Constructing gender and sexuality in a teachers' guide of health education

Master's Thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

This study aims to find out how gender and sexuality are constructed in a teachers' guide of health education. Sexuality and gender complex and interconnected concepts that intersect with power, race, and class as well. The rights of gender and sexual minorities have been widely discussed in recent years. At schools, LGBTQ youth still experiences more bullying and harassment than their heterosexual/cisgender peers. Research suggests that when sexuality and gender are discussed at school, LGBTQ students feel more safe and comfortable in their educational environments, which is why it is important to study LGBTQ representations.

Critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics are used in this study to understand the underlying ideologies and power relations better, and to focus on the queer point of view. The study aims to understand how much the constructions of gender and sexuality relies on cisnormativity and heteronormativity. Special attention is given to the construction of dichotomies, as they support heteronormativity and cisnormativity and further marginalise sexual and gender minorities.

The data of the study consists of the sex and relationship education -part of a teachers' guide of health education, as it is most relevant to the topics of gender and sexuality. The guide was published in 2009. The analysis is built around the varying discourses in the data to better understand the different contexts that LGBTQ issues are talked about. The research questions are: 1. How are gender and sexuality constructed in the data? 2. What are the discourses that construct gender and sexuality in the data?

The construction of sexuality differs from the construction of gender. Sexuality is constructed through varying discourses: fluid sexuality, sexuality as a personal trait, sexuality as sexual rights, sexuality as relationships and sexuality as sexual acts. Sexuality is portrayed as a fluid and personal attribute that can enrich one's life. Gender, however, is only constructed as a dichotomy, and is given no definitions, thus portraying it as "common sense" knowledge.

Asiasanat – Keywords
critical discourse analysis, queer linguistics, educational materials, queer representations, gender, sexuality, LGBTQ, discourse, representation

Säilytyspaikka – Depository

Muita tietoja – Additional information

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1 INTRODUCTION

The rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) have developed a great deal in the past few decades in Finland. From repealing *Kehotuslaki*, a law that forbid the "promotion of sexuality" in 1999 to Equal Marriage Act in 2013, allowing for same-sex marriage, and the Maternity Act in 2019, establishing automatic co-parenting recognition to female same-sex couples following fertility treatment, the rights of same-sex people have been increasingly recognised. Gender minorities have seen acts like the Name Law come into action, and recently the rights of transgender, non-binary and intersex people have been discussed more widely in media and in e.g. the European Union and the Finnish Parliament (ILGA-Europe 2020).

Many LGBTQ students still report experiencing more bullying at school than their heterosexual/cisgender peers (Alanko 2014; Buston and Hart 2001; NUS 2014; Kaltiala-Heino et al. 2019) . Studies also indicate that when sexuality and gender are discussed at school in a comprehensive and positive manner, it affects the wellbeing of the LGBTQ students in a positive way (NUS 2014). In this study I analyse the representations of sexuality and gender in a teachers' guide for health education. The focus of this study is on the discourses regarding gender and sexuality found in the sex and relationship education -section of *Virittäjä 7–9* (Immonen et al. 2009). *Virittäjä 7–9* is a teachers' guide that responds to *Vire 7–9,* a textbook of health education used in grades 7–9, with sex and relationship education taking place in grade 8. The teachers' guide was first printed in 2009. I conducted my analysis in the spring of 2019, but I accessed the data through the online service of *Otava Opepalvelu* already in 2017. Since then the materials have gone through changes and updates, but this study shows the situation in the context of 2009 and the following years. Although the guide itself might not be in use in the same form as it has been analysed here, I hope that this study will still point out important factors in our

understanding and presentation of gender and sexuality in educational materials. This analysis also shows how the writers of the guide have instructed the teachers to interpret the materials to themselves and the students, thus educating on generation of youth. The analysis has been conducted through the methods of critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics, highlighting not only the discourses found here, but the dichotomisation and marginalisation of gender and sexuality. My aim is to find out what kind of image *Virittäjä 7–9* conveys about gender and sexuality. The research questions are: 1. How are gender and sexuality constructed in the data? 2. What are the discourses that construct gender and sexuality in the data?

Gender and sexuality themselves are complex and fluid concepts that intersect not only with each other, but with power, race, and class as well (Gamson and Moon 2004; Holmes 2007). Neither concept is purely biological, but are affected by a number of factors besides biology, like culture, politics and society. In regards to gender, this has been widely talked about as the sex/gender-division, where sex refers to the biological concept and gender to the cultural one, but even this division is not as simple and easily defined (Holmes 2007). For example, intersex people, those born with ambiguous sex characteristics, often operate in the jungle of sex/gender in a way that defies strict dichotomies.

In this study I will look at gender as a system of meanings that constitutes us as masculine or feminine individuals. We produce gender, and gender produces us, through a variety of masculinities and femininities that are available for us to incorporate in our gender expression and identity. What counts as masculinity or femininity is not historically or culturally fixed, but rather the ideas of feminine and masculine behaviour fluctuate in time and place, as do our notions of gender, gender identity and gender expression (Holmes 2007). Expressing gender is linked to expressing sexuality, which is a complex ensemble of feelings, desires and behaviours (WHO 2006). We may choose to act on our desires or feelings differently in different situations, and our feelings and desires may be affected by our behaviour, or behaviour of others. Like gender, our understanding of sexuality

and/or its expression is not historically/culturally fixed.

We can examine our understanding of gender and sexuality by examining the way we name, organise and give meaning to matters relating to gender and sexuality. For example, the acronym LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual) has grown in accordance with our understanding, with the latter letters added to the acronym. Naming one's identity is a way to make one's experiences more understandable to others, and it is thus dependent on the social/historical/cultural and political context (Juvonen 2019). For example, use of the word *queer* has changed a lot over the last century. What started as a something that means 'odd' became a slur for homosexuality. In the 1990s with the emergence of queer studies the term was reclaimed, now to denote the restricting and binary qualities of words like gay, lesbian, or transgender. To others, queer might mean a specific type of political critique against the idealisation of normalcy, like marriage (Juvonen 2019). Colloquially queer has sometimes been used as an umbrella term for all non-heterosexual or non-cisgender identities, although not everyone identifies with the term. What is most important though is the understanding that sexuality and gender do not operate on a strict binary, and this is what my use of the term queer is trying to portray. Naturally, the different names one might use to denote meaning to their sexual and gender identities are equal and everyone has the right to use the terms they prefer.

Although one can easily find different variations of the LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQIA -acronym, in this thesis I will be using the acronym LGBTQ to better link my analysis to the context of my data. This is not to diminish the importance of intersex- or asexual-identities, who deserve representation as much as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer people. My use of the acronym stems from the fact that in 2009, the term LGBTQ was more likely to represent the information available to the writers of *Virittäjä 7–9*. I regard the fact that the acronym has grown over the last decade as a positive sign, as it will hopefully bring more and more people the means to make sense over one's identity. In this context, when I use the term 'queer', it is to

refer to identities that operate outside the dichotomy of lesbian, gay, transgender or bisexual. As there are people that might identify themselves for example as both lesbian and queer, there are also people that identify themselves as exclusively queer. I will also use the terms gender and sexual minorities as a synonym for LGBTQ people. However, it is good to remember that the aim of this study is to understand the constructions of gender and sexuality, not the construction of these terms – not that the construction of sexuality excludes the construction of the terms used to give meaning to it. As Pia Livia Hekenaho explains, these terms have their own history and they have all been born in certain historic contexts. They do not objectively depict the reality around us but rather construct it by setting limits to the way we perceive and name our experiences (Hekenaho 2010: 151).

Language is inherently linked into the way we understand/produce/are produced by gender and sexuality, and not only in the way we talk or what terms we use to give meaning to our experiences. Gender and sexuality operate within systems of power, for example within ideologies of heteronormativity and cisnormativity. Heteronormativity is the underlying assumption of heterosexuality as normal, marginalising queer identities. Cisnormativity assumes gender as a dichotomy where gender is only viewed through the categories men and women, again marginalising queer identities. Cisnormativity also includes the normative assumptions of women being feminine and men being masculine. One way to better understand these ideologies and their relations to gender and sexuality is through language, especially through discourses.

Fairclough defines the relationship between discourse and society through a three-dimensional model. Firstly, discourse is text, a chunk of language larger than a sentence. On the second level the text becomes part of a discursive practice. Thirdly, discourse is social practice (Fairclough 1992). This relationship between discourse and society gives us a way to recognise ideologies prevalent in different societies through language, and see how language shapes those ideologies in turn (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009, Fairclough 1992, Jones 2012). According to

Fairclough, by contributing to sustaining relations of power and domination, discourse becomes ideological (2001: 126). When it comes to gender, sexuality, and language, we can study the ways heteronormativity and cisnormativity operate in certain contexts – in this study in the context of education.

Understanding how gender and sexuality are constructed discursively in education is important. As previous research shows, representations matter: Studies mapping the experiences of LGBTQ youth in educational settings show that especially young people in minority groups suffer from lack of representations in their educational environment (Alanko 2014; Buston and Hart 2001; NUS 2014). LGBTQ pupils still experience more bullying than their heterosexual peers. The situation is especially dire in regards to gender minorities: as high as 80 % of trans youth reported experiencing bullying or harassment at school (Alanko 2014). At the same time, when sexuality and gender are discussed at school in positive light, LGBTQ youth feel themselves more included and safe in their educational settings (NUS 2014).

Discussing sexuality and gender at school is a matter of many factors, where the teacher, the curriculum, and the educational materials used can all play a part. The curriculum sets the goals and general plans for the teaching. The national curriculum, renewed in 2014 and implemented in the following years, talks about gender equality and mentions sexuality specifically in the goals for health education (Opetushallitus 2014), which is why I am studying a teachers' guide of health education. Teachers should use the curriculum as their guideline when planning their teaching. The teachers, and the education system in Finland, have been internationally praised as professional and highly qualified. Every teacher is required to have a Master's degree, and those wanting to teach subjects like health education will have to study obligatory courses on the subject as part of their teacher education.

Educational materials have been studied mainly from the point of view of sexual minorities or gender equality between men and women. Studies looking into LGBTQ

representations in educational contexts have found out that sexual minorities are often presented as invisible or in the marginal, and solely in negative contexts (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Temple 2005; Sauntson and Simpson 2011). LGBTQ identities are often only talked about in relation to issues such as AIDS, bullying, suicide and drug abuse (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Young and Middleton 2008). Gender minorities are rarely talked about in these studies. When representations of gender is studied, it is through a cisgender lens, where representations focus on women/men, boys/girls. These studies agree that men are often overrepresented in relation to women in educational materials (Palmu 2003; Tainio and Teräs 2010).

Although studies exploring LGBTQ representations in educational materials have been mostly conducted in international contexts, it does not mean that the issue has gone unrecognised in Finland either. Saarikoski and Kovero published a special guide to help teachers to include non-heterosexual youth in their lessons in 2013. In the guide the authors call attention to the lack of representations in educational materials (Saarikoski and Kovero 2013). Two years later The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health published another informational package for educational institutions, workplaces and officials about the diversity of gender (Tanhua et al. 2015). The package acknowledges this lack of representation as well. Nonetheless, domestic studies on the representations of LGBTQ people in educational materials are needed, especially when we look at the findings of the studies conducted abroad. Taking into account what we know about the effects of representations on students' wellbeing, it is important to analyse and understand how these representations are constructed.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter two depicts the situation of LGBTQ youth in education and looks into the previous research on queer representations in educational materials. The key concepts for this study – gender, sexuality and discourse – are explained in chapter three, along with queer linguistics and critical discourse analysis. In the fourth chapter I go through my data, research questions,

and methodology. Chapter five, with its many subchapters, is dedicated for analysis and the discourses found in the data. In the last chapter I summarize my findings, discuss the possible shortcomings of this research and explore future research opportunities.

2 LGBTQ IN EDUCATION

2.1 Sexuality at school

The rights of sexual and gender minorities in Finland have gone through some changes in the last decade. Same-sex couples got the right to marry in 2013 after a successful human rights campaign called *Tahdon2013*, I Do2013. In 2015, the Equality Act was renewed and discrimination on the basis of gender expression and gender identity was legally prohibited. The law also mandates that such discrimination should be actively prevented as well (Tanhua et al. 2015). More recently, the Maternity Act entered into force in April 2019, establishing automatic co-parenting recognition to female same-sex couples following fertility treatment. The new name law that entered into force also makes it easier to change one's legal name on the basis of one's gender identity, and the new government's programme commits to banning unnecessary and non-consensual cosmetic surgeries on intersex children (ILGA-Europe 2020).

