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Sauntson, Helen (2020) Changing educational policies: Language and sexuality in schools. In: Mullany, Louise, (ed.) Professional Communication: Consultancy, Advocacy, Activism. Communicating in Professions and Organizations . Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 273-290

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Chapter 14
Changing Educational Policies: Language and Sexuality in Schools

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1. Introduction

This chapter explores how academic research on language and sexuality can be used to inform and influence educational policy and, in particular, attempts to change curriculum content. I focus specifically on government-produced documents designed to provide direction and guidance on how to deliver Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in state secondary schools in England and Wales. At the time of writing, RSE is being reviewed and updated following heavy criticism in recent years, as well as a need for RSE teaching to incorporate relevant legal changes in the UK such as the Same-Sex Marriage Act (2013) and the Equality Act (2010). The research presented in this chapter entails a corpus-based critical analysis of the language used in RSE documents currently being used to inform RSE teaching in schools, as well as informing future directions for the subject. The critical element of the analysis utilises elements of Leap's (in press) historical sociolinguistics framework for investigating language and sexuality. In particular, I focus on Leap's concept of 'spectrality'.

In the section that follows, I present a brief historical overview of the development of RSE provision in schools in England and Wales. I then introduce the data used in the study and the frameworks used to analyse the data. This is followed by a discussion of the key findings emerging from the analysis and their relevance to changing RSE-related policies and provision in schools. The research presented in this chapter starts from a point of advocacy for LGBT+ rights. A key claim I make is that the documents currently being used to inform the teaching of RSE in schools in England and Wales embed implicit expressions of sexuality-based discrimination, even though they do not include teaching about LGBT+ identities and relationships. I posit that this is something that curriculum developers, policy-makers and educational practitioners urgently need to challenge in order to ensure that RSE is taught in a way that is fair, inclusive and accurately reflects current legislation regarding LGBT+ rights. In the conclusion, I discuss how this can happen and feed into practice.

2. ~~Context:~~ Relationships and Sex Education ~~(RSE)~~ in England and Wales

In the UK, Sex Education became mandatory in schools in 1993 under the Education Act. Shortly after this, the 1996 Education Act consolidated all previous legislation relating to SRE and made the subject mandatory for all pupils of both primary and secondary school age in the Science National Curriculum. The act specified that the biological aspects of sexual reproduction, puberty and information about HIV/AIDS and other STIs must be covered in Science lessons. Other aspects of SRE could be covered in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). The 1996 Act also specified that each school must provide a policy describing the content of SRE provision outside of national curriculum Science. It is the school governors' responsibility to produce and make available this policy. In the UK, school governors are groups of volunteers, usually from the local community, who oversee a school in terms of its ethos and strategic direction, finances and the educational performance of students.

The 2000 Learning and Skills Act set out more detailed and updated guidance about SRE requirements for all schools in England and Wales. This guidance stressed the importance of young people learning about marriage and 'family life' and it emphasised that young people should be protected from teaching and learning materials which are deemed 'inappropriate'. The act also specified that SRE teaching should be sensitive and responsive

to the age and religious and cultural background of pupils. Under the act, parents have a right to withdraw their child from all or part of SRE provided by the school outside National Curriculum Science lesson. Alongside the Act, the Department for Education and Employment (subsequently the Department for Education) published guidance on the delivery of SRE through the PSHE framework. In England, SRE continues to be taught through the subjects of Science and PSHE. Whereas Science is compulsory and schools are obliged to teach what is in the Science national curriculum, PSHE is a non-statutory subject which means that schools can choose what is included.

A final, significant piece of legislation relating to sexual diversity issues in schools in the UK was the 1988 Local Government Act. This legislation is of particular significance for the research findings presented in this chapter. Section 28 of this act made it illegal for homosexuality to be 'promoted' in schools. Non-heterosexual relationships were described as 'pretended family relationships'. In many ways, this act set the ground for providing SRE which focused exclusively on heterosexual (family) relationships and for creating and maintaining a silence around any other forms of sexual identities, relationships and family structures. Section 28 was finally repealed by Britain's Labour government in 2003, but there still appears to be a 'legacy' from Section 28 which has resulted in a pervading silence and fear of openly discussing non-heterosexual identities and relationships in schools (Ellis and High, 2004; Malmedie, 2012). It is this 'legacy', and its linguistic manifestations in present RSE curriculum guidance, that forms the basis of the analysis and arguments presented throughout this chapter.

