiences and integrate it into meaningful and purposeful actions in their fields. As Mohanty (1989: 185) reminds us:

Resistance lies in self-conscious engagement with dominant, normative discourses and representations and in the active creation of oppositional analysis and cultural spaces... Uncovering and reclaiming subjugated knowledge is one way to lay claims to alternative histories.

I argue that time spent reflecting on finding biographically located motivations for LGBT+ inclusivity advocacy means challenging dominant, heteronormative discourse which can

result in rupture which helps create space for alternate ways of being. This then helps bind LGBT+ advocacy to teachers own sense of self and habitus making it easier for teachers to face challenges and opposition to their projects. Next, the chapter explored how critical thinking skills can be developed alongside educating for LGBT+ inclusivity and help children to both develop their critical consciousness and negotiate contradictory habitus. Finally, this chapter explored avenues for embedding this practice moving beyond strategic essentialism to review the curriculum looking for natural opportunities to educate for inclusivity, developing student voice to make this practice meaningful for pupils and applying the skills learnt to other areas of social justice education within the curriculum. The final section of this thesis is a conclusion which brings together the main contributions of this thesis as well as recommendations for where the research can develop further.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis has illustrated that teachers can be powerful agents in disrupting heteronormativity through establishing LGBT+ inclusive curriculums in primary schools. It has shown that with sustained effort and support from a wide range of social networks teachers can shift the status quo towards being more inclusive of LGBT+ identities creating post-heteronormative spaces. Additionally, it has demonstrated the importance of understanding and aligning motivation and advocacy for social justice with enacting LGBT+ inclusive practice.

This research addressed a gap in the literature by exploring the perspectives of teachers who have embedded LGBT+ inclusivity over two or more years. As this is an underdeveloped area in the literature, it provides useful insights for teachers and academics in how meaningful LGBT+ inclusive education can be embedded in schools. Furthermore, this research offers a unique theoretical perspective on their experiences by combining heteronormativity with Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus capital and field and provides new insights into how teachers can draw upon their habitus, social and cultural capitals to disrupt heteronormativity and embed LGBT+ inclusivity practice. Throughout conducting this research, I have been pleasantly surprised at the tenacity and resilience participants displayed in advocating for LGBT+ inclusivity. I was personally touched and encouraged by their efforts and willingness to endure protest and conflict in pursuit of their ideals. I was impressed by how participants negotiated neoliberal structures of accountability and appropriated them to further their LGBT+ inclusivity goals often at personal risk. Additionally, I have come to understand the vital role allies play in embedding this work and am enthused to find that enthusiasm for LGBT+ inclusive education is not solely amongst LGBT+ teachers.

The thesis aimed to address three research questions:

- 1) What are participants' motivations for advocating and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity?
- 2) How do participants navigate structural constraints when embedding LGBT+ inclusive education?
- 3) What recommendations can be drawn from participants' attempts to embed LGBT+ inclusive practice?

The research has many implications in relation to these questions and in what follows I intend to draw together conclusions from my data analysis and findings in relation to answering the research questions above.

Chapter 5 explored the importance of biography in understanding motivation for advocating for and embedding LGBT+ inclusivity. It highlighted the importance of teachers taking time to critically reflect making connections between their own schooling and motivations for becoming a teacher with LGBT+ inclusivity advocacy. The research revealed that each teacher had a moment of rupture of the heteronormative status quo which inspired their LGBT+ inclusivity work. The implication here is that teachers must be given more opportunities in school and through teacher training to reflect on their biographies and values and make explicit links between them and educating for LGBT+ inclusivity. This can help to develop motivation for this practice and make it meaningful to each individual rather than simply another diversity target to be ticked off once a year. Furthermore, this thesis finds that there are professional development benefits to engaging in LGBT+ inclusivity work including experiencing a sense of self-actualisation when the habitus becomes aligned with the field and empowerment in exerting agency to shift the status quo rendering their fields of practice more egalitarian spaces.

The second research question asked 'How do participants navigate structural constraints when embedding LGBT+ inclusivity education?' Through this research I found that teachers face a range of structural constraints when embedding their projects. From the data, I identified the two main structural constraints as those of heteronormativity and neoliberalism. Heteronormative constraints manifested in a variety of ways, most notably from parents and colleagues finding LGBT+ inclusivity incompatible with their own (often religious) beliefs. The most successful participants found that they must try to avoid preconceptions about which parents will find LGBT+ inclusivity problematic as they found that both religious, traditional and more liberal-minded parents could find the teaching problematic. Whilst at the same time support was encountered from parents of all faiths and worldviews. Teachers embarking on embedding LGBT+ inclusive practice would benefit from understanding parental misconceptions, giving them space to vocalise their concerns, invite them in to school to observe lessons and engage with curriculum materials. Ultimately, there are many points of overlap between religion and LGBT+ inclusivity including the idea of loving all of god's children. Time spent anticipating potential concern will give teachers a head start in preparing for challenges they may face. Additionally, despite the high-profile protests in Birmingham and Manchester over the 'No Outsiders' project which persisted for a long time, the participants' general experiences were that conflict is experienced in the first year of implementing this work and significantly reduces in subsequent years as new norms are established. The implication here is that teachers must take a long-term view of this work and not despair when challenges arise, taking comfort in understanding that any rupture of the status quo will eventually settle into new patterns of normalcy.

Furthermore, the thesis found that sometimes heteronormative discourse manifested itself through personal attacks upon members of staff keen to actualise LGBT+ inclusive work. However, teachers found that these moments often led to a deeper solidarity amongst staff in engaging in this work as it actualises the need to actively address homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in schools through creating cultures that celebrate LGBT+ identities. Additionally, heteronormative discourse manifested through encounters with some colleagues who found there to be 'no problem' and therefore no need to educate about LGBT+ inclusivity. This situation demands that teachers are given space to interrogate the privilege associated with their own gender and sexual orientation to determine how this discourse were to impact them if they identified as LGBT+.

This research identified a more pervasive manifestation of heteronormative thinking that was more difficult for participants to navigate: the idea of what is deemed to be 'appropriate' to teach young people. This manifested in panoptic self-regulation whereby teachers constantly monitored their own teaching through the eyes of a perceived disapproving other to ensure it was 'appropriate' for the children they are teaching. To navigate this constraint, teachers must critically engage with their internal conversations (Archer, 2003) challenging each thought to see if it aligns with their habitus. Teachers must remain cognisant of the power of heteronormative thinking which constantly aims to fix in place the universal, timeless nature of heterosexuality, the family and typical gender roles (Dowson in Giffney et al. 2009). Instead they must actively counter this discourse with the voices of LGBT+ youth who continue to suffer higher rates of mental health issues and suicide than their heterosexual counterparts (METRO, 2017), LGBT+ friends and family who like Sarah's husband's brother Alex spend years of their lives hiding their true identities in fear of a society that may reject them and same-

sex parents and progressive voices within a society that has become much more accepting of LGBT+ identities (Nussbaum, 2018). Counteracting heteronormative discourse takes effort and repetition but can be a powerful tool in establishing new norms.