The latest ILGA-Europe review reflects on the LGBT rights and attitudes towards them in Finland during the year 2019. Although the advancement of legal rights has generally been supported by a majority of Finns, there is still some backlash. The *Aito Avioliitto* (True Marriage) Association has been vocal at different events and organised panel discussions with candidates of parliamentary elections. "In January, they were banned from participating in the annual Educa teachers' exposition in Helsinki, following widespread criticism from attendees and members of the Trade Union of Education (OAJ)", the report states (ILGA-Europe 2020: n.pag.). Some members in the Orivesi municipal council also proposed that children in daycares and schools should only be taught about two genders, male and female, but the city dismissed the motion as discriminatory (ILGA-Europe 2020).

LGBT rights in education have developed too. Until 1999, a law banning the 'public promotion of homosexuality' was still in act in Finland, and this affected the way

subjects like homosexuality were covered at school. Epstein (2000) ponders on the effects of a similar act – Section 28 – in the United Kingdom, explaining that when it came to discussing homosexuality at school or even intervening with homophobic bullying, teachers reported to being cautious, and often being silent (2000: 388). A more recent study by Sauntson and Simpson (2011) looking into the English curriculum in England finds that although the official curriculum could open possibilities for teachers to discuss LGBTQ topics at English class, teachers rarely take the opportunity to do so. Although we have no similar studies exploring the effects of *Kehotuslaki* directly in teaching in Finland, we can assume that talking about non-heterosexual sexuality in a positive manner in educational settings was non-existent. As many studies that are concluded well after the repealing of similar acts or laws over the world show, LGBTQ pupils still experience that the way sexuality and gender -related issues are handled at schools feels like marginalisation of LGBTQ people (Ellis and High 2004; OFSTED 2013; Alanko 2014; NUS 2014; Guasp 2012; Buston and Hart 2001).

A special report on the national school health survey of 2017, run by The Institute for Health and Welfare of Finland, finds that LGBTQ children and youth experience more bullying, sexual violence, psychological and physical violence than their peers – especially boys are at risk. LGBTQ youth also reported experiencing more anxiety than their peers. However, most LGBTQ students feel that they can be themselves at school, and there was no difference with heterosexual and cisgender youth in how teachers interact with them (THL 2017: 1).

2.2 Curriculum and sex and relationship education

The national curriculum guides the teaching on all subjects in Finland and sets the ground values that instruct the ways that schools work. The new curriculum was published in 2014, and it was implemented between the years 2016 to 2019, starting from grades 1–6 in 2016 and finishing with grade 9 in 2019. In the curriculum, the Finnish National Agency for Education states that the people in the learning community should be met and be treated as equals, and that being equal does not

equate to being similar – individual needs should be met in order to achieve equality. Special attention is given to gender, saying that the learning community should support the pupils in the construction of their identity. Teaching should acknowledge gender and encourage students to make choices without gendered role models (Opetushallitus 2014: 28).

The focus of this study is on sex and relationship education, as it is the part of curriculum that students most often turn to when looking for answers about LGBTQ issues. Sex and relationship education falls under health education in the Finnish national curriculum. In compulsory school, health education is studied between grades 7-9 as its own subject. Sex and relationship education often takes place in grade 8, when the pupils are around 14 years old (Opetushallitus 2014: 399).

The national curriculum states that the goal of health education is to further the students' knowledge about health in a variety of ways. The basis of the subject is laid on respecting life and human rights. The subject itself is divided into smaller topics: knowledge and skills relating to health, self-knowledge, critical thinking, and ethical responsibility (Opetushallitus 2014: 398). Sexuality, the different aspects of sexual health and the diversity of sexual development are also explicitly stated on the curriculum for health education. Gender is not specified as part of health education (Opetushallitus 2014: 400).

A special guide about gender and sexuality called *Älä oleta – Normit nurin!* 'Don't assume – Break the norms!' for schools states that in order to make education equal, amending the national curriculum is one of the ways to do that (Saarikoski and Kovero 2013). The guide is published by Seta, an organisation that promotes the rights of queer people in Finland. The guide is meant as an informational package for teachers, so that they could include sexual and gender minorities better in their teaching and in the school environment itself. Besides representation in educational materials, the guide promotes for inclusivity in teacher education, proper support system for students, intervening bullying that upholds norms, and paying more

attention to the contents of textbooks (Saarikoski and Kovero 2013: 89). The guide will be discussed further below.

2.3 LGBTQ in school textbooks and teachers' guides

The process of teaching at school takes shape through many different aspects. The teacher, the class itself and the students all can have an affect on the way the lessons play out. And while educational materials come in many forms as well, textbooks (digital or paperbacks) are a common way of collecting educational materials for specific subjects,. Educational materials have an authoritative status in that they are perceived as being part of the established institution of education, so they should and have been the subject of research from different perspectives before.

I have studied this topic myself before. For my Bachelor's thesis I compared how representations of gender and sexual minorities were handled in two Finnish and two English textbooks of health education (Suviranta 2015). In my study I found that the topics of sexuality and gender were handled very differently in the different countries: the Finnish textbooks represented sexuality through positive contexts, like relationships and feelings, whereas the English ones only talked about sexuality in relation to negative contexts, such as sexually transmitted deceases, bullying, and discrimination in society. In the Finnish books, gender (in relation to gender minorities) was only talked about when defining terms such as transgender or transvestite. The English textbooks did not mention gender minorities at all (Suviranta 2015).

Already during my previous study I found that most of the studies of queer representations of textbooks come from outside Finland, so the social, political and historical context of the findings is somewhat different. Nonetheless, the studies portray an important view of queer issues around the world in the context of education. A common theme among these studies is shown in a study from Julia R. Temple, analysing French Quebec high school books, who concludes that the books

enforce heteronormativity by dichotomising both sexuality and gender and problematising same-sex sexuality when it is talked about. (2005: 287). This is when same-sex sexuality was talked about at all – mostly the topic was absent completely (Temple 2005). Most studies on the topic find that same-sex relationships are mentioned minimally, and when they are, they are talked about only through negative contexts. In teacher education textbooks, non-heterosexuality was only portrayed through topics such as drug abuse, suicide and AIDS (Young and Middleton 2008). Macgillivray and Jennings, looking into teacher education textbooks as well, found similar issues as their analysis showed that LGBTQ people were portrayed as having no agency themselves. Queer people were only victims of a variety of social issues such as harasment, self-destructive behaviour, or discrimination. (2008: 181).

Studies that question the male/female-dichotomy or concern themselves with the representations of gender minorities are not as common as studies looking into representations of sexuality. Temple (2005) mentioned an emphasis on a rigid male/female -division, and Bazzul and Sykes pointed out how anything outside the sex binary is absent in their analysis of a biology textbook (2011: 281), but otherwise studies on gender are focused on the cisgender point of view and breaking of traditional gender roles. In 2010, Tainio and Teräs published a vast report on gender representations in school textbooks, ordered by the Finnish National Agency for Education. The report concluded that men/boys were represented more than women/girls (Tainio and Teräs 2010), but again, this study was concluded from the point of view of cisgender representation. A study by Palmu from 2003 shows similar findings.

Although there are no published studies directly on the representations of LGBTQ people in Finnish textbooks, it does not mean that the lack of representation has gone unnoticed. The above-mentioned *Don't Assume! Breaking the norms* -guide calls attention to the issue. Saarikoski and Kovero write how textbooks reflect a certain power structures, and it is possible that certain groups are not present in the books

at all, or people can be represented through stereotypical gender roles (2013: 67). The authors call for more attention to be paid to the content of textbooks from the point of view of representations.

The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health also published an informational package aimed for educational institutions, workplaces and officials about the diversity of gender (Tanhua et al. 2015). The package states that the possibility of the diversity of gender should be included in educational materials. The authors even state that as people seem to have little or no knowledge about the topic, it should be handled more in educational contexts and teachers should acquaint themselves with the proper terms and concepts that change continually (Tanhua et al. 2015: 38). As my Bachelor's thesis shows, the way the topic of sexuality was handled in health education differs greatly in Finland and England. More domestic studies to better understand the ideologies behind our textbooks are needed.

3 KEY CONCEPTS

3.1 Gender

In order to talk about gender and sexual minorities, we need to explore what gender and sexuality exactly are first. As they both are complex and fluid concepts that intersect not only with each other, but with power, race and class too (Gamson and Moon 2004; Holmes 2007), I will try to explain these concepts and examine their intersections with language.

Gender has been generally separated into the concepts of sex and gender, where sex is pertained to refer to the biological aspects of the concept, and gender to the socially constructed ones (Holmes 2007). This division, however, is not as simple. Biology and society cannot be strictly divided into different concepts, as one affects the other and vice versa, thus making sex and gender interconnected concepts as well. Both sex and gender are subject to historical and cultural changes, as our interpretation of biology shifts with our cultural models and academic research (Holmes 2007). So, when talking about biology and gender, it is important to keep in mind the social and cultural interpretations that colour our views of sex.

Gender cannot be talked about only as a biological category. We bring forth our gender for example with our clothing, our behaviour, and our acts, which we categorise as feminine or masculine. We build our gender identities by constantly combining these femininities and masculinities in different ways in accordance with the social situation we are in. This idea of doing or performing gender is often credited to Judith Butler, following her work of *Gender Trouble* in 1990. She writes how the notion of constructing gender gives us agency – when we, through an ongoing process of repetition, construct identity with the means available to us, she writes that there is always a possibility of variation in the process of repetition (Butler 1990: 185). She further explains that (Butler 1990: 189):

> To enter into the repetitive practices of this terrain of signification is not a choice, for

> the "I" that might enter is always already inside: there is no possibility of agency or reality outside of the discursive practices that give those terms the intelligibility that they have. The task is not whether to repeat, but how to repeat or, indeed, to repeat and, through a radical proliferation of gender, to displace the very gender norms that enable the repetition itself.

To put it another way, gender is a system of meanings that constitutes us as masculine or feminine individuals, and we use this system of meanings when building our gender identities. One important contributor to this system of meanings is language.

Gender has been researched through language in a variety of ways. Mary Bucholtz explains the ways feminist movements have influenced the study of gender and language in her chapter from the Handbook of Language, Gender and Sexuality called *The Feminist Foundations of Language, Sexuality and Gender Research* (2014). The second-wave feminist movement that started in the 1960s and 1970s America brought forward an interest in the ways women speak in various contexts in order to elevate women's issues (Bucholtz 2014). This type of study might seem old-fashioned now, but it has its place in feminist research by somewhat exaggerating the speech acts of women as the goal to aspire to in social acts in patriarchal societies.

To sum up the start of gender and language studies, much like second-wave feminism itself these studies all focused on the differences between men and women, thus itself also constructing said differences by reconstructing those discourses. The question these studies tried to answer was "Do women and men talk differently?" (Stokoe 2004: 107). This early sociolinguistic view to gender studies errs in treating gender as an essential category that can be easily traced to a category such as gender, thus turning gender into something one has, rather than something one does (Stokoe 2004; McElhinny 2014). Besides turning gender into an attribute, these types of studies saw the study of gender as the study of individuals, rather than institutions or larger systems (McElhinny 2014). McElhinny also reiterates the way the study of

gender was linked to heterosexuality through the assumption that gender should be studied where it was most salient, the most salient situations being interactions between potentially sexually available people of different gender, or women performing gender-specific tasks (2014: 49) However, as Bucholtz says , these types of studies should not be condoned on the light of modern research were the focus is much on intersectionality, because these studies were at the forefront in bringing previously overlooked women and women's issues and place in patriarchal societies to the centre of academia (2014: 31).

As the scope of feminism broadened, so did language and gender studies. With Butler's notions of performing gender, the relationship between gender and language was understood more as a social construction rather than an attribute (Stokoe 2004; McElhinny 2014). Stokoe depicts this as a "discursive turn" where the focus is on the examination of "social production of gendered identities and ideologies"(2004: 107). The widening scope of feminism also brought into view issues of class, race, and sexuality and their interrelations with gender (Bucholtz 2014; McElhinny 2014).

The perception of the category of gender itself has changed since the days of second-wave feminism. The mid 1990s sees the notion of queering gender, i.e. questioning the idea of gender as a binary. Queer theorists generally agree that it is possible to create more fluid gender identities outside a dichotomy of gender. Theoretically the question of 'to what extent is it possible to occupy a no-man's land between gender categories' is immensely fascinating. Many examples cited as 'gender trouble', such as drag queens, actually reinforce quite conservative ideas of masculinity and femininity (Holmes 2007: 180). Holmes suggests theorists to look further at intersex individuals, but points out concerns about how disregarding gender dichotomies might "institute ways of being in which the feminine might disappear" (2007: 180-181).

This is not to say that it is not important to insist on the artificiality of gender dichotomies, or that they should not be questioned. Pushing the boundaries of

gender and what it means is extremely important already because of the salience of gendered systems in our societies. What Holmes warns us about is that the experiences of people in those gendered systems should not be forgotten (Holmes 2007: 181). "The material and embodied effects those dichotomies have on women's and men's lives", Holmes clarifies (2007: 181). However, I would argue that those dichotomies have embodied effects in the lives of intersex and genderqueer people as well. As Holmes herself sums it up (2007: 182): "It does not have to be like this. There is no natural order that must be maintained. We have made gender and the inequalities that attend to it and therefore it can be remade." When talking about the theory of gender, Ehrlich and Meyerhoff point out the most important aspect of it: "[n]o matter what we [as researchers] say about the inadequacy and individuousness of essentialized, dichotomous conceptions of gender … in everyday life it really is often the case that gender is 'essential'... that gender as a social category *matters*" (2014: 8).