In UK RSE, there continues to be a narrow focus on heterosexual reproduction. This includes the documents pertaining to the recent (2017-present) review of RSE. There is also a focus on sexual health issues but, again, these predominantly relate to heterosexual sex. Same-sex relationships and LGBT+ identities are now included in RSE but only in a small section (two paragraphs) which is left quite vague. Given that sex education is still the only subject which explicitly draws attention to sexuality, the marginalisation of LGBT+ issues is a key contributing factor to the invisibility and marginalisation that many LGBT+-identified students experience in school.

Academic research examining RSE documents and teaching has revealed a number of worrying findings. In previous research which analyses classroom interaction from RSE lessons as well as RSE guidance documents (Sauntson, 2018), I have found that a discourse of gender emerges that presents differential values for girls and boys which are usually negative and potentially 'injurious' (Butler, 1996) to both. Girls are discursively responsible for their own behaviour and are more heavily judged (negatively) for their sexual behaviour. It is implied that girls have a greater responsibility for safer sex than boys and girls are discursively constructed as having less sexual agency than boys.

Sexual pleasure is discursively construed as something to be experienced by biological males only. Sundaram and Sauntson (2015) also note the perpetual absence of 'pleasure' as a theme in SRE classes results in a failure to challenge norms that construct girls as sexually passive/in danger and boys as necessarily sexually active/desiring. Sex itself emerges as a practice that is risky, dangerous and something to be avoided and 'delayed'. Sex often has 'unwanted' outcomes, particularly in relation to the vaginal intercourse that is presented as the primary activity taking place within such heterosexual relationships (Allen and Carmody, 2012; Sundaram and Sauntson, 2015).This 'de-eroticisation' of sex has also been observed by Brook (2013), who found that young people 'switch off' from SRE (including messages about safer sex) when it is de-eroticised. The mismatch between what is taught in SRE and what students actually want to know supports the work of Hilton (2007) who notes a well-established gap between content of SRE delivered in schools and what young people want to know, a finding echoed in the *Not Yet Good Enough* report on PSHE produced by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 2012).

My own previous research also reveals a predominant focus in RSE classes on heterosexual reproduction and a continual reinforcement of heteronormativity. There is often an implicit, taken-for-granted assumption of heterosexuality, including in families as well as in the future sexual orientation of the students themselves. Heterosexuality is very much constructed as the expected norm. This is despite the fact that there is recognition and explicit acknowledgement in the wider school environment of a wider range of sexual and gender identities. Furthermore, heterosexuality itself is represented in a very restricted way. It is constructed as always monogamous and, in terms of sexual activity, enacted through vaginal intercourse only. Other possibilities for heterosexual desire, activity and identity are entirely absent. This supports Allen and Carmody's (2012) argument that there is a need for an extended 'discourse of erotics' in SRE which acknowledges different forms of desire (and pleasure).

The literature outlined above documents continuing social problems concerning the RSE curriculum and delivery, and it is these persistent problems which the current research project attempts to address. It seems, then, that RSE is a highly problematic area of school provision and one in which activists, practitioners and academics have been making sustained efforts to reform as a means of making the subject more inclusive and, ultimately, more effective.

