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**Exploring the Discourses about Sexual Education in Kyrgyzstan: the Case of
Government, Non-Government and Political Institutions**

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Abstract

This paper presents the discourses about sexual education in Kyrgyzstan that were explored as the result of the discourse analysis of the media and interview recordings with the representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions of Kyrgyzstan. Based on the “scandal” over the sexual education pamphlets that occurred in 2013 in Bishkek, I investigated how the key actors of the conflicts - the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, the political party “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health - construct, transform and control the discourses around sexual education of young people. However, the paper does not demonstrate the existing discourses concerning sexual education alone. I argue that there is the hierarchy of the discourses, where the conservative nationalism, which comprises the “traditions” of the Kyrgyz people that by default also includes Islam, is the dominant discourse, whereas the sexual liberationist followed by the feminist discourses are at the bottom of this hierarchy. This allows me to argue that sexual education, which is open to the attachment of different discourses existing in the context of Kyrgyzstan, is still an empty point without fixed meanings, and thus is used as the tool by the “defenders” of not less empty concept “tradition” in order to gain political power as well as to create and re-create the dominant cultural norms and values in Kyrgyzstan.

Keywords: discourse, sexual education, children, government, NGO, political institution

Introduction

Sexual education of young people is debated in different parts of the world. In some countries, like the USA, the debates have begun centuries ago, but in others they have just started (Irvine, 2000). Kyrgyzstan, as the post-Soviet country, has just recently entered that field of conflict, where some groups of people and institutions offer the promotion of sexual education programs, while others fight against sexual education itself as well as against the institutions which are providing young people with such programs.

This paper presents the discourses about sexual education in Kyrgyzstan that were explored as the result of the discourse analysis of the media and interview recordings with the representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions of Kyrgyzstan. However, before presenting the description of the research project, its purpose and research questions, a brief overview of the problems in the sexual and reproductive lives of the people of Kyrgyzstan will shed some light on the current situation of sexual education in the country.

The report of the local human rights organization “Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan” states that in 2010 Kyrgyzstan was one of the countries with the highest adolescent birth rates - it was in 5th place after Azerbaijan, Georgia, Bulgaria and Romania (Ilibezova and Ilibezova, 2013). According to the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, within 8 years, in Kyrgyzstan, the adolescent pregnancy rate has doubled – from 3.86 children per 1000 girls under 18 years of age in 2004 to 7.74 in 2012¹. Additionally, in 2011 the number of births among girls between 15 and 17 years of age was 1, 214, and the number of births among girls between 18 and 19 years of age was 10, 543. Among this registered number of births, 91% of girls between 15 and 19 years of age gave birth to their first child; 8.7% gave birth to their second child; 32

¹ The National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic, (2014). *Gender Statistics*. Retrieved March 20, 2014, from http://stat.kg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=160&Itemid=162.

girls gave birth to their third child; and the registered 5 cases were 19 year-old girls who gave birth to their fourth child (Ilibezova and Ilibezova, 2013).

In addition to the adolescent birth rates, the National Statistical Committee presents the following data on adolescent abortion: in 2008, 1, 814 young girls of the age between 15 and 19 years had abortions, whereas in 2009 the number of abortions of young girls of the same age increased to 1, 939. The statistics also show that in 2012, the abortion of girls between 15 and 17 years of old comprised 1.3 % of all the cases of abortion. Moreover, the results of the national research study indicates that in general young people start their sexual lives at the age of 15, where the majority of them start it without knowledge about safe sex (IPPF, 2001, cited in Moldosheva, 2012).

Besides the teenage pregnancy and abortions, there are the cases of sexually transmitted diseases among young people. The data from the National Statistical Committee show that at the end of 2012, there were 3, 641 cases of HIV/AIDS officially registered patients among the citizens of Kyrgyzstan, of which 2, 463 were men, and 1, 178 were women. In 2010, the officially registered cases of HIV/AIDS were 827, where 655 represented men and 172 represented women. The statistics also state that the main routes of transmission of AIDS in 2006 were parenteral (650 cases) and sexual (174 cases), whereas the remaining 3 cases were from mother to child. Besides HIV/AIDS, in 2011 there were 14, 259 cases of other types of sexually transmitted diseases, including syphilis and gonorrhea².

Taking into consideration the fact that the cases of people's sexual and reproductive health are not fully documented in the National Statistical Committee and other statistical databases, it should be noted that the presented data do not fully reflect the social reality

² The National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic, (2014). *Gender Statistics*. Retrieved March 20, 2014, from http://stat.kg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=160&Itemid=162.

concerning these issues. The presented data represent only officially registered cases, but there are many situations when people either use the services of private clinics or use some medicine at home, which are not counted by the National Statistical Committee. Nonetheless, these statistics show or at least provide the readers with the idea about the sexual and reproductive health of the population of Kyrgyzstan, and mainly of its young people, who do not get any formal or informal education about their sexual and reproductive lives.

However, the question whether sexual education can prevent young people from infectious diseases, teenage pregnancy and abortion, or instead lead to the rise of these problems is still debated in Kyrgyzstan. It seemed that in the age of information “hybridity” (Latour, 1993), the institutions responsible for the education and health of young people as well as the general public cannot fully formulate their visions and standpoints concerning the sexual education.

Therefore, the current research paper aims to explore the discourses about sexual education that has been presented by the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions of Kyrgyzstan, and thus to understand how these discourses are constructed and shaped, related and differentiated, controlled and constrained. By analyzing these things, the paper also aims to understand how the explored discourses reflect and construct the “social world” of sexual education in the country. The paper focuses on the scandals over the sexual education pamphlets that happened in 2013, and aims to make the discourse analysis of the media and interview recordings with the key actors of the conflicts, which are the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, the political party “Erkin El”, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health.

Research Questions

By analyzing the collected data, the study will explore the following **research questions**:

1. What discourses do governmental, non-governmental, and political institutions use in presenting sexuality education to the public?
2. How the explored discourses reflect and construct the social world of sexual education and contemporary society in Kyrgyzstan?

Significance of the study

The previous studies conducted in Kyrgyzstan focused mainly on the attitudes of the youth, parents and teachers towards sex before marriages and were mainly within the healthy lifestyle framework. Therefore, this research study will be a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge on sex and sexual education. There were no studies conducted in the context of Kyrgyzstan as well as in other Central Asian countries with the focus on sexual education from the perspectives of macro institutions. In this sense, this research also adds the empirical material to the understudied issue in the studies on transition countries. Additionally, the results of the research study can be useful for policy makers to address the issue of sexual education in the country.

The thesis is organized in the following way: Chapter 1 presents the conceptualization of the key terms of the thesis paper. It also introduces the historical background of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan, outbreak of the current “scandals” over sexual education in the country, review of existing studies on sexual education, and finally theoretical framework. Chapter 2 provides information on the methodological frame and the instruments of data collection and analysis employed for this study. Chapter 3 presents the main findings of the research study. It discusses the positions of the governmental, nongovernmental and political institutions investigated under

this study, and their visions of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. Finally, Chapter 4 provides the Analysis and Discussion of the findings, which is then followed by Conclusion.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

This study is concerned with the discourses the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions use in presenting sexual education to the public, and specifically on how these discourses reflect and construct the social world concerning sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. The chapter consists of four subchapters: 1) historical background of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan; 2) outbreak of the current sexual education “scandals”; 3) review of existing studies on sexual education, and finally 4) theoretical framework.

1.1 Conceptualization

Before proceeding to the background information on sexual education within the context of Kyrgyzstan and to the review of existing literature, the chapter on conceptualization of the key terms will be helpful for readers to understand the structure and focus of the paper. The main concepts of the study, as it is implied, are discourse and sexual education.

Discourse

As any other terms, discourse is the vague and general concept. It does not have one and exact meaning, but it is rather used with different meanings within different theoretical contexts. Nonetheless, the general definition of the term discourse is as follows: “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)” (Jorgensen and Philips, 2012).

In the current study, the concept discourse refers to the verbal and written texts and communications produced by institutions that possess capacities to influence the thoughts and actions of the public and thus, to create the social reality for them. A particular attention will be

paid to the use of language and attachment of certain meanings to the knowledge of sexual education. This point, which emphasizes the active role of discourse in “creating and changing” the social world, is shared by the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe as well as by the Discourse Analysis of Gee (Jorgensen and Philips, 2012), which will be thoroughly discussed in the theoretical framework part.

Sexual Education

Sexual education is generally defined as “a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about...identity, relationships and intimacy.” (SIECUS, 2004) On the basis of this definition, the scholars differentiate two types of sexual education programs: 1) the Abstinence-Only Education programs which teach ‘abstinence from sex, discussions of values, character building and refusal skills” (Nestanet and et al, 2012); and 2) Comprehensive Sexual Education programs which teach about broader issues, including “gender identity, sexual and reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive rights, pleasure, violence, diversity and relationships” (IPPF, 2010).

However, for this particular research study, the concept of sexual education is used in its general form. In other words, within this paper the term sexual education is used without reference to any conceptual frame, for it is the main aim of the paper to find out hypothetically different discourses about sexual education in the context of Kyrgyzstan.

In addition, to the terms discourse and sexual education, the researcher decided to conceptualize the term children, for in every battle or movement, different sides always use children and their developments as an argument for proposing their own policies concerning sexual education.

Children

Based on the UN and World Health Organization, a child means every human being below 18 years (0-18 years). In addition, it is important to note that an adolescent means a human being between 10 and 19 years, young people are human beings between 10 and 24 years, and youth mean human beings between 15 and 25 years (cited in IPPF, 2009).

Additionally, sex educators differentiate two main constructs of children, which are not defined simply by age, these are:

1. “romantic children” whose innocence must be protected, and
2. “knowing children” whose innocence is not affected by the information seen as necessary for development (Jones, 2011).

This image of children as innocence being is still prevalent among many different groups of people: among those who want to prohibit sexual education in order to protect children’s innocence, as well as among those, who promote sexual education, in order to provide children with information so that they can themselves protect their innocence. As it is written in the work of Foucault (1978) “History of Sexuality”, Volume I, the discourse of an innocence and pure child has been widely played in different societies, institutions and people’s interrelationships.

However, in addition to “romantic children” and “knowing children”, Tiffany Mary Jones provides twelve more constructs of children, which are described in Table 2 together with the model for sexuality education discourses (see Appendix).

Model for sexuality education discourse

As the model for sexual education discourses, the current paper is using the model developed by Tiffany Mary Jones (Table 1), which presents four main education discourses that are 1) Conservative, 2) Liberal, 3) Critical and 4) Post-Modern. Based on this model, Jones

provides twenty eight sexual education discourses. These sexual education discourses are divided between the above-mentioned Conservative, Liberal, Critical and Post-Modern orientations, and basically represent the key meanings of these education discourses. Therefore, this paper will not go into specific sexuality education discourses under each orientation but will instead use the four main education discourses in order to analyze and interpret the discourses presented by the institutions under this study.

Table 1 Model of Education Orientations, adopted from Tiffany Mary Jones (2011)

	Orientation			
	Conservative	Liberal	Critical	Post-modern
Approximate time of origin	Pre-1960s	1960s	1970s	1990s
Belief about education	Education should maintain the <i>status quo</i> . It should identify, describe and reinforce the prevailing values, beliefs and practices of society, and 'transmit' them to students.	Education develops the individual potential of all students, rewarding achievement and encouraging competitive activity. It is based on developing knowledge and skills, especially inquiry and decision-making skills.	Education can help create a 'better' society/reality by encouraging students to identify values and practices that are unjust or unsustainable, to propose alternatives, and to take appropriate action to begin bringing those alternatives to fruition.	Education can demystify 'truth'/'reality' and problematise knowledge. Theories of the social are explored – such that the hegemonies (or discursive assumptions of a time or culture) are revealed, allowing new possibilities and conceptual play.
Goal of educators	To maintain social stability and protect the existing interests of various groups in society.	To promote individual excellence/happiness and social progress, and reward students according to their performance.	To bring about a more peaceful, just and sustainable world through students' actions.	To develop in students an oppositional position in relation to the dominant order/the possibility of any shared 'reality', self-reflexivity and awareness of partiality.
Role of students in shaping curriculum	Students leave unquestioned the dominant values and practices of society.	Students identify aspects of society in need of reform, but leave untouched questions of radical change to beliefs or practices.	Students ask probing questions about the most deep-seated values and assumptions in society. They instigate 'real-world' social action to redress inequities and combat prejudice.	Students can both de-construct and co-construct sexual 'truths' and systems, as all knowledge is seen as constructed and relational. Students are placed in an oppositional subject position through which they can interrogate constructions of 'reality' and intervene in their reconstitution.