Susan U. Philips points out the problem of early gender ideologies as being the belief that only one gender ideology exists in each society (Philips 2014: 303). In other words, the idea that gender exists in the crossroads with power, race, and class was not accounted for. Levon (2015: 295) talks about the theory of intersectionality, or the belief that no one category (like "woman", or "lesbian", or "working class") is sufficient enough to account for the experience or behaviour of an individual and calls for a more intersectional approach in sociolinguistic studies of gender. Ideologies will be discussed further below in the context of discourse, but here I will have to mention the importance of ideologies in gender, too. Power is deeply integrated with gender, and language is one point of view to study the power inequalities around gender. Philips brings special attention to ideologies in institutional settings (2014: 309):

> How are gender ideologies in different institutional settings similar and different? How are these gender ideologies shaped by their institutional contexts? Are some institutional complexes more ideologically powerful, influential, and/or hegemonic

in shaping gender ideologies than others?

Taking into account that the context of my research is that of an educational institution, special attention should be brought to the possible ramifications of gender ideologies in that setting. It could be argued that educational institutions are ideologically powerful places because of their position in creating/sharing knowledge. As discussed more below, Foucault argued that knowledge is power, and power can be realised in determening what constitutes as knowledge. In the concept of sexuality and gender, this is realised for example as deciding whether LGBTQ issues are a matter of knowledge or a matter of beliefs. Previous research shows that for example in the UK, issues of sexuality have sometimes been framed as matters of beliefs by discussing LGBTQ rights and religious ideologies in a way that frames religious notions of homosexuality being sinful equally important as actual the rights of LGBTQ people (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Young and Middleton 2008) .

3.2 Sexuality

Like gender, sexuality is a complex phenomenon. According to World Health Organisation (2006: 5), sexuality is

> … a central aspect of being human throughout life that encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.

Sexuality is not just sexual orientation, although orientation is a part of sexuality. Sexuality is an ensemble of feelings, desires and behaviours that are all affected by a number of factors ranging from biological to political to cultural. Gender, class, and

race are inherently linked to sexuality (Gamson and Moon 2004). People are partly expected to express their gender through sexual behaviours and desires, and thus gender does not only produce gender hierarchy, but heteronormativity as well (Baker 2008).

The complexity of sexuality has been understood in academia for a long time. Already in 1948, Kinsey, an American biologist and the founder of the Institute for Sex Research, created a heterosexual-homosexual rating scale, also known as the Kinsey scale. The scale would measure one's stance on a 5-step scale, where one end was being fully heterosexual, and the other being fully homosexual. Kinsey believed that most people fall somewhere in the middle of the scale (Baker 2008: 6). As our understanding of sexuality has deepened, it has become clear that sexuality and its multi-faceted nature cannot be represented by a simple scale. Along the years the Kinsey scale has been developed further by various researchers, with the graphic changing from a scale to a grid to a variety of scales that track a multitude of variables relating to sexuality, like attraction, behaviour, fantasies, identity, emotional, social, and lifestyle preference and political identity (Baker 2008).

One thing to remember is that the study of language and sexuality is very much tied to the study of language and gender. Initially combining the two worked as a protection to the study of sexual identities as homophobia made working on such fields of study risky (Queen 2014: 204-205). However, the distinction between the two fields of study is a murky one, as sexuality and gender cannot be separated from one another – for example, to what extent are performances of sexuality performances of gender? Speer and Potter (2002: 174) give us an example of the inseparable link between the two: "heterosexist talk relies on and invokes normative notions of gender and sexuality, policing their boundaries, consequently telling us much about the construction of both". As sexuality is such a multi-faceted phenomenon, so is the relationship between sexuality and language. Queen explains it as follows (2014: 204-205):

> [T]he fundamental question underlying this area of research is how research can

> scientifically and rigorously explain and perhaps predict the interrelationships of language, in particular language variation (either within or across individuals), with sexuality, where sexuality refers simultaneously to practices, identities, beliefs, and ideologies that are tied in one way or another to the eroticized body.

Bucholtz divides the research on language and sexuality around three types of issues: linguistic aspects of the social and political struggle of queer groups and individuals, the linguistic practices of particular queer groups and discursive representations of queer identities by both ingroup and outgroup members (2014: 36). Focusing on the linguistic practices of particular LGBTQ groups, in their book *Language and Sexuality,* Cameron and Kulick (2003) go through the history of linguistic research on sexuality, and divide it into four different phases. During the first phase, taking place between 1920s to 1940s, homosexuality was still regarded as pathology, and linguistic research on homosexuality was very much focused on vocabulary in a form of lists and gender inversion. This kind of work has its issues. Firstly, it is greatly generalised, portraying all homosexuals as a single homogenous group that uses similar language. Secondly, lists of vocabulary offer no information on the context of the language – how is it used and by whom. Nonetheless, nowadays these lists can provide us an insight "into the social context of homosexuality in the 1930s" (Cameron and Kulick 2003: 81).

The second phase coincides with the homophile and gay liberation movements, and brings the political advancement of homosexuals into language research. At this time, the perception of homosexuality is moving from that of an illness to a social identity, and the shift is reflected in the studies conducted during 1950s and 1960s. The gay language depicted in previous research is seen as old-fashioned and misguided, and divisions are created between those that use it and those that do not, depicting the latter group as politically progressive (Cameron and Kulick 2003).

The political aspect of language and sexuality research continues to the third phase, starting from the 1970s with the Gay Liberationist movement. Scholars take the idea of sexuality as a social identity further and frame homosexuals as an oppressed minority, similarly to ethnic minorities or racial identities, and depict the creation of new gay and lesbian communities, saying how the old-style homosexuals are gone (Cameron and Kulick 2003). Taking influence from Black English Vernacular and Women's Language, the concept of Gayspeak is well illustrated in a scholarly volume named after the concept in 1981. *Gayspeak* is devoted to gay and lesbian language, and the introduction to the volume says that "homosexuals permeate all dimensions of society as males and females, blacks and whites, rich and poor, rural and urban" (Chesebro 1981, cited in Cameron and Kulick 2003: 87). However, the intersections of sexuality with gender, race, class of geographical location are rarely discussed.

Kulick (2000) argues that the language practices of any social group do not necessarily tell anything useful about that particular group – so, studying "gay and lesbian language" reveals little about gays and lesbians themselves. Kulick's suggestion is to focus the study of language and sexuality to the language of desire by turning into theories outside linguistics, like cultural studies and psychoanalytic theory. His theory has sparked some criticism, arguing that excluding identity would potentially ignore the salience of socially constructed subject positions and the matters of power and other social phenomena (Queen 2014). As it is, sexuality and gender cannot be separated from issues of power, as argued by Michel Foucault and many others after him (Foucault 1978, Queen 2014, Gamson and Moon 2004; Holmes 2007). What this means is that studying either gender or sexuality, issues of power arise, and the ideologies and power hierarchies behind language can, or maybe even should, be examined and questioned.

Queer theory impacted the research on language and sexuality from the mid 1990s onward, starting what Cameron and Kulick call the fourth phase of language and

sexuality -research (2003). Butler's idea of gender as a performance, mentioned above, changed the way identity was perceived, and scholars investigated the ways in which identities are *materialised* through language, not how identity is *reflected* through language. In other words, identity is seen as the effect of specific semiotic practices, not as the source of it (Butler 1990; Stokoe 2004; McElhinny 2014). Livia and Hall published a groundbreaking work called *Queerly Phrased: Language, Gender and Sexuality* in 1997, starting a new way of sociolinguistic research. In the book, Livia and Hall describe queer ways of using language, and claim that the intention of such language usage is to disrupt normative conventions (1997: 13).

Hekenaho (2010) argues that queer studies were not actually a direct continuation of gay and lesbian -studies, although some researchers perceive it to be. According to Hekenaho, queer theory does more than just expands the terminology or the methods, and it should not be seen as an umbrella term for all the research questions relating to sexual and gender minorities. Rather, she argues, queer theory should question this type of identity-based discussion and politics and analyse the construction of concepts of normality and deviation (Hekenaho 2010: 148-149). The question should not be "What is the truth about homosexuality?" but rather "What meanings does the term denote to in different historical and social contexts, and how is it used and needed?" (Hekenaho 2010: 149).

Queer linguistics combines queer theory to the study of language and sexuality. William L. Leap shows in *Queer Linguistics as Critical Discourse Analysis* how queer linguistics can be used as critical discourse analysis. "So while queer linguistics is interested in sexuality, the queer linguistics pursuit of these interests leads into a broader interrogation of structures of normative authority and regulatory power", Leap writes (2015: 662), drawing comparisons of critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics. And like critical discourse analysis, queer linguistics is not focused on a single agenda, but rather on a multitude of issues rising from social inequality.

At the centre of queer linguistics is the queer subject whose experiences are heavily embedded in the historical and social contexts. Queer linguistics, as opposed to just queer theory, methodically uses the discursive and linguistic constructions in investigating such social contexts.

Formation of discourses within specific power structures is at the heart of investigating sexuality and gender through queer linguistics. With queer linguistics rises the "refusal to ground the analysis of linguistic practice in sexuality- (or gender)-related categories and binaries" (Leap 2015: 661). Often they are seen as "common sense", which can be uncritically accepted as true and right, thus leading to further marginalisation of queer people (Leap 2015).

One way to talk about this is through the concept of heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is the presumption of universal heterosexual desire, behaviour and identity, and the recognition that all social institutions are built around a heterosexual model of social relations (Baker 2008). Heteronormativity covers a range of beliefs, starting from the assumption of gender consisting of male and female-categories to the assumption that sexual relations are normal only between people of opposing categories. Many social practices are tied to heteronormativity, and they can potentially erase, regulate, taboo or silence queer identities. "Such social practices can be overt, covert or implied" (Baker 2008: 109). When talking about the presumption of gender as a binary matter, where everyone falls either under the 'male' or 'female' category, the term we use is *cisnormativity*. When studying gender and sexuality through discourse(s), heteronormativity and cisnormativity are often encountered as underlying ideologies that uphold certain power relations.

Heteronormativity and cisnormativity lead to marginalisation and 'othering' of queer people, and texts create and uphold these normativities by (amongst others)

upholding the binary views of sexuality and gender (Stein and Plummer 1994; Gamson and Moon 2004). Queer linguistics will help me locate such ideologies and question the unnecessary binaries portrayed in the data.

3.3 Discourse

The relationship with society and language can be examined through the works of the French academic Michel Foucault, whose academic works are vital to the creation of discourse analysis. For Foucault, things did not come into being by themselves, but were always produced in and by discourses (Foucault 1978). Discourses in plural (or a discourse, as opposed to discourse) refer to the recognisable ways to signify and depict things, phenomena and events from a certain point of view and from a certain angle, while discourse refers more to language as a social practice (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009; Jones 2012). Even though discourses do change through time, their change is slow and reflects the ideology of the society it is produced in, and thus certain discourses are easy to find in varying contexts in a specific point in time (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009). According to Foucault, we should question every discursive action, as everything that is being said will trace back to existing discourses and established statements, which are created in accordance to who has the power in society (Foucault 1978; Hall 1997; Andersen 2003; Mills 2004). It is possible to question discourses, because "[d]iscourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it", Foucault writes (1978: 116). Neutrality does not exist within discourses.

For example, Foucault argued that subjects like 'madness', 'punishment', and 'sexuality' only exist within discourses about them. It's possible to trace how these discourses came to be through analysis of different discourses about the subjects in different points in time. In *the History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction* (1978), Foucault introduces his theory that in the 18th century, sexuality had to be put into

words as reproduction became a political issue – people became population (1978: 32). From there on, the discourses of sexuality multiplied and scattered in various ways, relating to demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, ethics, pedagogy and political criticism (1978: 33). To put it another way, the homosexual subject was constructed by and in discourses about morality, legality, medicality and psychiatry (Hall 1997). 'The homosexual', as Foucault called him, was defined by certain statements in these discourses – now the subject was as immoral, illegal, sick and mentally ill. Defining homosexuality as something that is 'by nature' meant that, under the understandings of the time period, sexuality was something that normalising or therapeutic interventions could be used (Foucault 1978). Not only did these discourses produce a division of 'normal' and 'abnormal' sexuality, they produced strictly how each category was defined, and how the subjects of each category were to be treated as. When we operate on a certain system of beliefs, it regulates how we approach each other, ourselves and our surroundings (Andersen 2003: 3). Therefore the discourses we are using are not just ways of speaking, but social events themselves, as they have the power to produce, to reinstate, to exclude or to construct subjects. (Andersen 2003: 13). Homosexuality is actually a great example of how discourses are historically situated and arbitrary because of how our perceptions of sexuality and sexual minorities have changed not only within the last century, but even within the last few decades. As our attitudes and ideologies towards something change, it is reflected in the discourses that we use. If we follow this concept, it means that there are no inherent truths about subjects, but rather, truth is something that society has to keep working to produce by establishing and re-establishing discourses. "The history of sexuality – that is, the history of what functioned in the nineteenth century as a specific field of truth – must be written from the viewpoint of a history of discourses", Foucault writes (1978: 80).

