Studying Towards Diversity

A qualitative study of how teachers in Uruguay work with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity

Name: Karin Johansson
Institution: Department of Pedagogical
Curricular and Professional Studies (IDPP)
Program: KPU

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate how teachers in Uruguay work with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. This is done through six qualitative semi-structured interviews, which are analysed by means of *Queer Theory*. Later previous research of LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex) issues and the educational situation in Uruguay are presented. The results of the interviews are divided into four categories. First an analysis of general and specific pedagogical methods of gender identity and sexual diversity, then committed teaching and future prospects of pedagogy on gender and sexual diversity. These are all related to concepts such as *heteronormativity, unnaturalization* and *performativity.* The two main results of this study are the similarities of teachers working with gender identity and sexual diversity and the future prospects they have of this pedagogy. Even though the participants differ in the didactic methods they use depending on their subjects, they have several pedagogical concepts in common, e.g. the dedication of the teachers and that most of them work in the public sector. Many of them aspire for more institutional support for pedagogy on gender identity and sexual education and wish that it would spread among the educational sphere.

Preface

I would warmly want to thank all the participants, my tutor Zahra Bayati and all the persons who have made it possible to carry out the study. It has been a true pleasure to take part of the knowledge and experience of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in Uruguay. Throughout the research I have acquired understanding and insights of a variety of methods working with gender identity and sexual diversity. I will be forever thankful to the teachers who have shared their pedagogical competence and are concerned of this philosophy.

The intention of this study is to inspire, share and discuss different methods and concepts of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity practised in Uruguay. My wish is for this pedagogy to spread and develop in order to encourage a good school climate for gender identity and sexual diversity.

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1. Introduction

This study concerns methods and considerations when working with LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer, see section 1.1 Definitions and central concepts) perspectives in different subjects. My teaching degree incorporated various elements of gender identity and sexual diversity: a lecture on LGBTQ pedagogy, a fictional coming-of-age film about lesbian love and an academic book on the subject. Despite this information, many of my co-students experienced difficulties in applying an inclusive perspective in their specific subject. There was a need of finding a model of how to work with LGBTI issues in order to prevent harassment and discrimination (Sempol, 2015:2). I started searching for educational projects outside of Sweden. Previously I had been inspired by the educational system of Uruguay and its various innovative initiatives. In 2010 I first wrote about the newly launched national educational programme *Ceibal Plan* (Plan Ceibal), which introduced laptops in the learning process. At that time, little was documented on the outcome of this internationally pioneering programme in the Uruguayan schools (Zidán, 2010:5). Next I wrote my thesis in Spanish on the cultural differences of the laptops' importance depending on the social class in two schools in Montevideo (Johansson, 2011). I was left with an interest in finding out more about the educational changes in Uruguay as I turned my focus back to the country because of the recent developments in legal rights for gender identification and sexual orientation (Rocha, 2015:48).

Two LGBTI specific guides for schools have been produced in the country in the recent years. In 2011 the educational guide *Dresses in the Classroom a Guide on Affective and Sexual Diversity* (Freitas de Leon, 2011) was released, putting the sexual education law from 2007 into practise by including LGBTI issues in schools (Freitas de Leon, 2011:11). First shown at an LGBT film festival in Uruguay, a documentary called *New Dress* (Freitas de Leon, 2011) served as a basis for the creation of teaching materials, which provide information and exercise suggestions of regarding various themes such as gender non-confirming expressions (Freitas de Leon, 2011:61-75) and how to approach topics on sexual diversity in class (Freitas de Leon, 2011:51-61). In October 2014 the educational guide *Education and Sexual Diversity* (MIDES, 2014) was created by the LGBTI-rights collective *Black Sheep* (Ovejas negras) directed by *The National Institute of Women* (Inmujeres) under the *Ministry of Social Development* (MIDES). The guide was directed at educators to give practical advice about how to work with diversity from a rights and equality perspective in education. It is divided into three parts: a theoretical background, methodological advice consisting of workshops and exercises along with providing book, video and multimedia resource recommendations on how to work with LGBTI issues (Inmujeres, 2014). My attention was drawn to the creation and the publishing process of the guide, see section *3. Background* for more information. When deciding upon which focus the study would take, email conversations were held with social movements in Uruguay working with LGBTI issues, in accordance with Smith (1999:231) who suggests that researchers should always be in contact with the experts from the country where the study takes place. From the email correspondence, it was demonstrated that one area without much research was the methods of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. In addition, because of the low distribution of the guide, I found it more beneficial to focus on the teachers' methods in pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in the Uruguayan context of both resistance and human rights'

initiatives. The topic of this study was chosen due to my personal inquiry along with the commitment to work actively with LGBTI issues in education.

It is important to investigate the context around groundbreaking practices in Uruguay, in order to encourage academy to break away from a Eurocentric research focus. By carrying out this research, other countries can learn from pedagogy in Uruguay and develop similar methods adapted to their own specific context. In this thesis, I examine teaching that promotes gender identity and sexual diversity in schools. My aim is to contribute with material and analysis that develop the discussion of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity further in terms of methods, obstacles, solutions and future possibilities. To the background of various Latin American researchers, I wish to interpret the results of the teachers' interviews in the light of queer theory. Lastly, a discussion is held of the methods of the study, the participants' pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity along with its future.

1.1 Definitions and central concepts

Certain words' definitions relating to gender identity and sexual diversity will facilitate the understanding of this study's focus. When working with translation, researchers must be careful with the language used. Some word might be false friends and some concepts might disappear in the will of finding an English equivalent. However, it must be emphasized that language is something fluid and flexible, so there is seldom consensus on the exact definition or correct usage of words. When discussing *sexual diversity* in Uruguay, it must be taken into consideration that the relational orientation is understood broader than a merely sexual one, even when the word *sex* is used, affectivity might also be included in the meaning (Pérez, 2008:47), (UNESCO,2O13:6). Within the trans population in Uruguay several terms are included under the umbrella term *trans*. According to Sempol (2015:8) one thing that everyone identifying with the term has in common is the change in their gender identity. Cabral (2016:1) states that *transgenderism* is diverse in itself by definition, however, sharing the experience of not conforming to the gender binary or the heteronormativity (Cabral, 2016:1).

- – *LGBTIQ*: lesbian, i.e. women who have relationships with women, gay, i.e. men who have relationships with men, bisexual, people who have relationships with both women and men trans, i.e. a person whose gender is different from their assigned sex and intersex, i.e. that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male (MIDES, 2015).
- – *Non-binary:* A person who identifies as neither a man nor a woman. This identity also includes people who are gender fluid, i.e. move between genders, or are bigender, i.e. identify as both a man and a woman.
- – *Coming-out (of the closet)*: telling family and social surrounding about one's sexual orientation (Sempol, 2015:6).
- – *GenderNon-conforming Persons:* A person who has a sexual orientation different from the hegemonic one (Martinelli, 2015:11-12).

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2. Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to demonstrate how teachers, working with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, define their teacher practice and the future of this pedagogy. My teaching subjects are Spanish and English until upper secondary school. However, since pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity is a perspective and a practice that all educators can apply, regardless of subject or the students' age. Therefore, this study can apply a general pedagogical aim rather than a didactic one, specific to my subjects. The following questions were developed to carry out the research:

- – Which pedagogical methods are practiced among teachers from different sectors when dealing with gender identity and sexual diversity?
- – How does pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity interact with teachers' subjects?
- – How do teachers consider the future prospects of this pedagogy in Uruguay?

3. Background

This section will provide a brief background to the current national situation in Sweden and Uruguay regarding initiatives of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. In Swedish schools is can be understood as compulsory to integrate LGBTI issues in teaching considering that the law encourages to work with prevention of discrimination, the Swedish National Curriculum also states that "The school has a responsibility to counteract traditional gender patterns" (Skolverket, 2011:10). Due to the high number of LGBTQ students that suffer from mental health problems as a result of the lack of support from school (Almgren & Skogstad, 2015), the Swedish government invested in an educational initiative in 2014, e.g. an educational guide. Similar support material for is found in several other Swedish sectors, for example among social movements and NGOs (Lorentzi, 2010). Despite this, various educators and activists have voiced their concern on LGBTQ knowledge, visibility and devotion among pedagogues in the Swedish schools (Mac Donald, 2015, Sahlström, 2006, Almer, 2013). Based on the above pedagogical experience (see *1. Introduction*) and the general situation in Sweden, I decided to find out more on how to integrate pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in the different school subjects.