The second principle constraint encountered by participants was negotiating the accountability culture developed in schools through the alignment between education and neoliberalism. Whilst the effects were not as overtly obvious as those of heteronormativity, neoliberalism subtly constrains social justice projects by encouraging teachers to focus on core subjects, league tables and accountability at the expense of social justice oriented projects which do not appear to hold as much economic value. This meant teachers often having to spend their own money to buy resources for their projects, prioritise this teaching due to wider austerity cuts in children's services meaning schools become one of the only places where children can talk together in safe spaces about gender and sexual orientation. However, because teachers were intrinsically motivated to do this work they prioritised its implementation in meaningful and embedded ways and some even appropriated neoliberal structures of accountability to ensure that this teaching was delivered effectively. The wider implication here for teachers attempting this work is that there is space within the curriculum to prioritise this work if efforts are made to make space for it. Additionally, lesson observations, behaviour monitoring systems and work scrutiny can all help ensure that teachers efforts at LGBT+ inclusive education are not tokenistic and that teaching is delivered to a high standard.

To further embed LGBT+ inclusive school cultures teachers can draw from their cultural and social capital to ensure it is taught effectively. This thesis argues that drawing from social

capital is fundamental in successfully embedding this work. Teachers need to engage with various networks that can support their LGBT+ inclusivity work these include, local schools, LGBT+ charities that can provide support and training, LGBT+ members of the school community and union networks. Working in tandem with others makes this work less psychologically and socially demanding (McDermott, 2011). Well-developed social capital can be a lifeline especially for teachers like Stephanie who felt unsupported by her colleagues in realising her LGBT+ inclusivity project.

Teachers must also be aware that some agents, like newly qualified teachers, will have less social capital than others. However, social capital can be built up over time through developing networks and relationships. The most successful teachers had well developed social and cultural capital through specialised training, postgraduate degrees in psychology and mental health and held leadership positions within the school like Deputy Head which gave them more power in determining the priorities of the school curriculum. I would advise teachers wanting to embed LGBT+ inclusivity within their curriculum to take stock of their cultural and social capital to see how it can be leveraged or developed to support the enactment of their projects.

Another key tool participants engaged with to actualise their LGBT+ inclusivity projects was a commitment to critical reflection. I argue that as highlighted in the previous chapter a commitment to engaging with the internal conversation (Archer, 2003) is crucial in challenging heteronormative thinking. Additionally, LGBT+ teachers must critically reflect upon the possibilities their own sexuality affords them in this work both as embodied cultural capital and as a potential role model for LGBT+ youth (and future LGBT+ youth).

The final chapter engaged with the third aim of the research to explore recommendations from the participants' practice for other teachers who want to meaningfully embed this work in their own practice. From analysing the participants' data, I argue that an LGBT+ collective inclusive habitus can be fostered in schools. However, this takes time and a commitment to training all staff in the language and terminology of sexuality and gender. This then aids in the establishment of more inclusive norms. Crucially, all teachers need to engage and this must not fall solely at the feet of minority teachers. Returning to the idea of developing social capital through networks, for schools to successfully embed this practice it is worth engaging with other local primary schools and crucially feeder secondary schools to ensure that the LGBT+ inclusive collective habitus established at primary school continues into secondary school. Schools must proactively begin this work so that when a child presents as gender non-conforming the ground work has already been completed to ensure that the child is adequately supported and encouraged to thrive in the school environment.

I have argued throughout this thesis that teachers must engage with critical reflection to analyse how heteronormativity impacts their teaching and identities. I present the habitus reflection framework as a way to encourage teachers to engage with key moments in their biographies as learners, teacher and adults to develop motivation for LGBT+ inclusivity work. Its aim is to encourage teachers to develop anchors that can help make this work meaningful to them, for example: encouraging them to spend time critically reflecting upon how a heteronormative curriculum would have impacted an LGBT+ family member or friend growing up.

Furthermore, I argue that this critical reflection must be developed in the students teachers educate to challenge wider structural forces that perpetuate homo, trans and biphobia. Teachers who are successful at embedding LGBT+ inclusive education allow students to talk openly about gender and LGBT+ identities in safe spaces in ways that are meaningful to them and their own lives. This openness can help students experiencing habitus clivé as through being presenting with a range of perspectives they become empowered to make up their own minds ultimately raising their critical consciousness (Freire, 1977). Teachers can continue to embed their LGBT+ inclusivity projects over time by increasingly de-essentialising their teaching so that LGBT+ inclusivity becomes part of the fabric of school life, for example, by modelling stories that incidentally include same-sex parents.

From conducting this research, I have learnt that creating embedded LGBT+ inclusive curriculums is a real possibility and that teachers have significant agency in creating these spaces if they are motivated to prioritise this teaching and are committed to engaging in critical reflection to disrupt heteronormative discourse.

This thesis highlights how more research needs to be conducted into how teachers embed LGBT+ inclusive education, especially scrutinising the content of their teaching and whether it perpetuates heteronormative thinking or creates post-heteronormative thinking in schools. Additionally, research can be conducted using the habitus reflection framework to explore the impact it could have on teachers beginning to embed this work in their practice and whether or not it impacts their motivation and commitment to LGBT+ inclusive education.

In summary, much progress has been made towards the acceptance of LGBT+ people in UK society since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Plummer, 2008, Weeks, 2007 and Nixon, 2006) yet LGBT+ youth remain a particularly vulnerable subsection of society (Gower et al. 2017, Birkett et al, 2009) and equality progress made can easily be reversed (Stonewall, 2019). To move towards a progressive, inclusive and more egalitarian society, schools and particularly primary schools (as this is the age when perceptions and beliefs about others crystalize (Issacs and Bearison, 1986) have a role to play in ensuring that children learn from an early age that LGBT+ identities are a normal part of a rich, diverse society. Ideally then, this collective habitus can filter out into society over the coming generations helping to eradicate discrimination and perpetuate acceptance through the active construction of a post-heteronormative society.

## References

Aarseth, H., Layton, L., and Nielsen, H.B. (2016) 'Conflicts in the Habitus: The Emotional Work of Becoming Modern'. *The Sociological Review*. 64(1) pp.148-165.

Abdallah-Preteuille, M. (2006) 'Interculturalism as a paradigm for thinking about diversity' *Intercultural Education* 17 (5), 475-483.

Achrati, A. (2006) 'Deconstruction, Ethics and Islam.' *Arabica*. 53(4) pp.472-510.

Adair, J. K. (2011). 'Confirming *chanclas*: What early childhood teacher educators can learn from immi Alexander preschool teachers.' *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 32(1) pp.55–71.

Adkins, L. (2004). 'Reflexivity: Freedom or habit of gender?' *The Sociological Review*, 52(2) pp. 191–210.

Alexander, J. and Yescavage, K (2001) 'The Pleasure and Pain of Chasing Amy: Analysing Reactions to Blurred Identities and Sexualities', *The Journal of Bisexuality* 1(1) pp.117-35.

Althusser (1971) *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans, B. Brewster. New York: Monthly Review.

Allman, P. (2007). *On Marx*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Apple, M.W. (1995) *Education and power*. New York: Routledge.