The question of power is an integral one in order to understand just how these truths are laboured into being. According to Foucault, the discourses of 'illness' or 'criminality', for example, were created with the intent to control the ill and the criminal (Foucault 1978). Foucault talked of the power/knowledge -pair: knowledge

is always created through power, and knowledge is power (1978). Hall reiterates Foucault's notion of knowledge as power by reminding us how important it is to understand the circumstances in which knowledge is to be applied or not (Hall 1997: 48-49). Discourses are a vital part in understanding how power works, as discourses work in the space and as the means of its exercise (Foucault 1978: 32).

Fairclough refined the relationship between society and discourse that Foucault talked about. In *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), Fairclough explains a three dimensional model of discourse that depicts three different levels that link discourse to society. Firstly, discourse is text. This can be in the form of speech, writing, visual images or a combination of all. So on one level, discourse is a chunk of language larger than a sentence. On the second level the text is part of a discursive practice which involves the production and consumption of texts. And finally, discourse is a social practice. These three levels match the ideas of description, interpretation and explanation in analysis of discourses.

Fairclough describes how the first level of analysis is the textual analysis that can consist of vocabulary, grammar, text structure, force of utterances (what sort of speech acts, like promise, threat or requests, they constitute), coherence and intertextuality. The linguistic analysis of a text cannot be completed without mentioning text production and/or interpretation, i.e. the second level of discourse, so the distinction between these two levels is not a sharp one (Fairclough 1992). Analysing discourse as discursive practice asks how texts are produced, distributed and interpreted. This level takes into account the context of the text: how does it define, constrict and mold the production/interpretation of the text? For example, school textbooks are produced specifically for the context of education, and when analysing them this context should be a part of the analysis as it affects the interpretation of the books. Fairclough writes that texts "set up positions for interpreting subjects that are 'capable' of making sense of them, and 'capable' of making the connections and inferences, in accordance with relevant interpretative principles, necessary to generate coherent readings. These connections and

inferences may rest upon assumptions of ideological sort" (1992: 84).

Ideologies are at the heart of discourse. Fairclough understands ideologies as "significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation or relations of domination"(1992: 87). All texts and discourses construct different ideologies, even if it might not seem that apparent at first glance. It is especially those ideologies that have become so naturalised that they are written of as 'common sense' that one should question. In other words, we have a "specific set of beliefs and assumptions people have about things such as what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is normal and abnormal", which is what Jones (2012: 11) defines as ideology. Gender is a good example of a phenomenon that is often constructed through naturalised ideologies – many would claim that gender itself, especially the dichotomised model of it, is just common sense that people 'just know'. Looking at this model more closely, we see that not only is it not up to date with modern understanding of gender, but it portrays power relations that effectively marginalise the less powerful, i.e. non-binary gender identities.

What is normal or abnormal often portrays power hegemonies and includes the question *who* is normal and who is abnormal. Following Fairclough's notion of the dualistic nature of language and society, discourses are social processes and in their part construct social practices (2001: 123). In the context of gender and sexuality, by analysing the discourses employed to construct gender and sexuality, we can better understand how ideologies affect and are employed in this process. In this study I have focused on the ideologies of heteronormativity and cisnormativity, which are explained above. As these ideologies uphold marginalising power structures by defining that which is abnormal and normal, recognising those structures could be the first step to shift the presentations of said structures, and aim for fairer representations and social processes.

Discourse analysis is the tool we can use to analyse how truth is laboured into being (Mills 2004). Producing knowledge always comes with the price of exclusion. As certain discourses and subjects are legitimised and established, others are excluded. Sexuality is yet again a great example of this. Non-heterosexual identities, if not anymore categorised as sick or criminal as they historically have been, are still produced as the 'other' against the 'normal' (Stein and Plummer 1994).

However, critical discourse analysis has been criticised too. Pietikäinen goes through the types of critique associated with 'criticality' in her article *Critical debates: Discourse, boundaries and social change* (2016). Firstly we can look at the emancipatory critique, which relates to the idea of CDA as a source for emancipation. Awareness of social inequalities is often claimed to be the first step to emancipation. However, in saying so, the researchers themselves often take key categories for granted, all the while they are trying to critique them. For example, here I will be looking into sexuality and gender with a focus on constructed dichotomies within those categories. Although I critique them, at the same time I reproduce those same categories and the problematic boundaries between centres and margins. This type of emancipatory critique in CDA also follows some static assumptions about power relations, mainly between the oppressors and the oppressed, and the majority and the minority. As a researcher of discourse, one should acknowledge their part in creating, re-creating and upholding the language of their field of study (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 171)

Another issue with CDA follows the problems of connecting local practices to the big picture. Through discourse the connection between language and society is not only acknowledged but highlighted, but focusing so much on the local can be problematic. Especially when aiming for the emancipatory aspect of CDA, the focus on the local can even be harmful to the subjects that are hoping for research results to help with their issues. When there is a great lack of universality, it can be difficult to use such research in a political way to raise awareness or for emancipation (Pietikäinen 2016).

Carnivalesque critique is not as established a form of critique as the previous ones, but rather it draws on humour to disrupt normative and fixed ways of thinking. This critique can be found in forms of graffiti, parodies or other forms of media. In the field of language research this type of critique may not be taken seriously as it is deemed too light, but carnivalesque critique nonetheless takes the issues of power, language and social change seriously. "Carnivalesque strategies are used to challenge hegemonic social orders through grotesque realism and inversion of hierarchies and exaggeration, inviting audiences to critically reflect upon the constructed nature of the social world", Pietikäinen writes (2016: 273). She adds that for language researchers, they can provide a nexus point to look into "practices of politics, popular culture and social change in a moment of transition and multiplicity" (Pietikäinen 2016: 273).

Of course, what we have here are different ways of being critical, and all of them attract their own critique too. So, Pietikäinen suggests a rhizomatic way of looking at the concept of critique (2016). This approach encourages us to see critique as an on-going progress, complex, connected and with an intersectionality of discourses. Pietikäinen elaborates (2016: 278):

> The relationship between language practices and their networked characteristics are implied and are seen in connection with historical, social, economic, and political practices and processes. They are neither linear nor separate, but instead any text, sign, or speech act potentially includes several interlinked discourses, which are connected to and across each other. Thus discourse can be seen as a historically embedded practice of knowledge construction, with material consequences and with rhizomatic connections to other spaces, times, and practices.

What a rhizomatic approach to criticality can give us is a way of shifting away from fixed and ahistorical meanings. Going back to the Foucauldian view of discourse as a socially constructive force, this means we have to view discourses as a process of "becoming", not "being" (Pietikäinen 2016).

4 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 School textbooks and teachers' guides

My data consists of sex and relationship education chapters from a teacher's guide for health education called *Virittäjä 7–9*, written by Immonen et al. in 2009, with the second edition published in 2010. The guide is meant to follow *Vire 7–9* health education textbooks meant for comprehensive school grades seven, eight, and nine, with sex and relationship education recommended to be handled in year eight, when students are 14 years old. In *Virittäjä*, sex and relationship -education covers 109 pages and it covers the topics of life developments, puberty, sexuality, relationships, sex, contraception, and STDs, which are divided into corresponding chapters. The analysis has been conducted in the spring of 2019, and the data is from Otava Opepalvelu (Otava Teacher's Service). The data is in Finnish and I have translated the examples I use in my text to English. The translations are idiomatic and my focus is not on grammar, as that suits the analysis I have done better – the focus of my analysis is on discourses and contexts, and the methods I am using do not highlight grammar per se.

I have accessed the data through Otava Opepalvelu, an online service meant for teachers and students organised by the publisher of Virittäjä. The data was accessed first in 2017. In Opepalvelu one can find digital teaching material for the students as well as guides just for the teachers. The service is not open for everyone, but requires a licence bought by the school to access the materials. I acquired a licence from the publisher specifically for my research. Virittäjä corresponds best with the traditional book -version of Vire 7–9, as that version is directly referenced in the teacher's guide (for example by referencing page numbers), but can be used to aid with the digital material as well.

My focus on analysis is solely on the teacher's guide, but it is good to keep in mind that the guide would not be used by itself and requires the textbook for its use as

well. However, the guide does give us an outlook on the topics that are talked about during lessons. The teacher's guide to Virittäjä consists of extra information on the topics covered in the book in the form of slides, exercises for the students, and answers for exercises that are in the textbook – even though the name suggests that the guide is just for teachers, it is just as much for the students as well. The exercises really highlight what is thought of as important, as the exercises help the students to actually remember the information covered in the textbook by requiring them to adapt and use that information in practice. Of course, it is up for the teacher to choose just how much the guide and its exercises will be used. I am not claiming that the guide will give a thorough look into how lessons are structured in sex and relationship education, but they can play an important part in them so they should not be overlooked either. Below, I will explain how the data itself affects the analysis I have conducted.

4.2 Research questions

My thesis will look into how gender and sexuality are talked about in a Finnish teacher's guide for health education. As gender and sexuality are the key concepts here, this analysis will be conducted especially from the point of queer linguistics in order to question the underlying power relations and dichotomies in modern Finnish school settings – cisnormativity and heteronormativity are at the centre of the research. I wish to get a clearer view on what discourses are being utilised in the discussion of gender and sexuality.

My study will be based on the following research questions:

1. How are gender and sexuality constructed in the data?
2. What are the discourses that construct gender and sexuality in the data?

I believe that these questions will give me the most thorough picture of gender and sexuality in teacher's guides. The questions themselves are interlinked – the

construction of sexuality and gender takes place in and through the discourses, i.e. the discourses play a part in constructing the concepts. The questions allow me to look at *how* the topics are handled and the contexts they are in. It matters a lot whether gender and sexual minorities are only represented through strict binaries, or in terms of bullying or AIDS, for example, or with more positive ideas like positive relationships, family and friendships.

Looking into the construction of sexuality and gender will allow me to see them as the fluid and complex concepts that they are. This way I can still look at them from the point of view of sexual and gender minorities while actively questioning the dichotomisation of both gender and sexuality. This is why I will also be using the terms LGBTQ or gender and sexual minorities instead of focusing on homo-/hetero- or bisexuality. When using the term queer I am referencing to sexual identities outside the LGB-categorisation, and the term genderqueer to reference gender identities outside the trans- and cisgender-dichotomy. I am not denying the importance of such categories to those that identify with them, but the limitations those categories impose on the fluidity of sexuality and gender should be acknowledged as well.

4.3 Methods

The analysis will follow the framework of critical discourse analysis with queer linguistics in order to question the underlying power relations and the perceived duality of gender and sexuality. Critical discourse analysis aims to understand the ideologies behind discourses, which in turn shows us how power is distributed within the social and historical context of the text. Queer linguistics focuses on unpacking the dichotomies of concepts such as heterosexual/homosexual and man/woman. These frameworks are not mutually exclusive, but rather they have many similarities that support one another. In fact, William L. Leap goes as far as suggests that queer linguistics can be used *as* critical discourse analysis (2015). As the concepts of gender and sexuality are shown to be much more nuanced and complex

than two neat boxes one can tick off on the start of a questionnaire, to portray them as such is greatly diminutive to those who do not fall on that category (and to everyone else as well). The portrayal of such dichotomies is a question of power between majority and minority as well.

Critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics are qualitative methods of research. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen explain that what is common to all the varied methods that are described as qualitative is the aim to understand how people signify things and construct meanings (2009). The construction of meanings is always dependent on the context, and thus the constructed meanings form a dualistic bond with society. Discourse analysis applies its focus on the meeting points of society and signifiers, i.e. on the nexus of it (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009). What this means is that the analysis process itself varies from quantitative research. Whereas quantitative methods may allow for more of a linear approach, qualitative research – and discourse analysis amongst it – is more hermeneutic in nature. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen describe the analysis process in discourse studies as a hermeneutic circle. In it there is no clear starting or ending point for the creation of information, but the information is formed through various parts that each affect the picture as a whole, which again affects the interpretation of smaller parts of research (2009: 144). As a discourse analyst the researcher operates on this ring, until their understanding of the topic reaches the point where they can step out of the ring and write down their observations.