After the official publishing of the guide, *Education and Sexual Diversity,* it was critiqued in media by religious and academic representatives (De Armas et al., 2015:23). First various bishops from the *Episcopal Conference of Uruguay* (CEU) claimed that the guide promoted a total contrast to the christian conceptions of marriage, family and morality, stating it was an "ideological sexual education" in contrast to Uruguay's secular educational curriculum (La Diaria, 2014). Second, the Uruguayan journalist Valenti also said he is "a proud heterosexual" as a response of what he experienced as reverse discrimination from the guide, discriminating against heterosexuals. He was sceptical the part of the guide that deals with "promoting deconstruction of the hegemonic model of family and partnership" would prevent discrimination (MIDES, 2015:42). Third, Dr. Andrea Diaz Genis wrote a philosophical critique of discourse on LGBTI identities used in the guide in a column. Instead, she promoted working towards no categories of identity, emphasizing a post-identical discourse of *persons* (Diaz, 2014). As a consequence, Daniel Cordo from the highest educational organ, the *Counsellor of the Central Board* (*CODICEN),* suspended the printing and the distribution of the guide, criticizing the lack of authorization from higher instances. After these reactions, the 10 000 planned copies of the guide were decreased to less than a 1 000, which can now be found online as a PDF-file. Consequently, the educational authorities decided to make their own guide (Cabrera, 2015), which remains unpublished at the time of writing (September, 2016).

4. Previous research

This section will provide an overview of selected studies relating to pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in Uruguay. These embrace topics such as studies about LGBT issues (Goldwaser, 2012, Pérez, 2008, Martinelli, 2014) and LGBT concerns in education (Darré, 2005, Rocha, 2015, De Armas et al., 2015). I have decided to touch upon these two research areas because of the practical knowledge and theoretical concepts they can provide for a deeper understanding of the results of this study.

4.1 LGBTI Studies

When researching about another country than that of my nationality, it was of further importance to consider aspects of gender identity and sexual diversity issues and school issues in Uruguay. Historically, the European colonization of Uruguay, with its English and French morality and culture contributed to the medicalization of sexual diversity (Pérez, 2008:47). Despite this colonial heritage, many social movements have emerged, among them LGBTI groups, and there is a global focus towards Latin America today (Pérez, 2008:48). During the last years Uruguay has experienced progress in legal recognition and rights for sexual orientation and gender identification (Rocha, 2015:48, Sempol, 2015:1).
  In this section, the academic work can be divided into those that have an international perspective and those that are specifically focusing on Uruguay. Pérez's study (2008) deals with sexual diversity in *Mercosur* and provides a macro perspective of the continent. The benefit of the study is that it looks at Uruguayan context specifically as well as relating it to and comparing it with other South American countries. This provides the reader with cross-continent similarities in e.g. how the Catholic Church operates in terms understanding homosexuality as a sin (Pérez, 2008:52). Despite regional difference Pérez (2008:48) emphasizes that the societal proximity helps working with social rights together. Pérez (2008:49) indicates that the sexual diversity can, if not controlled, threatens patriarchy, and when included in the educational sphere it usually meets a lot of resistance. In accordance with the focus of my study Pérez (2008:49) also recognizes education as a component that can influence the conception of sexuality, among others and emphasizes the importance of language.
  Whereas, Martellini (2014:30), has undertaken qualitative interviews, which concentrate on the migration within Uruguay from smaller towns to the capital in the process of *coming out* by LGB youth. The latter contrasts my study in two ways: first the research focus on LGB and relocation rather than education and second the comparison of the participants' different places. That is, in this case the one from the smaller cities to the capital of Uruguay. In accordance with the hypothesis that moving to Montevideo facilitates flexibility to experiment with sexual orientation even though major parts of the oppression remain, the focus on identity and coming-out (Martinelli, 2014:6) are similar to my study. The results of Martinelli's study (2014:36-37) show that the interviewees feel a bigger stigma in their hometowns compared to the capital, discovering one's gender identity and sexual identity gradually. Martinelli (2014:40) emphasizes the political potential of being out despite severe risks such as death, jail, fines, exile, violence and economic, social along with political restrictions. However, many of the participants experience invisibility of their identities and the rejection, which Martinelli (2014:41, 61-64) points out can be as severe. Among other spheres this lack is found in schools, which often

promote heterosexuality, resulting in guilt, confusion and pressure to hide certain gender expressions connected to sexual dissidence (Martinelli, 2014:42), e.g. games for younger pupils are designed to reinforce the gender roles (Martinelli, 2014:36). Martinelli (2014:43) links this context with disinformation and with the medical discourse of pathologizing sexual diversity. First, the family is considered the most difficult place for coming out, being the primary sector that promotes heterosexuality (Martinelli, 2014:36) and second the workplace (Martinelli, 2014:51). In the educational sphere difficulties such as repression when showing non-conforming gender expressions are met with slurs (Martinelli, 2014:35-36). Martinelli (2014:55) concludes lesbians and bisexual women are more unprivileged than gay or bisexual men, due to lesbophobia and patriarchy (Martinelli, 2014:56). Whilst homosexual men experience more discrimination in form of suspected paedophilia (Martinelli, 2014:36), lesbians experience more violence but tend to be familiar with it and get invisibilized (Martinelli, 2014:61-64). In the case of Uruguay, the cultural climate for LGBTI issues has not advanced as much as the legal one (Martinelli, 2014:44).

4.2 Gender and sexual diversity in education

Even though studies regarding LGBT issues in schools have been carried out in Europe and USA since the mid 1980's, it is important to study the particularities in a Uruguayan context as a Western study are not universally applicable (Rocha, 2015:49). School can be a positive place for socialization but for students who do not confirm to the normative ideas of identities it can be a hostile world of bullying (Rocha, 2015:48, UNESCO, 2013). There are few studies of trans students' school experience in Uruguay (Rocha, 2015:49), which have been a driving force for this study to research the situation of LGBT issues in education. These studies can be divided into two groups, those that focus only on sexual diversity (De Armas et al., 2015) and those that focus on gender identity and sexuality and education in Uruguay (Rocha, 2015, Sempol, 2015).

Firstly, Sempol (2015:1) analyses some central theories of how to confront the challenges that teachers experience when encountering sexual and gender diversity in schools, in order to find out how to accommodate LG students the most appropriately (Sempol, 2015:2). The article aims to promote respectful approaches to prevent violence in order to celebrate diversity within schools (Sempol, 2015:2). It proposes that if there are doubts about how the students want to identify themselves, teachers can call them by their last names until resolved by the respective student (Sempol, 2015:9). Because of extended transphobia, it is important for teachers to offer survival strategies to trans students. For example, providing staff training in trans issues, using correctly gendered language and letting students use bathrooms and uniforms that match their genders. Additionally, they should work to broaden heteronormative concepts of gender, i.e., showing a varied representation of the trans population, with e.g. different professions (Sempol, 2015:9).

Secondly, Rocha's study (2015) maps problems that trans students experience in school in Uruguay, covering both bullying, institutional violence and problems related to the teachers (Rocha, 2015:49). The study confirms, through stories of trans students, that heteronormativity is practised systematically in education. There are two main conclusions: Firstly, dividing students into groups based on their gender, through segregated toilet facilities, separate physical education classes and other group activities, enacts violence on gender nonconforming people. Secondly, the study concludes how these persons confront aggression, finding their own strategies to the indifference experienced at the school and that of the educational authorities, failing to provide an even minimally friendly atmosphere (Rocha, 2015:68). Rocha's hypothesis was that

discrimination would soften for younger LGBT students but the study demonstrated no change over time (Rocha, 2015:69). Despite the changes in law (see section *3.1 LGBTI Studies*) there was no significant difference in student experience. Therefore, Rocha (2015:69) suggests that *public policies* are needed to translate law into practice.

Lastly, De Armas et al. (2015) investigate the presence of sexual diversity in education comparing two different secondary schools in Uruguay, one technical, *UTU*, and one theoretical one, *Liceo*, through interviews and a media analysis (De Armas et al., 2015:3). They conclude that the educational differences in terms of scheduled hours for sexual education influence in e.g. the continuity that the UTU can offer with the fixed subject and therefore respond to the needs of the students (De Armas et al., 2015:22). Students expressed the need to have LGBT issues covered in sexual education and also revealed lack of confidence in their teachers being adequately educated in the matter (De Armas et al., 2015:23). In contrast to my study, this thesis mixes a discourse analysis of the media-reaction to the guide *Education and Sexual Diversity* (MIDES, 2014) along with interviews from two different secondary schools. If there was to be more time and resource for a study, it finds it interesting to see how the media reactions affected the practice of sexual education in secondary schools (De Armas et al., 2015:3). Even though there are previous studies that touch upon the topics of LGBT and education, none of them focus on the methods that would embrace pedagogy gender identity and sexual diversity in Uruguay.