1.2 Historical Background

This and following subchapters will give the introductory level familiarity of the issue to the readers who have little information about historical background of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan and the recent events over sexual education pamphlets, which happened in the last four months of 2013 in the country.

Studies on sexual education have held a marginal place in the context of Kyrgyzstan. There are few studies with micro perspective analysis, investigating the sexual behaviors of the youth and attitudes of their parents towards sexual education, but there are almost no studies investigating the perspectives of micro as well as macro institutions on the topic in question. The existing dearth of attention to sexual education in Kyrgyzstan, according to Anara Moldosheva (2012), the local expert on sexual education, is the result of the discursive struggles between different political and social groups, where each tries to create its own norms for the sexual lives of people.

In addition, the Soviet past of Kyrgyzstan has had an influence on the development of sexual education in the country. Based on the widespread and distorted statement that “there was no sex in the USSR”, most people have stated that there was no sexual education in the Soviet Union. However, the work of post-soviet and international scholars shows that there was sexual education in the former Soviet Union, though it was in a moral and health framework (Williams, 1994; Moldosheva, 2012). Specifically, throughout the 1960s and 1970s there were lectures on family formation, birth rate, prevention from sexually transmitted diseases and abortion (Williams, 1994). Later, in 1982 the USSR’s Ministry of Education introduced the program “Ethics and Psychology of Family Life” where sexual education had been taught as a part of the program (Moldosheva, 2012). However, as the experts claim the sexual lives of people were

strictly controlled by the centralized power institutions, and therefore the programs on sexual education were presented in accordance with a moral and healthy lifestyle framework. According to Anara Moldosheva (2012), these “moral paroxysms” of the Soviet Union have left a huge imprint on people’s attitudes about sex, sexuality, parental anxieties and child-rearing; like during the Soviet times, today in independent Kyrgyzstan, sexual education exists primarily in a “healthy lifestyle” framework, although the topics on sex and sexuality are not controlled as they were in the Soviet Union.

In Kyrgyzstan, sexual education in a healthy lifestyle framework has been mainly fostered by nongovernmental organizations and independent researchers. The large scale of educational programs has been promoted by UNESCO, UNIFEM, UNDP and “Soros” foundation (Tartakovskaya, 2006). Additionally, there are independent research centers which conduct studies on gender politics and human rights, and offer corresponding educational programs; these are the Women Support Center, the “Diamond” Association and the Center of Gender Studies. With the support of these organizations, many attempts to introduce gender and sexual education into the schools and universities of Kyrgyzstan have been done; yet, almost all of them did not get approval by the Ministry of Education (ibid).

One of the first attempts to develop teaching materials for the use in schools of Kyrgyzstan was the introduction of the “Healthy Lifestyle” handbook in 1999. The handbook was designed for secondary school teachers, higher educational institutions, students and NGO workers. In total, 70 000 copies of the handbook were printed and distributed to school libraries (Moldosheva, 2012). The handbook consisted of twenty chapters, where all dealt with the issues of hygiene, a healthy diet and the importance of exercise, but two with the issues of HIV/AIDS, venereal diseases and sexual relations (IRIN, 2004). Based on the content of those two chapters,

the group of parents, activists and religious figures contested against the handbook, “accusing the authors of intentionally corrupting young people” (Moldosheva, 2012, p.6), by teaching them the topics that could bring “depravity” and “calamity” to their lives (IWPR, 2005). Therefore, in 2002, after the book was republished the fourth time, the Ministry of Education banned it from the school curriculum (Moldosheva, 2012).

After those events, in 2002 the international organizations UNICEF and GIZ together with the local nongovernmental organization Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan initiated the creation of pamphlets “Questions of the Youth of Kyrgyzstan about...” reproductive health, sexual relationships, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. The main reason for the creation of such pamphlets was the results of the research study done by IPPF in 2001, which showed a high need in the adequate information on sexual and reproductive questions for the youth of Kyrgyzstan. The other reasons were the rise of STDs and teenage pregnancies in the country, and the prohibition of the book “Healthy Lifestyle” from the school curriculum. The pamphlets were published for the first time in 2004, after that they were republished in 2006, 2011, and 2012 (Chirkina, 2013). However, in 2013 the pamphlets started to be criticized by the political activists. This “scandal” over the pamphlets and sexual education in general is thoroughly described in the following subchapter.

1.3 Outbreak of the Current “Scandal”

To write about the exact date and reasons for the “scandals” over sexual education is difficult, as there is no proper information on it. Nonetheless, based on the media we can state that, the “scandals” started in the mid-September of 2013, when representatives of the political party “Erkin EI” together with the representatives of the analytical center “Religion, Politics and Law” gave a press conference, criticizing the activities of the Reproductive Health Alliance of

Kyrgyzstan and specifically their pamphlets on sexual education, named “Questions of the Youth of Kyrgyzstan about...” (Television Broadcast). From that time on, there were many debates on TV, public discussions, conferences and parliament sessions on sexual education and the sexual education pamphlets. The main actors of those events were the political party “Erkin EI”, the analytical center “Religion, Politics and Law”, the nongovernmental organization “RHAK”, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. However, the representatives of other political, nongovernmental and governmental institutions were also involved in the events. They supported either those who were demanding the prohibition of existing information on sexual education, or those who were arguing about the importance of such education for raising children’s awareness on sex related topics. The governmental institutions, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and some members of the Parliament supported the critics of sexual education pamphlets presented by the representatives of “Erkin EI” and “Religion, Politics and Law”. Nonetheless, their positions towards sexuality education in general have been left in shadow.

However, a month before these “scandals”, in August 2013, the mass media was bombarded with the news on the parliament’s decision to introduce sexual education into the schools of Kyrgyzstan. That project was the joint project of the UNFPA and the parliament, in order to prevent teenage pregnancy, the level of which has risen almost two times from 2006 (4.43% in 2006 and 7.74 in 2012)³. Additionally, in May of the same year, the Jogorku Kenesh (the parliament) reported about a new edition of the Law of Kyrgyz Republic on “Reproductive Rights of Citizens and Guarantees of their Realization”, where the article 13 states about the

³The National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic, (2014). *Gender Statistics*. Retrieved March 20, 2014, from http://stat.kg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=160&Itemid=162.

rights of young people to sexual and reproductive education⁴. These events promised the transition of the country's policies on sexual education from conservative towards more liberal ones. However, after the “scandals” over the sexual education pamphlets of RHAK, neither the UNFPA nor the representatives of the government have said anything about the promotion of sexual education in the country.

1.4 Review of Existing Studies

In this stage, the paper will focus on the research studies conducted in Kyrgyzstan. The majority of them however have focused not on sexual education but rather on reproductive health, sexual behaviors of young people, and marital relationships. Among the documented research studies are the one conducted by IPPF in 2001 and the one national study conducted by UNICEF in 2008.

One of the first researches carried out in Kyrgyzstan was the regional research done by IPPF in post-Soviet countries of the Central Asia. The main goals of the research project were to find out the level of awareness among the young people about their reproductive health, and the reasons for and age of entering sexual relations. The results of the survey showed that among 3,520 young people from 15 to 24 years of age, 55 % were sexually active. In addition, every second respondent have positive attitudes towards sexual practices before marriage, though for the majority of them their “first sexual intercourse was unplanned” (IPPF, 2001, cited in Moldosheva, 2012).

The study on attitudes, knowledge and skills of adolescents on healthy lifestyle, which was conducted by UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic (2008), shows that the majority of the youth (81%

⁴Information is taken from the website of Jogorku Kenesh, see http://www.kenesh.kg/RU/Articles/15842-Na_obshhestvennoe_obsuzhdenie_31_maya_2013_goda_vynositsya_proekt_novoj_redakcii_Zakona_Kyrgyzskoj_Respubliki_O_reproduktivnyx_pravax_grazhdan_i_garantiyax_ix_realizacii.aspx.

out of 3500 of participants) never discuss the topics on love, relationship, sexual behavior and other questions related to their sexual lives with their parents and teachers. The results show that their **friends** are the major source about the questions of sexual puberty (40%) and sexual relationships (54%). The study also presents that the majority of participants (youth aged 11-17 years old) want to know about the issues of HIV/AIDS (68.8%) and sexual relationships (53.3%) from schools. In addition, the study investigated the attitudes of parents and teachers towards introduction of sexual education into the schools of Kyrgyzstan, where the majority of both parents and teachers indicated that it is “taboo” to discuss with children the “themes related to sex in schools and families” (ibid. p. 31)

These studies by the IPPF and UNICEF, however, focused primarily on the adolescents’ awareness of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, smoking, and drug use, but not on sexuality education per se. Therefore, within the context of Kyrgyzstan there is still a lack of research on the applicability of sexual education in formal and informal settings based on youth’s, parents’ and other important social group’s perspectives.

Sex and Sexuality as Medium of Sexual Education

Sexual education is first and foremost related to sex and sexuality issues. So in order to better understand the case of sexual education, it is important to review the development of the concepts sex and sexuality within the social sciences and humanities.

For centuries, sexuality has been silenced “product of human activity” (Rubin, 1984, p.143). However, the XX and XXI centuries have become the periods of sexual revolutions, when sexuality has been transformed from private sphere to the public one. It has become the part of the modern art, has started to be regarded as a political issue especially in the discussions

about women empowerment, and has become the part of one's identity (Epanova, 2011).

The theoretical explanations of sexuality within the social sciences and humanities illustrate this transition of sexuality from being the “natural” and “private” thing to the “constructed” and “public” one.

Sexology, one of the first theoretical explanations of sexuality, was established in the beginning of the XX century. According to the majority of sexologists, sexuality and sex are natural and given things. In addition, sex is considered as the fundamental need of all human beings, which affects all the spheres of people's activities, starting from physical to psychological ones. Moreover, the sexologists view only heterosexual sex as natural sex, because only through such form of sex, it can become reproductive and fulfill its important function (ibid.). However, there are some sexologists like David Kinsey, whose work though illustrates sex as natural and given thing, accepts the fact that there are other forms of sexual practices beyond the heterosexual one (Jackson and Scott, 2010). Thus, the discourse about sex and sexuality within this theoretical explanation is mainly in the frame of heterosexual sex being only the “natural” and “normal” sex, where reproduction is considered its main function.

Following the sexology, in 1960s the theory of psychoanalysis was developed. Most of the ideas of psychoanalysis are similar to those of the sexology. Like the sexology, the psychoanalysis treats sex as the natural and inborn characteristic of a person that influences all forms of behavior, and especially the psychology of a person. Similarly, the psychoanalysis present sexuality in a dichotomous language – “normal” and “abnormal” - where the heterosexual relationship based on love and monogamy is the only “normal” relationship (Epanova, 2011; Jackson and Scott, 2010). Nonetheless, there are some differences. The

psychoanalysis unlike the sexology does not treat reproduction as the main function of sex, but it rather considers “polymorphous pleasures” as being so (Jackson and Scott, 2010, p.10). According to them, pleasures can be obtained not only from the sexual act, but also from kiss, observation of the object of desire, and other non-genital forms of sexual practices. Moreover, according to the psychoanalysis, sexual development is located in the family context; it is shaped and formed by the family (ibid.). This represents a very interesting tension between biological and contextual explanation of sexuality within psychoanalysis, which promoted the development of cultural approach to sexuality.

Thus, as an alternative to the previous explanations of sexuality, social constructivism comes with its ideas as sexuality being a cultural phenomenon, which is not merely influenced by cultural factors, but rather constructed by particular social and cultural institutions (Epanova, 2011). One of the prominent theories within this framework is Foucault’s discourse analysis, which is questioning the biological origin of sexuality. However, before proceeding directly to the ideas of Foucault, let’s first look at the ideas of Gayle Rubin, whose work illustrates the constructivism of sex and sexuality by the “power” institutions.

In the work “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality”, Rubin (1984) claims that sex and sexuality has been used by “power” institutions as a way of repressing the society by creating the hierarchical system within it. According to him, these institutions have constructed a very strong “hierarchical system of sexual values”, where married heterosexuals are alone at the top, whereas unmarried heterosexuals followed by other types of sexual practices, which are “against” “human nature” are at the bottom (ibid.). Thus, within this system, the value is given only to sex used for reproduction, whereas all other forms are prohibited and punished. These ideas of Rubin are similar to the ideas of Foucault on sex and

sexuality.