My approach to my research was very much hermeneutic as well. After setting preliminary research questions and narrowing down the data, I started the analysis by skimming through the text first to get an understanding of what it includes. First, my aim was to find the main concepts that arose from the text, and from reading and rereading the data I set my focus on the concepts of sexuality and gender and their construction. During this process I adjusted my research questions more than once and refined the methodology that I found to be most suitable for the data and the concepts at hand. Diving more into the theory of my methodology allowed me to

further the analysis to a deeper, sharper level. All over, the research process of this thesis was very hermeneutic in nature: smaller parts affected the bigger picture and vice versa. This process however also sets some challenges for the researcher – as the process itself is not linear, writing it down into a cohesive text can be tricky at times (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009).

Once I had found the suitable theoretical frameworks for my analysis, I started a more thorough viewing of the data through the lenses of critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics. Fairclough's definition of three-dimensional discourse, explained above, matches the ideas of description, interpretation and explanation in the analysis of discourses (Fairclough 1992). I described what was in the text, followed by an analysis of discourse as discursive acts, i.e. focusing on the process of interpretation. I paid special attention to the second level of discourse, that of interpretation and production. The guide has multiple levels of interpretation. In itself, the guide portrays an interpretation of what is important in the textbook *Vire 7–9* by the writers of the guide, followed by an interpretation done by the teachers using both the textbook and the guide that is then portrayed in their teaching. Because the data holds somewhat of an authoritative and trusted status, the way it is interpreted by its readers is crucial in creating knowledge, and thus creating power in society (Hall 1997: 48-49). So, in my analysis, when I talk about interpretation, I try to analyse the way the teachers might interpret it, remembering that the interpretation is encouraged by the way the guide is written.

As mentioned above, analysing discourse as discursive acts must take into account the context of the text: how does it define the text? How does it mold the text? How does it affect the production/interpretation of the text? School textbooks, and the teachers' guides that come with them, are a great example of how context affects production/interpretation. The books follow certain conventions in their production – certain discourses are available/suitable for them, while others are not. For example, one would not write a school textbook using the same discursive acts as in chat rooms online or academic papers of physics, for example. Although fictive

stories might be used in the books, they need to be based on facts as well. And this assumption is shared by those that read and interpret the book in turn. In my analysis, I paid special attention to the possible interpretations, as the books present themselves with an authority on knowledge. I look at how the teachers' guide instructs the teachers to interpret the knowledge presented, but I also think about the knowledge relayed to students, which happens through exercises and slides presented in the teachers' guides.

The authoritative status of the text led to me paying a lot of attention as to how the teacher's guide defines sexuality and gender – I believe they can affect how the rest of the discourses constructed about sexuality and gender are interpreted. If someone has a better understanding of notions of sexuality and gender, the notions are more likely to be interpreted in a more open and fluid way, rather than relying on the idea of 'common sense' which often strengthens dichotomies and even stereotypes. With this in mind I start my analysis by analysing the definitions of sexuality and gender in detail, with interpretation in focus. This preliminary analysis of definitions then affected my analysis throughout, as I believe that the ideas one has about gender or sexuality affect the way the texts are read. One should remember that although I have talked about definitions and discourses separately, definitions adhere to or draw on certain discourses as well. So when I talk about definitions here, I focus on a single question: what is the definition that the text gives about gender and sexuality? This is done simply by finding the statements of "sexuality is" or "gender is", or the exercises that make the students question "what is sexuality?".

Once I had done preliminary analysis on the definitions of gender and sexuality in the book, I started focusing on the discourses that were used to construct gender and sexuality. Young and Middleton, in their study of teacher education textbooks (2008), showed that ten years ago LGBT people were still talked only in relation to negative topics that take away their agency. Macgillivray and Jennings agreed, further describing their portrayal as "victims of harassment, bullying, depression, self-destructive behaviour, and societal discrimination" (2008: 181). When sexual

minorities are only talked about in negative light, it gives a very negative and one-sided portrayal of sexuality to young people. This is why it is extremely important to study the themes through which sexuality and gender are represented. This is why I am heavily focusing on discourses in this study.

After going through the definitions of sexuality and gender, I found following discourses in relation to sexuality: fluid sexuality, sexuality as a personal trait, sexuality as sexual rights, sexuality as relationships and sexuality as sexual acts. These discourses are very interlinked, and they intersect in multiple ways. For example, in an exercise that highlights how relationships develop, the book says: *Tutustutaan omaan ja toisen kehoon,*'one gets to know your and your partner's bodies' (Immonen et al. 2009: 454), we can see multiple discourses in action. Firstly, we have *sexuality as sexual acts*, where sexuality is constructed as physical acts. Secondly, taking in the context of the sentence, this act is portrayed to be a part of a relationship, so sexuality is also constructed through the discourse of sexuality as relationships. Thirdly, the gender of the people engaging in this relationship/physical act is left ambiguous, thus constructing sexuality as fluid as well.

In relation to gender, I found that gender is only talked through the discourse of gender as a dichotomy. In some cases one could argue that fluidity of gender is shown through the word choices that leave the gender of the subject/object unspecified, but here I came back to Fairclough's ideas of interpretation (1992). With the definition of gender being non-existent, I concluded that these instances were more likely to be interpreted as a nod to fluid sexuality, rather than fluid gender. I discuss this phenomenon more in the analysis.

After identifying the discourses in the data, I shifted my focus to queer linguistics. This time, I went through the text with the dichotomisation and marginalisation of gender and sexuality – heteronormativity and cisnormativity – in mind. In other words, I focused on whether or not sexuality and gender were constructed as a

dichotomy, and whether or not sexual and gender minorities were portrayed as marginalised, ie. heterosexuality and cisgender were shown as the "normal". After going through the text initially with just focusing on this, I also looked at the different discourses specifically with dichotomisation in mind. The questions to help me with this were: Is dichotomisation employed more within certain discourses, as it is with others? In what context does dichotomisation happen?

Here I have laid out the methods of my analysis. Although I have written them describing somewhat of a linear process, it is good to bear in mind that the processes described above were simultaneous. For example, analysing the text through the lense of discourses or analysing the text through the lense of dichotomies do not necessarily cancel each other out, but rather they are integrated deeply.

5 ANALYSIS

In *Virittäjä*, sexuality and gender are represented very differently. Whereas sexuality is shown as complex, personal, physical and emotional, gender is assumed as part of common sense, as something that needs no explaining. First, I will show how sexuality is constructed and what discourses are used in constructing it. Then I will look at gender, to show how the portrayal of gender differs from that of sexuality. Whereas sexuality is constructed through varying and diverse discourses that together form a complex portrayal of sexuality, gender in *Virittäjä* is better defined by a lack of definition.

5.1 Sexuality

5.1.1 Defining sexuality

To understand how Virittäjä constructs sexuality, I will first see how the book itself defines it. For the teachers the book sets out a goal for the chapter: *Oppilas tietää, mitä seksuaalisuudella tarkoitetaan ja miten monimutkainen ominaisuus on kyseessä*, 'The student knows what sexuality refers to and how complex attribute it is' (Immonen et al. 2009: 437). Simply stating that sexuality is a complex notion helps to not reduce it into stereotypes or strict dichotomies that marginalise non-heterosexual identities. After a good start with the goal for the chapter, the guide book gives the following definition (Immonen et al. 2009: 450):

> Seksuaalisuudella tarkoitetaan jokaisen minäkuvaan kuuluvaa sisäistä ominaisuutta, joka rakentuu sukupuolesta, seksuaalisesta suuntautumisesta, erotiikasta, välittämisestä, kohtaamisista toisten kanssa ja suvunjatkamisesta.
>
> Sexuality is an inner attribute of everyone's self image, and it is constructed of gender, sexual orientation, erotica, caring, encounters with others, and reproduction.

Already by defining the concept of sexuality, the writers are handling it in a more

nuanced way than the concept of gender. The definition itself follows the modern understanding of sexuality and makes it simple to understand for younger students. Here sexuality is explicitly defined as a personal attribute that is an inherent part of everyone's identity, composed of many other complex attributes.

This definition is further supported by an exercise in the book called *Seksuaalisuuden palapeli,* 'the jigsaw of sexuality' (Immonen et al. 2009: 439). In the exercise, the students are asked to discuss which of the given terms are a part of sexuality. The terms show a diverse picture of sexuality, and include things like *pukeutuminen*, 'clothing', *rakastuminen,* 'falling in love', *asenne*, 'attitude', *itsemääräämisoikeus*, 'right to self-determination', *kulttuuri*, 'culture', *uskonto*, 'religion', *ajatukset*, 'thoughts' and *yhdyntä*, 'intercourse'. Also included are the terms *homoseksuaalisuus,* 'homosexuality', *biseksuaalisuus*, 'bisexuality', and *heteroseksuaalisuus,* 'heterosexuality'. The terms are presented next to a picture of a jigsaw, with the phrase *seksuaalisuus rakentuu…*, 'sexuality is composed of…' in the middle. The words on the page are not restricted to one aspect of sexuality, but rather they follow the definition of sexuality given in *Virittäjä*. The words here cover emotional and physical aspects of sexuality, bringing in society, relationships with others and self-presentation, too. As this is an exercise that is meant to open up discussions, this is a great opening for the teacher to run a conversation about sexuality and its diversity.

In *Virittäjä*, the definition of sexual orientation is not restricted to a dichotomy: *Seksuaalinen suuntautuminen kertoo seksuaalisten tunteiden kohteen ja minkälaisista asioista saa mielihyvää*, 'Sexual orientation defines the object of your sexual feelings and things you get pleasure from' (Immonen et al. 2009: 450). The definitions here are both informative, in keeping with modern ideas of sexuality (WHO 2006; Temple 2005; Baker 2008), and inclusive, as they construct the idea of sexuality outside dichotomies. The word choice of 'the object of your sexual feelings' avoids creating a binary image of sexuality by keeping the sentence gender neutral.

Students are also asked to define what heterosexuality, homosexuality and

bisexuality mean (Immonen et al. 2009: 444). This restricts sexuality more on the confines of those three labels, but it is a positive thing that heterosexuality and bisexuality are defined alongside homosexuality. Oftentimes heterosexuality is completely forgotten and not presented as a sexuality at all (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Temple 2005; Sauntson and Simpson 2011), which marginalises LGBTQ people even more. Forgetting heterosexuality installs the idea that heterosexuality is so normal that it is the 'default setting' that does not need defining and perpetuates heteronormativity. When heterosexuality is defined as a sexuality as well, non-heterosexual identities are not marginalised as 'others' as heterosexuality is not set out to be the default setting that other sexualities differ from.

The data that is being used for analysis has a clear purpose to educate both the teacher and the students reading it. The exercise discussed here, where students are asked for definitions of the terms 'homosexuality', 'heterosexuality' and 'bisexuality' is especially made for the students. Many people find comfort in finding a name for their identity, as discussed above. Sexuality and gender are important systems of meanings through which many organise their identities in everyday life. This is why I would argue that there are grounds for keeping these terms in the health and education -textbook. What is most important is that sexuality is not reduced to just homosexuality, but those seeking knowledge about it find information of the concept in a diverse way. As of now, our society still organises our identities through certain categories. While it is extremely important to question the validity, the usefulness and the consequences of upholding such categories which is what this thesis is trying to do, I understand that teachers' guides and students school textbooks should explain terms that the students might encounter outside educational contexts and that might be helpful for them to give meaning and wording to their own experiences.

Diversity is not something that can be analysed solely through the definitions given on certain subjects. To understand how sexuality is constructed and how sexual minorities are represented, we have to look further in the data. Here, in the context

of relationships, we see that sexuality is constructed as fluid, personal and complex despite identifying common labels like homosexuality and heterosexuality when talking about it.

5.1.2 Fluid sexuality

Sexuality is generally constructed as a fluid construct in the data. Especially in the context of relationships, sexuality is not presented as a dichotomy. When talking about relationships, the wording never specifies relationships as heterosexual. In an exercise called *Seurustelun polku,* 'the path to dating', *Ihastutaan lähipiirissä olevaan henkilöön,* one gets 'a crush on a person in your social circles', *Uskalletaan kertoa tunteet niiden kohteelle* 'one has courage to tell about your feelings to the object of your affections' and *Tutustutaan omaan ja toisen kehoon,*'one gets to know your and your partner's bodies' (Immonen et al. 2009: 454). The wording carefully avoids mentions of gender. Regarding the well thought definitions of sexuality and sexual orientations, these are likely to be perceived more as a nod to fluidity of sexuality, rather than fluidity of gender, for reasons explained below in the analysis of gender in Virittäjä. These types of examples can be found throughout in the context of relationships: *Yleensä ihastutaan esim. henkilön ulkonäköön ja kun opitaan tuntemaan paremmin, tunteet vahvistuvat ja muuttuvat koko elämää hallitsevaksi rakastumiseksi*, 'Normally you get a crush for example on a person's looks and once you get to know them better, the feelings grow stronger and transform into life-consuming falling in love' (Immonen et al. 2009: 460), *Hyvässä seurustelusuhteessa kumppanit huomioivat niin omat kuin toisenkin tunteet ja pystyvät ottamaan vastuun seurusteluun liittyvistä asioista*, 'In a good relationship the partners will take notice of your own and the other's feelings and can take responsibility on matters regarding dating' (2009: 460) and *Oletko joskus kertonut ihastuksen kohteelle tunteistasi?*, 'Have you ever told your crush about your feelings?' (2009: 453).