4.3 Educational information of Uruguay

The Uruguayan educational system can be divided into three principal parts: initial, primary and secondary. The initial period covers year four to year five, primary continue from year six to year 12 and finally secondary from 13-year-olds until 18-year-olds. The last one is divided into two cycles: the first one 1, 2, 3 and the second one of 4, 5, 6 (Cuadra, 2011). After secondary school one can access higher education in Uruguay, these consist of non-university studies, e.g. teacher training or university, or university, either public or private (Universia, 2011).

Sexual education has been compulsory since 2007 but depending on the educational centre it is practiced differently, e.g. in the Technical Schools of Uruguay (*UTU*) sexual education is a subject of its own with a final grade, whilst in theoretical secondary school (*Liceo*) it is matter temporary appearing with workshops in the time of other subjects (De Armas et al., 2015:13). The general educational law also includes a part stating that it "will have, as an aim, provide appropriate instruments that promotes educators to reflect critically about gender and sexuality in general in order to enjoy it responsibility"(*My translation*, De Armas et al., 2015:4). Traditionally a major part of the trans population abandons education (Sempol, 2015:1) and trans students' school results have been lower than the rest of the population (Rocha, 2015:48). However, now several trans students are appearing in secondary and higher education (Sempol, 2015:1).

5. Theoretical Framework

In contemporary social science, it is recognized that researchers always approach their research from a particular position. Since no research can be considered fully objective, many researchers choose to make their perspectives explicit. By being explicit about their stance, they prepare the readers for the political perspectives embedded in their work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:22), making the work more transparent and raising the academic quality of the research (Stake, 2005:443). This study will be carried out on the assumption that it is necessary to find a way to work with including LGBTI issues in pedagogy and I will search for the ways that teachers can work most beneficially. This section presents the theories social constructivism and queer theory, which will serve as an analytical base to interpret the material of the study.

5.1 Social constructivism

Within general research two main perspectives discuss the understanding identity: biological essentialism and social constructivism. The first one seeks answers on an individual basis in an innate biology and the second understands identity as constructed in a specific social and cultural context. One such way of understanding identity is reflexive normativity, which understands development as a series of flexible patterns that are influenced by historical changes (Johansson, 2006:215). Therefore, the students' situation should be interpreted in accordance with variables such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity etc. (Johansson, 2006:216-217). As a contrast to the biological essentialism Butler represents social constructivism explaining

> ...'the body' not as a ready surface awaiting signification, but as a set of boundaries, individual and social, politically signified and maintained. No longer believable as an interior 'truth' of dispositions and identity, sex will be shown to be a performatively enacted signification... (Butler,1999:45).

The choice of social constructivism as a theoretical perspective for this study is based on that pedagogical studies have started replacing the previous positivist perspective on knowledge with constructivism and socio-cultural theories (Rinne, 2014:31). Previous research on this study's topic applies a constructivist perspective on gender identity and sexual diversity (Pérez, 2008:49, Martinelli, 2014:16).

5.2 Queer Theory

Since the university sphere is heavily influenced by the northern, European ideals (Marrero, 2008:207), it is important not to reproduce this effect in research. One strategy that can help prevent that is to use theories from the geographical context of the study rather than those from Western thinkers. Consequently, I will use the combination of Argentinean and Uruguayan authors who research on queer theory. Many of the above Latin-American queer studies (see section *3. Previous Research*) use Judith Butler as a theoretical reference (Sempol, 2015, Rocha 2015, Martinelli, 2014), which is based on a French and American theoretical tradition of feminism, psychoanalysis and social constructivism. In accordance with social constructivism, Butler indicates that "...it is a significant theoretical mistake to take the "internality" of the psychic world for granted" (Butler, 1999:xv).

5.2.1 Heteronormativity, Performativity, Deconstruction and Unnaturalize

This section will present several of Butler's concepts are often used as analytical tools by local researchers such as Diego Sempol)2015), Cecilia Rocha (2015), Romina Martinelli (2014), Mauro Cabral (2016) etc. Analytical tools relevant to interpret the results will be the following: *heteronormativity*, *performativity deconstruction* and *unnaturalize.* Working with LGBTI issues, the concept of *heteronormativity* is necessary as an analytical tools and it is used in several Uruguayan and Argentinean queer studies (De Arma, et al., 2015:3, Martinelli, 2014:37, Freitas de Leon, 2011:42, Rocha, 2015:42, Sempol, 2015:2, Figari, Carlos, et al. 2012:4). Most public institutions, including educational ones, are permeated by *heteronormativity* (Sempol, 2011:20, Rocha, 2014:51) seeing heterosexual relationships as the norm that everyone must strive towards (Pérez, 2008, 49). Heteronormativity reproduces images about gender norms, limitations and stereotypes about identities outside the norm. As a result, the heteronormative gender expression expected from the biological sex, i.e. male-masculine and female-feminine, are considered normal and others merely an imitation of those (Butler,1999:43). This perception of *realness* gives privileges to those who fulfil the expectations (Butler,1999:45) and sanction those who do not, as non-conforming gender expressions are usually thought of as *impossibilities* (Butler,1999:190). Butler (1999:43) explains gender expressions that do not conform to the gender binary should not be understood heteronormatively as a "copy (is) to (an) original" but rather as a "copy is to copy". That is, all gender expressions are constructed, thus some expressions can never be considered as *true* or *false* (Butler,1999:x). This construction Butler (1999:xv) calls *performativity,* meaning that all gender expressions are repetitions that are continuously repeating or breaking norms. This repetition of certain conforming gender expressions also creates the idea of *real women* (Butler,1999:191). In accordance with Simone de Beauvoir's idea of that a woman is not *born* but constructed culturally, Butler (1999:45) claims that everyone does gender. The school system can be a tool to educate students to be heterosexual and to respond to respective gender expectations (Rocha, 2015:51-52). However, by understanding how heteronormativity functions, ideas about gender and sexuality might broaden (Butler,1999:x). In addition, Butler (1999:192) believes that "Gender transformations are to be found precisely in … the possibility of a failure to repeat, a de-formity, or a parodic repetition that exposes the phantasmatic effect of abiding identity as a politically tenuous construction". Therefore, to unnaturalize something implies to take it outside of its habitual context in order to observe it. It might be a deconstruction of gender and sexual identities as something biologically innate. That is to emphasize them as socially constructed and how they relate to hegemonic structures in society is useful when working with sexuality in the classrooms (Sempol, 2015:9). In other words, to unnaturalize is to question something habitual, whilst deconstruct is to reflect upon the different component in e.g. a discourse.

Butler also maintains that there must be a distinction between an actual connection between gender and sexuality and the link that heteronormativity creates. That is, in order to control heterosexuality among the population, a strong relationship between sex, gender, sexuality and desire is created (Butler, 1999:24). If this is not exposed, there is a risk that certain experiences of heteronormative discrimination will be invisible (Butler, 1999:xiii). This means that heteronormativity is maintained upon the perception that e.g. a person with a male juridical sex will be heterosexual and desire women. Trans population often experience heavy discrimination and social rejection because they challenge the gender binary and therefore expose gender performativity in society (Sempol, 2015:8). In addition to this, trans issues get little

priority within LGBTI topics and this invisibility is excused by claiming that trans issues are to be "new", "rare" or a "minority" (Cabral, 2016:2). Sempol (2015:9) emphasizes the paradox of how heterosexuality is understood as invisible and thus rejects the importance to make non-heterosexual practices visible is rejected. He argues that heterosexual symbols and informal comments to colleagues and students are examples of how heterosexuals are visible in their teaching profession. Similarly to this, sexuality can be seen as a "dynamic process extended throughout a whole lifetime" (MIDES, 2014: 8).

Another concept used when dealing with heteronormativity is *symbolic violence* (Sempol, 2015). Referring to Bourdieu, Lawler (2016) exemplifies it:

> Examples of the exercise of symbolic violence include gender relations in which both men and women agree that women are weaker, less intelligent, more unreliable, and so forth (and for Bourdieu gender relations are the paradigm case of the operation of symbolic violence)

Teacher should, according to Sempol (2015:8) when teaching work preventing symbolic violence and be explicit about their subjectivity. Referring to Wittig, Butler refers to her idea that language can be a tool of changing power structures (Butler, 1999:36).

6. Method & Methodology

In this section several parts of the process of the study will be presented: the method, the methodology, the selection, the process analysis and the ethical considerations.

6.1 Method

The main method of this thesis was qualitative semi-structured interviews with six teachers forming an empirical study. A semi-structured interview normally consists of a certain amount of previously decided interview questions with the flexibility of other questions and topics to get included during the conversations (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 315). Regardless the study's topic, the previous questions should be specific enough so that the results can be compared. Also the same research questions from the study can be used in the interview question, together with five-ten more specific ones, starting with the general and finishing with the deeper topics (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:316).