Apple, M.W., Au, W., and Gandin, L.A. (eds) (2011) *The Routledge International Handbook of Critical Education*. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Archer, M.S. (2003) *Structure, agency and the internal conversation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Atkinson, C. (2020) "They don't really talk about it 'cos they don't think it's right': heteronormativity and institutional silence in UK primary education.' *Gender and Education*. Pp.1-15

Au, W. Bigelow, B. & Karp, S. (2007) *Rethinking our Classrooms: Teaching for equity and justice*. Rethinking schools: Alabama.

Ball, S. (2017) *The Education Debate*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Bandura, A. (2006). 'Toward a psychology of human agency.' *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1(2) pp. 164–180.

Bandura, A. (2001) 'Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective.' *Annual Review of Psychology*. 52 pp.1-26.

Barkhuizen, G. (2008) 'A narrative approach to exploring context in language teaching.' *English Language Teaching Journal*. 62(3) pp.231-239.

BBC (2019) *Assistant head 'threatened' in LGBT teaching row*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47158357> [Accessed 12th February 2019]

BERA (2018) *Ethical guidelines for Educational Research*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online> [Accessed 2nd January 2019]

Berlant, L. and Warner, M. (1998) 'Sex in Public.' *Intimacy*. 24(2) pp.547-566.

Bernstein, B. (1970). 'Education cannot compensate for society.' *New Society*, 15(387), pp. 344-47.

Birkett, M. Koenig, B, and Espelage, D.L. (2009) 'LGB and questioning students in schools: the moderating effects of homophobic bullying and school climate on negative outcomes.' *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 38 pp.989-1000.

Bishop, A. (2002) *Becoming an ally: Breaking the cycle of oppression in people*. London, UK: Zed Books.

Bourdieu, P. (1974). 'The School as a Conservative Force: Scholastic and Cultural Inequalities'. In Eggleston, L, (ed) *Contemporary Research in the Sociology of Education*, pp. 32-46. Methuen, London.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) *The Forms of Capital*. [online] Available at: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm> [Accessed 2nd October 2018]

Bourdieu, P. (1987) 'What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups.' *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 32 pp. 1-17.

Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power*. Trans. G. Raymond and J. Adamson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2000) *Pascalian Meditations*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant, L. (1992) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Oxford: Polity press.

Bragg, S. Renold, E. Ringrose, J. and Jackson, C. (2018) 'More than boy, girl, male, female': exploring young people's views on gender diversity within and beyond school contexts.' *Sexuality Society and Learning*. 18(4) pp. 420-434.

Britzman, D.P. (1998) *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Towards a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Brookfield, S. D. (1995) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Jossey Bass.

Brookfield, S. (2009) 'The concept of critical reflection: Promises and contradictions.' *European journal of social work* 12(3) pp.293-304

Brown, K. (2004) 'Leadership for social justice and equity: weaving a transformative framework and pedagogy.' *Educational Administration Quarterly* 40(1) pp.79–110.

Brown, C. P. (2009). 'Pivoting a pre-kindergarten program off the child or the standard? A case study of integrating the practices of early childhood education into elementary school.' *The Elementary School Journal*, 110(2) pp.202–227.

Bruner, J. (1991) 'The Narrative Construction of Reality.' *Critical Enquiry*. 18(1) pp.1-21

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). 'Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach.' *Discourse Studies*, 7(4/5) pp.585–614.

Burke, C.T. (2011) 'The Biographical Illumination: A Bourdieusian Analysis of the Role of Theory in Educational Research.' *Sociological Research Online*. 16(2) pp1-9.

Burns Thomas, A. and Niesz, T. (2012) 'Power, knowledge and positioning in teacher networks.' *Professional Development in Education*. 38(4) pp.683-687.

Burridge, J. (2004) "'I am not Homophobic But...': Disclaiming in Discourse Resisting Repeal of Section 28.' *Sexualities*. 7(3) pp.327-344

Burton, A. (1995) 'Things that could make a difference: Integrating lesbian and gay issues in secondary schools.' *Health Education* 95(5) pp. 20–25.

Busby, M. (2019) *Teachers experience more stress than other workers, study shows*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/feb/25/teachers-experience-more-stress-than-other-workers-study-shows> [Accessed 18th November 2019]

Bushnell, M. (2003) 'Teachers in the Schoolhouse Panopticon: Complicity and Resistance.' *Education and Urban Society*. 35(3) pp.251-272.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1999) 'Revisiting Bodies and Pleasures.' *Theory, Culture & Society*. 16(2) pp.11-20

Canagarajah, S. (1996) 'From critical research practice to critical research reporting.' *TESOL Quarterly*. 30(2) pp.321-331.

Carlson, D. (2002) *Leaving Safe Harbors: Toward a New Progressivism in American Education and Public Life*. New York and London: Routledge Falmer.

Carlile, A. (2019) 'Teacher experiences of LGBTQ inclusive education in primary schools serving faith communities in England, UK.' *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. pp.1-20.

Carter, K., & Doyle, W. (1996). 'Personal narrative and life history in learning to teach.' In B. Sikula & R. Geyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research in teacher education* (pp. 120–142). New York, NY: Simon & Shuster MacMillan.

Case, S, E (1991) 'Tracking the Vampire', *Differences: A journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 3(2) pp.1-20.

Ceplak, M.M. (2013) 'Heteronormativity: School, Ideology, and Politics.' *Journal of Pedagogy*. 4(2) pp.162-187.

Chakraborty, A., McManus, S., Brugha, T., Bebbington, P., and King, M. (2011). 'Mental health of the non-heterosexual population of England.' *Journal of Psychiatry*, 198, 143–148.

Chambers, S.A. and Carver, T. (2008) *Judith Butler and political theory: Troubling politics*. London: Routledge.

Chubbuck, S. M. (2008). 'A novice teacher's beliefs about socially just teaching: Dialogue of many voices.' *New Educator*, 4(4) pp.309-329.

Cohen, C.J. (1997) 'Punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens: the radical potential of queer politics?' *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. 3(4) pp.437-465

Colegrove, K, S, S, and Zúñiga, C. (2018) 'Finding and Enacting Agency: An Elementary ESL Teacher's Perceptions of Teaching and Learning in the Era of Standardized Testing.' *International Multilingual Research Journal*. 12(3) pp.188-202.

Collay M (1998) 'Recherche: teaching our life histories.' *Teaching and Teacher Education* 14(3) pp.245–255.

Collay M (1999) 'Mediating morality: a new teacher ministers to her students.' *Religion and Education* 26(1) pp. 49–57.

Collay, M. (2010) 'Retracing the roots of teacher activism in urban schools.' *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*. 5(3). pp.221-233.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). 'Narrative inquiry.' In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3rd ed., pp. 477 - 487). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Costa, C and Murphy, M. (2015) *Bourdieu, habitus and social research the art of application*. New York: Palgrave.

Coulter, R.W.S. Birkett, M. Corliss, H.L. Hatzenbuehler, M.L. Mustanski, B. and Stall, R. D. (2016) 'Associations between LGBTQ-affirmative school climate and adolescent drinking behaviors.' *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. 161 pp.340-347

Coutrot, L. and Elder-Vass, D. (2011) 'The Causal Power of Social Structures: Emergence, Structure and Agency.' *Archives européennes de Sociologie*. 52(3) pp.561-563

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000) 'Teacher quality and student achievement.' *Education policy analysis archives*. 8(1) pp.1-44.