3. Data and methods

In a previous study (Sundaram and Sauntson, 2015) focusing on a single RSE document (the 2014 SRE Guidance for England and Wales), it was found that there was an absence of many elements that might be expected to appear in a relationships-focused subject such as love, feelings and consent. Given that RSE provision in England and Wales has been undergoing review and reform from 2017-2019 (with a view to updated RSE guidance being put into practice in schools from 2020), it seemed important and timely to conduct an updated study of more recent documents produced by government bodies relating to the ongoing RSE reform. The new study involved building a specialised corpus of a number of documents involved in the recent RSE reform. There were 18 RSE documents in total (listed below), comprising the 102,353-word corpus:

1. RSE briefing paper (Aug 2018)
2. Draft regulations for SRE (2018)
3. SRE guidance (2000)
4. Justine Greening announcement (March 2017)
5. Section 34 of Children and Social Work Act (2017)
6. National Curriculum statement on SRE
7. Education Act (sections on SRE provision) (1996)
8. 'Not Yet Good Enough' PSHE report
9. SRE Bill first reading
10. PSHE Bill (2016)
11. House of Commons 'Life Lessons' report (2014-15)
12. Government response to 'Life Lessons' report
13. RSE draft guidance (2018)
14. RSE draft impact assessment (2018)
15. DfE policy statement (2017)
16. SRE review (2008)
17. 'Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools' report (2016-17)
18. Government response to 'Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in Schools' report (2016-17)

Documents 1 and 2 were used as the basis for selecting the rest of the documents for the corpus – any text referred to in documents 1 and 2 was also included in order to produce a

larger corpus which contained texts which informed the production of the final guidance document. Therefore, the content of the corpus reflects the 'discourse' surrounding the review (some of the discussions that happened during the review process and the information that informed the final content) as well as the document produced at the end of the review period.

The data in the study were analysed using a combination of corpus linguistics and a specific element of critical discourse analysis termed 'spectrality' by Leap (in press). A well-documented advantage of using corpus linguistics is that it enables us to make observations about language use which go beyond intuition and, because it is computer-based, it allows the exploration of patterns of language use which are not observable to the human eye. It is only through repetition that particular ideologies become naturalised through discourse. The more quantitative methods of corpus linguistics are well-placed to identify these kinds of repeated patterns across large stretches of interactional text. Baker (2008) and Baker et al. (2013) have written extensively on the use of critical corpus linguistics and have examined in detail how corpus linguistics can be used to enhance and support the claims made through the application of critical discourse analysis.

The specific corpus techniques used are keywords and concordance analyses, available using the software Wordsmith Tools (Scott 2014). Scott (2014) defines a 'keyword' as a word that occurs in a corpus more often than would normally be expected when compared to another corpus. Keywords, then, are very revealing in terms of the more unusual meanings and trends presented in the corpus. A keyword list is a useful starting point for word-based corpus analysis as it can begin to reveal information about themes and discursive priorities within the texts comprising the corpus. This can then provide a basis for further analysis. A keyword analysis requires the corpus under scrutiny to be compared with a 'reference corpus' which is a larger and more general corpus. In this case, the keywords lists were generated by comparing each document set with a word frequency list from the British National Corpus (http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/).

A next stage commonly used in corpus analysis is to consider the semantic environment of some lexical items. Examining a word's concordances (a specified number of words to the left and right of the search term) can help to build up a semantic profile of that word which can contribute to revealing any underlying discourses and ideologies in the corpus. Using keyword and concordance analysis together can provide an important overview of the main themes, discourses and ideologies prevalent in the corpus.

For the discourse analysis component, I draw on Leap's (in press) recent work which examines language and sexuality 'before Stonewall'. The Stonewall riots of 1968 are often considered to be a defining moment in LGBT history as it ushered in the era of gay liberation. For information about the Stonewall Riots, see Duberman (1993). Leap's book actually challenges this dominant narrative of Stonewall as the 'emblematic event in modern lesbian and gay history' (Duberman, 1993: xvii), including in linguistics, and sets out to investigate the language of LGBT+ love and identity 'before' Stonewall. Leap argues that looking back at the historical development of a field of applied linguistics is important. Most previous work in language and sexuality has looked at language 'after' Stonewall and has been informed by its historical framing as the beginning of gay liberation, gay pride and the formalising of sexual identities in public life. In post-Stonewall language and sexuality work, language before Stonewall is often characterised as the 'unspoken' and the 'outside of language'. As a result of this, Leap argues that the queer subject is concurrently constructed as 'outside of society'. What is important about this for the current study is that linguistic analysis points to non-heterosexual identities as still being placed 'outside society' in the 2019 RSE documents, which I exemplify and explain in the following section.