6.2 Methodology

The main purpose of having qualitative interviews was to be able to see how the teachers describe their own didactic methods. If I were to do a less qualitative methodology, I would miss out on a deeper understanding of methods and experiences working with education of gender identity and sexual diversity. By using semi-structured interviews it was possible to see patterns among the participants' discourses without missing particular interests and experiences that might be the case if directing an interview continuously (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:315-316, Esaiasson et al., 2007:284). Additionally, letting the participants exercise more agency over the topics of the interview was a way to decentre my role as a researcher, which is recommended when wanting to prevent being a dominant interviewer (Walia, 2012). Due to the image of big cities as more LGBT-friendly (Martellini, 2014:7) and the time limitation, the study was decided to be carried out in the bigger cities of Uruguay, e.g. Montevideo.

Research is always subjective (Santoro & Smyth, 2010:494) and the researcher's experience will always influence the study itself. In contrast to merely intake the data, researchers also produce the material by their presence in the process (Santoro & Smyth, 2010:494). Santoro and Smith (2010:495) discuss the consequences of being an *insider* verses *outsider* in the participant group. On one hand, as they define an *outsider* as often lacking "...knowledge of particular cultural practices and/or mores of communication", I as a white European can be considered an *outsider* culturalwise in Uruguay. On the other hand, I belong to the *insider group* as a teacher dedicated to pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity (Santoro & Smyth, 2010:495). Sharing a common pedagogy with the participants can contribute to that certain sensible experiences are only shared with *insiders* (Smith, 1999, 197). This complexity of being both an *insider-outsider* is relatively common since in many cases researchers can belong to both groups due to the intersections of gender, sexual orientation, class, profession etc. (Santoro & Smyth, 2010:496). However, coming as an *outsider* to Uruguay implies a certain responsibility. Even though I have tried to take this in to consideration throughout the whole study, it is impossible to get from the fact that being a white European will make a different study than if I were born and raised in the country where the study took place.

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6.3 Selection

The suitability selection of the informants was limited to teachers who work with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, i.e. teachers who self-define teaching defending these issues. The participants all have in common that they practise pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity but they teach in different settings, some in higher education and others in secondary schools. Since the study covered more interviews than would have been possible to transcribe, I made a re-selection of the interviews that contrasted each other the most with an equal gender selection (3 men, 1 non-binary person and 2 women).

6.4 Process

Before travelling to Uruguay I used my previous contact network of teachers and social movements to get in contact with teachers using pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, so called *network selection* or *snowball selection* (Lewis-Beck, et al. 2004). A difficulty found in the research process was the balance of having an as open definition of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity as possible in order to not lose out on teachers who taught in a non-familiar way to me, at the same time as having a common component among the educators. One question was what was the exact definition of a pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, however I decided to leave this up to the participants to define.

     Firstly, previous to the interviews I met each participant in pre-meetings. This implied an introduction to the study for the participant and information about the participant's work for me. Transparency of the methods, aims and use of the research were informed to the informants, an essential part of research ethics so that informants are fully conscious of what they are participating in (ESRC, n.d., online). In the rare cases where there was no time for the participant to coordinate such a meeting, similar conversations where held online. The pre-meetings gave the possibility to make the most of the latter interview because of certain background information and the time-span of making more specific questions to each participant. However, as Fontana and Frey claim that the process of an interview is always bound to the historical time and the political stance of the interviewer (Fontana & Frey, 2005:695), it was of importance to introduce myself and my role in Uruguay as a European student. This way, the meetings also served the idea of creating a relation of confidence between the participants and me.

     Secondly, after the first contact, a rapport was written about the informant, including information about their profession, experience and actual situation etc.

     Thirdly, an interview schedule of fixed questions was created and determined to be the same for all interviews. These fixed set of questions were created to be as open as possible in order to not limit the answers in the interviews (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:315). The base consisted of five topics that permeated all interviews, introduction and definition, didactic material, difficulties and solutions along with future. These topics were organized in the order starting with easier and general questions to ease the conversation, finishing with the deeper and specific ones (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:316) (see *Appendix* for the interview schedule). Later, this schedule was linked with each personal rapport, creating the final interview guide, a mix between the same questions and the unique information about this participant.

     Fourthly, I decided upon a place and time for the interview as convenient as possible for the participant. It might be difficult for educators to talk openly about their current jobs and especially at their workplace. Therefore, the informants were asked to choose a place for the

interviews, in order to feel comfortable to have an open discussion, as Holgersson (2011:221) asserts that it is more convenient to meet at a place familiar to the informants. The location of the interview did therefore vary from e.g. walking outdoor to the kitchen table where confidence could more easily be met (Holgersson, 2011:229). In addition to this, a small snack was usually shared during the interview to ease the conversation and to create a familiar link to the participants, e.g. Uruguayan mate-tea is usually drunk between people at work.

Fifthly, I held the qualitative interviews using the guide as a base parallel with letting the conversation go in the direction of the interest of the participant. In accordance with DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree (2006:316), I adapted the discourse to the participant being in the interview, e.g. expressed the questions differently. Interpreting questions were asked if there was any linguistic or cultural doubt about the content in the answers. Even though I originally had thought to use focus groups, I later considered that the individual interviews gave more space to openly talk about the personal experience since the participants differed between opinions in strategies, age and sometimes the topics mismatched for focus groups, e.g. questions about the experience working with colleagues.

Conversations of how to bring back something to the educational field were held with the participants and I visited some educational centres in different arrangements. This resulted in a quite familiar contact between me and the informants, something that might be favourable in terms of opening up in the interviews. Lastly, the interviews were fully transcribed. Email contact has later been re-established with the participants present in the study in order to discuss anonymity with them and only include information that has their agreement.

6.6 Analysis

The study used an inductive method, which means that the interviews were discussed by a content analysis using the theoretical framework specified earlier, i.e. relevant concept from Queer Theory based on social constructivism. This is the analytical framework that similar studies in the region, Uruguay and Argentina, have applied and Queer Theory provides the concepts to comprehend the results of the interviews. In order to take the local differences in account, theorists from Latin America have been used in the theory section. When analyzing the results I will apply a so-called "sociological listening" (*My translation*) that Holgersson (2011:220) understands as an interpretation of an empirical material from a sociological theoretical perspective. It implies to read between the lines and nuance the material to the cultural context.

6.7 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations include concepts such as full information, anonymity, voluntariness and comprehension of what it means to participate in the research (Diener & Crandall, 1978). The anonymity of the participants is an essential part of the ethics of the study (ESRC, n.d., online) and sometimes a criterion for participation for some informants. Anonymity consists not only in not naming the informants but also to anonymize information about the informants in case they could be tracked in a certain context. The anonymity of this study consists of letting the participants decide upon which information they want to be presented in the essay, i.e. gender, profession, subject, level of teaching etc. One of the participants has chosen not to be anonymous.

Since the study would exclusively include teachers with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, it does not provide a full picture of the general attitudes within the teaching profession. However, there was already studies demonstrating the heteronormativity among the teaching staff (Sempol, 2015:2, Rocha, 2015:47) so the aim of this selection was to deepen the knowledge about how to implement inclusive pedagogy in schools, rather than interviewing teachers who reject inclusive pedagogy.

7. Results

The thematic of the results are divided in relevance to the research questions and which answers I consider as the most favorable for interesting discussions among the participants. The results are divided into the categories of: *Introduction, General Pedagogical Methods on Gender Identity and Sexual diversity, Specific Pedagogy on Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity to a Certain Subjects and its Material, Committed Teaching* and *Future Prospects.* I translate all the quotes from the interviews. One of the participants use a gender neutral pronoun, with their consent I will use the English form of third person plural, *they, their,* which is, among others, used to indicate gender neutrality relating to a singular person. Along with the professions, some of the participants also carry out workshops at schools representing various social movements.