Davis, R., & Freire, P. (1981). 'Education for awareness.' In R. Mackie (Ed.), *Literacy and revolution* (pp. 57–69). New York: The Continuum Publishing Company.

D'Emilio, J. (1993) 'Capitalism and Gay Identity' in Abelove, H., Barale, M.A., and Halperin, D.M. (eds) *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge. Pp.467-476.

Denzin, N.K. (1989) *Interpretative Biography*. London: Sage.

DePalma, R. and Atkinson, E. (2009a) *Interrogating heteronormativity in primary schools: the work of the no outsiders project*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.

DePalma, R, and Atkinson, E. (2009b). "'No Outsiders': Moving beyond a Discourse of Tolerance to Challenge Heteronormativity in Primary Schools." *British Educational Research Journal* 35(6) pp.837–855

DePalma, R. and Atkinson, E. (2009c) "'Permission to talk about it": narratives of sexual equality in the classroom.' *Qualitative Inquiry*. 15(5) pp.876-892.

DePalma, R., and M. Jennett. (2010) "'Homophobia, Transphobia and Culture: Deconstructing Heteronormativity in English Primary Schools.'" *Intercultural Education* 21 (1) pp. 15–26.

Department for Education and Skills. (2007) *Curriculum review: Diversity and citizenship* [online] Available at: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2007-ajegbo-report-citizenship.pdf> [Accessed: 9th January 2019].

Department for Education (2020) *School teacher workforce*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/workforce-and-business/workforce-diversity/school-teacher-workforce/latest> [Accessed: 3rd March 2020]

Derrida, J (1997) *Of Grammatology*, corrected edition, trans, G. Spivak. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Desmarchelier, C. (2000) 'Teachers' understanding of homosexuality and body image: Habitus issues.' *The Journal of Men's Studies*. 8(2) pp.237-253

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking in the educative process*. Boston, MA: D. C. Heath.

Department for Education (2019) *Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf) [Accessed 10th February 2020]

Dimaggio, P.J. (1988) 'Interest and agency in institutional theory.' In Zucker, L.G. (ed.) *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*. Cambridge: Ballinger.

Dodd, V. (2019) *Anti-muslim hate crimes soar in UK after Christchurch shootings*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/mar/22/anti-muslim-hate-crimes-soar-in-uk-after-christchurch-shootings> [Accessed 18th November 2019]

Do Mar, M.C.V, Dhawan, N. and Engel, A. (2011) *Hegemony and heteronormativity revisiting 'the political' in queer politics*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Donelson, R., & Rogers, T. (2004). 'Negotiating a research protocol for studying school-based gay and lesbian issues.' *Theory Into Practice*, 43(2), pp.128-135.

Douglas, N., Warwick, I., Kemp, S., & Whitty, G. (1998). *Playing it safe: Responses of secondary school teachers to lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils, bullying, HIV and AIDS education and Section 28*. London: Institute of Education.

Du Bois, W.E.B. (1903) *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Dover Publications.

Durkheim, É. (2003). *Ethics and civic morals*. London, England: Routledge. (Original work published 1950) Durkheim, É. (2010).

Edwards, L.J. Brown, D.H.K. and Smith, L. (2016) "We are getting there slowly": lesbian teacher experiences in the post-Section 28 environment.' *Sport, Education and Society*. 21(3) pp.299-318.

Elia, P. (2000) 'Democratic sexuality education: a departure from sexual ideology and traditional schooling.' *Journal of Sex Education & Therapy*. 25(2/3) pp.122-129.

Ellis, V. (2007) Sexualities and Schooling in England After Section 28: Measuring and Managing "At-Risk" Identities. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*. 4(3) pp.12-30.

Ellis, V., & High, S. (2004). 'Something more to tell you: Gay, lesbian, or bisexual young people's experiences of secondary schooling.' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(2) pp.213–225.

Epstein, D. (2000). 'Sexualities and education: Catch 28.' *Sexualities*, 3(4), pp.387-394.

Epstein, D and Johnson, R (1998) *Schooling Sexualities*. Bristol. Open University Press.

Equalities Act (2010). Available at: [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga\\_20100015\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf) [Accessed 10th February, 2020]

Espelage, D., and S. Swearer. (2008) "'Addressing Research Gaps in the Intersection Between Homophobia and Bullying.'" *School Psychology Review* 37 pp.155–159.

Farrley, G., O'Higgins Norman, J., and O'Leary, M. (2017) 'Custodians of silences? School principal perspectives on the incidence and nature of homophobic bullying in primary schools in Ireland.' *Irish Educational Studies*. 36(2) pp. 151-167.

Ferfolja, T. (2009) State of the Field Review: Stories So Far: An Overview of the Research on Lesbian Teachers. *Sexualities*. 12(3) pp.378-396.

Flores, G. (2014) 'Teachers working cooperatively with parents and caregivers when implementing LGBT themes in the elementary classroom.' *American Journal of Sexuality Education*. 9(1) pp.114-120

Ferfolja, T. (1998) 'Australian lesbian teachers – A reflection of homophobic harassment of high school teachers in New South Wales government schools.' *Gender and Education* 10(4) pp.401-415

Ferguson D, (2019) 'We can't give in': the Birmingham school at the frontline of anti-LGBT protests. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/may/26/birmingham-anderton-park-primary-muslim-protests-lgbt-teaching-rights> [Accessed: 26th January 2020]

Fligstein, N. and McAdam, D. (2011) 'Towards a General Theory of Strategic Action Fields.' *Sociological Theory*. 29(1) pp.1-26.

Flores, G. (2014) 'Teachers Working Cooperatively with Parents and Caregivers when Implementing LGBT Themes in the Elementary Classroom.' *American Journal of Sexuality Education*. 9(1) pp.114-120.

Fofes, E. (2000) 'Young adult reflections on having an openly gay teacher during early adolescence.' *Education and Urban Society*. 32(3) pp.399-412.

Forrest, S. (2006). 'Straight talking: Challenges in teaching and learning about sexuality and homophobia in schools.' In M. Cole (Ed.), *Education, equality and human rights: Issues of gender, "race," sexuality, disability and social class* (2nd ed., pp. 111-133). London: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Random House.

Foucault, M. (1984) *The History of Sexuality Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure*. London: Penguin Books.

Foucault, M. (1998) *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*. London: Penguin.

Fox, A.R.C. and Wilson, E.G. (2015) 'Networking and the development of professionals: Beginning teachers building social capital.' *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 47 pp.93-107

Frankham, J., 2006. 'Network utopias and alternative entanglements for educational research and practice.' *Journal of education policy*, 21(6) pp.661–677.

Freedman, H., and Jones, A. (1980) 'Educational research and two traditions of epistemology.' In Jackson, L. and Peters, M.A. (eds.) *Feminist Theory in Diverse Productive Practices: An educational philosophy and theory gender and sexualities reader volume vi*. London: Routledge. Pp.8-28.