Foucault like Rubin accepts the point that sexuality can be used as a mean of repression, control, and dominance; however, he is questioning the idea that it has always been used and shaped by repressive forces. In the work “History of Sexuality”, volume I, Foucault (1978) shows readers the transition of sexuality from being public and open to the personal and secret stage. In doing so, he is questioning the idea that sexuality was a pre-given object shaped by repressive forces. According to Foucault, sexuality is not a natural and given thing, but rather the result and instrument of innumerable discourses. He refers to the relationship of power and sexuality as “repressive hypothesis”, in the sense that sexuality can be shaped by repressive forces, but it does not always work through repression. Foucault argues that from the seventeenth century to nineteenth century and on, people have witnessed “not the increasing repression but the change of discourses about sex” (ibid.). These ideas are also supported by other sociologists like Gagnon and Simon (1974, cited in Jackson and Scott, 2010), who state that nothing is sexual in itself: “acts, bodies and feelings become sexual only through application of certain scripts which imbue them with sexual significance.” Like Foucault, these authors claim that people start to think of certain object or body as sexual only through the script, or in the words of Foucault through discourses, which shape people’s perception and understandings concerning sex and sexuality.

Thus, sex and sexuality being one of the main mediums of sexual education influence its policies and programs. The presentation of sexual education is influenced by the ideas that the theories present; they are used as means of producing “particular types of bodies and minds” (Foucault, 1980, cited in Nash, 2010, p. 22) with particular types of knowledge, as it was during the Soviet time, when there was neither open media nor widely accessed information as the

Internet. However, the situation in contemporary Kyrgyzstan which has more or less open media and an access to the World Wide Web is not much different. Here as the experts claim sexual education is used not by one centralized power, but by many and different “powers”, which propose different norms about sexual lives of people (Moldosheva, 2012).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

In an attempt to understand and explain the discourses used by the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions investigated under this study, I will focus on two theoretical approaches within Discourse Studies. These are the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee.

The Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe

The discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe represents the combination of the theories of Marxism and structuralism, according to which the social world is nothing more but the "web of processes in which the meaning is created" (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 25). The meaning within their discourse theory cannot be fixed, but instead is in the constant struggle over the determination of the reality about the social world. These and other ideas of the theory can be better explained through the examination of the key concepts that Laclau and Mouffe use in their work “Hegemony and Socialist Strategy” (1985). The authors use many and different concepts related to the identity formation, organization of discourses, and conflict analysis; however, for the purpose of the current study, the concepts from the last two groups will be examined, these are:

1. Key signifiers in the organization of discourses: nodal points, (elements, moments), and floating signifier
2. Concepts for conflict analysis: hegemony and hegemonic intervention (Jorgensen

and Phillips, 2002, p.50).

Key signifiers in the organization of discourse

The first concept to examine is the **discourse**, which explains and at the same time is explained by the above-mentioned concepts. Discourse in the theory of Laclau and Mouffe is an “attempt to dominate the field of discursivity [everything outside of a particular discourse], to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a center” (Laclau and Mouffe, cited in Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 26). In other words, discourse is an attempt to fix *signifiers* into certain meanings, while excluding all other possible meanings within the field of discursivity.

However, as it was mentioned above, meanings cannot be fixed completely and permanently, so Laclau and Mouffe states that a *signifier*, which is given a certain meaning in one discourse, may be given another meaning in a different discourse. Therefore according to them, the field of discursivity is full of “the multiplicity of competing discourses”, “the struggles over what the structure should look like, what discourses should prevail, and how meaning should be ascribed to the individual signs” (ibid., p.29). Yet, Laclau and Mouffe claim that the main aim of the discourse is to fix meanings and “to create a unified system of meaning” (ibid. p.27), which can be done through the constitution of nodal points.

A nodal point, according to them, is the central “privileged signifier” which binds together other signifiers, attaching them certain meanings (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.26). For example, in the case of sexual education we can say that “tradition” is a nodal point, around which many other meanings concerning “sex” are ordered. In other words, the terms “sex”, “sexual behavior” or “sexuality” acquires its meaning by being related to “tradition”.

In addition to nodal points, the other important concepts, within the Discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe are the **elements** and **moments**. Elements are “the signs within the discourse

whose meaning has not yet been fixed”; whereas moments are “the signs that have had their meaning fixed by a discourse”. As Jorgenssen and Phillips (2002) explain, the transition of elements to moments is “never entirely fulfilled”, because elements are always open to the attachment of different meanings, which constitutes the concept “floating signifier”.

Floating signifier refers to the conflicts between competing discourses in production of certain meaning concerning some aspects of the social world (ibid.). Again, if we look to the case of sexual education, the term “tradition” is a nodal point within the discourse of nationalism, and a floating signifier is the struggle between the discourse of conservative nationalism and the discourse of the liberal internationalism over the definition of the meaning of sexual education.

Thus, within this study, the reviewed concepts will serve as tools for understanding and analyzing the discourses about sexual education presented by the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions. As for now, we can say that according to the theory of Laclau and Mouffe, discourse is the temporary set of meanings, which can be reproduced or challenged and transformed by other existing discourses. However, this theory is not limited to the language but covers all the aspects of the social world, where the politics according to Laclau and Mouffe is the most important one.

Concepts for Conflict Analysis

Laclau and Mouffe states that the “politics has primacy” (Laclau, 1990, p.33, cited in Jorgenssen and Phillips, 2002), because it can “determine how we act and think and thereby how we create the society” (ibid. p. 34). According to them, the politics and discourse are closely related: as the discourse tries to create “fixed and unambiguous meaning”, the politics too tries to create a “stable and unambiguous reality” about the social life of people, where the groups they

belong to, their identity and meanings they use are naturalized (ibid.). In order to explain “how this reality is created so that it appears objective and natural”, Laclau and Mouffe use and develop the concept *hegemony*.

The concept hegemony was first developed by the neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who defines it as the consensus of people achieved “through the exercise of political, intellectual and moral leadership” (Jessop, 1990 cited in Nash and Scott, 2006). However, for Laclau and Mouffe, hegemony is not limited to the state, government or dominant class but includes all the social actions, which “organize the society in a particular way, while excluding all other possible ways” (ibid. p. 36).

In the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe, hegemony is the extension of a discourse, when the meaning it holds becomes fixed, naturalized and practiced by people as a given thing (Jorgenssen and Phillips, 2002). Hegemony is mainly used to explain the situation when different discourses compete with each other and struggle over the determination of meaning concerning a certain phenomenon or an aspect of the social world. According to Laclau and Mouffe, this conflict or *antagonism* between discourses can be solved through the *hegemonic intervention*. As Jorgenssen and Phillips explain, hegemonic intervention is the result of the conflict situation when “one discourse is undermined from a discursive field, from which another discourse overpowers it, or rather dissolves it...” In other words, hegemonic intervention is the process that occurs during the conflict situations and then is resulted by the domination of one discourse over others.

James Gee’s Approach to Discourse Analysis

Within the current study, the Gee’s approach to discourse analysis is used for the methodological analysis of the collected data, thus supplementing the Discourse Theory of

Laclau and Mouffe. The distinctive feature of the approach is the way Gee distinguishes between discourse (referring to the language in use) and Discourse (referring to the combination of the language and other social practices), based on which he develops four “tools of inquiry”.

Discourse, social language, situated meanings and figured worlds are the four “tools of inquiry”, which are presented within the Gee’s approach to discourse analysis. According to Gee, these tools help the discourse analyst to understand how people, using the language, can construct and reconstruct the social world, define and redefine one’s identity, build and rebuild the social practices.

In the work of Gee **Discourse** is about communicating “who I am...[and] what I am doing”. It is about the combination of the language and other social practices such as “acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking, believing”, which represent “distinctive identities and activities” of people shaped by social groups they belong to (Gee, 2011, p.37).

Following this point, Gee suggests research analysts to look at the social position of a speaker, because “people act and talk not just as individuals, but as members of various sorts of social and cultural groups” (ibid. p.36). According to him, people use different types of language in different contexts. In his work, he is focusing on what he calls “**social languages**”, which are defined as “styles or varieties of a language (or a mixture of languages) that enact and are associated with a particular social identity” (ibid. p. 39). So, in order to understand what a speaker says, the analyst need to know the “socially situated identity” of the speaker and based on it to analyze his/her language.

In addition to the social identity of the speaker, Gee suggests to focus on the context an oral or written text is presented, because depending on the context the text can change its meaning. Therefore, Gee offers to analyze discourses based on their **situated meanings**. This is

similar to Derrida's aphorism "iterability alters", which means that "the insertion of texts into new contexts continually produces new meanings" (Balkin, 1996, p.4).

Finally and most importantly, Gee suggests paying attention to the "**figured world**", which is "a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal". According to the figured model, the words people use are based on theories, stories, or models in their minds, and in the media, books and public discussions about what is "normal", "typical" or "the way the world should or is". Gee states that these "typical" stories about the social world often "marginalize people and things that are not taken as "typical" or "normal", and fight against reforms.

Chapter 2: Literature on Methodology and Analysis

2.1 Research Design

The research method used for the current study was the Case Study Research Method. This research method was chosen in order to study and better understand the case of sexual education within the context of Kyrgyzstan. According to Gerring (2004), case studies are useful for intensive researching of one or more units by getting an in-depth understanding of the issue under the study. In addition, case studies help researchers to understand the complex interrelationships of different actors of certain programs, organizations, social groups, events or of other phenomenon (ibid.). For the current research, the main advantage of the case study was that, it helped the researcher to make thorough investigation and analysis of the discourses the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions use in presenting sexual education to the public, and to understand the interrelationships between the discourses of these institutions. Additionally, the case study allowed the researcher to focus only on the major institutions among many others which have participated in the sexual education "scandals".

Among the three types of the case study: 1) *Casual*; 2) *Interpretive*; and 3) *Normative*, Interpretive case study was used for this research. It was selected mainly because the main aim of the interpretive case study is to get a deep understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the units of analysis being studied. Casual and Normative types could be also used for the current study, but the purpose of these types of method are not congruent with the purpose of the study. Therefore, interpretive method, known also as intrinsic case study, was chosen as the most relevant type for the exploration of the issue of sexual education.

Interpretive case study helped the researcher to interpret the discourses about sexual education presented by the governmental, nongovernmental and political institutions in relation to the research questions developed earlier by the researcher, which are:

1. What discourses do governmental, non-governmental, and political institutions use in presenting sexual education to the public?
2. How the explored discourses reflect and construct the social world of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan?

Instrument for Data Collection

For the purpose of the current research study, the main instrument for data collection was an in-depth interviewing. This method helped the researcher to get rich data from relatively few people and to learn in details the respondents' thoughts, attitudes, and understandings concerning the main topics discussed.

Additionally, the analysis of the online newspaper articles on sexual education published in vb.kg and kloop.kg was chosen as a supplementary research instrument for the study. This technique was used mainly to validate the collected data, by cross-checking them from other sources rather than relying only on the results of the interviews. In addition, the analysis of the

online newspaper articles could help the researcher to see the perspectives of other governmental, nongovernmental and political institutions towards sexual education in Kyrgyzstan.

The researcher selected the articles published between September and November months of 2013. In the selection of articles, a particular attention was paid to the terms “sexual education”, “sex”, “young people”, “school children”, “pamphlets” and “health.” Overall, 20 articles were analyzed – 16 from vb.kg and 4 from kloop.kg.

Sample and Sampling frame

Sample and sampling frame refer to the techniques used to select the population or unit of analysis of a research study. However, for this particular study, it is also important to explain the selection of the case that has been studied.

According to Johansson, the selected “case” should be:

1. a complex functioning unit
2. investigated in its natural context [...], and
3. contemporary (2003).

The case selected particularly for this research study is 1) a complex unit - different actors and groups, including governmental institutions, political parties, NGOs, religious representatives, parents, teachers and the youth, have been involved in the series of events, conferences and public discussions over the issue of sexual and reproductive education; 2) the case of sexual education within this research was investigated in the context the issue has raised, in Bishkek; and finally, 3) sexual education is a contemporary issue for Kyrgyzstan, it has started to be discussed at the governmental level only since 2008 (Moldosheva, 2013).

Thus, the case of sexual education applies to all the selection criteria written above;

however, the main reason for studying specifically this case was the interest of the researcher in the questions that have been studied.