Using methods from historical sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysis, Leap explores what he terms the 'heteroglossia of before' Stonewall. Leap claims that this heteroglossia is routinely realised through a number of language elements. In this chapter, I draw on one of these elements – spectrality – which explicitly deals with temporality and this, I argue, is important for the meanings that are created in the current RSE documents under scrutiny. I argue that the element of spectrality in the RSE discourse creates particular affective resonances in relation to sexuality in school contexts.

Leap (in press: 48) defines 'spectrality' as […] events, activities, images and other details that are ordinarily not connected to each other in space and time are brought into a space/time connection. According to Leap, spectres are things from the past that manifest linguistically in the present and imbue sexually diverse identities with particular meanings influenced from those past contexts. This can and does often include past traumatic events so that spectrality in language often construes the 'afterlife of trauma'. Leap draws on Derrida's (1994) notion of *spectralite* and *hauntology* to emphasise conditions where 'time is out of joint'. Leap discusses concepts of 'spectral potency' and 'spectral haunting' in certain contexts which have the effect of instilling feelings of fear. In other words, spectrality in discourse generates material affective responses which can delegitimise certain identities and practices. In sum, the combined use of the corpus techniques of keyword and concordance analysis, and an examination of spectrality as a component of critical discourse analysis, enables a systematic investigation of how the RSE documents use language to perpetuate discriminatory discourses around non-heterosexual identities and relationships.

4. Analysis

The top 40 keywords in the corpus are presented in Table 1. Many of the keywords in the present study are, unsurprisingly, linked to the main topic that the documents deal with (i.e. sex education) and the key social actors involved (pupils/students, parents and teachers). It is standard practice in corpus linguistics to remove the grammatical words from a keyword list, so that the words presented are the lexical words. Therefore, the keywords in Table 1 are lexical words only.

1. schools	2. PSHE	3. SRE	4. sexual	5. education
6. sex	7. relationships	8. harassment	9. school	10. guidance
11. pupils	12. RSE	13. Ofsted	14. young	15. violence
16. statutory	17. curriculum	18. parents	19. teachers	20. children
21. secondary	22. teaching	23. bullying	24. pornography	25. primary
26. abuse	27. health	28. relationship	29. people	30. safeguarding
31. quality	32. DFE	33. online	34. taught	35. including
36. issues	37. teach	38. girls	39. teacher	40. support

Table 1: Keywords in 2018 RSE corpus

The keywords suggest that there continue to be absences around pleasure, emotions and the social dimensions of sexuality. Again, this does very little to create a positive discourse around sexual identity and activity. Whereas there continue to be absences around love and consent, *violence*, *bullying*, *abuse*, *safeguarding* and *harassment* do now appear as keywords, which suggests that RSE is beginning to address these important issues more directly.

A closer analysis of the words occurring outside the top 40 keywords shows that there are some references to 'feelings' in the corpus. There are a total of 79 references to *feel** in the whole corpus. The asterisk indicates that the word is a lemma i.e., the base forms of words

which can vary in terms of word class, grammatical tense and so on (for example, *promot** includes *promote, promotes, promoting, promotion* etc.). However, closer examination of these occurrences reveals that many of them actually refer to teachers' feelings about their levels of confidence in delivering the subject and about young people feeling 'safe' in lessons. Very few of the occurrences refer to the place of feelings and emotions in intimate relationships. This appears to be still largely dominated by the language of risk, heterosexual reproduction, and language which places responsibility for the negative outcomes of sexual activity on girls.