Freeman, H. and Jones, A. (1980) 'Educational Research and Two Traditions of Epistemology.' *Education Philosophy and Theory*, 12 pp.1-20.

Freire, P (2003) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum International.

Freeman, M. (2015) 'Narrative as a mode of understanding' in De Fina, A. and Georgakopoulou, A. (eds.) *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. London: Wiley-Blackwell. Pp. 21-35.

Friedman, S. (2015) 'Habitus Clivé and the emotional imprint of social mobility.' *Sociological Review*. 64(1) pp. 129-147.

Fuentes, M. A., Teran, V., Ferrer, K., & Cruz, D. (2009). 'Reducing negative attitudes toward the LGBT community through gay literature.' Poster session presented at the 117th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada.

Fuss, D. (1989). *Essentially speaking: Feminism, nature and difference*. New York: Routledge.

Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge: Polity press.

Giffney, N. and O'Rourke, M (2009) *The Ashgate research companion to queer theory*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Giroux, H.A. (1988) 'Teachers as intellectuals: Towards a critical pedagogy of learning.' *Pedagogy, theory and practice*. 170(2) pp.142-149.

Giroux, H. A. (1996). *Placeres inquietantes*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Giroux, H.A. (2004) *Terror of Neoliberalism: Authoritarianism and the Eclipse of Democracy (Cultural Politics and the promise of Democracy)*. Ontario: Paradigm Publishers.

Goldstein, R.A. (2004) 'Who Needs the Government to Police us When We Can Do it Ourselves? The New Panopticon in Teaching.' *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*. 4(3). Pp. 320-328

Goodhand, M., and Brown, K.M. (2016) 'Heteronormativity in Elementary Schools: The Hidden and Evaded Curricula of Gender Diversity.' *International Journal of School and Cognitive psychology*. 3(3) pp.1-15.

Gower, A. Forster, M. Gloppen, K. Johnson, A. Eisenberg, M. Connett, J. and Borowsky, I. (2017) 'School practices to foster LGBT-supportive climate: Associations with adolescent bullying Involvement.' *Prevention Science*. 19(6) pp.813-821.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks* (Q. Hoare & G. N. Smith, Trans.). New York: International Publishers.

Gray, E.M. (2013) 'Coming out as a lesbian, gay or bisexual teacher: negotiating private and professional worlds.' *Sex Education* (2013) 13(6) pp.702-714

Gray, E.M., and Harris, A. (2015) 'Queer superheroes: the impossibility of difference, a neoliberal promise of equal (teacher) love. *Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*. 29(1) pp.97-108.

Green, A. (2002) "'Gay But Not Queer: Toward a Post-Queer Study of Sexuality'", *Theory and Society*, 31(4) pp.521-545.

Grumet M (1980) *Bittermilk*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Guha, R. and Spivak, G. (1988) *Selected Subaltern Studies*. Dehli: Oxford University Press.

Hackney, C. and Hogard, E. (1999) *Women in transition: a mission of service. Advancing Women in leadership, Winter*. [online] Available at: <http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/winter99/hackney.html> accessed 3rd August 2019.

Halperin, D. (1995) *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Halpern, D. (2005) *Social capital*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Helm, J. H. (2008). 'Got standards? Don't give up on engaged learning!' *Young Children*, 63(4), pp.14–20.

Helmsing, M. (2016) 'Becoming-American: Experiencing the nation through LGBT fabulation in a ninth grade US history class.' *The Journal of Social Studies Research*. 40 pp 173-176

Henderson, M. (2015) *Understanding Bullying Experiences among Sexual Minority Youths in England*. Centre for Longitudinal Studies. [online] Available at: <https://cls.ucl.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CLS-WP-20158.pdf> [Accessed 25th October 2020]

Hill, D. (2004). 'Books, banks, and bullets.' *Policy Futures in Education*, 2(3), 504–522.

Hooks, B. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Hung, C.Y. (2018) 'Educators as Transformative Intellectuals: Taiwanese Teacher Activism during the National Curriculum Controversy.' *Curriculum Inquiry*. 48(2) pp.167-183

Ingram, N, and Taylor, Y. (2018) *Working-Class Boys and Educational Success: Teenage Identiteis, Masculinites and Urban Schooling*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Issacs, L.W. and Bearison, D. J. (1986) 'The development of children's prejudice against the aged.' *International Journal of Aging & Human Development*. 23(3) pp.175-194.

Jennett, M., Rivers, I., Jowett, K., Power, P., & Caught, R. (2004). *Stand up for us: Challenging homophobia in schools*. London: Department for Education and Skills.

Jones, S. (2010) 'Stuck in Neutral? HE Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Education and Gender.' *Assessment, Learning and Teaching Journal* 8, pp.42 – 44.

Jones, M, T., and Hillier, L. (2012) 'Sexuality education school policy for Australian GLBTIQ students.' *Sexuality, Society and Learning*. 12(4) pp.437-454.

Joy, S. Game, A.M. and Toshniwai, I.G. (2018) *Applying Bourdieu's capital-field-habitus framework to migrant careers: taking stock and adding a transnational perspective*. The International Journal of Human Resource Management. [online] Available at: [https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/66865/1/BourdieuMiAlexander\\_s\\_IJHRM\\_R.1.pdf](https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/66865/1/BourdieuMiAlexander_s_IJHRM_R.1.pdf)

[Accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019]

Kaźmierska K (2004) 'Narrative interview as a method of biographical analysis.' In: Fikfak JJ, Adam F and Garz Z (eds) *Qualitative Research: Different Perspectives – Emerging Trends*. Ljubljana: ZRC Publishing, 153–172

Kelly, P., and Lusic, T. (2006). 'Migration and the Transnational Habitus: Evidence from Canada and the Philippines.' *Environmental and Planning A*. 38(5), 831-847.

Kincheloe, J.L. (1993) *Towards a critical politics of teacher thinking: Mapping the postmodern*. Westport CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. (2002). 'Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research.' In Y. Zou & E. T. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: Qualitative approaches to the study of education* (pp. 87–138). Lanham, MD: rowman & Littlefield.

Kosciw, J.G., Greytak, E.A., Bartkiewicz, M.J., Boesen, M.J., Palmer, N.A., (2012) *The 2011 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences Of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Transgender Youth In Our Nation's Schools*. New York: GLSEN.

Kosciw, J. Palmer, N and Kull, R. (2013) 'The effect of negative school climate on academic outcomes for LGBT youth and the role of in-school supports.' *Journal of School Violence*. 12(1) pp.45-63.

Kosciw, J.G., Greytak, E.A., Palmer, N.A., and Boesen, M.J., (2014) *The 2013 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences Of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Transgender Youth In Our Nation's Schools*. New York: GLSEN.

Kugle, S. (2010) *Homosexuality in Islam: Critical Reflection on gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims*. Oxford. Oneworld publications.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2004). *Against common sense: Teaching and learning toward social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge Falmer.

Labov, W. (1972) *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2003). "Lies My Teacher Still Tells: Developing a Critical Race Perspective toward the Social Studies." *Critical Race Theory Perspectives on the Social Studies: The Profession, Policies, and Curriculum*. Ed. Gloria Ladson-Billings Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Lipponen, L. and Kumpulainen, K. (2011) 'Acting as accountable authors: Creating interactional spaces for agency work in teacher education.' *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 27(5) pp.812-819.