Units of analysis

To investigate all the actors involved within the conflicts of sexual education was difficult due to time limitations. Therefore, among all key players, only the major institutions, which have played an active role in discussing the issue of sexual education in 2013, were chosen to be interviewed. These are:

1. the governmental institutions, namely the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health
2. the political party “Erkin El” [Free People], the party which has raised the issue of sexual education for public discussion, and
3. the non-governmental organization, Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, which provides services, educational programs and projects concerning the sexual and reproductive health of young people.

However, in initial stages of the project, the researcher also planned to interview the representatives of the religious institutions, namely the chairman of the “Religion, Politics and Law”. But because, they did not response to the letters, and then refused to participate in the project, I decided to focus only on three above-mentioned institutions.

The Process of Interviewing

The representatives of the governmental, nongovernmental and political institutions were contacted and invited for the interview with the use of email. The researcher has written the official letters to each of the institutions’ email addresses with the consent form attached.

The representatives of the political party “Erkin El” and of the Reproductive Health

Alliance replied immediately to the letters and were eager to participate in the research project. However, it was problematic to arrange the interview time and location with the representatives of these institutions.

Unlike the representatives of the political party and the alliance, the representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, requested the letter from the university in addition to the official letters and consent form the researcher sent them earlier. But after the researcher provided them with the university letter, they did not respond. Then, the researcher visited the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and directly contacted with their representatives.

Interview guideline

The interview guideline was developed for each of the institutions separately, with minor differences in questions. The guidelines consist of four parts: 1) the introductory questions, 2) the questions on sexual education, 3) the questions on the role of government, NGOs, parents, religion and other actors in providing sexual education for adolescents and youth, and finally 4) the concluding questions.

The introductory part consists of general questions about respondents and their educational and work experiences. This part was developed so that to build the rapport with the interviewees. The second part is comprised of the questions on respondents' understandings of sexual education, their attitudes and perspectives towards attempts to introduce sexual education in Kyrgyzstan, their strategies and projects concerning sexual education in the country, and possible alternatives that the institutions suggest. The third part of the interview guideline consists of such questions like "What institutions are responsible for the sexual education of young people?" Then, based on the answers, the respondents were asked the questions about the

role of other key actors. These questions were asked so that to find out the perspectives of the respondents on the role of each institutions which regulate and/or should regulate the issue of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. The concluding part was about the attitudes of the public, parents, teachers and youth towards sexual education and towards the activities of the institutions being studied.

2.2 Analysis Procedure

The collected data will be analyzed in the framework of discourse analysis. This is the tool to analyze the patterns of language, thoughts and meanings within oral or written sets of data (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Within the scope of this paper, particular attention will be paid to the use of language and the meaning the informants attach to the terms “sexual education”, “sex”, “children”, “young people”, “norm” and “health”.

In order to analyze the collected data, the tools provided by the Discourses Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee, which are described above in the theoretical framework part, will be utilized.

2.3 Ethical Consideration

Before conducting the interview, the informants of the study were provided with the written description of the current research project. The description was comprised of the following information: the research topic, the objectives of the research study, the conditions of the interview, the issues of confidentiality, and the contact details of the researcher for further questions and possible inquires.

Moreover, at the beginning of the interviews, the informants were given the consent forms for participation. The consent forms contained a paragraph with the information about the research project and the statements about the consent of the informants to voluntarily participate

in the research project, with the blank space for the names and signature of participants, and the dates of the interviews.

Additionally, after signing the consent form the informants were invited to ask questions concerning the research project.

2.4 Limitations

Although, the research has partially fulfilled its aims, there were several unavoidable limitations. First, the study was limited by its small sample size. The sample size could have been expanded by including the representatives of other non-governmental and political institutions, as well as other participants of the scandals over sexual education pamphlets. However, getting an access to the representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health took a long time, so therefore the sample size was limited only to four interviewed institutions.

Time limitation was another constrain during the research project. The collection of the data, transcribing of the interviews and coding of selected newspaper articles took a considerable amount of time, and thus leaving only several weeks for finalizing the research paper.

Finally, it is important to note that the interview guideline, assumptions, and reviewed literature were assessed mainly by the researcher, and partially by the research supervisor. Therefore, certain degree of subjectivity might be found in the research paper.

Chapter 3: Findings

3.1 General overview

This chapter provides the general findings of the current research study, which are derived from the interviews conducted with the representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health (governmental institutions), the representatives of the Reproductive Health

Alliance of Kyrgyzstan [RHAK] (nongovernmental institution) and the representatives of the political party “Erkin El” (political institution). In addition to the interviews, the findings come from the analysis of the online newspaper articles on sexual education and sexual education pamphlets. The description of the findings will illustrate the positions of the government, nongovernment and political institutions concerning sexual education, which will be then followed by the Discussion part, where the key findings will be analyzed with the use of the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee.

As the study focuses on the “scandals” over sexual education, which were started with the critics of the sexual education pamphlets of RHAK from the side of the political party “Erkin El”, I think it will be logical first to present the sexual education discourses presented by the nongovernmental organization, and then proceed to the description of sexual education discourses of the political institutions, and finally look at the sexual education discourses of the governmental institutions.

3.2 Sexual Education: The Position of the Non-Governmental Institutions

The key representative of the non-governmental institutions, which I studied within this research study, is the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan (RHAK). The Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, the member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), was established in 2001. It has seven branches - one in every district of the country. In addition, the RHAK has two clinics, which provide the services on reproductive health and safe abortion, and different educational programs on HIV, STDs, sexual and reproductive health, safe maternity, safe abortions, and the rights to the information. The distinctive characteristic of the alliance is “the active participation of young people in the management and decision making processes of the organization”.

The main mission of the RHAK is “to promote and protect the sexual and reproductive rights of people, their rights to free and informed decisions concerning the sexual and reproductive health”, and to provide people with “the opportunity to express their view points on different issues concerning their health, and the opportunity to realize the rights to family planning, contraception use, child birth, and HIV treatment”.

Why Sexual Education?

During the interview I asked my informants the question “What made you work in the sphere of sexual education?” This question was initially formulated for the political parties, which all of a sudden started criticizing sexual education pamphlets, but then I also decided to find out the factors that pushed the NGO to work in this sphere.

The representative of the RHAK explained that sexual education is “the initial aim and mission of the organization since its establishment”. The factors that pushed the chief executive officer to open this organization were “the lack of the support from the society and family members during the problems in one’s sexual and reproductive life” and “the negative attitude of people towards sex related topics, which is the part of the Soviet legacy” in Kyrgyzstan. So, according to the words of the CEO, this organization was established in order to fill this “information vacuum” and “to provide people with the opportunities to broaden their horizons of thinking and views, to change their attitudes towards their own lives, to change their behavior, and to create the best conditions of life for people and their families”. In addition to it, the CEO of the alliance stated that “the questions concerning sexual behavior, sex, safe life, reproduction, child birth, and happy motherhood are the components of a happy life”, so in this sense according to her “the organization makes people happy”.

The Perspective on Sexual Education

The main question asked in order to find out the perspectives of RHAK on sexual education was “What is your perspective and vision on sexual education?”

According to the representative of the alliance, sexual education is “good and adequate information” concerning one’s sexual and reproductive health, which should be approached from many and different institutions, like family, school, medicine, mass media and art:

Sexual education, I mean the component of it, is the good and adequate information in a family, this is the first thing. Starting from the birth of a child, it is about the readiness of parents to give such information...Good sexual education is then a school, which has adequate subjects, or the integrated information in already existing subjects for young people based on their age, based on their development, including their anatomical development...This is also adequate resources for maintaining one’s health on the basis of the information one gets. So, then it is a culture of interrelationship...which is again formed by one’s family, school, and medicine that can provide you with the services and help for maintaining your health... It includes intersectional approach, intersectional relationship, and integration of all these questions at different levels. This is basically the sphere, the informative sphere, which is formed by the mass media...this is also a cultural thing, and even art...

In addition to it, the informant implies that sexual education is about “truthful relationship”, and she mainly stresses the trustful relationship with parents:

...for me as an adult person I would prefer to have such trustful relationship with my parents. But because of many different reasons, including cultural, religious, and many-many other social reasons, which got embedded in our society, our children do not have trustful relationships with their parents, and in this sense, friends are the main source of information.

Then, the respondent emphasizes the “adequate information” which the RHAK provides to young people concerning their sexual and reproductive lives:

So, we as an organization, investigating this situation, social situation, and understanding that we are the only source of information, have tried to make it [information] more adequate... in the age of a huge information vacuum on this sphere, it [the organization] allows young people to get adequate information

Additionally, the informant talks about the Internet as another source of information, which is full of “inadequate websites”, which young people should be able to sort:

But there is another source of information, which is probably the most widespread source, the Internet. However, not all information is bad there. I mean there are some websites with good information, with good quality, with good instructions, advice from doctors, but unfortunately there are inadequate websites as well, which young people also use...young people and children should have strong, adequate, clear and personal barriers [skills] in consuming or not-consuming these kinds of information, which are again formed through the system of education.

Concerning the sexual education in Kyrgyzstan, the respondent states that Kyrgyzstan does not have any sexual education programs. According to her, the state and the system of education does not provide young people with “adequate information” about their sexual and reproductive lives, despite the attempts of the international organizations and the local activists to introduce such programs:

But unfortunately, we do not have sexual education in our country, despite the attempts of international organizations. Despite all the attempts of social activists...it has not been integrated into the system for 20 years of the country’s independence.

The respondent seems pessimistic about the future of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. She states that in the society, where the system of education has negative attitudes towards sexual education, it is hardly possible to integrate sexual education programs into the system:

There are some successful and unsuccessful attempts, experiments, projects, pilot programs, which have not become the part of the system, and which unfortunately will not become the part of the system of education...You see, for many years, I thought that the most important thing was the subject on sexual education, that the most important thing was the preparation of teachers to these subjects. But now, after working here for 12 years, I am sure that the most important thing is the political will and position of the parliament, government, the system [of education] and science towards these questions. If there is no such exact position, neither a perfect subject nor the army of teachers who know and understand the importance of this information for young people, will help

However, the respondent presents sexual education as an indicator of development:

So, I think that the culture of sexual behavior and sexual education are the indicators of the move of the society to more developed stage. And when we have it [sexuality education], I will say, “yes, we have moved to the next stage of development” like societies in other countries.

So, these are the general findings, which illustrate the position of the RHAK concerning sexuality education within the context of Kyrgyzstan. The in-depth discussion about the

sexuality education discourses used by the RHAK will be presented in the Discussion part. Below, the positions of the political and governmental institutions will be presented.

3.3 Sexual Education: The Position of the Political Institutions

The representative of the political institutions, which I studied within the current research study, is the political party “Erkin El”. The political party “Erkin El” was established in 2005, after the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan. According to the leader of the party, the main activities of “Erkin El” are its activities against the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Program) in 2007, activities against the sale of Karkyra (the region in the Issyk-Kul oblast’ of Kyrgyzstan) in 2008, active participation in the events of 2010, in Bishkek during the April events and in Osh during the June events, and the activities against the sexuality education pamphlets in 2013.

The political party consists of the chairman, vice-chairman, regional representatives and other members, of different age groups. In the beginning of its socio-political activities, the political party was known as the youth political movement, and now according to the words of its chairman, it no longer wants to be considered as the youth political party, instead he calls his party “the party of the new generation, the party of new people, and the party of a new format”.

The party “Erkin El” cooperate with the range of other political parties, like “Amal” and “Muras”. The leader of the party Erkin El stated that “they want to create a new political block”, and that “they already appear to the public together as a political block”.

The main mission of the party “Erkin El” is not clear, but if we rely on the words of its chairman, it is “to satisfy the interests of the Kyrgyz Republic, to keep stability in the country, to develop the country, and to fight against the threats, dangers and challenges, which destroy the country”.

Why Sexual Education?

To the question “Why did you get involved in the issue of sexual education?” the respondent stated that they encountered this topic for the first time in 2012, when the members of the political party were invited to the TV program on NTS (Nezavisimaya Televizionnaya Stanciya - Independent TV Station). So according to the chairman of the party, at that program, they debated with the representatives of the RHAK. That program made them “investigate why sexual education is regulated by the NGOs, but not the government.”

Though the respondent stated that they “did huge work investigating sexual education”, he could not provide any of their work but replied that they “investigated the history and all the things about the NGO “Reproductive Health Alliance”. We investigated not only the pamphlets that they publish, but we also investigated what organizations they cooperate, where they get finance and its regional departments”.