7.1 Introduction of the Participants

7.1.1 Information About the Participating Teachers

Name	Profession	Subject	Self-defined identity and pronoun
Alejandra Collette	Teacher at Secondary School & Director	Literature	Woman, pronoun *she*
Newen	Workshop leader at Primary School	Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity	Non-binary, pronoun *they*
Miguel	Professor at Higher Education and Teacher at Secondary School	History and Social Science	Man, Pronoun *he*
Julio	Professor at Higher Education and Teacher at Secondary School	Sociology and Civics	Man, pronoun *he*
Ana	Teacher at Secondary School and Detention Centre	Biology and Sexual Education	Woman, pronoun *she*
Carlos	Teacher at Collage	Sexual Education	Man, pronoun he

7.1.2 Definition of pedagogy and Clarifications of Identities

The majority of the participants doubt about which name to give their pedagogical practices. Some participants say that no names occur to them since they have not considered naming the practice before. Many of them connect it to "human rights" as a strategy to ease the topic. Newen explains that they use "human rights" instead of LGBT as a strategy for smoothing resistance against the topics and because sometimes lesbians and bisexuals get excluded from the usage of LGBT anyhow, as demonstrated in Martinelli's study (2014:56). They continue saying that "human rights" is a broad enough term to include everyone and when dealing with public institutions such as schools, the term backs up the discourse and facilitate the work.

Julio makes comparison to Latin-American neighbouring countries and his own

denomination, "In Argentina one can talk about *pedagogy of differences.* I would say that it is a convivial pedagogy, pedagogy of acceptance and conviviality. And this is the first thing I tell teachers when I speak to them about sexual diversity". Two of the participants bring up "inclusion" and "integration" as when describing the methods, but they both problematize the terms. Newen relates to the experience of working with social movements on disability where "integration is not used anymore, it has a lot of problems, when are they integrated? Actually they are already integrated..." in contrast to when dealing with social movements concern with "diversity", when they think that "integration" is more often used than "inclusion". Several names and explanations are expressed, something that might demonstrate different strategies of discourse depending on the context, audience, aim, etc., as Pérez (2008:49) suggests explicitly discussing sexual diversity might meet various obstacles.

The participants express that there is confusion among the learners regarding LGBTI identities and their meanings. Therefore, the the visibility of them is used as a strategy even though Newen declares the difficulty of explaining gender identity at a workshop at primary school. In order to do so, Newen also negotiated with the other two workshop teachers whether or not to explain *intersex* to the teachers, due to the difficulty the teachers felt about tackling the topic. In accordance with Butler (1999: xiii), it is the heteronormative link between gender and sexuality that some of the participants want to dissolve. Even if several participants want to vanish the categories as a utopia, they alarm invisibility or misinterpretation of LGBT identities if not clarified. On the contrary, one participant seems to oppose talking about definitions, stating that they are very hard to define and does not teach anything, "If I read a definition, will this cause a change in me? That is crazy, if not a rare causality". He believes that one should not focus only on non-heterosexual practices to defeat heteronormativity but rather must talk about the *heterosexual closet*, which he explains as the fears and obstacles heterosexuals experience created by heteronormativity.

7.2 General Pedagogical Methods on Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity

7.2.1 Methods

Many of the participants insist that it is possible to include LGBTI issues transversally in all subjects and in the relation teacher-student. Alejandra Collette explains it as following "Further to the subject you teach, you work from a perspective of a human being, it is the contact with the pupils". Alejandra brings up LGBTI topics automatically being a Trans teacher: "I am the diversity, only by standing in front of the class my body is talking". She that the fact of being a teacher and trans makes the topic present continuously: "Let's see, if I were a person who corresponded to a gender binary, I would then deal with it more specifically". Another participant has a similar discourse, Julio: "There is no previous work, it is the permanent respect, to listen to the other". This is also supported by Sempol (2015:2) who advises to work with LGBTI issues in order to prevent harassment and discrimination.

7.2.2 Issues

Several teachers state that LGBTI issues appearing among students should always be tackled. Two teachers emphasize the risk of merely working these topics during the "diversity month", in September when there is the Uruguayan Pride-march, in case they later get forgotten for the rest of the year. Miguel adds that it is as well as important to prevent heteronormativity by

problematizing it throughout the year, scrutinizing where discrimination, violence and harassment come from in order to "visualize many situations that usually work in silence". Alejandra Collette suggests that if a student is trans, school staff should, comparatively to Sempol (2015:9), "Until the persons have done their process, and do not show their gender identity, call the persons by their last name and talk to them in neutral." That is, speaking in neutral would be instead of stating a first name, teachers can use second person singular in order to speak gender neutrally in order to prevent that the person will feel ashamed, Alejandra asserts. In addition, teachers can also, apart from the student group ask the student who he, she or they, wish to be referred to. She also explains that in various teachers' meetings they can discussion whether a student is about to come out in order to support without being explicit, by creating a positive atmosphere where the students know that "Neither will they be judged, pointed to, nor discriminated". These strategies relate to the issues that Rocha (2015:68) present in schools for trans students: toilets, student lists etc. Several teachers accent the cautiousness that these topics should be dealt with. They express it should never be compulsory to define yourself but if the initiative is taken to do so, there should be support.

As well as, Miguel narrates that the most favourable is not always to confront a topic explicitly. He narrates the anecdote of a colleague working in a school where the colleagues insisted in that LGBTI perspective in the teaching was unimportant. Instead of forcing the issues to immediately take space at the school she waited until more confidence was built and did the first intervention during the *diversity month* (see *5.2.3 Issues*) and had clearly positive results so that next year the issues are dealt with throughout the whole year and transversally." In this case, Miguel recommends this since he suspects the contrary would have worsened the situation. Many participants emphasize that coming out is a personal process that no one but oneself knows how and when it is best to be done.

7.2.3 Theoretical Perspectives

The participants contrast their theoretical perspective with what they voice is usually connected to the discourse of sexuality: genitals, conceptive methods, sexually transmitted diseases etc. The majority of them accentuate a non-biological perspective on LGBTI issues, as when Miguel puts sexuality into social constructivist perspective and considers it is necessary to

> "unnaturalize it, introduce it to the political field...You cannot differentiate between culture and nature. Culture permeates everything. The body is not a *tabula rasa* [blank sheet] outside of culture, it is introduced thanks to language. Because of the symbolism that is made of the body, culture also permeates sexuality. Starting to compare us to penguins makes no sense; it does not show the way".

This pedagogical approach is based on a social constructivist idea of that everything is explained by language and therefore culture (Johansson, 2006:215, Butler, 1999:45). Butler (1999:x) states that making heteronormativity visible can ease the possibility of other gender expressions.

Ana problematizes what is "scientifically proved" with her students stating that "science is as subjective as human beings". Relating it to sexuality, she explains it is influenced by many different factors, such as philosophy, science, sociology and anthropology and therefore there is no universal concept of it. She explains that, "Sexuality is present all of the time, not only in the genitals. The friendship bonds, what we permit and what we don't". In addition, Julio tells that he works with a perspective called *double hermeneutics,* "which is reappropriating the agent's discourse and deconstruct it by a sociological discourse in order to later bring it back to the discourse of the agent". That is, to enable a perspective different from the one students are used

to or to put the discourses in a historical perspective.

However, at one instance in the interview, Alejandra Collette defends gender identity as not being a matter of a choice. Lastly, even if the majority of the teachers present a conscious choice of theoretical perspectives, Miguel, Carlos, Ana and Julio continuously connect the theories with everyday life experiences. One can relate the theoretical perspectives as a wave of replacing more biologically rooted theories with social constructivism in teaching with a LGBTI perspective in accordance with the change Rinne (2014:31) demonstrates in pedagogical studies, which enables the necessary deconstruction for making power structures visible.

7.2.4 Classroom Discourse

Several of the participants state that there is a need to get away from a superficial discourse where the students only reproduce what they think their teachers wish to hear. Even so, the limits of a classroom discourse differ among them. Despite that the teachers permit a certain discourse among the students, they often set an example by conveying another perspective in the classroom. In this section is it demonstrated the different strategies that the participants use in order to get under the surface of an "accepted" discourse and reach the prejudice, values and stereotypes. Ana states that her position does always remain alike and explicit no matter which students she encounters. If so Carlos shares the ideological base of the political developments in terms of diversity and celebrates the struggle social movements have done to achieve them, he wants to get away from a uniform discourse regarding diversity:

> "I do not want to impose a new hegemonic discourse of how to deal with difference. People become prescriptive, even evangelist about that one should not discriminate. What a strange thing pedagogically that is happening when making a guide of how not to discriminate. I believe it is a nonsense".

Even if he believes that the LGBT success has given certain visibility and legitimacy (see section *3.1 LGBTI Studies*) he considers that LGBT people are still getting discriminated, since no learning is done in an "evangelist" atmosphere and he thinks this generation is not as politically attentive as the previous ones. Carlos brings in another dimension talking about broadening *diversity* to different species and including *solidarity* as a tool for change. Defining solidarity as

> "putting myself in your shoes, trying to imagine myself how you could feel. Because showing solidarity with someone who is from your same group would benefit me, and that is not solidarity. I know that this can seem a lot like christianism or altruism, but it is not such a fairy tale. As specie I think it is important to remind ourselves to conceive new solidarities. Because sexual diversity is very polluted by political correctness".