The pattern above describes the construction of sexuality in the context of relationships: there are partners, objects of one's affection and crushes are had on

another person. After defining homosexuality, heterosexuality and bisexuality the construction of relationships breaks out of those labels, never really mentioning them again. Romantic relationships are not defined through sexual orientation, as they are built around the two people who like each other, whatever sexuality or gender they identify with. These types of positive images that include sexual minorities as an active part of healthy relationships are important for non-heterosexual youth. The importance of positive representations and how they can affect the youth will be talked about in discussion.

5.1.3 Sexuality as a personal trait

Besides showing sexuality as fluid, it is also portrayed as a personal matter. The discourse of sexuality as a personal trait overlaps with the other discourses a lot. It is present in discourses of relationships, sex and fluidity, for example. Nonetheless it is an important discourse that should be analysed as its own. Studies beforehand show that the personal nature of sexuality often goes ignored, and sexuality is rather portrayed through discourses of AIDS and bullying, thus focusing more on the social impacts of sexuality (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008: 181). Macgillivray and Jennings say that when focus is on such negative discourses, the result essentialises and pathologises non-heterosexual identities (2008: 182). Portraying LGBTQ identities through bullying and AIDS thus also reinforces the us/them -categorisation, whereas when sexuality is portrayed as personal, it is normally categorised as part of 'us'.

The definition of sexuality given by the book is already part of the discourse of sexuality as a personal trait. *Seksuaalisuudella tarkoitetaan jokaisen minäkuvaan kuuluvaa sisäistä ominaisuutta, joka rakentuu sukupuolesta, seksuaalisesta suuntautumisesta, erotiikasta, välittämisestä, kohtaamisista toisten kanssa ja suvunjatkamisesta*, 'Sexuality is an inner attribute of everyone's self image, and it is constructed of gender, sexual orientation, erotica, caring, encounters with others, and reproduction', Immonen et al. (2009: 450) write. Right from the start sexuality is explicitly defined as an inner

attribute that everyone has.

A good example of the discourse of sexuality as a personal trait is the following: *Fantasia on oman mielikuvituksen muodostama kuvitelma seksuaalisesti kiihottavasta tilanteesta*, 'Fantasy is the fiction created by one's imagination of a sexually stimulating situation' (Immonen et al. 2009: 451). The focus of the statement is on one's personal imagination and one's personal fantasies. The focus on personal is also apparent in the context of relationships and sexuality: (Immonen et al. 2009: 460)

> Seurustelun tulisi edetä vaiheittain seurustelun polun kuvaamalla tavalla. Silloin omat tunteet kehittyvät ja kyky ottaa vastuuta kasvaa niin, että on valmis etenemään seurustelussa.
>
> Dating should progress in degrees as shown by the path. This is when your own feelings develop and your ability to take responsibility grows until you are ready to progress in dating.

Again, one's *own* feelings and the ability to take control are highlighted through the discourse of sexuality as a personal trait.

Another example comes in the form of an image. On page 445 there is a picture of group of people of varying ages. All of them are wearing somewhat similar clothes: jeans, t-shirts or sweaters in different shades of blue. Some girls have heels, some are wearing sneakers. The big question underneath this picture is *Mikä heidän seksuaalinen suuntautuminen voisi olla?*, 'What could their sexual orientation be?' (Immonen et al. 2009: 445). This picture is obviously meant to break stereotypes of sexuality, and in doing so it also suggests that sexuality is something that each person in the picture possesses. By showing people that are relatable, and treating sexuality as a trait that cannot be deduced from one's looks, the book suggests that sexuality is inherently personal.

Discourse of sexuality as a personal trait is also linked with the discourse of sexual rights (Immonen et al. 2009: 450):

> Seksuaalinen itsemääräämisoikeus tarkoittaa sitä, että jokainen saa itse määrätä omaan seksuaalisuuteensa liittyvistä asioista. Käytännössä tämä tarkoittaa sitä, ettei kenenkään tarvitse suostua minkäänlaiseen seksuaaliseen kanssakäymiseen, vihjauksiin ja ehdotteluihin ilman omaa tahtoaan.
>
> Sexual self-determination means that everyone can determine the matters relating to their sexuality by themselves. In practice this means that no one has to agree to any kind of sexual interactions, insinuations or suggestions without their own free will.

Here sexual rights themselves are defined as inherently personal. Altogether the discourse of sexuality as a personal trait is a great example of how discourses are always linked to each other in overlapping ways (Fairclough 1992).

5.1.4 Sexuality as sexual rights

One discourse for sexuality is that of sexual rights. Most space for this discourse is given when going through what the law says, i.e. how sexual rights can be violated. Decrees 1–7 of Act 20 of Criminal Code of Finland are directly copied to Immonen et al. (2009: 447-449). The decrees are about sexual violations, and show how the law views acts such as rape, child abuse, and forceful intercourse and sexual acts. This way sexual rights are talked about through violations of such rights, by showing that these acts are criminal.

The talk of sexual rights does not take place only in the criminal code. In an exercise called *Seksuaalisuuden muodot*, 'the types of sexuality', students are asked to define a variety of terms relating to sexuality (Immonen et al. 2009: 444). Among these terms we have 'pedofilia' and 'incest', which are part of the discourse of sexual rights. Paying attention to the sexual rights outside the discourse of law can possibly make these issues more understandable to the youth, and help them to recognise their own

rights in such matters.

Sexual rights are also talked about through more positive connotations. Immonen et al. write list the following as the sexual rights of the youth (2009: 441):

> Oikeus nauttia seksuaalisuudesta! Oikeus tietoon seksuaalisuudesta! Oikeus suojella itseään ja tulla suojelluksi! Oikeus seksuaaliterveydenhuoltoon! Oikeus osallistua heitä koskeviin päätöksiin!
>
> The right to enjoy one's sexuality! The right to knowledge about sexuality! The right to protect yourself and be protected! The right to sexual health care! The right to take part in decisions that concern them!

Showing sexual rights through a more positive light is a great way to make sure that sexuality itself is viewed as a positive matter. Especially important is the right to enjoy one's sexuality, following the importance of positive representations discussed above. The importance this message is highlighted by the use of exclamation marks, which are not used in a similar manner elsewhere in the data.

The core message of this discourse comes through in page 451 (Immonen et al. 2009):

> Seksuaalinen itsemääräämisoikeus tarkoittaa sitä, että kenenkään ei tarvitse suostua minkäänlaiseen seksuaaliseen kanssakäymiseen (ei edes vihjailuihin) ilman omaa tahtoaan kenenkään kanssa
>
> Sexual self-determination means that no one will have to agree to any kind of sexual interaction with anyone (or even insinuations) without their own will.

Sexual rights are defined as human rights by organisations such as the United Nations, International Women's Health Coalition and the World Health Organisation. WHO has defined sexual health as follows (WHO 2006: 5):

> Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

The way that sexuality is presented as sexual rights shows that Virittäjä understands the core message of the World Health Organisation. Not only are sexual rights discussed through law, but also as a freedom to enjoy one's sexuality in a safe environment. In order to create a positive image of sexuality, positive representations of sexuality should not be limited to certain discourses.

5.1.5 Sexuality as relationships

The discourse of sexuality as relationships starts already in the given definition of sexuality. In the book, 'caring' and 'encounters with others' are listed as components of sexuality (Immonen et al. 2009: 450). The definition is also constructed as the discourse of sexuality as relationships, where the emotional aspects of relationships and sexuality are highlighted. 'Caring' and 'encounters with others' are also discussed in other terms later on. In the exercise 'jigsaw of sexuality' (2009: 439), the components of 'falling in love', 'flirting', 'dating', and 'having a crush on someone' are suggested to be a part of sexuality. As mentioned above, the exercise creates discussion about what sexuality is.

Dating and relationships are also given their own chapter in the larger section that deals with sexuality. The chapter is called *Seurustelun pelisäännöt*, 'the rules of dating' (2009: 452-461). The goal of the chapter is for the student to understand the responsibility that comes with dating in the form of taking other's feelings into account, as well as staying true to one's own feelings. Not only is this chapter part of the larger section of 'joy and responsibility in sex', but sex, sexuality and relationships are shown to be intertwined throughout the chapter.

On one exercise the students are asked to think about their own experiences through yes or no -questions. The questions are (Immonen et al. 2009: 453):

> Oletko ollut joskus ihastunut johonkin henkilöön?
> Oletko kertonut joskus ihastuksen kohteille tunteistasi?
> Oletko joskus seurustellut (salaa tai julkisesti)?
> Oletko joskus suudellut tai onko sinua suudeltu?
> Oletko hyväillyt tai onko sinua joskus hyväilty vaatteiden päältä tai alta?
> Oletko joskus rakastellut?
>
> Have you ever had a crush on another person?
> Have you ever told your crush about your feelings?
> Have you ever dated (in secret or in public)?
> Have you ever kissed or have you been kissed?
> Have you caressed someone or have you been caressed while clothed or unclothed?
> Have you ever made love?

The questions show the progression of relationships on both emotional and physical level, and how the two are intertwined. Not only does the progression of relationships include kissing and caressing, but it starts with one's feelings. The last question refers to lovemaking, not sex, also highlighting the emotional aspect of the act. The questions are also very inclusive to sexual and gender minorities, as the gender of one's partner is never specified, not even through a girl/boy dichotomy. It is not 'Have you ever had a crush on a boy/a girl?' but rather 'Have you ever had a crush on someone?'.

The 'path to dating'-slide follows the same pattern as the questions above: the relationship is shown to be built from feelings of a crush to getting to know your partner both mentally and physically to taking responsibility for your partner and yourself. The physical and mental aspects go hand in hand, as step number three illustrates (Immonen et al. 2009: 454):

> Kuljetaan käsi kädessä, opetellaan seurustelun pelisääntöjä ja ymmärtämään toista ihmistä.

> You walk hand in hand, you learn the rules of dating and you learn to understand the other person.

In the same step the book is showing both the physical aspect of walking hand in hand, and the emotional aspect of learning to understand one another. Both aspects are shown in the context of relationships. After this slide, the students are asked to create their own rules for relationships, which should include the start, the development and the ending of relationships as well (Immonen et al. 2009: 456). The students are asked to pay special attention to how the other person feels in each situation. Examples from the United States and the United Kingdom show that text books often equate sexuality to sex, and at most attraction, but the emotional aspects of it are rarely talked about (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Temple 2005; Sauntson and Simpson 2011). This gives a very one-sided image of how sexuality works in real life, as it works in relation to others. Even though sexuality is a personal and changing part of us, our feelings and relationships with other people is what defines and realises sexuality.

5.1.6 Sexuality as sexual acts

Although sexuality is not tied to dichotomies in the context of relationships, when it comes to sex education, sexual minorities are still in the marginal. Even though terms like petting, lovemaking and making out are separated from the act of intercourse by definition (Immonen et al. 2009: 471), and the importance of feelings and trustful relationship is highlighted (Immonen et al. 2009), sex is mainly equated to intercourse between a man and a woman, as is one's 'first time' and 'losing one's virginity'.

A game of word explanations for the students differentiates intercourse, sex, and

lovemaking (Immonen et al. 2009: 471). Here lovemaking includes all the physical and mental activities that lead to arousal, sex depicts the physical activities leading to arousal and intercourse happens when a man pushes his penis into a woman's vagina. These distinctions are important to understand already from the point of view of sexual education, but they are also important to those that might not engage in intercourse. Same-sex couples should be included in sex education as much as heterosexual ones, and making sure that the youth understands that intercourse is not all there is to sex, or the ultimate goal for sex, is a great way of being inclusive. This is not to say that the possible consequences of intercourse should be ignored, as preventing unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases is an important part of sexual health.

Unfortunately, the distinctions between sex, lovemaking and intercourse get muddy elsewhere in the book. On an exercise titled *Eka kerta*, 'the first time', the students are asked to read a story from the book 'about the first intercourse' (Immonen et al. 2009: 473) and answer a few questions based on the story. The first question is *Millaisessa tilanteessa henkilö menetti neitsyytensä,* 'In what kind of a situation did the person lose their virginity?'. Here one's 'first time' is equated strictly to intercourse, as is losing one's virginity. Besides this exercise, the right time for intercourse is debated. *Oikea aika seksiin ja yhdyntään on, kun sitä itse haluaa ja pystyy ottamaan vastuun tilanteesta,* 'The right time for sex and intercourse is when you want it yourself and can be responsible in the situation', Immonen et al. write (2009: 464). This statement is followed by informative slides the teacher can show the students. These slides depict how many young people have had intercourse, how many times, with how many people and what contraceptives were used through infographics (2009: 465-469). These slides talk almost exclusively of intercourse, except on two occasions. Firstly it is said that *Yhdynnässä olleista peruskoululaisista noin neljäsosa harrastaa seksiä säännöllisesti* 'about a quarter of compulsory school students that have had intercourse have regular sex' (2009: 466). If this statement was by itself with no context, we could not say for certain that intercourse is automatically paralleled to sex. However, the same slide goes on to state that *Noin kolmasosalla peruskoululaisista*

yhdynnän kokeneista viimeisen kuukauden aikana ei yhtään yhdyntää -> yhdynnät melko satunnaisia, 'about a third of compulsory school students who experienced intercourse have had no intercourse within the last three months -> intercourse quite occasional' (Immonen et al. 2009: 466). The second occasion mentions how *peruskoululaisilla pojilla selvästi enemmän kumppaneita,* 'in primary school, boys have clearly more sexual partners' (Immonen et al. 2009: 467). Sex is again equated to intercourse by presenting sexual partners and intercourse partners as synonymous, as the subheader for the slide is *Yhdynnän kokeneiden kumppaneiden määrä,* 'the number of partners by those that have experienced intercourse'.