Thus, it seems that the party’s “investigations” were mainly related not to sexual education per se but more to the activities of the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan. The respondent was not clear about their work on sexual education as well as on their understanding of the concept, which is described in the following subchapter.

The Perspective on Sexual Education

The question “What is your perspective/vision on sexual education?” was asked several times, but the respondent could not provide exact answers; instead he always switched the discussion to different topics like the activities of the party, the activities of the RHAK, and the pamphlets. The respondent stated that

...in general sexual education is not about these pamphlets. Sexual education is not only about protection from AIDS, sexual education is not only about protection from sexually transmitted diseases. It is not only about unplanned pregnancy or abortion... sexual education is a complex issue. You know, the people who are for sexual education give

the statistics that in our country, girls get pregnant starting from 9 years of age, aaa...and statistics on abortion, prostitution, AIDS, STDs. And they say that the reason for all these things is the lack of education...so we do not agree with this point

It was difficult for the informant to provide a clear answer to this question, so he was referring to the activities of RHAK and the sexual education pamphlets all the time:

We claim that there are such problems in our country because of such people as [RHAK members]...when they distribute such pamphlets to young people starting from 10-year old children, the pamphlets which have information on sex...And we claim that exactly such kind of pamphlets make our children do such bad things

In addition, the respondent always stated that “sexual education is a complex issue” and that “it should be approached in a complex way”, which he could not explain at first, but then stated that

I mean, there are many questions, which should be approached in a complex way...the influence...the factors of influence on the spiritual, moral and psychological state of children, we should look at all these things and come to certain decisions. Some things should be limited, for example TV, websites, other things should be changed...Sport can be promoted, instead of sexuality education

And lastly, he said

In general...we...we have a presentation about this question, I will send it to you via email...you can look through it in order to get our visions, ok.

So, after my request to send the presentation promised during the interview, my informant immediately sent it to me. I looked through the presentation, and my first question was “so what are their positions?” The presentation was prepared in November 2013 with the topic “Traditional Culture and Upbringing of Young People”. The presentation should have covered the following topics as it is written in its content: “Sexual education, Education on Sexual Relationships and Education on Family Relationships”. However, it mainly focuses on the Western and Kyrgyz values concerning the reproductive health education; nowhere else except the content, the concept “sexual education” is presented. So, first they present “The History of Reproductive Health Education”. They cover the Pre-Soviet time, the Soviet time, Independent

Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyzstan in the future. According to the presentation, during the Pre-Soviet time “the upbringing was based on nomadic traditions of the Kyrgyz and morality”; during the Soviet time “the family values were based on Communism”; whereas in the Independent Kyrgyzstan “the upbringing is based on Western values and absolute freedom, which poses a great danger to the gene pool and moral ethos of the people”. The reproductive education in the future Kyrgyzstan is presented as “advanced education with the integration of the Kyrgyz traditions and morality”. In almost all of the slides of the presentation, there is a division between “western and foreign values” and “Kyrgyz values and our own education and experiences”. Thus, according to the presentation, the political party wants to get rid of all “western and foreign values” which are now “heavily internalized in the minds of people” and instead wants to develop “traditions, morality, education and experiences of the Kyrgyz people”.

Although the respondent was reluctant to say that he is against sexual education during the interview as well as in his presentation, his words carried no notion of approval:

I: From your words, I get that you are not against sexual education in general, but against these pamphlets, right?

R: No...you know...mmm...we are against these pamphlets 100%...we are against them, this is out of question...we are against these pamphlets, against NGOs which publish such destructive pamphlets, I want to emphasize, destructive pamphlets...and that was proved by the qualified institutions. We claim these pamphlets are destructive

The respondent does not say directly that he is against sexual education here, but he states that sexual education cannot be taught in Kyrgyzstan:

In my point of view SEXUAL education DOES NOT FIT our country AT ALL...I do not know may be reproductive education, I do not know, this is the question for further discussions...we need to discuss this problem and resolve it. I mean I am for discussion of this problem and resolving it. We understand that we should offer the complex methods of education for our children...because children are our future...I mean spiritual and moral education, this is very important, this is very important...

So, here we see that the respondent is against sexual education. According to him, Kyrgyzstan can offer other types of education, as the respondent calls it “the right type of education, such as

sport, art, dance, and music”, “spiritual and moral education”, but not sexual education at all. This position of the political party “Erkin EI” is similar to what the government institutions offer.

3.4 Sexuality Education: The Position of the Government Institutions

As the representatives of the government institutions and as the institutions, which are responsible for the education and health of the population, the positions of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health were investigated for this research paper. Although, the interviews with the representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health were held separately, their positions concerning sexuality education will be presented here together as the position of the government institutions.

The Ministry of Health and The Ministry of Education

The interviews were held with the representatives of the two Ministries. From the Ministry of Health, I interviewed the leading specialist from the Maternal and Child Health Department, and from the Ministry of Education, I interviewed the leading specialist from the Department of the Preschool, School and Extracurricular Education. To arrange the meetings with the representatives of the ministries was a difficult task, so I interviewed them in the beginning of March after the range of my unsuccessful attempts starting from December of 2013. I could arrange meetings with my respondents from the Ministries only through the social networks of my parents. However, despite this success, it was still difficult to have interviews both with the representative of the Ministry of Health and the representative of the Ministry of Education.

I contacted the representative of the Ministry of Health several times in order to fix the time and place of the interview. The first time, when I called her, the respondent said that she was too busy and gave me her email address, so that I contacted her via email. I sent her the

description of the research project and consent form, and asked her to send me the time when she would be able to meet for the interview. So, we fixed the time. However, on the day of the interview she said that she had no time at all and refused to discuss the topic on sexual education. Instead the respondent proposed to send her my interview questions. I did not have other choice, so I sent her the list of questions, and got her reply in three days. The respondent answered about 70% of the questions, and the answers were mainly taken from statistical documents.

Unlike the situation with the Ministry of Health, I was able to discuss the topic on sexual education with the representative of the Ministry of Education. However, there were still many difficulties to meet with the respondent. The first time when I met the respondent, she asked “what is the topic of the interview? sexual education? We do not have sexual education...and that is it. Now, I am too busy, come in two hours.” Finally, the interview was held the next day.

Why Sexual Education?

In initial, pre-interview discussions with the representatives of the Ministry of Health as well as of the Ministry of Education, they did not want to discuss the topic on sexual education. They stated “we do not have sexual education, we do not.” However, during the interview the representative of the Ministry of Education opened The Law of Kyrgyz Republic about the Reproductive Rights of Citizens and Guarantees of their Realization, whereas the answers of the representative of the Ministry of Health were mainly taken from the National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic:

We have sexual education. Now, I will tell you [opening some documents from her computer]. According to the law on reproductive health...wait...[searching the information from the document]...According to the law on reproductive health, so there should be educational programs concerning sexual education...sexuality education. These issues are stated in the articles 11, 23, 24, 25, 28 of the current law, the law on reproductive health. So, based on this law, we have the following programs for resolving these issues. We provide teenagers and young people with the objective information on sanitation and hygiene, prevention of early marriages, abortion, formation of healthy

lifestyle, and prevention of bad habits, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases (representative of the Ministry of Education)

The representative of the Ministry of Health listed the statistics on contraception use, early marriages and teenage abortion, and then stated that

We see there is a lack of information concerning sexual and reproductive health of teenagers, lack of interest in sexual education of the children among parents, and limited access of young people to the services related to their reproductive health. So the Ministry of Health accepts the necessity of promotion of sexual and reproductive education among teenagers, (representative of the Ministry of Health)

Thus, it seems that the government institutions are not interested in the issue of sexual and reproductive education of young people. In the first meetings they could not say anything about the topic, and only after preparing some documents, looking through the statistics on related issues and the reproductive law of Kyrgyzstan, they stated that the Ministries provide some services in schools as well as in medical institutions:

So for realization of all these things, we have special educational programs for school children and students...This is about the formation of the skills and abilities to live in a healthy way and of responsibility, formation of healthy habits, like sport, hygiene, and organization of a healthy leisure time. So, what else...in addition, these programs are included in the school curriculum and taught within such subjects like Biology, Human I guess, right? Man and Society and Anatomy...But, we cannot provide holistic sexual education, which would be taught separately from other subjects because...aaa...educational institutions, they teach children about moral things, like how one should behave within the society (representative of the Ministry of Education)

In Kyrgyzstan, we have the Kyrgyz National Center on Human Reproduction, the National Center on Maternal and Child Health...in addition, there is the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic from July 2006 about the National Strategy for Reproductive Health of the Population 2015, according to which we have reformed many sectors of the Ministry of Health in order to improve the reproductive health of the population...Additionally, the Ministry of Health have some programs on reproductive health (representative of the Ministry of Health)

The Perspective on Sexual Education

Concerning the perspectives on sexual education, the Ministry of Health could not provide a clear answer to the question “What is your perspective on sexual education?” The

respondent stated that

We need sexual education, which can provide young people with the skills of safe behavior and of family planning. We are willing to work out the mechanisms together with the government, commercial, and international organizations in order to provide the unorganized youth and the youth with special needs with such education (representative of the Ministry of Health)

But to the question what can you tell about the sexual education in Kyrgyzstan, the representative of the Ministry of Health answered that she does not know anything about it, though later she talks about the clinics and the sexual education pamphlets of RHAK, and the program on Healthy Lifestyle which has been developed by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education:

Unlike the Ministry of Health, the representative of the Ministry of Education directly stated that sexual education is mainly the information aimed to prevent young people from early marriages, from abortion, bad habits, HIV/AIDS:

...this is about the prevention of HIV, right, we all know that now we have AIDS, and this is about the treatment of drug-users, person with AIDS and other hygienic treatment. So that is why, mhm, within this program, children should not be taught about sex and sexual intercourse, but they should be taught about abstinence from sex...the sexual education I think it is a perverted type (representative of the Ministry of Education)

The position of the representative of the Ministry of Education is closer to the Abstinence Sexual Education Programs, the main goal of which is to form a healthy lifestyle. However, we cannot call it Abstinence Sexual Education Program, because, according to the representative, this information cannot be taught as a separate subject, but should be taught in already existing subjects such Biology and Anatomy. So, for the question “why is it not possible to provide sexual education as a separate subject?” the respondent states

Well, such topics are taught by medical persons during the extracurricular hours, and teachers cannot teach these topics, because...mmm...even these books...we had some attempts, but it has negatively influenced children, because as we know children’s psychology is constructed in the way that they imitate everything they read, everything they see, everything they...play. So that is why it is dangerous for adults to provide them

with such...open courses on sexual education (representative of the Ministry of Education)

In addition to it, the representative of the Ministry of Education talks about the pamphlets of RHAK and the pamphlets developed by the Ministry of Education

Of course negative. I mean all the topics are written in an open way that, it brought to...Our society is not ready for such pamphlets, I mean the schools are not ready, the society is not ready, children are not ready for discussion of such open information...I mean they were published for those people who have such [sexual] needs, but not for school children...

...And if we distribute the Alliance's [RHAK]...pamphlets to educational institutions, our society will be destroyed because...aaa...all the things written in those pamphlets can push young people do these things in toilets, streets...and thus, it will bring negative things. Aaa...but the program which is being developed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, the program on Healthy Lifestyle, it contains the information like how one should...I mean all the information are based on our traditions, our standards, educational plans and programs

And the respondent makes an interesting comparison between these two pamphlets:

Our pamphlets have an educational purpose...I mean it contains only useful information, the positive information...how to say...the information that does not destroy one's health. And in those pamphlets [of RHAK]...I would not say [smiling]...how to say, the information is perverted.

These pamphlets [of RHAK] do not fit the standards of educational programs, which are taught in public secondary schools. These books probably were developed for adults, I do not know with what purpose they were developed, but they completely do not fit public secondary schools, and they are not for schoolchildren...

According to the respondent, the sexual education that is provided by the RHAK is “destructive”, “perverted” and “the dirty type of sexual education” which should be strictly regulated and controlled, by providing the “moral information based on Kyrgyz traditions”

We cannot prohibit these things, but schools should teach children the things in accordance with our traditions...First of all, a child should be taught the things on how to take care of himself...but not the things on how to make sex or sexual intercourse, right. So, that is why we offer such programs, like “taking care of oneself”, “sanitation”, we teach them abstinence from sex, but not sex...because the dirty type of sexual education can lead to infectious diseases, and in order to prevent oneself from infections one should abstain...