Furthermore, the 'feelings' that are referred to in the occurrences tend to be negative ones, particularly fear, insecurity and lack of confidence. There are, for example, 38 occurrences of *concerns*, 23 occurrences of *vulnerable*, 5 occurrences of *anxiety*, 26 occurrences of *unwanted* and 9 occurrences of *fear*. I argue that these words taken together produce a cumulative discourse around fear and insecurity as the dominant emotions linked to sex and relationships in the corpus. By comparison, there are fewer occurrences of words which refer to positive emotions – in the whole corpus, the only ones which could be found were *love* (6 occurrences), *happy* (5 occurrences) and *enjoy* (4 occurrences). It seems, therefore, that sexuality (in terms of identity and relationships) is discursively related to negative affect in the documents comprising the corpus.

These findings warrant further investigation. What exactly do the fears, insecurities and concerns refer to and what bases do they have (if any)? Why are these feelings so pervasive in the documents, while expressions of positive feelings such as love and pleasure have relatively few occurrences? In order address these questions, we need to move beyond the corpus itself and engage with the historical context of RSE in the UK. This is where Leap's concept of spectrality, within a broader historical sociolinguistics framework, can offer insights into why fear appears to be such a pervasive feeling in relation to the teaching about RSE in schools.

4.1 Spectrality in RSE

Probably the most worrying finding from the current analyses of the RSE document is that the spectral language of Section 28 appears to continue to 'haunt' the 2018 RSE guidance. Although the resonances of Section 28 in previous RSE documents and practices has been identified in other research (Ellis and High, 2004; Malmedie, 2012), very little has used the tools of applied linguistics to systematically examine how Section 28 spectrality manifests in the language of the documents in ways that are difficult to challenge.

'Section 28' is a commonly used shorthand term for Clause 28 of the 1988 local government act for England, Wales and Scotland. In the original text of the act (Figure 1), I have underlined the section which legislates against the 'promotion of homosexuality by local authorities':

Local Government Act 1988
An Act to secure that local and other public authorities undertake certain activities only if they can do so competitively; to regulate certain functions of local and other public authorities in connection with public supply or works contracts; to authorise and regulate the provision of financial assistance by local authorities for certain housing purposes; to prohibit the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities; to make provision about local authorities' publicity, local government administration, the powers of auditors, land held by public bodies, direct labour organisations, arrangements under the Employment and Training Act 1973, the Commission for Local Authority Accounts in Scotland, the auditing of accounts of local authorities in Scotland, and dog registration, dog licences and stray dogs; and for connected purposes.
[24th March 1988]

Figure 1: Local Government Act 1988

The specific wording of Clause 28 of the 1988 act which singles out schools for particular attention is shown in Figure 2:

> [a local authority] shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality or promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship.

Figure 2: Clause 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act

A side-by-side comparison of the original Clause 28 text and the reformed RSE guidance currently in use shows how similar they are in how they deal with sexual orientation. In Figure 3, I have underlined the specific areas of similarity.

> A local authority:
> 'shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality or promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship'. [Clause 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act]
>
> Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. The Secretary of State for Education and Employment is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation. Sexual orientation and what is taught in schools is an area of concern for some parents [RSE draft guidance, 2018]

Figure 3: Comparison of Clause 28 and current RSE documents

The 'spectre' of section 28 is clearly evident in the language of the documents which are currently directly informing the teaching of RSE in schools. Specifically, it is use of the verb *promote* and its collocation with *sexual orientation* which creates the spectrality and its accompanying negative prosody around sexual diversity. In fact, when we look at a concordance of *promot**, we see that co-occurrences of *sexual** and *promot** always appear in negative constructions i.e. the texts advocate *not* promoting sexual orientation. In the concordances in Table 4, I removed references to promotion of children's 'well-being' in broad terms, as well as references to 'health promotion'. The remaining concordances reveal that the verb *promote* mainly collocates negatively with sexual orientation and with same-sex marriage, and positively with equality and inclusion. In effect, this means that not only are schools expected to not promote sexual orientation, they are also expected to not promote same-sex marriage. This produces an ideologically contradictory position in which legal practices are silenced, and that silencing itself, is a homophobic and, therefore arguably, illegal practice.