Lough, C (2019) *Teach first recruits its 'biggest and best cohort* [online] Available at: <https://www.tes.com/news/teach-first-recruits-biggest-and-best-cohort> [Accessed 26th January 2020]

Luhmann, S. (1998). 'Queering/querying Pedagogy? Or, pedagogy is a pretty queer thing.' In W. F. Pinar (Ed.), *Queer theory in education edited* (pp. 141-155). Mahwah, New Jersey London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lyons, K. (2016) "UK Doctor Prescribing Cross-sex Hormones to Children as Young as 12." The Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/11/trans-gender-nhs-doctor-prescribing-sex-hormones-children-uk> [Accessed 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020]

Lyotard, J.F. (1979) *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*. Paris: Minuit.

MacIntosh, L. (2007) "'Does Anyone Have a Band-Aid? Anti-homophobia Discourses and Pedagogical Impossibilities.'" *Educational Studies* 41(1) pp.33-43

Macintosh, P. (1989) "'White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.'" *Peace and Freedom*. Pp.1-3.

MacKenzie-Bassant, C. (2007) 'Lesbian Teachers Walking the Line between Inclusion and Exposure.' *The International Journal of Art & Design Education*. 26(1) pp.54-62.

Martino, W. (2014) "Love the sinner, hate the sin': The clash of religious and sexual minority rights in Ontario Catholic schools.' In G. Walton (Ed.). *The gay agenda: Creating space, identity, and justice* (pp.207-222) New York: Peter Lang.

Martino, W., and Berill, D. (2003) 'Boys, schooling and masculinities: Interrogating the 'right' way to educate boys.' *Education Review*. 55(2) pp.99-117.

Martino, W., and Cumming-Potvin, W. (2016) "'Teaching about Sexual Minorities and 'princess Boys': A Queer and Trans-infused Approach to Investigating LGBTQQ-themed Texts in the Elementary School Classroom.'" *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 37 (6) pp.807–827.

McCormick, R., Fox, A., Carmichael, P., & Procter, R. (2010). *Researching and understanding educational networks (New perspectives on learning and instruction)*. London: Routledge.

McDermott, E. (2011) 'The world some have won: Sexuality, class and inequality.' *Sexualities*. 14(1) pp.63-78.

-

McGlynn-Stewart, M. (2016) 'How early childhood influences Beginning Literacy Teachers' Professional Learning.' *Brock Education: a Journal of Educational Research and Practice*. 25(2). Pp. 35-52

McLaren, P and Farhmandpur, R. (2005) *Teaching against global capitalism and the new imperialism*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

McNay, L. (1999). 'Gender, habitus and the field: Pierre Bourdieu and the limits of reflexivity.' *Theory, Culture and Society*, 16(1) pp. 175–193.

METRO (2017) *Youth Chances: Integrated report*. [online] Available at: <https://www.metrocharity.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-04/National%20Youth%20Chances%20Intergrated%20Report%202016.pdf> [Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> August 2018]

Meyer, E. J. (2008). 'Gendered harassment in secondary schools: understanding teachers' (non)interventions.' *Gender and Education*, 20(6), pp.555–570.

Mills, C. (2012) 'When "Picking the right People" Is Not Enough: A Bourdieuan Analysis of Social Justice and Dispositional change in Pre-Service Teachers.' *International Journal of Educational Research*. 53 pp.269-277.

Mills, C. Gale, T. Parker, S. Smith, C. and Cross, R. (2019) 'Activist dispositions for social justice in advantaged and disadvantaged contexts of schooling.' *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 40(5) pp.614-630.

Minckler, C.H. (2014) 'School leadership that builds teacher social capital.' *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*. 42(5) pp.657-679.

Mishler, E.G. (1986) *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mishna, F. Newman, P.A. Daley, A. and Solomon. S. (2009) 'Bullying of lesbian and gay youth: A qualitative investigation.' *The British Journal of Social Work*. 39(8) pp.1598-1614

Mohanty, C, T. (1989) "On Race and Voice: Challenges for Liberal Education in the 1990s." *Cultural Critique* 14: 179-208.

Morberg, S and Lagerström, M. and Dellve, L. (2012) 'The school nursing profession in relation to Bourdieu's concepts of capital, habitus and field.' *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences* 26(2) pp.355-362.

Morgan, E. and Taylor, Y. (2018) 'Dangerous Education: The Occupational Hazards of Teaching Transgender.' *Sociology*. 53(1) pp.19-35

Mouzelis, N. (2000) 'The subjectivist-objectivist divide: against transcendence.' *Sociology*, 34 (4). pp. 741-762

Mudde, C. (2020) *The 2010s' grim legacy: the decade of the far right*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/06/2010s-legacy-far-right-politics> [Accessed 24th February, 2020]

Mutchler, M. (2002) 'Will it be silence and violence or safety and prevention for the next generation of gay youth.' *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*. 7(1) pp.23-38.

Neary, A and Rasmussen, M.L. (2019) 'Marriage Equality Time: Entanglements of sexual progress and childhood innocence in Irish primary schools.' *Sexualities*. 23(5-6) pp. 898-916.

NHS digital (2016) *Adult psychiatric morbidity survey: Survey of mental health and wellbeing, England, 2014* [online] Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey-survey-of-mental-health-and-wellbeing-england-2014> [Accessed 9th November 2018]

Nicholas, S., & Berliner, D. (2007). *Collateral damage: How high-stakes testing corrupts America's schools*. Cambridge, CA: Harvard University Press.

Nixon, D. (2006). 'In praise of diversity: Why schools should seek gay and lesbian teachers, and why it's still difficult.' *Forum*, 48, pp. 275–282.

Nolan, K. (2015) 'Beyond tokenism in the field? On the learning of a Mathematics teacher educator and faculty supervisor'. *Cogent Education* 2(1) pp. 1-16.

Nussbaum, M. (2018) *Monarchy of fear: a philosopher looks at our political crisis*. Oxford University Press.

Office for National Statistics (2017) *Sexual identity, UK:2016*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2016> [Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018]

Oliver, C. and O'Reilly, K. (2010) 'A Bourdieusian Analysis of Class and Migration: Habitus and the individualizing process.' *Sociology*. 44(1) pp.49-66

Osterman, K.F. (1990) 'Reflective practice: A New Agenda for Education.' *Education and Urban Society*. (22) pp.132-153.

Pantić, N. (2017) 'An exploratory study of teacher agency for social justice.' *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 66 pp.219-230.

Paraskeva, J. M. (2007). 'Kidnapping public schooling.' *Policy Futures in Education*, 5(2), pp. 137–159.

Patai, D. (1992). 'Minority status and the stigma of "surplus visibility."' *Education Digest*, 57, pp.35-37

Peterson, D (2011). 'Neoliberal homophobic discourse, Heteronormative human capital and the exclusion of queer citizens.' *Journal of Homosexuality*. 58. Pp.742-757.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Pells, R. (2017) *Private Jewish school fails the OFSTED inspection for not teaching LGBT issues*.