We should show them [young people] what is right and what is wrong...So, if we start

teaching sexual education, our society will be full of perverted things

This chapter provided the general findings of the current research study about the positions of the nongovernmental, political and governmental institutions. These findings were derived from the representatives of the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan [RHAK] (nongovernmental institution), the representatives of the political party “Erkin El” (political institution), and the representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health (governmental institutions). The chapter is followed by the Discussion part, where I will do in-depth analysis of the key findings with the use of the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter, I will make the analysis of the discourses used by the governmental, nongovernmental, and political institutions concerning sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. The analysis will be based on the interviews I conducted with the representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, the representatives of the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, and the representatives of the political party “Erkin El”. In addition, the analysis will partly cover the local online newspaper articles on sexual education, with the main focus on the parts where the representatives of the above mentioned institutions or of other governmental, non-governmental, and political institutions share their points of view about sexual education.

First, with the use of the tools, provided by the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee, I will analyze how the discourses are organized: I will present the nodal points, social languages and floating signifiers concerning sexual education. Then, I will analyze the conflict between competing discourses through the hegemony and hegemonic intervention. Finally, I will analyze how the explored discourses reflect and construct

the social world concerning the sexual education in Kyrgyzstan. These parts will be then followed by the Conclusion section.

4.1 Borders between discourses

Discourse, as it is presented in the Discourse Analysis of Gee, is the reflection and construction of the meanings concerning the social world or of its certain aspects. If we look to the case of sexual education in Kyrgyzstan investigated under this study, discourses about sexual education presented by the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions are all connected with “the image of the child” as an innocent being, which should be protected from all the “bad”, “evil” and “impure” acts. The image of the child unites the competing discourses of the investigated institutions, whereas “the image of tradition”, which divides the society into “Us” and “Them”, put a way for disagreements.

The Image of Children: “Romantic”, “Knowing” or “Sexual Decision-Makers”?

According to the results of the study, the image of a child is one of the borders between the discourses about sexual education. If the political party “Erkin El” and its supporters from other political institutions, as well as the Ministry of Education, present the image of children as “romantic” whose “innocence” must be protected, the Reproductive Health Alliance presents it as “knowing children” who should get “adequate” information, so that they themselves can protect their “innocence”.

Based on the model of sexuality education discourses (Table 1) developed by Tiffany Mary Jones, these constructions of the image of children refer to the Conservative education discourses. According to it, “romantic children” are incapable “to seek, possess or create knowledge on their own”, and therefore they need to be protected by parents, teachers, and other responsible institutions from any sex related information. These ideas are repetitively used by the

representatives of the political party “Erkin El”, who claim that

“such kind of information make our children go out and have sex...[and therefore] they need to be taught the things based on Kyrgyz traditions, mentality...We need spiritual and moral education for our children...and we are against these pamphlets [sexual education pamphlets of RHAK] and against NGOs, which publish such destructive pamphlets...they should be prohibited, and some things should be limited, for example TV, websites, other things should be changed...”

The same image of children is presented by the Ministry of Education:

“all the things written in those pamphlets can make children have this thing [sex] in toilets, streets...and thus, it will bring negative consequences....a child should be taught the things on how to take care of himself...but not the thing on how to have sex...sexual intercourse...these things should be always controlled and regulated, because a child should always be under the control of adult people...otherwise our future, the future of our society will be in danger. Children should be protected, children should be controlled, and children should be taught how to behave in the society. If we leave a child without these things [controls] then I think we will destroy his health, destroy his future, and I think we will have as the result not a person but a monster...So using the wrong educational materials, we can destroy the whole society.”

The “knowing children”, which is presented by the representatives of the RHAK, should be aware of sex, sexuality, sexual issues, and have sexual desires, but should be guided by the provision of “adequate information”. As it is stated in the findings section, according to the representatives of the RHAK, children should be provided with the “good and adequate information about sexual and reproductive health” by his/her family, provided with the “adequate subjects” by his/her school, provided with the “adequate resources for maintaining one’s health” by the medical institutions, have skills “to sort out bad and inadequate information” and “understand that if one does not follow the rules, he[or she] can have dangerous consequences”.

Although, the image of children used by the Reproductive Health Alliance is mainly presented as the “knowing”, there are points, which indicate their wish to treat children as “Sexual Decision-Makers”, who in addition to the guidance through the provision of information can also learn through their own experience and experimentation. In other words, they wish the

society to treat children as sexually free and responsible beings, but according to their words, this is impossible in the society of Kyrgyzstan:

Imagine these things [pleasure from sex, sexual freedom and responsibility] happening in our schools when sexual life is about sexual pleasure...I am sure parents would just kill us, but for them [Dutch people], it is ok...and they talk about these things...But it becomes a problem, when WE start talking about sexual life...these things are not allowed in our country...They [politicians] even do not want to talk about it...and all their arguments are based on cultural values...and traditions...They say *according to our traditions and culture these things are not allowed*...

Thus, we see that “the image of tradition” presented and pushed by the political and governmental institutions, according to the representatives of RHAK do not allow them to develop the image of “Sexual Decision-Makers”.

However, it is again questionable, because the representative of RHAK all the time says about the “adequate information” but does not clarify what exactly constitutes the “adequate information” and who defines what information is adequate and what is not. From this point, the discourse of the “enlightened children” presented by the NGO also prevents them from critically engaging social diversity.

Thus, the images of children, from one side as “romantic” and from the other side as “knowing” illustrate that sex and sexual relationships are perceived as the “natural” things. Based on this rhetoric, they must occur, in the first case only in “married and heterosexual families”, and in the second case, occur between married as well as unmarried couples but only if they possess “adequate information about safe sex” in order to avoid all possible risks. In this sense, sex and sexual relationships are presented as the “duty” and “responsibility” of an “adult” being rather than of “children”.

The image of “romantic children”, presented by the political and governmental institutions suggest that the society of Kyrgyzstan perceive children as beings without sex. It is easier for the responsible institutions to think that children do not have sexual lives and it is

easier for them to close eyes to the sexual issues of children and young people, rather than to accept their sexual lives and relationships, and offer them programs, which would not regulate and control their behaviors but instead help them in learning the tools to live in the world, which is full of complex relationships.

Concerning the RHAK, the image of “knowing children” suggests that the society of Kyrgyzstan should perceive children as beings who have sexual lives but who should be guided by the “adequate information”, which should be provided by the family and government institutions. From the words of the representatives of the RHAK, there is no clear indication of what they mean by the “adequate information”. So, it seems that the RHAK does not fully know how and in what forms sexual education of young people should be developed in Kyrgyzstan.

The Image of Tradition: Division between “Us” and “Them”

The image of tradition is the other border between the competing discourses explored within this study. Like “the image of children”, “tradition” is also repetitively used by the investigated institutions. Interestingly enough, “the image of tradition” presented by the political party “Erkin EI” and the Ministry of Education is the same, as it is the case with “the image of children”, which contradicts very much “the image of tradition” presented by the RHAK.

The political party “Erkin EI” as well as the Ministry of Education state that sexual education should be based on the “tradition”, “mentality” and “cultural values” of Kyrgyz people. They present “tradition” as the source of historically defined identity, the identity that was formed during the nomadic lives of Kyrgyz people. In addition, “tradition” is presented as the source of safety, as the source, which would provide children and young people with the “moral and spiritual education” based on the “institutions of shame, respect and *el emne deit* [what people will say]”, and thus protect them from “destructive” information about sex,

sexuality and sexual relationships.

The “image of tradition” presented by the RHAK contradicts the ideas about traditions as the source of safety, provision of moral information and protection, presented by the political party “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education. Instead, the RHAK claim that “tradition” is the “barrier” for the development of sexual education in a more liberal and sex-positive way and also the “barrier for young people” to develop “a youth-friendly space.”

However, “tradition” is not merely presented by these institutions as a source of safety and protection on the one hand, and as a barrier on the other, but it is also used to divide the society into “Us” and “Them”. This division is especially reproduced by the political party “Erkin El” and the NGO Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan.

The political party “Erkin El” presents “Us” being based on traditional, spiritual, moral, and thus the “true” way of development of the Kyrgyz people, and “Them” being as “strange and foreign, which “threatens to destroy the national security of the country and the moral state of its people”. The political institutions include into “Us” only Kyrgyz people and Kyrgyz “traditions”, while excluding RHAK and all other NGOs of Kyrgyzstan into “Them” and defining them as “Western agents”. The interesting thing is that, the representatives of the “Erkin El” exclude other ethnic groups and their traditions as well.

In contrast to this, the RHAK presents “Us” filled with “traditional and cultural values”, which keep the country from moving up to “the next stage of development”, and “Them” as the ones who have the right standard for educating young people and the right way of development. The representatives of RHAK include into “Us” the whole Kyrgyzstan with all its people, social institutions and organizations, including RHAK itself, whereas into “Them” the countries with already established system of sexual education. Therefore, these divisions presented by the

political party “Erkin El” and the RHAK are used for different purposes.

The division of RHAK into “Us” or “Kyrgyzstan” and “Them” or “the countries with sexual education” is used for the comparison of the situations concerning sexual education in different countries, whereas the division into “Us” or “Kyrgyznes” and “Them” or “Western” of the political party is used for excluding “non-Kyrgyz things”, attaching them negative features, and providing arguments to justify their acts of inclusion of only “the Kyrgyz things”. They point out on “common” history, “common” language, and “common” “values” of the majority people of the country, and thus reproduce and construct the society - culture and social identities of the general population.

These two images - “the image of children” and “the image of tradition” serve as the borders between the discourses presented by the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions, which are one of the sources of conflicts between discourses over sexual education. The organization of these competing discourses presented by the investigated institutions will be discussed in the following subchapter. Using the tools provided by the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee, I will present the organization of the discourses, the analysis of the conflict over sexual education through the hegemonic intervention, and the power of discourses to reflect, reinforce and construct the social world concerning sexual education.

4.2 Organization of Discourses

According to the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee, the key tools in organizing the discourses are nodal points, figured world, social languages and floating signifiers. So based on these tools, I am going to analyze the discourses that are presented by the institutions under this study.

Nodal points, Figured World and Social Languages

A nodal point as it is described in the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe is the “privileged signifier”, which organizes around it other signifiers, attaching them certain meanings. The findings of my study reveal two nodal points, which are “tradition” and “development”.

The nodal point “tradition” is mainly used by the political party “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education, in order to explain why “sexual education [presented by the RHAK] does not fit the society of Kyrgyzstan”, and why it is “bad”, “perverted” and “destructive”. In other words, these institutions, based on the nodal point “tradition,” attach negative meanings to sexual education and all sex-related topics. According to them, in the tradition of the Kyrgyz people, there have never been talks on sex-related topics, instead there were “institutions of shame, respect and *el emne deit*”, which controlled the behavior of young people and directed them into the “positive way of development”, provided them with the “positive information” and helped them become a “right person”.

The other nodal point “development” is used by the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, according to which sexual education is considered as one of the stages of development. Based on the nodal point “development”, the RHAK presents sexual education in a positive way. Sexual education within this frame is the “good and adequate information” concerning one’s “body, feelings, sexuality, puberty period, sexual and reproductive health and sexual relationships”. In addition to it, the representative of the RHAK often uses the rights-based language, which is linked to the development framework: she claims that “sexual education is the part of the constitutional rights” of the citizens of Kyrgyzstan.

However, the terms “tradition” and “development” are used by the informants without

clarification of what they mean by these terms. These nodal points are used by the informants based on the common sense understanding, where for “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education, the term “tradition” is the core of the Kyrgyz people, which if not practiced can lead to the “destruction of the Kyrgyz nation”, whereas for the RHAK, the term “development” is the core for the realization of the rights and freedoms of people, which Kyrgyzstan is on its way to achieve. Using one of the inquiry tools of Gee, we can also state that the use of these terms is based on the “figured world” of the informants - on the models of the world that they have in their minds, in the media and books they read, and in the public discussions they participate in. In this sense, the nodal points founded within this study, “tradition” and “development,” are empty points, which can get their meanings only in relation to other words, languages or social events, as well as to the social identity of the speakers, which enable them to exclude other possible meanings and possible connections between discourses on sexual education.