Although in one exercise the distinction between sex, lovemaking and intercourse are made, pretty much everywhere else that distinction is non-existent and sex *is* intercourse. By showing sex as intercourse, non-heterosexual identities are left out of active participants in sex, as sex is only acted through intercourse, which specifically happens between a man and a woman. So while in the context of relationships physical shows of affection are open to members of same sex, here non-heterosexual identities are not present. 'The first time' and losing one's virginity is clearly constructed as an important event here, as so many slides are devoted to it with the idea of showing that there is no strict age by which young people are expected to lose their virginity. And as important it is to help the youth to relief the pressures of having sex when they are not ready for it, none of the exercises here question the concept entirely, or deem it important enough to include non-heterosexual identities.

When sex is equated to intercourse, sexually transmitted diseases are only talked about in relation to penises (and mainly heterosexual sex), although the risk of contracting an STD is present in vaginal, anal and oral sex. This suggests that for example sex between two girls is neither a possibility, nor that it should need any type of protection. This type of oversight is not only marginalising but potentially harmful to one's health. Marrazzo et al. (2005) found in their study that when women engage in same-sex sexual acts often perceive the risks involved to be lower than they actually are. Excluding the potential for same-sex sexual acts goes directly

against one of the goals of SRE set by the national curriculum, which is the promotion of safe sex (Opetushallitus 2014).

5.2 Gender

5.2.1 Defining Gender

Defining gender is an important aspect of health education. As explained before, if a student wanting to know more about their gender identity would want to seek further information at school, sex and relationship education would be a natural place to start. The National Curriculum also highlights the importance of gender equality and tackling gender roles in a critical manner (Opetushallitus 2014: 28). Definitions, like explaining what gender or gender identity are, do not count as positive representations by themselves, but they are a fundamental part of the discussion of gender and gender identities – they create a base from which the students can continue the discussion deeper, and can impact how gender is viewed and interpreted in other parts of the book, as discussed above. This is why it is important to take a closer look into how gender is and is not defined in Virittäjä 7–9. This shows us directly what is set as knowledge, following the Foucaultian power/knowledge -distribution, and what as common sense.

The only aspect of gender that is defined is the term *transgender*, which is defined as following (Immonen et al. 2009: 451):

> Henkilö, joka kokee olevansa toista sukupuolta kuin hänen fyysinen sukupuolensa on ja valitsee tunteidensa kohteen henkisen sukupuolensa mukaan
>
> A person who feels they are another gender than what their physical gender is, and who chooses the object of their affection based on their mental gender

Because this is the *only* aspect of gender that is given any sort of definition, this further reinforces the idea that we fully and naturally understand what gender in itself is: no other explanation is given to what the notions of 'the other gender' or 'one's physical gender' mean, so the assumption is that we already know.

By defining gender only through the transgender experience, the book reinforces the notion of transgender people as 'other' (Stein and Plummer 1994) and portrays the idea that gender is something only related to transgender people. As explained above in relation to sexuality, if we only talk about homosexuality and leave out concepts of heterosexuality and sexuality itself, we are enforcing heterosexism, i.e. the idea that heterosexuality is the default setting and non-heterosexual identities are the odd exceptions from that, ignoring the actual fluid nature of sexuality (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008). In Virittäjä, the same happens with gender, which is just as complex and fluid in nature as sexuality. The book constructs a cisnormative representation, where being cisgender is the unspoken and invisible norm and being transgender or genderqueer the odd one out. These 'default settings' leave the majority – here heterosexual and cisgender people – out of sexuality and gender entirely.

The definition of the word 'transgender', which was discussed above, was crucially placed in an exercise that asks students to explore different types of sexuality (Immonen et al. 2009: 444). Although gender is linked with sexuality, being transgender is not a type of sexuality.

Portraying gender as a component of sexuality is very different to portraying gender as a type of sexuality. As the students are not given any type of definition of what gender is, linking the two in this way can be misinforming.

Although there are no direct definitions for the terms *gender*, *gender identity* or *cisgender*, one exercise in the book could lead to a further discussion of gender identity. The strict ideals upheld by the media are mentioned by saying that *Media*

ihannoi kauniita, hoikkia naisia ja lihaksikkaita miehiä, 'Media glorifies beautiful, thin women and muscular men' (Immonen 2009: 450). This could be an opening to examine one's gender identity by comparing it to the portrayals in the media. Still, this is not the type of definition of gender or gender identity that would help with the marginalisation of transgender, intersex or genderqueer people. This exercise is also disconnected from the one mention of transgender people in its placement, and thus it can be difficult to link to the portrayal of gender minorities. Even with a possible opening to examine gender further, the gender dichotomy is still upheld.

Because the above is the only definition regarding gender, we need to look at what is not said. Leaving discussion of gender out of the book is especially marginalising for gender minorities, but discussing gender should be important to cisgender youth as well. Understanding how gender is constructed and the social and biological implications of gender and their interconnections would help young people to comprehend their own gender identity better in an empowering way. This is especially important in light of the studies that show how even 80 per cent of transgender students have experienced bullying at school (Alanko 2014). Overlooking such an important factor in teaching is especially odd when we look at how sexuality is handled, and see that sexuality is given its own explanation as a concept, and that the students are encouraged to specifically think about and discuss the construction of sexuality. So why is gender not given the same treatment?

5.2.2 Gender as a dichotomy

The absent definition of gender can affect the interpretation of the discourses about gender. As gender is not talked about as extensively as sexuality, the discourses of gender are lacking as well. Here I will look at the construction of gender as a dichotomy. This discourse reinforces the notion of gender as a binary between male and female or man and woman and can be harmful especially towards gender minorities.

The word choices in the text mainly construct a male/female -binary. A good example of this is in an exercise where the students are asked to describe their *Ihanne tyttö- tai poikaystävä,* 'ideal girl-/boyfriend' (Immonen et al. 2009: 438). The wording here is explicit in its terms of gender: there are two options, a girl or a boy. A more inclusive way to say this could have been to ask the students to describe their ideal partner, for example. This type dichotomy is present throughout the text. In the chapters of the book dealing with relationships, we find examples such as 'Media glorifies beautiful, thin women and muscular men', mentioned before, (Immonen et al. 2009: 450), as well as *Kuinka iso osa tytöistä* 'How big a proportion of the girls', *Kuinka iso osa pojista* 'How big part of the boys' (Immonen et al. 2009: 455). Upholding dichotomies such as this leads to the marginalisation of the less powerful groups, such as those that exist outside the man/woman-dichotomy (Gamson and Moon 2004).

Following queer linguistics, it is exactly these types of binary constructions that we must be vary of (Leap 2015: 661). The binary oppositions can be harmful especially (but not only) to the minority groups that are being marginalised as the 'other' by the more powerful groups (Gamson and Moon 2004). Although it is important to talk about the gender stereotypes and pressures put out by the media, these dichotomies leave those that operate outside of them excluded.

In sex education, sex and intercourse are often used interchangably. (Immonen et al. 2009). Intercourse can have a variety of unwanted consequences, such as pregnancy or STDs, and I agree that it is important to teach young people about such consequences. This sole focus of sex as intercouse, however, can leave genderqueer people outside the conversations of sex if not carefully handled. Above, I discussed a similar issue in regards to the discourse of sexuality as sexual acts. When intercourse is equated with sex, sexual acts between same-sex or genderqueer couples are left out.

There are a few examples in the text that can have a gender fluid interpretation (Immonen et al. 2009: 442):

> Miksi koskettaja koskettaa toista? Millaisena koskettaja kokee tilanteen? Mihin koskettaja kosketuksellaan pyrkii? Millaisena kosketettava kokee tilanteen? Miksi kosketettava pitää/ei pidä kosketuksesta?
>
> Why is the toucher touching the other person? How does the toucher experience the situation? What is the goal of the toucher? How does the toucheé experience the situation? Why does/doesn't the toucheé like the touch?

Here the actions are performed by the toucher and the toucheé, not by men and women or boys and girls. The wording leaves room for interpretation outside the gender dichotomy previously present in this book, and shows them as active participants in relationships. However, I would argue that if we take into account how gender is otherwise constructed as a dichotomy, it is unlikely that the text above would be read as a nod to fluidity of gender by the reader, especially if they have no previous knowledge of gender. More likely, this will be seen as a nod to fluid sexuality. What supports this interpretation is the picture next to this text. In this picture we see a couple, presumably a girl sitting on a boy's lap – at least this is how it will be interpreted by most of the readers of the text, as both people in the picture present their gender in a traditional way through their clothing. Their faces are cropped out and the girl has a laptop on her lap, and the boy is reaching to the laptop with his hand. As Fairclough points out, images are a text too, and can be interpreted as such (Fairclough 1992). So here, even though the actual text does not follow a gender dichotomy, the picture is not really gender neutral in its presentation. One could argue that the way the expression of one's gender does not necessarily correlate with one's gender – but since this thought is not explored in the book otherwise, we cannot assume that such interpretations would follow naturally to the readers.

A similar case can be seen in the definition of 'transgender': *Henkilö, joka kokee*

olevansa toista sukupuolta kuin hänen fyysinen sukupuolensa on ja valitsee tunteidensa kohteen henkisen sukupuolensa mukaan or 'A person who experiences themselves to be another gender as what their physical gender is, and who chooses the object of their affection based on their inner gender' (Immonen et al. 2009: 451). The wording here could leave room for an interpretation that is outside the male/female-dichotomy, but for someone who has no previous knowledge of gender or its fluidity, *toista sukupuolta* will also likely be read as 'the other of the two'. If the writers of this book intended this to be a nudge to the fluidity of gender and the purpose would have been to include those outside the male/female-dichotomy, the wording would have worked better as *[h]enkilö joka kokee olevansa muuta sukupuolta*, where the word *muuta* could be interpreted as 'another', but in a way that does not limit the number to two. Taken in the context of the book, where the concept of gender is not really explored but taken as something everyone just knows, even this possible interpretation of fluidity seems a bit feeble.

Other examples of gender neutral phrasing can be found in a section called *Seurustelun polku,* the path of dating. In this section the pupil is asked to put the different steps of relationship in the right order. The steps include the following examples (Immonen et al. 2009: 454):

> Ihastutaan lähipiirissä olevaan henkilöön
> Uskalletaan kertoa tunteet niiden kohteelle
> Tutustutaan omaan ja toisen kehoon
> Molempien kumppanien[…]
>
> You get a crush to a person in your inner circles
> You have courage to tell your feelings to the object of your affection
> You get to know your and your partner's bodies
> Both partners[...]

Gender is never specified in these examples. The passive voice in *ihastutaan*, *uskalletaan* ja *tutustutaan* and the gender neutral terms such as 'person' and 'partner'

make these phrases inclusive to genderqueer interpretations. Examples such as these are especially important, as these show people of all genders as active members in various relationships and thus create representations of genderqueer people in positive contexts. As discussed above, previous studies show that portraying LGBTQ people only through discussions of negative issues like drug abuse, discrimination or bullying, it reinforces negative stereotypes of non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities (Temple 2005; Macgilliray and Jennings 2008). This type of representation then concludes in "essentializing and pathologizing LGBT identities, rendering them as hapless victims with no self-determination or agency" (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008: 182).

However, yet again, the lacking of proper conceptualisation of gender in this book can hinder these interpretations especially for those that are not genderqueer themselves. With no proper understanding of gender these can easily be read as a way of confirming the male/female-binary alongside with fluid sexuality. As Fairclough writes (1992: 81):

> [I]nterpreters arrive at interpretations of the totality of the social practice of which the discourse is a part, and these interpretations lead to predictions about the meanings of texts which again reduce ambivalence by excluding certain otherwise possible meanings.