[online] Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/private-jewish-school-lgbt-issues-fail-ofsted-inspection-vishnitz-girls-london-orthodox-sex-british-a7809221.html> [Accessed 23rd September 2019]

Pendenza, M. and Lamattin, V. (2019) 'Rethinking Self-Responsibility: An Alternative Vision to the Neoliberal Concept of Freedom.' *American Behavioral Scientist* 63(1) pp.100-115.

Pennell, S.M. (2016) 'Queer cultural capital: implications for education.' *Race Ethnicity and Education*. 19(2) pp.324-338.

Petit, M.P., Chamberland, L., Richard, G., & Chevrier, M. (2012). 'Jeunes de minorité's sexuelles victimes d'homophobie en milieu scolaire: Quels facteurs de protection [Sexual minority youth victims of school-based homophobia: What are the protective factors]?' *Revue Canadienne de Sante' Mentale Communautaire*, 30(2), 13–29.

Picower, B. (2012) 'Teacher Activism: Enacting a Vision for Social Justice.' *Equity & Excellence in Education*. 45(4) pp.561-574

Plummer K (2008) 'Studying sexualities for a better world? Ten years of Sexualities.' *Sexualities* 11(1–2) pp. 7–22.

Portes, A. (1998) 'Social capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology.' *Annual Reviews*. 24. Pp.1-24.

Potvin, L. (2016) 'Radical heterosexuality: Straight teacher activism in schools: Does ally-led activism work?' *Essays on Education, Philosophy and Politics*. 4(1) pp.9-36

Putnam, R.D. (1995) 'Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital' *Journal of Democracy*. 6(1). Pp.65-78.

Pyhältö, K. and Keskinen, J. (2012) 'Doctoral Students' Sense of Relational Agency in Their Scholarly Communities.' *International Journal of Higher Education*, vol.1 (2), pp.136-149.

Quinlivan, K., & Town, S. (1999). 'Queer pedagogy, educational practice and lesbian and gay youth.' *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 12(5) pp.509-524.

Rasmussen, M.L. (2004) "'That's So Gay!': A study of the Deployment of Signifiers of Sexual and Gender Identity in Secondary School Settings in Australia and the United States. *Social Semiotics*. 14(3) pp.289-308

Reay, D. (2004) "'It's All Becoming a Habitus': Beyond the Habitual Use of Habitus in Educational Research.' *British Journal of Sociology in Education*. 25(4) pp.431-444

Reay, D. (2018) 'A Life Lived in Class The Legacy of Resistance and the Enduring Power of Reproduction.' *PRISM* 2(1). Pp.10-22.

Renolds, E. (2007) 'Primary School "Studs": (De)constructing Young Boys' Heterosexual Masculinities.' *Men and Masculinities*. 9(3) pp.275-297.

Riaño, Y. (2011) 'Drawing new boundaries of participation: experiences and strategies of economic citizenship among skilled migrant women in Switzerland.' *Environment and Planning A*. 43(7) pp.1530-1546.

Richard, G. (2015) 'The pedagogical practices of Quebec high school teachers relative to sexual diversity.' *Journal of LGBT Youth*. 12(2). pp.113-143

Richardson, R. (1986). 'The hidden messages of school books.' *Journal of Moral Education*, 15 (1), 26-42.

Richardson, J. and Parnell, P. (2007) *And Tango Makes Three*. London: Simon and Schuster Children's UK.

Riemann, G. (2006) An Introduction to "Doing Biographical Research.' *Historical Social Research* 31(3) pp.6-28.

Rivers, I and Carragher, D.J. (2006) Social-development factors affecting lesbian and gay youth: a review of cross-national research findings. *Children and Society*, 17(5) pp.374-385.

Robertson, A. (2018) *Online Teach first's LGBT intake almost doubles*. [online] Available at: <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/teach-firsts-lgbt-intake-almost-doubles> [Accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018]

Robinson, K. (2016) *Creative schools: Revolutionizing Education from the Ground up*. London: Penguin.

Robinson, K.H., and Ferfolja, T. (2007) 'Playing it up, playing it down, playing it safe: Queering teacher education' *Teaching and Teacher Education* 24 pp.846-858.

Rosenthal, G. (2005) "Biographical research' in R. Miller' (Ed.) *Biographical research Methods Volume III*. London: Sage Publications.

Rudoe, N. (2017) 'Lesbian and gay teachers and sex/uality education policy enactment in schools. *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. 39(6) pp.1-15.

Safi, O. (2003) *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender And Pluralism (Islam in the Twenty-First Century)* Oxford. One World Publications.

Samuel, C. (2013) 'Symbolic violence and collective identity: Pierre Bourdieu and the ethics of resistance.' *Social Movement Studies*. 12(4) pp.397-413.

Sartwell, C. (2000) *End of Story: Toward an Annihilation of Language and History*. Albany NY: SUNY Press.

Sayer, A. (2010) 'Bourdieu, Ethics and Practice' in E.B. Silva and A.Warde (eds) *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy: Settling Accounts and Developing Alternatives*. London: Routledge.

Schön, D. A. (1996). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schraer R and D'Urso. J (2017) *BBC Gay rights 50 years on: 10 ways in which the UK has changed*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40743946> [Accessed on 26th August 2018]

Schwandt, T.A. (2007) 'The pressing need for ethical education: 'A commentary on the growing IRB controversy.'" In N.K. Denzin and M.D. Giardina (Eds.), *Decolonizing and politics of knowledge: Ethical futures in qualitative research*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast press.

Schweisfurth, M. (2006) 'Education for global citizenship: teacher agency and curricular structure in Ontario schools.' *Educational Review*. 58(1) pp.41-50.

Sedgwick, E.L. (1990) *Epistemology of the closet*. California. University of California Press.

Shor, I. (1996) *When Students Have Power: Negotiating Authority in a Critical Pedagogy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Skeggs, B. (2004) 'Exchange value and affect: Bourdieu and the self' in Adkins, L. and Skeggs, B (eds). *Feminism after Bourdieu*, 89-90. Oxford: Blackwell.

Shelton, A. (2015) 'The sociocultural factors that influence a novice teacher's LGBT activism.' *Teaching Education*. 26(1) pp.113-130.

Shor, I. and Freire, P. (1987) *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on transforming education*. London: Bergin & Garvey.

Shütze, F. (1992) 'Pressure and guilt: The experience of a young German soldier in World War Two and its biographical implications,' *International Sociology*, 7(2): 187-208.

Simon, R.L. (1992) *Teaching Against the Grain: Texts for a Pedagogy of Possibility*. Praeger.

Sinclair, A (2017) "It's a real negotiation within yourself": Women's stories of challenging heteronormativity within the habitus.' *Women's Studies International Forum*. 64 pp.1-9.

Smith, L.T. (2012) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Smyth, J., Down, B., and McInerney, P. (2012) *The Socially Just School: Making Space for Youth to Speak Back*. New York: Springer.

Snapp, S.D., Burdge, H., Licona, A.C. Moody, R.L and Russell, S.T. (2015) 'Students' Perspectives on LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum.' *Equity and Excellence in Education*. 48(2). pp. 249-265.