The emptiness of these points, and especially of the point “tradition”, can also be revealed in the interviews. During the interviews, I asked several times the representatives of the political party “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education - “what do you mean by tradition?” However, neither the first nor the second could provide the exact meaning of the term “tradition”. The representative of the political party was referring to the “nomadic” history of the Kyrgyz people, to “the institutions of shame, respect and *el emne deit*”, and to “the morality and spirituality” – to the points, which are also empty and which the informants again could not explain. For the representative of the Ministry of Education, like for the representative of “Erkin El”, it was difficult to explain what they mean by “tradition”, and how sexual education can be integrated into the “traditions of the Kyrgyz”. When asked about “tradition-based sexual education”, the representative of the Ministry of Education was all the time referring to

“morality”, “mentality” and then “national ornaments of the Kyrgyz people”.

If we look back to history of Kyrgyzstan, and try to find out the full meaning of “tradition” in relation to the education and wellbeing of young people and of the population in general, we see that there were no formal schools and medical institutions. Instead, Kyrgyz people use different cults, such as the cults of the “Umai Ene”, “Shamanism” and “Tengri” (Abramzon, 1971). These cults were used by the Kyrgyz people for worshiping and sacrificing for the health of children and the safety of family units. In addition, there was a widespread use of the services of so called “traditional healers” in the situations when people needed to cure some diseases of their children, or when they wanted them to bless their children (ibid.). However, the “traditions” of the Kyrgyz as well as of other ethnic groups have been transformed with the social changes happening in the Central Asian region and in the world. So in this sense, the term “tradition” can always be used as an empty point by political parties and other institutions for achieving certain political power as well as the domination over the majority of people by pointing out on “common” history, “common” language, and “common” “values”.

As Gee suggests, people act and talk not as individuals but more as the members of particular social or cultural groups, thus creating particular “social languages”. So, the situated identities of the informants of this study - which are described in the Chapter 3 - also influences the terms and arguments they provide to justify their positions. If we look to the situated social identities of the political party “Erkin El” and the Ministry of Education, they are mainly related to the “preservation” of the national interests of the Kyrgyz people, whereas the situated social identity of the RHAK is close to the protection and provision of human rights, and especially of the right to sexual and reproductive health and the right to the information. These situated social identities again reproduce their “figured worlds” pointing on what is “normal” and “typical” for

the society of Kyrgyzstan, thus marginalizing “atypical” and “abnormal” people and things, and fighting against “the reforms” in the case of the political party “Erkin El”, struggling in promotion of sexual education in the case of “RHAK”, and working in accordance of the orientation given by the public in the case of the Ministry of Education.

The production of theses discourses on sexual education, which are the tradition-based nationalism and the development-based sexual liberalism, can illustrate the contemporary society in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan, as the “Central Asia’s island of democracy”, is full of many and different “ideologies”, where each of them is trying to get the “dominance” over the formation of the public attitude in the country. The two discourses revealed in the current study are the part of such “ideologies”, which compete with each other over the determination of the sexual lives of young people. The competition between these discourses created two “poles”, each surrounded by certain meanings about sexual education as well as the social life of the country in general. However, as it is said, Kyrgyzstan is not a “unipolar” or “two-polar” country, it is rather “multipolar”, which has many and different international, national and local organizations, groups and movements. Following this, the competition between the two poles on sexual education and their emptiness, as the results of the study illustrate, excluded and put barriers for the development of other possible “poles”, such as the ones which would focus on religious education, abstinence education, comprehensive sexuality, feminist and queer education programs (Appendix, Table 2). The emptiness of the discourses employed within the conflicts over sexual education made it difficult for other ideas to connect and to engage into exchange with each other.

Floating Signifiers

From the analysis provided in the subchapter above, we see that the nodal points used by

the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions are empty and exist only in relation to the situated social identities and situated meanings, as it is the case with “sexual education”. In other words, “sexual education” represents the main floating signifier within the conflict between RHAK, “Erkin EI” and the government. It is an empty element, open to the attachments of different meanings within the ongoing struggles between the competing discourses, where the “defenders” of the two nodal points - “tradition” and “development” - use it as the tool for achieving certain goals within the activities of their institutions, and thus attach different meanings to the concept.

In the case of the political party “Erkin EI”, which employ the conservative education discourse, sexual education is presented as something that was “introduced by the West” with the main aim to “destroy” the psychological and moral state of not only children and young people but of the whole Kyrgyz nation. It is presented as the trigger for sex, which makes children go out and have sex in the streets or public places. It is also presented as the “propaganda” of pornography, homosexuality, same-sex marriages, abortion, and “threat” to the national gene pool, “traditions” and ‘cultural values” of the Kyrgyz. According to the representatives of the political institutions, education “should identify, describe and reinforce the main values, beliefs and practices of Kyrgyz people”, and “transmit” them to young people. For the defenders of the discourse tradition-based nationalism, the goal of education in general is to maintain social stability and protect the existing interests of certain groups in the society of Kyrgyzstan.

However, in the case of the non-governmental institution “RHAK”, which use the liberal education discourse, sexual education is presented as the “positive information”, which prepares children and young people to their sexual lives. It is presented as the “enlightenment” of children, young people and the general population about sexual and reproductive health. It is also

presented as the “protection” from STDs and teenage pregnancy. It is presented as “the right” and “choice” of every individual to make his/her own decisions concerning his/her sexual and reproductive life. The NGOs view education as an asset for “developing knowledge and skills, especially inquiry and decision-making skills”.

The presented attachment of different meanings illustrate that sexual education is an empty “element”, which still has not been transformed into the “moment”. It has not got the fixed meaning yet, but is attached different floating meanings based on two nodal points - “tradition” and “development”. However, this emptiness appears as “meaning” at some points, because it allows not only the attachment of certain meanings, but also the concealment of other possible meanings, thus making people believe in the attached meanings as the only “positive” and “objective” ones.

4.3 Conflicts over Sexual Education: Hegemonic Intervention

The main focus of this study was the conflicts over sexual education that occurred during the last four months of 2013, and on its main actors - the NGO Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, the political party “Erkin El”, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. The results of the study illustrate the reluctant attitude of the governmental institutions towards sexual education of young people of the country, where some representatives of the Ministry of Health refused to participate in the study, but those who participated answered the questions selectively and based on the national statistical documents, whereas the representatives of Ministry of Education during the interview always wanted to take the responsibility away from the system of education, claiming that the main role concerning sexual education is played by the system of health, and that it is the responsibility of every citizen:

These questions should be taught only and only by the system of health. This is more about individual discussions and relationships of children, because every child and every

citizen has/ the right to go to doctors, who can tell them what to do in this or that situations...they can consult them...and the system of health plays the main role in these questions (The Ministry of Education)

It shows that the conflict was mainly between the discourses and figured worlds of the political party “Erkin El” and of the NGO “Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan”, where the governmental institutions played no role at all, but have been just waiting for the situation when the public can provide it with the substantive orientations to regulate, organize and then distribute some type of knowledge to the society of Kyrgyzstan.

The analysis of the interviews held with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health as well as of the interview held with the RHAK, illustrate that the governmental institutions got the orientation and started already providing the children and young people with the education based exactly on the orientation, which is very much close to what the political party “Erkin El” was offering, that is tradition-based conservative nationalism:

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have developed the program on Healthy Lifestyle, where all the information is based on our traditions...everything is illustrated based on national ornaments, on our traditions...on our mentality and our traditional values. I mean our handbook contains only positive information that does not destroy one’s health...You see, in schools we first of all provide moral education (The Ministry of Education)

But I can say that the situation with our pamphlets is the sort of criticism from the side of so called political leaders as well from the representatives of the system of education, Jogorku Kenesh...I mean it was an ordered thing, which actually has influenced some of our partners that are not so strong as we are...so before they were providing some information, but after [the situation with pamphlets], they got afraid...and now, they stopped publishing some materials...and they already stopped doing so...(RHAK)

So based on these results, we can state that there was a hegemonic intervention from the side of the political party “Erkin El” into the sphere of sexual education that was provided by the NGO Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan. This hegemonic intervention affected not only the activities of the RHAK but also the activities of other NGOs in this sphere. In other

words, the conflicts over sexual education were resulted with the hegemonic intervention, which undermined the development-based sexual liberationist discourse, and instead overpowered the tradition-based conservative nationalism.

4.4 The Power of Discourse: Reflection and Construction of Social World Concerning Sexual Education

The results of the current study illustrate the power of a discourse to construct the social world concerning the sexual education of young people, as well as the social identities of the general population. The discourse presented by the political party “Erkin El”, which got its dominance over other discourses within the discursive field of sexual education, reflects the overall situation in the society of Kyrgyzstan, which for the last 5 years is mainly focusing on the nationalist ideology with a great employment of empty meanings such as *Kyrgyzness* and the “traditions” of the Kyrgyz people.

In addition to the reflection of the social situation of the society of Kyrgyzstan, the nationalist discourse constructs the social identity of people, indicating the boundaries between “Us” and “Them”, attaching positive features to the first, and negative features to the later, and providing the arguments based on the “image of children” and “the image of tradition” to justify their exclusion of the sexual education of the RHAK and inclusion of the political institutions’ offers to develop moral and spiritual rather than sexual education. It has constructed so called “collective” identity for the population of Kyrgyzstan.

However, we cannot state that the tradition-based nationalist discourse will dominate the discursive field of sexual education all the time. Although it got its dominance after the conflicts over sexual education that happened in 2013, we should note it will be questioned by other discourses. There is a great tendency that the tradition-based nationalist discourse will be

replaced by an Islamic discourse, the rise of which can be seen with the introduction of the pilot courses about Religion to the schools of Kyrgyzstan, and the bill about “measures for the prevention of harm to the health of children and their physical, intellectual, mental, spiritual and moral development”, which is proposed by the Islamist member of the parliament Tursunbai Bakir uulu. These state-level decisions in promotion of “traditions” of the Kyrgyz, which by default also includes Islam, the repression of the NGOs and social organizations, I suppose will keep sexual liberationist discourse of RHAK in undermined position for a long period of time.

Sexual liberationist discourse proposed by RHAK, offers to develop the programs for young people that would provide them with the “adequate information” about sexually transmitted diseases, sexual anatomy and physiology, contraception, family planning, birth control and reproduction. These topics if presented to the society of Kyrgyzstan would help to raise the awareness of people about their sexual lives and to avoid the issues in sexual and reproductive lives of young people. However, the negative attitudes of the public towards sex-related topics and towards the term “sex” itself keep these educational programs to be accessed only by few people of the country.

The position of the RHAK of course does not represent the discourses used by other NGOs existing in Kyrgyzstan - the positions and discourses may vary from one NGO to another. For example, there are NGOs that employ feminist discourse, which although support the position of RHAK in provision of sexual education, offers quite different approach to sexual education itself. They propose the deconstruction of the heteronormative status quo of the society, question the bi-polarized model of sex and gender, instead offering diverse sexualities and genders, and suggest the reconsideration of the “family” institution (Table 2). In this sense, feminist discourse is perceived in much more negative way in the society of Kyrgyzstan, than it

is the case with the sexual liberationist discourse of RHAK.

The situation with these discourses around sexual education illustrates the overall attitude of the public towards sex and sex-related topics. As Foucault (1978) writes in his “History of Sexuality”, volume I, sex and sexuality serve not only as means of repression, control and dominance; they are the products of the common people and their routinized actions. By consuming the constructs of the political and governmental institutions and not consuming the constructs of the non-governmental institutions, the public produces and reproduces the most preferred for itself discourse, naturalizing it as self-evident and the true way of life for Kyrgyzstani people.

In this sense, the political institutions as well as the public produces the hierarchy of the discourses on sexual education. From the results of the study, we see that tradition-based nationalism and Islamic discourses are at the top of the hierarchy, whereas the sexual liberationist discourse of the RHAK is at the bottom, which is followed by the feminist discourse. This hierarchy of sexual education discourses resembles the hierarchical system of sexual values presented by Rubin (1984), according to which only married heterosexuals are alone at the top, whereas unmarried heterosexuals followed by other types of sexual practices are at the bottom. In the hierarchy of discourses on sexual education as well as in the hierarchy of sexuality, the value is given only to sex used for reproduction in monogamous families, whereas all other forms of sexual practices and topics, especially if they are related to children’s and young people’ sexual lives, are prohibited and undermined.