N	Concordance		
1	as with any professional, to	promote	sexual orientation. They will be
2	sexual health. It is not about the	promotion	of sexual orientation
3	support. There should be no direct	promotion	of sexual orientation
4	would be required to actively	promote	same-sex marriage. During
5	that the proprietor must actively	promote	the fundamental British values
6	and that schools must actively	promote	the specified principles
7	that schools are not required to	promote	same-sex marriage: Teaching
8	teacher, is under a duty to support,	promote	or endorse marriage of same-sex
9	requirement for schools to actively	promote	principles which encourage
10	arising from the concept of active	promotion.	The inevitable result

11	requiring schools to 'actively	promote'	British values have provoked
12	and sexual health. It doesn't	promote	early sexual activity
13	support. There should be no direct	promotion	of sexual orientation.
14	PSHE should be taught in a way that	promotes	equality as defined
15	and sexual health. It does not	promote	early sexual activity or any
16	bullying which should support and	promote	the inclusive and tolerant
17	a wider preventative approach to	promoting	inclusive, tolerant school
18	ways to work with boys and girls to	promote	gender equality and both
19	and reflect the key principles in	promoting	tolerance and inclusion

Table 4: Concordance of *promot**

Upon further examination of the context of some of the *promot** concordances, more of the 'spectrality' of section 28 is revealed. The examples below show more context of some of the *promot** concordances in Table 4. All of the examples show how *promot** collocates negatively with *sexual orientation* and *same-sex marriage* in the documents, and I have underlined the specific parts of the text in which these wordings appear.

> It is inappropriate for youth workers, as with any professional, to promote sexual orientation. They will be expected to respect this guidance when dealing with school age children.
>
> It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.
>
> The Secretary of State for Education and Employment is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation.
>
> The Coalition Government made reforms to the regulatory framework for free schools, academies, and independent schools. Some campaign groups, including the Coalition for Marriage, interpreted the reforms as meaning that schools would be required to actively promote same-sex marriage.
>
> No school, or individual teacher, is under a duty to support, promote or endorse marriage of same sex couples. Teaching should be based on facts and should enable pupils to develop an understanding of how the law applies to different relationships.
>
> Sex and relationship education (SRE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards. It involves teaching children about reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It doesn't promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation.
>
> This was updated in, and states that schools are not required to promote same-sex marriage: Teaching about marriage must be done in a sensitive, reasonable, respectful and balanced way.
>
> No school, or individual teacher, is under a duty to support, promote or endorse marriage of same sex couples. Teaching should be based on facts and should enable pupils to develop an understanding of how the law applies to different relationships.

As I have noted previously (Sauntson, 2018), the idea of being able to 'promote' any sort of sexual orientation is highly contested and the phrasing of this part of section 28 has a long history of being critiqued. The underlying problem with using *promote* to refer to sexual orientation is that is implies that sexual orientation is a choice. Given that the SRE guidance was reviewed as recently as 2013, it is alarming that the section 28 echo of 'promote sexual orientation' has been retained in the 2018 documents as they stand at the time of writing. Given the history of the Section 28 legislation, this phrase clearly means 'do not 'promote' homosexuality' in the teaching of RSE. This conflicts with the fact that schools are now governed by the Equality Act which clearly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The phrase also sits in tension with the fact that (particular kinds of) heterosexuality appears to be 'promoted' all the way through the guidance because of the prevalence of positive reference to heterosexual reproduction. The phrase, therefore, is confusing and problematic in a number of ways. It is perhaps not surprising that teachers are confused and apprehensive about how to address issues of non-heterosexual identities and relationships in SRE, given the retention of this phrase. We can therefore deduce from this that when the document prohibits teachers from promoting sexual orientation, heterosexuality is, in fact, exempt from this. Thus, the semantic profile of *promote** functions to effect a discourse of heteronormativity. The discourse of heteronormativity constructed also starkly contrasts with the final statement in the current RSE guidance 'sexual orientation' section: 'Schools need to be able to deal with homophobic bullying' (p. 13).