What this means is that we have to analyse the discourse of gender dichotomy in its context in society, not just in the book. As of now, gender is still often referred to as a dual practice, and *Virittäjä* does not question this practice, or even discuss it; even if knowledge about trans rights and gender minorities might be becoming more common, the 'common knowledge' of gender binary still persists and often goes unchallenged.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 About the findings

The aim of this study is to find out how gender and sexuality are represented in a teachers' guide of health education through the lens of critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics. Sexuality is talked about in a variety of contexts, and the image of sexuality was portrayed as a diverse one. Sexuality is portrayed through the discourses of fluid sexuality, sexuality as a personal trait, sexuality as sexual rights, sexuality as relationships and sexuality as sexual acts. The discourses are often interlinked. In regards to gender, this complexity and variety is all gone, and gender is only portrayed as a dichotomy. All throughout, the underlying goal for these discourses is to educate students about matters relating to health, whether it be via self-knowledge, emotional competence or understanding sexually transmitted diseases. Here health is understood as a multi-leveled phenomenon that encompasses many aspects of well-being. With the goal of the material in mind it is even more curious that gender is not represented in almost any way.

The national curriculum sets goals for equality, generally highlighting the equality between men and women by being critical of traditional gender roles and encouraging students to fill roles outside the traditional ones, if they so desire (Opetushallitus 2014: 28). Further on, in the chapter of the curriculum that deals with health education, sexual identity and equality is highlighted, again aiming to help students through providing the means to explore their identities and gain self knowledge. Does *Virittäjä 7–9* achieve these goals? With the analysis I have conducted, I could argue that yes, it does. Sexuality is portrayed as a multidimensional, fluid and personal matter by constructing it through a variety of discourses. This portrayal is in line with the goals of the curriculum and its aims. Traditional gender roles are also avoided, as the wording in the materials often leaves the subjects/objects of language ambiguous, at least in the context of

relationships. In the context of sex and sexual acts, gender is shown as more traditional in the sense that sexual acts are mostly portrayed through heterosexual relationships, and same-sex acts are mostly ignored.

Is avoiding traditional gender roles enough when aiming for gender equality? The concept of gender roles gives us a great point of view to discuss this issue further. As my data deals with sex and relationship education, it is in this context that we have to look at the portrayal of traditional gender roles. Here the gender roles (or the criticality of them) are portrayed through the discourse of what I have labeled as fluid sexuality. This discourse shows that there is a possibility of sexuality existing outside the dichotomy of homosexuality and heterosexuality, and it is often achieved by using passive voice or gender neutral wording. When analysing the text through the lens of queer linguistics, I made the decision to situate this type of language under fluid sexuality, not fluid gender. I have explained why above, but here I would like to highlight what this shows about the interconnectedness of sexuality and gender and its implications from the point of view of health education and equality.

The fact is that sexuality and gender both could be discussed through this discourse highlights the way they are interlinked. Gender, as mentioned by Virittäjä itself, is an aspect of sexuality. When the representation of gender is as lacking as it is here, could we not argue that it affects the understanding and/or portrayal of sexuality too? This is why I would also ask in relation to the curriculum: is the goal of avoiding traditional gender roles enough to promote gender equality? What the curriculum suggests is that gender equality only relates to equality between men and women, so the idea of gender as an essentialised, common sense notion can be tracked already to the curriculum. What academic theory – and the experiences of gender minorities – shows, is that gender is just as multidimensional a phenomenon as sexuality, and does not fit into a man/woman category (Holmes 2007; Philips 2014; Stein and Plummer 1994). The notion of gender is much more than gender roles between men and women, and it should be portrayed as such. The fact that

gender is presented as common sense knowledge, is an issue of power, as we follow Foucault's notion of the power/knowledge -pair. "Power is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not", Hall explains (1997: 48-49). When gender is represented in this way, it not only diminishes the experiences of non-cisgender people, but also denies everyone the chance to explore their gender identity with accurate knowledge and understanding of the multitude of gender.

I would also like to briefly mention the ideas that were not mentioned in my data at all. For example, when talking about sexuality, asexuality was not mentioned at all, thus erasing some identities completely. Although sexuality was presented as personal and fluid, given that homosexuality, heterosexuality and bisexuality were named, the possibility of not feeling sexual attraction was not given much thought. One does have to remember that the teachers' guide I am analysing is written in 2009, when the acronym LGBTQIA was still developing, so finding the term 'asexuality' in the data would have been surprising. Juvonen (2020) writes how the terms given to experiences of sexuality and gender have multiplied in the 2010s. However, even without the term, the idea of not feeling sexually attracted to someone could have been mentioned more explicitly – "it is okay, if you do not feel sexually attracted to someone". In regards to gender, the concepts of gender and gender identity would have been profitable and readily available for all students to explore in 2009. As mentioned above, neither of these were talked about.

6.2 About this research

In this study I followed a detailed route, but these issues could have been looked at from a larger scale and different discourses. For example, fluid sexuality could have been part of sexuality as a personal trait – the two are already heavily interconnected. My analysis through queer linguistics, however, made me pay special attention to dichotomisation, so I decided to include fluid sexuality as its own discourse. This also highlighted another issue in the data, which was the

dichotomisation of gender. The discourses could have also been looked at from a somewhat larger point of view. Moona Veijola analysed the sexuality and gender discourses in an eight grade health education textbook in her bachelor's thesis, and she found the following discourses: the discourse of heterosocialising, the discourse of binaries, the discourse of highlighting similarities and the discourse of highlighting relationships (2016). This type of division could have worked as well. However, I chose a more detailed way to highlight the contexts that sexuality and gender are – or are not – talked about. As previous research shows, LGBT issues are often talked about in a marginalised way, focusing only on negative aspects of sexuality – bullying, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008, Young and Middleton 2008). I was curious to see how my data corresponded with those topics. What previous research proves is that we need to talk about gender and sexuality in a positive light – through feelings, relationships, and the joy of sexuality, as they were in *Virittäjä 7–9*, with bullying or STDs not directly related to sexual minorities.

Paying so much attention to the third part of Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse, interpretation (Fairclough 1992), tends to make this research speculative. I believe that the authoritative status of educational materials warrants some speculation about the possible interpretations of the content, but I admit that my analysis was somewhat heavy with it. In recent years, issues of gender and sexuality have been talked about in different media a lot – maybe the heterosexual and cisgender students know about transgender issues from their favourite YouTubers, or are acquainted with the issue trough their family or friends? It is possible that children nowadays are more familiar with the topic than their parents were at their age. The reports yearly conducted by ILGA-Europe show positive development, where the rights of LGBTQ people are increasing and people opposing those rights are not allowed to implement their discriminatory views in public places (ILGA-Europe 2020). However, I believe that here it is better to err on the side of caution, so to speak, and assume that there are students that are not familiar with the topics outside of school. Educational materials should reflect that and offer equal

chances to educate students about issues relating to their identities (including when students identify themselves as heterosexual and/or cisgender). Moreover, the research mapping out experiences of LGBTQ students in educational contexts shows that students are dissatisfied with the handling of issues of sexuality and gender at class (Ellis and High 2004; OFSTED 2013; Alanko 2014; NUS 2014). And with the research we have, we mostly get the opinions of LGBTQ youth about these issues – in a sense, the responsibility of educating the majority falls on the minority group yet again. I believe that teaching about gender and sexuality is important to all students, not just those that identify with sexual and gender minorities. Understanding the theory behind the issues can make everyone feel more comfortable in their own identity. Of course, for many that take matters of gender and sexuality as common sense, these issues can be invisible, and many might not know why there is a need to learn about these things. It would be interesting to see further research about how heterosexual and cisgender youth responds to health education or representational issues, too.

In this study I have given a lot of attention to the definitions of gender and sexuality, and talked about the definitions separately of the other discourses. I would like to acknowledge that these definitions are not fully separate from the discourses, but that the full construction of the representations of gender and sexuality comes from the varying discourses. The reasoning behind the decision to highlight this area of the material stems from my chosen methods. Critical discourse analysis highlights the links between society and text, and I believe that seeing what kind of definitions the data gives can give us more information on how society portrays gender and sexuality in general. Also, looking at Fariclough's three-dimensional model of discourse, interpretation of the text plays a part in discourse studies as well, and the interpretation of the text can differ depending on the definitions and general terms given, as explained above – this is the way the writers instruct the guide to be interpreted. Queer linguistics, then, highlights the marginalisation and the othering of sexual and gender minorities, which is something that the differing definitions of sexuality and gender show. The fact that gender is not defined at all is a prime

example of othering, which is often shown in similar studies with the case of sexuality (Macgillivray and Jennings 2008; Temple 2005; Sauntson and Simpson 2011). The authoritative status of the data affected my decision too.

The definitions of sexuality include explanations for homosexuality, heterosexuality and bisexuality as well. As my analysis is based on queer linguistics and critiquing the heterosexual/homosexual -binary, we have to wonder how labeling homosexuality, heterosexuality and bisexuality constructs sexuality on the possible homo/hetero-dichotomy. Just the act of explaining bisexuality as well is breaking down the binary a bit. But, the argument here can be that giving labels to these sexualities reinforces the notion of sexuality as neat boxes, even though bisexuality might allow us a little bit more space away from the extreme ends of the binary of sexuality. When analysing texts and critiquing discourses, are we not just reproducing those same discourses we are critiquing (Pietikäinen 2016)?

One could also question my decision to use both critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics as my framework for the analysis. Are they both really needed? As mentioned above, queer linguistics can be used as critical discourse analysis, and the two are heavily intertwined. Leap suggests that queer linguistics is discourse analysis with the queer subject, whose experiences are heavily embedded in the historical and social contexts, at the centre. It would have been acceptable to focus on queer linguistics, as it already methodically combines discursive and linguistic constructions with queer theory to investigate social contexts, and I did consider it for a moment. However, after consideration I decided to use both critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics as the methods of this study. Firstly, in the preliminary stages of the analysis, I found that I kept returning to Fairclough's three-dimensional model for discourse – with the social context of the study being education, I believe that Fairclough's model is great for highlighting the authoritative status of the data, and the aspect of interpretation, which has been heavily discussed already. I also admit that as a novice researcher, being able to depend on both critical discourse analysis and queer linguistics gave me a sense of clarity and structure with the

analysis, that I feel would have been lacking otherwise. I find that although similar, the methods can still highlight slightly different aspects of analysis, in this case in a way that was beneficial for the study.

That said, it should be acknowledged that Fairclough's three-dimensional model for analysis, first written about in 1992, can be a somewhat outdated view of discourse analysis, or at least not the final point of development of critical discourse analysis. For example, Pietikäinen (2016: 278) discusses the possibilities of a more rhizomatic approach to criticality in critical discourse analysis. The rhizomatic approach encourages us to see discourse not as a linear, traceable line in history, but rather as an on-going process with interlinked discourses (Pietikäinen 2016: 278).

I should also mention that the material I used as data is also getting somewhat out-dated. As I started my research in 2016, there already existed new online versions of the teachers' guide that I analysed. I do not know how much it differs from the version I analysed here. However, I would argue that the analysis I have done here gives an accurate picture of how those who used the version I analysed were instructed to interpret the guide and its corresponding textbook and to use it to educate one generation of youth.

6.3 Further research

The need for aforementioned speculation also rises from the lack of comprehensive research in this area. The research concentrating on the experiences of the students is hugely important, but I believe there is a need to further analyse how those experiences correlate with the content of the curriculum and educational materials – the educational environment is a varied field consisting of a diversity of aspects. Educational materials, curriculum and the teachers implementing them can all have a huge impact on how these matters are taught and received at schools, and the rapports and guides that concentrate on making education more equal for all acknowledge this (Saarikoski and Kovero 2013, Tanhua et al. 2015). For example, the

national curriculum highlights gender equality as a whole, but focuses on sexuality only in relation to health education. Shouldn't gender be specified in the context of health education as well? More possible topics of research can be found in teacher education as well – how are the future teachers taught to handle issues of gender and sexuality in education?

The teachers' guides are an interesting set of data for research, as they are aimed for both the teachers and the students, and as they are tied to the actual textbook as well. I say that the guides are for both teachers and students, because most of the guides are extra slides or exercises for the students, or show answers to questions that are in the textbooks. What differentiates them from the textbooks is that the material in the teachers' guides is not readily available to students, as the teacher is responsible in deciding what material actually gets used during actual lessons. What this shows is just how multifaceted a project a lesson at school can be. How health education deals with representations of gender and sexuality is a matter of many things: the educational materials, the teachers using them, the class atmosphere. Plenty more research could be set on this area.

This is not to say that studies focusing on educational materials are not useful in themselves. The material is an important part of teaching, and students notice when the representations are lacking, especially those in underrepresented groups (Alanko 2014; OFSTED 2013; NUS 2014). With developing materials, it is important to keep producing studies with a critical eye. For example, gender has mostly been studied as a matter of equality between men and women (Palmu 2003; Tainio and Teräs 2010) in educational materials. As this research outlines, gender is a more complex phenomenon than that. As we have seen with the way sexuality is constructed here, it is possible to talk about these matters in a way that is not essentialising or marginalising. As sexuality is here built as a positive, personal and fluid matter, we can only ask for gender to be one day given the same treatment.

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