Conclusion

This paper presented the discourses about sexual education in Kyrgyzstan that were explored as the result of the discourse analysis of the media and interview recordings with the representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions of Kyrgyzstan. Based on the “scandal” over the sexual education pamphlets that occurred in 2013 in Bishkek, I investigated how the key actors of the conflicts - the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, the political party “Erkin EI” and the Ministry of Education - construct, transform and control the discourses around sexual education of young people.

In order to analyze and reveal the existing discourses around sexual education, I used the Discourse Theory of Laclau and Mouffe and the Discourse Analysis of Gee. With the help of the tools for discourse analysis, provided by these theories, I investigated how the discourses were constructed and shaped, related and differentiated, transformed and constrained.

Though the study focused on three institutions – the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions – it revealed only two discourses. These are the tradition-based nationalist discourse employed by the political party “Erkin EI”, and the sexual-liberationist discourse employed by the NGO “Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan”. Concerning the governmental institutions, the findings show that they have reluctant attitudes towards the sexual education of young people. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, according to the results of the study, played no role during the conflicts but have been just waiting for the situation when the public can provide them with the substantive orientations to regulate, organize and then distribute some type of knowledge to the society of Kyrgyzstan.

However, the paper does not demonstrate the existing discourses concerning sexual education alone. I argue that there is the hierarchy of the discourses, where the conservative

nationalism, which comprises the “traditions” of the Kyrgyz people that by default also includes Islam, is the dominant discourse, whereas the sexual liberationist followed by the feminist discourses are at the bottom of this hierarchy. This allows me to argue that sexual education, which is open to the attachment of different discourses existing in the context of Kyrgyzstan, is still an empty point without fixed meanings, and thus it is used as the tool by the “defenders” of not less empty concept “tradition” in order to gain political power as well as to create and re-create the dominant cultural norms and values in Kyrgyzstan.

The analysis of the findings provides some policies on sexual education to be undertaken in Kyrgyzstan. Particularly, it should be noted that

- the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, which on April 29 started discussing The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on “Reproductive Rights of Citizens and Guarantees of their Realization”, has to lead the debates on sexual education programs in the context of Kyrgyzstan, and to conduct the politicization of the issue;
- in addition, the Ministry of Education has to formulate concrete terms and definitions on sexual education, to propose the legislation plans and draft concepts; it also has to engage into exchange over this subject with the Parliament, as well as with the institutions (NGOs or IGOs) and local activists working in the sphere of sexual and reproductive education;
- as the general society of the country is not ready yet for the discussion of sex-related topics in schools or in any other educational institutions, local NGOs and activists can broadcast some social advertising in order to show the importance of sexual education in the lives of young people, and then in the long-run to work out age-appropriate programs.

Suggestions for further researches

The current study investigated the discourses employed by the representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and political institutions. This research presented how sexual education is constructed by the macro-institutions of the country, thus shaping the public perceptions and attitudes towards the issue. However, as sexual education is mainly related to young people, the quantitative as well as the qualitative research studies focusing particularly on young people, teachers and parents will help to understand the position of the population of Kyrgyzstan towards the issue. These future studies together with the current research will be valuable contributions for introducing more exact policies and programs on sexual education in the country.

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Appendixes

Table 1 Model of Education Orientations, adopted from Tiffany Mary Jones (2011)

	Orientation			
	Conservative	Liberal	Critical	Post-modern
Approximate time of origin	Pre-1960s	1960s	1970s	1990s
Belief about education	Education should maintain the <i>status quo</i> . It should identify, describe and reinforce the prevailing values, beliefs and practices of society, and 'transmit' them to students.	Education develops the individual potential of all students, rewarding achievement and encouraging competitive activity. It is based on developing knowledge and skills, especially inquiry and decision-making skills.	Education can help create a 'better' society/reality by encouraging students to identify values and practices that are unjust or unsustainable, to propose alternatives, and to take appropriate action to begin bringing those alternatives to fruition.	Education can demystify 'truth'/reality' and problematise knowledge. Theories of the social are explored – such that the hegemonies (or discursive assumptions of a time or culture) are revealed, allowing new possibilities and conceptual play.
Goal of educators	To maintain social stability and protect the existing interests of various groups in society.	To promote individual excellence/happiness and social progress, and reward students according to their performance.	To bring about a more peaceful, just and sustainable world through students' actions.	To develop in students an oppositional position in relation to the dominant order/the possibility of any shared 'reality', self-reflexivity and awareness of partiality.
Role of students in shaping curriculum	Students leave unquestioned the dominant values and practices of society.	Students identify aspects of society in need of reform, but leave untouched questions of radical change to beliefs or practices.	Students ask probing questions about the most deep-seated values and assumptions in society. They instigate 'real-world' social action to redress inequities and combat prejudice.	Students can both de-construct and co-construct sexual 'truths' and systems, as all knowledge is seen as constructed and relational. Students are placed in an oppositional subject position through which they can interrogate constructions of 'reality' and intervene in their reconstitution.

Table 2 Sexuality Education Discourses and the Images of Children, adopted from Tiffany Mary

Jones (2011)

Education orientation	Sexuality education discourse	Approach	Child construct
<i>Conservative</i>			
Transmitting dominant sexualities	Storks and Fairies	To protect children, sexual information is intentionally substituted with a pleasant fiction drawing on popular culture. A stork, fairy or mythical occurrence brings fully-formed babies to established loving and hopeful family homes that consist of a married female and male.	The Romantic Child
	None/Non-approach	Sexuality content – seen as the domain of parents/the church/an exterior authority and developmentally, socially or morally inappropriate for schools to disseminate – is withheld/censored in pedagogy, texts and the school environment.	The Romantic Child
	Physical Hygiene	Problematic bodily emissions related to sexual functioning must be managed/hidden. (Hetero) Sexual sublimation beyond marital sex is necessary to maintain hygiene; deviation leads to loss of masculine power and creativity, female hysteria, disease and degeneration.	The Romantic Child
	Sexual Morality	Religion/God is at the centre of a sexuality system based on asceticism, body/mind and flesh/spirit dichotomies. Marital procreative heterosexual sex only is affirmed, other expressions are condemned temptations of the body, to be controlled by the mind for the purity of the spirit.	The Knowing Child
	Birds and Bees	Sexual interaction is part of a naturalist world. Natural metaphors protect childhood purity but satisfy curiosity. Human sexuality mimics the contact of bees with flower pollen, cross-pollination and the fertilisation of bird's eggs. The mother animal and its care are emphasised.	The Knowing Child
	Biological Science	Focuses on scientific understandings of biological reproduction of the human species; embedded in broader study of bodily systems, human life-cycles, animal reproduction or genetics. Involves study of anatomy, physiology, 'correct' functioning and disease prevention.	The Knowing Child
	Abstinence Education	Students are told to abstain from sexual interaction until married. Prior sexual activity is presented as a cause of psychological and physical harm – depression, shame, guilt, sexual infections and loss of long-term committed relationships. Intercourse basics may be taught.	The Knowing Child
	Christian/Ex-gay Redemption	Masturbation, homosexuality and gender diversity are 'not part of God's plan'. They represent modern cultural distractions. Sexual orientation and gender behaviours can be controlled through effort. Youth are encouraged to be 'ex-gay' identified/heterosexual.	The Knowing Child
<i>Liberal</i>			
Teaching sexuality skills and knowledge for personal choice/development	Sexual Liberationist	Promotes sexual individual sexual rights, with the individual deciding what is right for their own behaviour. Ethics of reciprocity and consensuality. A broad range of sexual acts are 'normal'. Youth are encouraged to 'feel comfortable' with sexual concepts and vocabulary.	The Sexual Decision-maker
	Comprehensive Sex Education	Wide-ranging sexual education covering sexual anatomy and physiology, contraception, sexual communication, relationship development and maintenance, sexual victimisation, sexual values, sexual minority issues, sexual prejudice, and abstinence as a choice.	Developing Sexual Decision-maker
	Sexual Risk/Progressive	Sexual activity of any kind outside of marriage involves a list of emotional, social and physical risks including heartbreak, being ostracised, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, etc. Youth are taught about perceived dangers, 'safe sex', condom use and contraceptive choices.	The Informed Decision-maker
	Sexual Readiness	Focuses on equipping students with decision-making skills regarding their sexual 'readiness'. Virginity is valued, and not to be exchanged lightly. Readiness involves individual, emotional, physical, relational, practical and other concerns. Sex before readiness is seen as damaging.	Developing Sexual Decision-maker
	Effective Relationships	Sexual and other relationships are seen in terms of effectiveness of communication, emotional exchange, support and other key features. Students are taught communication, negotiation, empathy and other relating skills.	The Informed Decision-maker
	Controversial Issues/Values Clarification	Schools are a neutral space for rational, objective study. Sexual issues (such as homosexual marriage) are controversial. The individual student must be encouraged to express and form their own opinion on them. Teacher should present evidence impartially, without advocacy.	Developing Sexual Decision-maker
	Liberal feminist	A woman is equal to a man and can choose her career/occupation. She should receive equitable working conditions and remuneration, and should have more choice about her roles within a relationship regarding child rearing and the sharing of domestic duties and dynamics.	The Gendered Decision-maker

<i>Critical</i> Facilitating integrated student action based on alternative sexuality principles. Redressing marginalised sexualities	State Socialist/Sexual Politics	Freudian genital gratification in the context of 'politically correct' non-monogamous heterosexual relations is seen as a healthy way to channel energy, rather than purely into a life of work or for reproduction. Greater acceptance of working-class and adolescent sexualities.	The Sexual Citizen
	Sexual Revolutionary Socialist/Radical Freudian Radical Feminist	Focuses on how a revolutionary sexuality can be celebrated in a context of civilised and labour-free technological utopia. Polymorphous pre-genital exploration that celebrates the body in a post-labour utopia. Creative exploration, love and play are encouraged. A woman is different to a man and these differences should be valued. Feminine writing styles, knowledge, emotions, experiences and concepts of time may be explored. Child-rearing is valued as labour; however, a life that is autonomous from men is also a possible and legitimate lifestyle.	The Sexual Citizen The Gendered Citizen
	Anti-discrimination/Anti-harassment/Equity	Human rights concepts, acts and legislation based on sexuality, sex, orientation, etc., must be understood and respected. Discrimination or harassment on the grounds of such personal traits is wrong. School codes, posters, class rules, and equal access policies may reflect this.	The Global Citizen
	Inclusive/Social Justice Safe and Supportive	School should be safe and supportive spaces that promote equity, social justice and inclusiveness for all students. Students of diverse sexualities, sexes, etc., should be supported and included in school events, activities, class resources, etc. This support is affirming, beyond 'acceptance'.	The Local Citizen
	Gay Liberationist	Focuses on combating direct and indirect homophobia by identifying and eliminating it. Emphasises the need to acknowledge, protect and support gay and lesbian people as a marginalised group within society. There is an effort to make gay and lesbian issues 'visible' in sexual and other frames.	The Sexual Citizen
	Post-colonial	Redresses the marginalisation of local and Indigenous cultural knowledge through provision of local teachings about sexualities and sexuality frameworks. Can incorporate oral histories, elders, parent-child nights and engaging in traditional activities/ceremonies.	The Ethnic Citizen
<i>Post-modern</i> Theoretically exploring sex, gender and sexuality frameworks and positions	Post-structuralist	Teachers and students explore how 'reality' is constituted through language and representation. They de- and co-construct texts about sexuality and gender, and consider how sexual identity plays a central political role in emancipation. Teachers may play 'devil's advocate'.	The Social Construct
	Post-identity Feminist	Sex is political and serves as a source of both liberation and oppression. Its meaning and experience are shaped by social and cultural differences such as race, gender, social class, and orientation. Gender identity is shaped by cultural institutions, language, media, etc., and is not innate.	The Sexed Social Construct
	Multi-cultural/General Po-mo	Aims to ensure schooling equitably educates culturally diverse populations. Rejects the notion that (sexual) reality can be understood in a singular universal voice. Sexuality education should acknowledge the various heritages of the child, as well as mainstream/'general' sexuality efforts.	The Cultural Subject
	Diversity Education	Sexuality and gender are not limited to a two-sex bi-polarised model. A whole school approach is taken to becoming inclusive for people with diverse sexualities and gender identification, including students, staff and families. Variety is celebrated. Constructions of 'family' are reconsidered.	The Sexual Subject
	Queer	Aims to disrupt/destabilise the structures (sex, gender, orientation) that uphold the illusion of heteronormativity through revealing their performative nature. This can be achieved through deconstruction and (re)creation of texts, including the self or others as texts.	The Sexual Subject