This is the only mention of homophobic bullying in the entire document and the statement is not elaborated on at all. The clear irony here is that the wording of the rest of the 'sexual orientation' section may actually play a part in contributing to the perpetuation of homophobic bullying in schools through its prioritising of heterosexuality and its retention of the section 28 directive not to 'promote' sexual orientation.

Further examination of specific examples from the *promot** concordance set reveals tensions between 'not promoting sexual orientation' whilst positively promoting 'equality'. Some examples include:

> The third principle is that PSHE should be taught in a way that promotes equality as defined with reference to the protected characteristics included in the Equality Act; encourages acceptance of diversity and difference; and emphasises the importance of responsibilities and rights.
>
> In addition to the legislation above, schools are also required to have in place policies on behaviour and bullying which should support and promote the inclusive and tolerant environments we would like to see develop through whole school approaches.
>
> We will work with a broad range of partners on how schools can identify and reflect the key principles in promoting tolerance and inclusion, as well as any associated tools or resources that schools may need as a framework to support them to implement a whole school approach.

Unsurprisingly, this results in confusion for teachers and an acutely felt contradiction between upholding values around equality, diversity and inclusion whilst abiding by the prohibitive wordings of the RSE documents (see Sauntson, 2018 for interviews with teachers about RSE delivery).

In her work of affect, Ahmed (2014) notes that historical negative affect towards homosexuality as an 'object' has continued to 'stick' to certain 'objects' in the present. This is a similar concept to Leap's idea of spectrality in relation to certain kinds of sexual identities. Fear, as negative affect, is what continues to 'stick' to expressions of non-heterosexuality,

especially in particular institutional contexts such as schools. This is even the case where non-heterosexual practices such as same-sex marriage are legal. This is extremely problematic. Challenging such language should, arguably, be a priority for academics, practitioners, activists and policy-makers.

5. Conclusion

In sum, the combined corpus and critical analysis presented in this chapter shows that fear is the prevailing affect which permeates RSE texts which focus on sexual identities and relationships. This analysis of fear constitutes what Leap terms spectrality in that it creates a spectral discourse in the 2019 RSE corpus which reiterates the Section 28 text of 1988. The result is that those with responsibility for delivering RSE in schools are placed in a contradictory and impossible position with regards to non-heterosexual relationships. They cannot express homophobia, but they simultaneously cannot express positive attitudes towards non-heterosexual relationships and practices in case this is perceived as breaching the RSE edict of not 'promoting sexual orientation' or 'promoting same-sex marriage'. For this reason, I argue that the spectral language of Section 28 needs to be completely removed from current RSE documents and guidelines.

Since preparing this chapter and sharing the findings from the corpus analysis with educational practitioners, charities and professional organisations, including

organisations who used it to lobby the government, the verb *promote*, in all of the newest 2019 RSE guidance document, no longer collocates negatively with sexual orientation and same-sex marriage. This is likely to be the final version of the document which will be used to teach RSE in schools from 2020. This change is already a measure of success of the research findings presented in this chapter. But arguably further work can still be done in terms of alerting organisations who produce resources for the teaching of RSE (e.g., *Personal and Social Health Education Association*, *Sex Education Forum*) about the need to pay careful attention to the way language is used in both materials and the way topics are discussed in class. Educational practitioners with responsibility for delivering RSE have also suggested that my research findings be shared with Ofsted, who may then be able to focus on language use as part of their ongoing observations and reviews of how RSE is being taught in schools. Given that LGBT+ identities and relationships are now included in the RSE guidance (albeit in a small section), there is a need to ensure that materials and activities do not inadvertently or deliberately produce 'spectral discourses' around LGBT+ relationships. There is clearly a role for applied linguists in advising on language use in the teaching of RSE, especially as it relates to teaching about gender and sexuality diversity and it is hoped that this chapter provides practical evidence of how this process can successfully take place.

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