In order to reach comprehension, he proposes a method of asking questions on e.g. homophobia. "I try to generate something more global, from biodiversity, ecosystem, speciesism. To understand that homophobia and sexism exist enables me to understand speciesism". Instead of "correcting" certain words, this strategy, wants to involve the students in order to get a discussion by asking "'Did it never happen to you that... how did you feel? Has it happened to you that you wish your son would be a murder before being a faggot? Why?'" Questions can according to Carlos generate that the other feels comprehended using empathy as a method when teaching and that way change can be possible. Two of the participants also work with curse words as a strategy. Together with the students, Ana reflects upon what is the meaning of the recipient when using a swear word. In a similar way, Miguel demonstrates how he thinks it is better to work with the prejudices instead of suppressing them, "The prejudices must be brought out, e.g. there is a boat with fourteen persons and one has to leave so that it does not to flood. Who is sacrificed?

'The faggot because that is unmoral to be one'. Okay, 'Thanks for expressing yourself'". He later relates this need to the Uruguayan culture: Miguel says that on the one hand, on the surface things seem to be accepted but when it comes to the values, they are actually not. Therefore, Carlos believes the classroom can be a space where prejudices are brought to the surface. "You have to touch this spot where the values come out". Also Ana agrees that learning is not an easy process and sometimes students can suffer when there is a change occurring.

In the same manner Julio says he works for a safe classroom atmosphere by "Neither enable irony, nor jokes about the other. Neither do I allow the lesson to continue in this direction, I prefer to intervene in the moment and disarm this discourse: where does it come from, how does it affect the other?" Julio concludes that "I think the priority is not to be neither disciplinary, nor authoritarian, but to create a discussion space, enable the other's opinion... in order not to generate a silent complicity". The reflection upon language of the participants and their strategical choices can be interpreted as using the revolutionary potential there is in language (Butler, 1999:36). Similarly to Miguel's statement about adapting to the school, different methods are used depending on the time and place.

7.3 Specific Pedagogy on Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity to a Certain Subjects and its Material

Since the participants teach different subjects on various levels, a selection of the methods specific to sexual diversity, biology and literature are presented here.

7.3.1 Sexual Diversity at Primary School

Newen tells about a workshop held with two other instructors at a primary school. The first exercise about gender roles where they stated different hobbies and the pupils would raise their hands if identifying with them. In accordance with the gender of the pupils who have their hand up and the comments and reactions in the class, they would then deconstruct gender roles. The second activity consisted of showing a video where a trans person appeared. At that moment some of the younger boys laughed, something that the teachers experience more among boys than girls. This reaction might be understood as some trans identities automatically provoking questions about the binary nature of gender (Cabral, 2016:1), laughter being a nervous response to shifting their ideas of gender. They also worked with national and international laws consisting of a human rights framework, the scholar curriculum, definitions of gender and a glossary on gender identity. The stereotypes were explained as brands that one finds in a Supermarket; they do not tell what is on the inside. Next, they discussed the film *Shrek the third* and the liberation of the princesses. Newen considers a scene from the film was excellent to work with in primary school since the princesses would liberate themselves cooperating together and "one of the princesses is trans". Later the pupils got a photo from a scene in a group from which they explained the story and characters. Lastly, they made a poster about same-sex marriage based on a non-discrimination idea. Finally, they work with several guides accessible on the Internet: *Dresses in the classroom a guide on affective and sexual diversity* (Freitas de Leon, 2011) (see section *3. Background*), the Brazilian guide G*uia educativa de sexo, genero y sexualidad en la escuela,* which deals with trans issues. Newen relates the difficulty of finding a children's book about gender identity, consulting her network of trans friends which book would be most

beneficiary. Some books related diversity topics. However, the way the issues were presented did not seem useful to Newen.

7.3.2 Biology and Sexual Education at Secondary School

Ana varies between many different methods in her biology classes depending on if it relates to sexuality or gender. She does not use any books because they are expensive and the pupils need to buy them themselves. Therefore, she puts the material together herself, which usually results in working outside working hours, consisting of guides from LGBTI social movements and educational institutions: e.g. "Education and Sexual Diversity". Her pedagogy also includes dealing with stereotypes, authoritarian societies in relevance to gender identity and sexual diversity: e.g. heteronormativity or homosexuality during the Nazi Germany. Among the classroom activities Ana refers to an exercise where she uncovered a table filled with items and a tablecloth for ten seconds to let the pupils observe it from their perspective. Later they brought attention to the possible observation from their angle and related it to the subjectivity of sexuality and how one's world is constructed, e.g. from a heteronormative perspective.

Ana usually finds the students in detention less fixed to the hegemonic values than the secondary school pupils. When giving a lesson about hormones, including a third sex, talking of intersexuals, female and males one student in detention was surprised "How impressing, how things have changed, now we talk about intersexuals", which the teacher interpreted as a macro social-historical perspective on education and society. Her goal with the knowledge required after the course is to have achieved understanding about: "organisms that are related to sexuality, think of sexuality as sexualities and not just in one way, take care of each other and detaching themselves from the common discourse". Ana's perspective on broaden the view of *reality* can be related to the theoretical perspective of social constructivism emphasising multiple viewpoints on society.

7.3.3 Literature

Alejandra Collete studies classical literature canon in her classroom from a gender and sexual diversity perspective: *Don Quijote de la Mancha, Shakespeare, Dante* and *Sophocles.* She explains this pedagogy as when dealing with

> Quijote I work from different angels, each year I chose a new topic, so I always transversalize... In this one I talk about fulfilling your dreams, not only professional dreams, your gender identity and your sexual orientation. With *The Divine Comedy*, the topic is love, with whom we fall in love, with the bodies, with a man or a woman or the person. Obviously the *machismo* and the patriarchal culture and how they affect us so that we do not accept the different...

Alejandra Collete tells how the many classical literary texts are male-dominated and how she works with gender in her class from the reflections of the students.

In this section all participants unifies topics on gender and sexuality. Similarly to the classroom activities Newen carried out about gender roles and Alejandra Collette about masculinity in literature, Ana works parallel with gender and sexuality. This might be related to the fact that Butler (1999:xiii) claims gender and sexuality to be inseparable in a heteronormative society and therefore it is advisable to connect the two for a deeper understanding of social constructions. Broadening the gender possibilities might be a way to prevent LGBTI discrimination.

7.4 Committed Teaching

In contrast to the previous sections, the commitment of the teachers is not directly connected to the research questions of this paper. However, it is of interest to enhance this aspect since it was a concept often present in the interviews and influences their teaching practise regarding topics on gender identity and sexual diversity. Several of the participants value the dedication of teachers and discuss the role of a teacher. Carlos explains that teaching "means a challenge, to be questioning oneself constantly. You cannot be too comfortable. You will probable be saying some prejudice. The nuclear is to decentre oneself from the comfort zone to engage with the other." Only in this way, according to the participant, will the teaching be "honest". Ana exemplifies the function education can play in broadening perspectives, when a former pupil tells her at a reunion that "'I do not know about contents but secondary school opened up my mind, I talked about other stuff, saw other people: the classmates and the teachers, their way to talk, to dress...". Ana confirms that "all teaching is subjective, not even one's sexuality stays outside the classroom", which relates to Sempol (2015:8) who advices teachers to be explicit about their subjectivity. The same way that education reproduces heteronormativity (Sempol, 2011:20, Rocha, 2015:51, Martinelli, 2014:35), it might also be a tool for social change, as stated by Ana. However, Ana adds that it must be considered to work together with other components in society, (see section *5.9.1 Prospects*).

Most of the participants work, or have worked mainly in the public sector. In some interviews, religious private schools are presumed to demonstrate more resistance to pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity than the public ones. Other participants express their commitment to public schools as an engagement for social change. That is, they prefer to teach the working class rather than the upper class students in private schools.