Souza, D.H., Mogetti, E.A., Villani, M., Panichi, M.T.C., Rossetto, R.P. and Huerga, S.M.R. (1999) *Turma de progressão e seu significado na escola*. In Ayers, W., Quinn, T., and Stovall (eds.) (2009). *Handbook of social justice in education*. New York: Routledge.

Sparks D (2005) 'Leading for transformation in teaching, learning, and relationships.' In: DuFour R, Eaker R and DuFour R (eds) *On Common Ground*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree, pp.155–176.

Stonewall (2014) *The Teachers' Report*. [online] Available at: [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/teachers\\_report\\_2014.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/teachers_report_2014.pdf) [Accessed 26th October 2018]

Stonewall (2017a) *Primary best practice guide*. [online] Available at: [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/stonewall\\_primary\\_best\\_practice\\_guide\\_2018\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/stonewall_primary_best_practice_guide_2018_-_final.pdf) [Accessed 10th February 2020]

Stonewall (2017b) *LGBT in Britain hate crime and discrimination*. [online] Available at: [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_hate\\_crime.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt_in_britain_hate_crime.pdf) [Accessed 24th August 2018]

Stonewall (2019) *Creating an LGBT- inclusive primary curriculum*. [online] Available at: [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/creating\\_an\\_lgbt-inclusive\\_primary\\_curriculum.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/creating_an_lgbt-inclusive_primary_curriculum.pdf) [Accessed 22nd December 2019]

Sumison, J. (1999) 'Critical reflections on the experiences of a male early childhood worker.' *Gender and Education*. 11(4) pp.455-468.

Szczepanik, R. and Siebert, S. (2016) 'The Triple Bind of Narration: Fritz Shütze's Biographical Interview in Prison Research and Beyond.' *Sociology* 50(2) pp. 285-300

Thapa, A. Cohen, J. Guffey, S. and Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013) 'A Review of School Climate Research.' *Review of Educational Research*. 83(3) pp.357-385.

Thatcher, M. (1987) *Speech to Conservative Party Conference*. [online] Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106941> [Accessed 24th October 2018]

Thompson. S., ed. (2014) *Encyclopedia of Diversity and Social Justice*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Thurer, S.L. (2005) *The End of Gender*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Thurlow, C. (2001) 'Naming the "outsider within" homophobic pejoratives and the verbal abuse of lesbian, gay and bisexual high-school pupils.' *Journal of Adolescence*. 24(1) pp.25-38.

Toomey, R. B., McGuire, J. K., & Russell, S. T. (2012). 'Heteronormativity, school climates, and perceived safety for gender nonconforming peers.' *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, pp.187–196.

Tompkins, J. (2002). 'Learning to see what they can't: Decolonizing perspectives on indigenous education in the racial context of rural Nova Scotia.' *McGill Journal of Education*, 37(3) pp.405– 422.

Verduzco, L.I. and Mendoza, R.A.L. (2016) 'In/formal sex education: learning gay identity in cultural and educational contexts in Mexico.' *Gender and Education*. 28(4) pp. 546-561.

Villegas, A.M. and Lucas, T. (2002) 'Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum.' *Journal of Teacher Education*. 53(1) pp.20-32.

Ward, B. (2020) Letter to UK Prime Minister on Gender Recognition Reform. [online] <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/17/letter-uk-prime-minister-gender-recognition-reform> [Accessed 19th June 2020]

Warin, J. (2017) 'Conceptualising the Value of Male Practitioners in Early Childhood Education and Care (EYEC): Gender Balance or Gender Flexibility' *Gender and education*. 31(3) pp.293-308.

Warin, J., and Price, D. (2020) 'Transgender awareness in early years education (EYE): 'we haven't got any of those here' *Early Years An international Research Journal* 40:1 pp140-154.

Weeks, J. (2007) *The World We Have Won*. London: Routledge.

Woodson, A.N. (2017) "'Less than a Vapor": Positioning Black lesbian women in history teacher education.' *Journal of Lesbian Studies*. 21(4) pp.465-477.

Youdall, D. (2006) *Impossible Bodies, Impossible Selves: Exclusions and Student Subjectivities*. Netherlands. Springer.

Zucker, L. G., (ed.) (1987) *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*.

Mass: Ballinger. In press

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview schedule:

#### Part one

Please tell me your personal life story. I am interested in your whole life. Anything that occurs to you. You have as much time as you like to tell it.

This may involve talking about key experiences and memories relating to:

- Childhood (*place of birth, experience growing up*)
- Schooling (*impact of teachers, friends, interests*)
- Family / friendships (*how they helped develop who you are*)
- Work (*job roles, career highlights and lows*)
- Teaching experience (*what made you become a teacher, classroom experience*)
- Interests (*hobbies, politics, religious, cultural influence*)

Questions will be asked to clarify points of interest arising from the first part of the interview.

#### Part two

##### **How teachers exert agency in disrupting hegemonic heteronormativity in the primary classroom**

*(The following questions are prompts and may not need to be asked of each participant dependent upon what they cover in answering the above question).*

- Please tell me the story of how you have developed LGBT+ inclusive practice within your teaching practice?
- What led you to begin teaching for LGBT+ inclusivity?
- Is there more would you like to do to educate for LGBT+ visibility?
- Have you faced any challenges in educating for LGBT+ inclusivity in schools?

- Have you had to compromise in your efforts to educate for LGBT+ visibility? How?
- To what extent do you feel your own sexuality impacts your abilities to undertake this work?
- Are there factors you think may inhibit a teacher from educating for LGBT+ visibility?
- Do you consider there to be wider benefits of educating for LGBT+ visibility?

#### **The role of the habitus in interrupting hegemonic heteronormativity**

- How do you conceptualise your role as a teacher?
- What are your key beliefs and values as a person and as a teacher?
- What do you feel motivates you to educate for LGBT+ visibility?
- Did you have experience of learning about LGBT+ people and themes as a child?
- To what extent do you feel your beliefs and values align with those of your colleagues?

#### **The role of capital**

- Would you say you belonged to certain social groups in society?
- How has being part of that group influenced your ability to teach in ways that are aligned with your values?
- Do you draw from social networks within and outside school who support you with educating for LGBT+ visibility?

#### **Negotiating wider structures in the field**

- Do you find that your values generally align with those of the school in which you work?
- How much control do you feel you have over curriculum development?
- Have your efforts to visibilise LGBT+ lives and themes had an effect on your students, parents and colleagues?
- How supported do you feel by senior leadership in conducting this work?
- Have you received training in educating for LGBT+ inclusivity?
- Is there anything further you would like to add?

## Appendix B: Participant Questionnaire.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study exploring how primary teachers educate for LGBT+ inclusivity. In order to progress with the research please fill out the below information and return to [b.johnson4@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:b.johnson4@lancaster.ac.uk) who will contact you in due course.

**1. What is your age?**

---

**2. How do you define your gender identity?**

---

**3. How do you define your sexuality?**

---

**4. How do you define your ethnicity?**

---

**5. How many years have you been teaching?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Please state (in as much detail as you want) how you have educated for LGBT+ inclusive curriculum within your own school.**