7.4.1 Being a Reference

Several participants take upon great reasonability when teaching, emphasizing the role one plays as an adult. Carlos explains "You are the creator of opinions; you influence people...without getting afraid of this". Thus Miguel highlights that if a teacher is not suitable for teaching "You have to engage in some other job. I understand the good intention but we work with people, we can hurt them and the damage can be irreparable so no, it is unacceptable." Julio demonstrates this responsibility with a metaphor "When a child is young and wants to discover the world and goes to the park with his father, dependent of their own personality and risk capacity he will run a little bit ahead... but at a point he will look back to see if the reference, this security is there" Relating this to education, Julio says that teachers are this reference for the pupils. In accordance with De Armas et al. (2015:23), Julio recognize that many LGBT students lack an adult to deal with the violence they experience, emphasizing how this can prevent feelings of guilt, fear and rejection among the students. Also Rocha (2015:48) and UNESCO (2013) present the bullying that LGBTI student suffer. As Rocha's study (2015:68) demonstrates, trans students tend to find their own strategies of how to deal with discrimination when the school staff 's support is missing. Miguel says that in the questionnaire of LGBT students, they said their references at school were the sexual educators, in order to talk about these issues. The law from 2007 assures sexual education for all educational centres (Freitas de Leon, 2011:11) even if the presence of the educators differs depending on the school (De Armas et al., 2015:22). According to Julio a LGBT

teacher can also become an icon of the possibility of both LGBT and wellbeing, pointing out it is not about being an "idol". The participants who can talk from an own experience going through education being LGBT become the adult referent for the students. Some students have come out to them, knowing that they belong to the same community. In accordance with Butler's (1999:xii) statement that expressions that are gender non-conforming can be made possibilities when repeated to disturb heteronormativity, the referents can be seen as important representations that broaden the mental visions on gender and sexual orientation.

The teachers themselves, depending on the LGBT teacher, come out in different ways. Whilst Julio prefers to do it in a subtle manner, he tells about LGBT colleagues who explicitly say "Let's get this straight, I am gay", considering that either way is good. All participants repeat that when dealing with LGBT students they must be very careful not to push in any direction but to support them in their process. e.g. If a student comes out by showing a photo of their same-sex partner, they meet it neutrally as if anything. As heterosexuality does not need to come out in social situations and is dealt without much attention (Sempol, 2015:9), it might be that the teacher chose to react subtly to the coming-out of students.

7.4.2 Student democracy

In a similar manner that the participants are dedicated to their profession, they encourage the students' commitment as well. All participants demonstrate a commitment to include topics and methods that coincide with the interests of the students and to encourage the students' participation. Alejandra Collette and Ana perceive their students enjoying discussions in the classroom. Ana explains

> It is in the bond with the students where things start happening, if there is no connection, nothing will appear…the class is very silent and still it seems like a good lesson, but nothing happens. The lesson should be talking, dialogue, I ask, I propose something... I want the students to wish to come to my lessons, at least that they do not have a bad time.

Here a clear consideration for the learning and well being of the students are expressed. Ana draws a link to critical pedagogy because of the transformative potential this teaching has.

> "I want to change some things in this world that I do not agree with. From this point everything is connected to raise awareness. A possibility to think oneself outside of oppression, or at least to become aware of how one is oppressed in order to do something about it".

As in the study of De Armas et al. (2015:23), which present the absence of teaching sexual education with LGBT issues, the pupils during Newen's workshop expressed their need to talk about sexual diversity: "When we arrived [for the workshop] they were desperate to talk about these issues". Alejandra Collete continues how she includes the students' motivation for different topics: "Each lesson is different; I allow it to be taken where they want to go... and I can exemplify a certain situation from a text with nowadays". However, she also emphasizes that she does it in the matter that she finds herself prepared enough to deal with an issue. "If they [the pupils] raise the topics of diversity or gender identity, I discuss it, we talk and great... but if they bring up a topic I am not an expert on, then we arrange and I bring a person who knows more about it". That way, Alejandra Collete includes the class dynamic in her lesson planning.

7.5 Institutional Support for Pedagogy on Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity

The answers of the participants differ in their views on the existence of institutional support for pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity: those who believe that the support is ambiguous and those who believe it does not exist. The general educational law in Uruguay encourage "educators to reflect critically about gender and sexuality in general" (*My translation*, De Armas et al., 2015:4). However, whether this is represented in other policy documents and in practical material differ among the participants.

     Firstly, the participants coincide in that they consider the Uruguayan public sector as paradoxical. On one hand, making laws of LGBT justice and on the other hand not facilitating the educational support for it. Alejandra Collette explains it as a difference between theory and practice: Even if in the discourse everything seems fine, very accepted, in reality it is not like this. It is same authorities that mark the difference for you." Later on she says that it was not until she got her name in the official documents that she got call by the correct gender and name. One participant refers to the general school law that assures sexual diversity in an article that defends the diversity in all its forms (see section *4.3 Educational Information*). Yet when the law gets translated to each subject's curricula, sexual diversity disappears from the documents. In the curriculum of sociology, unities such as *Gender and Prejudice* along with *Stereotypes and Discrimination* exist. However, Miguel and Julio states that the ambiguous curriculum can be interpreted differently depending on the teacher as there is no clear politics behind it. Therefore, Julio concludes that the educational authorities' support in pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity is insufficient. This, according to Julio, is manifested as well in the process of publishing the guide "Education and Sexual Diversity" (see section *3. Background*).

     Secondly, Alejandra Collette does not consider the educational authorities to assist in these issues: "It is a work that the civilian society is doing because of dedication." She also emphasizes that education, along with health care is a highly LGBTI discriminatory sphere as several Uruguayan authors state (Sempol, 2011:20, Rocha, 2015:51, Martinelli, 2014:35).

7.6 Future Prospects for Pedagogy on Gender Identity and Sexual Diversity

7.6.1 Prospects

Among the prospect of what the education would be like regarding LGBTI issues in a decade's future, the participants responded around three different future situations: the same, maybe changed and changed.

     To begin with Ana considers that the pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity will continues to be limited to a number of committed teachers and the rest of the teaching staff continue to exclude these issues.

> Education is part of the political stakeholder and it is needed to be established in society to be accepted... I do not know if in ten years, hopefully.... Until the hegemonic order will be another one, it will not happen. You cannot demand from the current system to work against itself. That does not happen, but there will always be people using the faults, the own contradictions of the system, the cracks, the spaces where you can get in and construct another discourse, other possibilities. And that is the way things have been made.

Ana questions the idea that education would be separated from society and that a social change would happen on its own, making references to how the school system nowadays function as a

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social reproduction of the hegemonic model. If something would change, it might be in the official documents, which always is faster, she concludes in accordance with Martinelli (2014:44) who states that the legal changes usually is faster than the cultural one. Only social movements can make a real change of the state of being. One can interpret this vision in accordance with Pérez's (2008:49) suggestion that sexual diversity is threatening for masculine power. Next Newen considers that the education will change and is already in change. However, they point out that nothing will appear by itself and fear is the most important to overcome. The conservatism among the educational authorities affect the cautiousness among directors and educators. Newen recalls LGBT issues in education, such as visibility of trans identities and the legal support of changing one's name as examples of previous improvements. In accordance with Pérez (2008:49) who recognizes education as a component to influence the conception of sexuality, change might be possible as stated by some participants. As well as Newen, Alejandra Collette also emphasizes the improvements done but is sceptical to a change "Eleven years of left government and still the education has not been reformed". This statement coincides with the results of Rocha's study (2015:69), where a comparison was made between the participants who have school experience after the new government and the following laws. The results demonstrate that there was no difference in experienced discrimination between the different age groups.

7.6.2 Necessary changes

The participants present different strategies to advance with pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. Therefore, Alejandra Collette regards three policies necessary to implement pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in the whole school system. In the first place, to insert an educational reform, later to include the issues in teaching program of future educators and lastly to educate the school staff already working. Several other participants coincide with a greater demand of the educational institutions, recognizing the importance of the social movements' workshop at schools as well as the difficulty of making a bigger change in that way. Miguel also agrees with that change must happen on various levels: e.g. in the teaching program and believe that for including LGBT issues "the best hope we have now are the sexual educators" even if he adds that is not the preferred strategy. He clarifies that, "The sexual educators can plant seeds in different educational centres about sexual diversity and this way enable to change the atmosphere little by little". Julio considers that a LGBTI manual should be officially distributed, "proposing to the educational community that this is a topic that should be cross-disciplinary...". He concludes that issues supporting the rights of trans students such as the access the preferred bathroom and change of same as well as enabling same-sex couples should be implemented. These strategies can be interpreted in the light of preventing symbolic violence within schools (Sempol, 2015:8). In order to enable the teacher to work with these issues continuously, Julio proposes that clear educational referents, and a clear educational program of reference should be established.

> If gay people want to get married they can but it is a quite marginalized sector. In order for the law be to made flesh, I need concrete educational politics. That is curricula, plans, texts, books, activities and a concrete work in the educational communities.

These proposals accord with to Rocha's (2015:69) suggestion of concreting the laws to educational policies.

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8. Final discussion

This section will discuss several topics of the study. First the methods used when carrying out this research and possible alternatives to that. Second the answers on which pedagogical methods of gender identity and sexual diversity that teachers within different sectors practice in Uruguay and how these interact with their subjects. In addition to this, it will summarise and reflect upon the concept of this pedagogy such as, the dedication to teaching and the future situation of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity.

8.1 Methodological Reflections

Considering the fact that neither Spanish nor English are my mother tongues but rather subjects of my previous academic studies, it should be mentioned that some cultural or linguistic concepts might have gone lost in translation, in accordance with Santoro and Smith's (2010:495) conception that an outsider does not usually have "knowledge of particular cultural practices". If the study had been carried out in Swedish, some of my cultural understanding might have been broaden. However, due to my previous studies in Uruguay I had background information of cultural and social phenomena. During the interviews the participants addressed me several times as an *outsider* (Santoro and Smith, 2010:495) referring to Uruguay and its culture in an explanatory manner, which had the advantage of clarifying their answers. In addition, as when having undertaken semi-structured qualitative interviews human factors such as misinterpretation and diffuse selection might often appear.

8.2 Conclusions

The methods of how to teach gender identity and sexual diversity differ both depending on the subject but also on the pedagogy of the teacher. First the participants use different material according to their subject's topics and relate them to gender and sexuality. For instance, Alejandra Collette draws parallels between literary classics and patriarchy and Ana talks about the multi-perspectives on sexuality. Second the perceived discussion of different approaches on how gender identity and sexual diversity can be taught is an interesting phenomenon to observe. On one hand, one can detect the perception of the confusion students have about LGBTI identities. On the other hand, the will of getting away from the categories of identity and "naturalize" all gender identities and sexual diversity. Additionally, the belief of that one cannot focus on non-heterosexual practices to defeat heteronormativity but rather must talk about the *heterosexual closet.* Among the interesting tools used by the participants to achieve this we find denaturalization, deconstruction and questioning of prejudices. In addition to this, the teachers also use their own identity when treating subjects about gender and sexuality. Alejandra states that her mere presence in the classroom is part of her pedagogy.

There are a few similarities between all participants: they all express a discourse of concern of their students and dedication to their job. Being a reference of gender identity and sexual diversity for the students is one example of how the concern is demonstrated. As Martinelli (2014:40) suggests, being *out* e.g. as a lesbian teacher might carry risks with it. However, the participants conclude that it is important for LGBTI students to have adults they can refer to when talking about these issues.

Further all the participants have the quality of a reflective character. Considering the past,

present and future of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in Uruguay, they all seem to take on a critical perspective on the situation in Uruguay at the same time as appreciating the advances that have been done. The ability to apply such a perspective seems to me as highly beneficial for the development of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. Several of the results in this study might be applicable to a Swedish context.

8.3 Implications & Further Research

I consider that it might be positive for a pedagogical development in Swedish if a more self-critical attitude was adopted from a Uruguayan pedagogy. Since a country has an overstated self-image of the actual situation, such as for pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, it might function as a disservice when trying to improve circumstances since the challenges become harder to perceive. As stated above (see *3. Background*), guides have been developed in Sweden, but similarly to the case of Uruguay, not been largely distributed to promote pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity. In addition to this, the results demonstrate a gap between laws and teaching practice, something that could be the case in Sweden as well. As Pérez (2008:49) put forward the resistance sexual diversity can provoke due to confronting heteronormativity, if the obstacles of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity are not made explicit, the strategies will, according to me, be harder to find. Such a resistance might be the media reaction after the publication of the guide *Education and Sexual* Diversity, when Valenti claimed heterosexual pride and that the guide created inverted discrimination (see *3. Background*). Throughout the interviews it was suggested that coverage in media of the guide might be understood to affect, firstly, the distribution of the guide in educational centers and, secondly, the creation of the public opinion on LGBQ+ visibility in schools. Possible reasons to this reaction in media might be revolutionary potential that exist in pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity and that any visibility of non-heterosexual practices provokes heteronormativity (Pérez, 2008:49). In accordance with the results of this study, if the guide were to be put in practice a radical change of a previously biologist perspective on sexual diversity would probably be exchanged with a social constructivist one, which could mean an opening for a critical consideration of gender and sexuality.

Many of the participants aspire to more public engagement for pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in terms of concrete curriculum and guidelines of how to take action in an educational centre. Others stress the importance of an inclusion of these issues in the teaching programmed as another teacher accentuate that the change comes by a profound questioning of preconceptions about sexuality and gender. For a broader distribution of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity, public institutions could offer financial and juridical support in designing material and suggestions on how to include LGBTI perspectives in schools. As Martinelli (2014:43) deduces the lack of pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in schools to disinformation, a possible solution might be to provide information about LGBT matters in order to prevent guilt and confusion among LGBT students (Martinelli, 2014:42).

Since Uruguay historically was colonized by catholic Spain (Pérez, 2008:47), religion might still play an important role in the conservative resistance that LGBTI issues meet.

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However, according to the interviewees, the secular image of Uruguay permeates even the religious parts of society. This is for instance demonstrated in the media's answer to the launching of the guide (see section *3. Background*), where Sturla present the current educational system as totally neutral in contrast to the claimed ideological teaching the guide would turn education into. Since teaching always is performed by persons who have a historical background and are influenced by their society, as stated by several participants, aims such as *neutral* and *objective* teaching might be difficult, if not even impossible to achieve. In accordance with social constructivism, the participants' answers state that all teaching might be considered subjective. One participant emphasizes that the transparency lies in that teachers' perspective should be explicit (ESRC, n.d., online) and get the class involved in the activities. It might be suggested that through less European influence and presence from the Catholic Church, pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity might evolve more.

As all of the participants in this study live or work in bigger cities in Uruguay and Martinelli study (2014) highlight the change LGB people experience when moving from the smaller cities to Uruguay's capital. Therefore, the conditions of practising pedagogy on gender identity and sexual diversity in smaller cities compared to bigger cities in Uruguay might be of interest. Studies within topics of migration and LG issues have been carried out in Sweden as well, e.g. *Beyond bright city lights: the migration patterns of gay men and lesbians* (Wimark, 2014, Galin, 2010).

As well as if there is a difference in working with this perspective in public and private educational centres, as the participants perceive. If so, how do the strategies of working with LGBTI issues vary in these two sectors? Similar studies would be interesting to carry out in Sweden since there does not seem to exist extended research on these topics. They are also questions that future research might provide teachers will useful knowledge that could be translated into practises that might assist the educators. My perception after this study is that some teachers find it easier to include sexual diversity rather than trans issues in their teaching. As Rocha (2015:49) states that there are few studies of trans students' school experience in Uruguay more research could be carried out on how to include trans issues in teaching.

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Appendix

English Translation of the Interview Schedule

Inform about the anonimity
- Could you please tell me briefly about your profession?
- With which frequency do you teach your students?
- When speaking about issues related to gender identity and sexual diversity, which terms do you prefer to use?
- How would you describe your pedagogy?
- What does this pedagogy imply in general terms?
- What does this pedagogy imply in your teaching?
- Which methods do you use in your pedagogy?
- How is the contact between you and the students regarding these issues?
- How is the institutional support for this pedagogy?
- Which pedagogy is practised in the educational centre where you work?
- What is the management's perspective on diversity?
- Could you please tell me your experience regarding the guide *Education and Sexual Diversity*?
- Which consequences did the guide cause?
- How were the teachers' reactions?
- Which posibilities do you see in the future working with these issues?
- Which problems do you see?
- How could these problems be resolved?

Original Interview Schedule in Spanish

Informerar sobre la anonimidad.
- ¿Puedes contarme un poco sobre tu profesión?
- ¿Con cuánta frecuencia se ven los alumnos y alumnas?
- ¿Cuando hablas de temas relacionadas con diversidad de sexualidad y de género, qué palabras prefieres usar?
- ¿Cómo describiría la pedagogía tuya en las clases?
- ¿Qué implica esta pedagogía en términos generales para vos?
- ¿Qué implica en tu enseñanza?
- ¿Qué métodos usas para esta pedagogía?
- ¿Cómo es el trato entre vos y los alumnos en estos temas?
- ¿Cómo está el apoyo institucional de enseñanza para la pedagogía tuya?
- ¿Cómo es la pedagogía en general en el centro donde trabajas?

- ¿Cómo es la perspectiva de la dirección en estos temas?
- ¿Puedes contar sobre tu experiencia de la guía?
- ¿Qué consecuencias tuvo el proceso de la guía?
- ¿Cómo eran las reacciones de los profesores?
- ¿Qué posibilidades ves dentro de tu lugar de trabajo de trabajar estos temas en el futuro de esta pedagogía?
- ¿Qué problemas ves?
- ¿Cómo solucionas a los problemas?
- ¿Podrías contarme cómo tu situación profesional ha sido durante los últimos años?