

**Fylde Coast Living Libraries: Seaside Story  
Telling – within a pedagogy framework**

The Journal of Youth Voices in Education:  
Methods Theory Practice  
Copyright©2019  
University of Cumbria  
Vol 1(1) pages 32-42

Deborah Terras

**Abstract**

The co-design of the MaCe project is about bringing together, young people, researchers, academics and students to explore their environment within an Equalities Framework. This article forms part of the overall research findings and will be part of a framework of knowledge based on the inequity within an educational system, supporting and underpinning pedagogic research, enabling wider opportunity for debate and critical review.

**Keywords**

Co-design, indirect, action research, social mobility, young people, equalities framework, living libraries, push-outs.

**Introduction:**

The marginalization and co creation Education Project (Stuart et al. 2019) is an international research programme part funded by Erasmus+ delivered by the University of Cumbria (UK), VIA University College (Denmark) and University College of Southeast (Norway). The aim of the project is to understand young people's experiences of privilege or disadvantage, in education, in order to co-create more equitable educational solutions in schools and further and higher education. The project also aims at understanding students' experiences of marginalisation in general education in order for the European team of academic and student researchers to co-create solutions for education and other sectors that support young people.

This research article presents the reality of educational experiences within the town of Blackpool, Lancashire, UK, involving six young people. It explores the application of an indirect method of interviewing young people to share their experiences. The 'indirect method', involves engaging in a conversation on a young person's terms, without asking leading or invasive questions to ensure young people are not marginalised or exploited through the research process. For the purpose of this article, I refer to the young people's conversations as Living Libraries. The living library concept originated in Denmark and was quickly adopted, with particular focus in Australia. According to Government of Western Australia Dept of Health, (2008) 'A Living Library works like a normal library, except the "Book" is a person who shares their experiences and stories, and gives the borrowers a chance to ask questions. The research explores young people's experience of privilege or disadvantage in education, in order to co-create more equitable educational solutions in schools, further and higher education. The literature review explores the inequalities of young people in particular from working class backgrounds linking to a social mobility theme which is a current focus in Blackpool, through Opportunity Area, Department of Education funding. The Department of Education (2017) introduced plans to improve social mobility for young people through education, identifying 12 opportunity areas, based on deprivation and limited choices, to be awarded investment to improve social mobility and emphasis that equality of opportunity starts with education. Blackpool was chosen, using education attainment and results, combined with measuring areas who presented with the greatest challenges and least amount of opportunities. The Department of Education primary purpose of Opportunity Areas is to focus local and national resources on a common goal - to increase social mobility and involve focusing energy, ideas and resources to provide children and young people with the

**Citation**

Terras, D. (2019)'Fylde coast living libraries: seaside story telling – within a pedagogy framework', *The Journal of Youth Voices in Education: Methods Theory Practice*, 1(1), pp. 32-42.

opportunities to fulfil their potential. Its will adopt a place-based approach involving the whole education community, from early years to employment, in the areas of the country where social mobility is lowest’

This research article, through an indirect approach, explores young people’s lived experienced stories, while accessing High Schools in Blackpool, England. (Moshuus & Eide. 2016, p 7) suggest the indirect approach “allows the researcher and the informant to partake in the reproduction of cultural truths in ways that make both the stories and their telling open to interpretations both parties to the research may corroborate.”

This research draws upon their lived realities, linking in social mobility and inequality within schools and further education and facilitate young people, through an indirect approach, to identify inequality in their experiences at High School, as well all as exploring where they felt they were positioned in the establishment of secondary and further education. The researcher’s role was to facilitate this identification and use those living library stories to influence change in policy, while supporting a co-design approach to reduce the distance between researcher and researched. (Stuart et al. 2019 p.6) highlights the opportunity ‘to use the asset-balanced participatory youth research embodied in the MaCE project, to understand the complex and nuanced inter and intra socio-cultural process of young people deciding to leave school early. It has potential to inform education, youth development, practitioner development and future research, and ultimately aims to contribute to social justice.’ The young people, who have participated in this research, are key to the co-creation of a body of knowledge, that will have an impact on current practice within education, and will benefit both young people and educational practitioners. The co-creation approach is an equal appreciation of each key stakeholders role and to use the young people’s stories and experiences to support and influence future policy and decision making.

### **Methodology**

The methodology adopted for the project is action research using a qualitative narrative approach. (Zuber-Skerritt. 1992b:15 in McNiff , p. p 51-53, 2002) identifies ‘components of action research as critical, reflective accountable, self-evaluating and participative.’

It can be suggested that the in-direct approach, which is used in this project, is a new style of managing one to one interviews or focus groups and concentrates on a levelling of the power relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. The indirect approach, was developed in an unstructured, participatory research practice. The method is premised on the contextual challenges involved when researchers, students and young people from different and even possibly antagonistic meritocratic positions meet in dialogue. The method first posits that the researcher and young people do not share the same cultural setting. Second, it posits that both questions and answers that direct the inquiry should come from the young person. In this respect, (Stuart et al. 2019, p.9), suggests it is a participant led conversation enabling some levelling of the power dynamics innate in interview situations. By valuing the knowledge and insights of student co-researchers, advanced research and practice experience will be acquired. In short, this project models social inclusion within our own HEI’s and local communities.’

The research sample was six young people, three main interviews in pairs, aged between 16 and 19 of mixed gender, recruited from a group of young people attending Blackpool Football Club, Community Trust Learning programme. There was a variation of experiences with some who had been excluded or as Michelle Fine (MaCe international Conference, May 2019) described ‘school push outs.’ and others who had left high school at 16.

The young people, at the time of this research, attended Blackpool Football Club Community Trust, studying in BTEC sports science or Bachelor of Arts in sport science.

Ethical procedures were followed through the University of Cumbria framework and policy. (Denscombe. 2010, p142) describes three ethical principles: participants should be protected; researchers should avoid deception or misrepresentation; participants should give informed consent. (Sapsford and Abbott. 1996 in Bell, p. 49, 2010) argue that interviewing is intrusive, they make it clear that confidentiality is a promise that you will not be identified or presented in an identified form, while anonymity is a promise that not even the researchers will not be able to tell which responses came from which respondents'. From a student researcher perspective, this research has enabled a development of personal praxis, in using action research as a methodology and a greater understanding of the characteristics of action research. (McNiff. 2000 p2) states 'action research is practical'. She highlights there are two main reasons for doing action research: 'to improve practice and generate new theory'.

(Frostholm. 2018, in MaCE online canvas 2019) explains the approach draws directly on a strict ethnographic framework and can be compared to unstructured interviews or "the walking interview." I would suggest perhaps it has a flavoured approach and at times the indirect approach can be testing for the researcher and young person.

Frostholm explores the concept of the happenstance, an unforeseen occurrence that happens between the interviewer and the interviewee, that makes us change our approach to the interview. Frostholm suggests experiencing a happenstance within the indirect interview, researchers will have a more complex view of meaning - a lucky path to extended contextual knowledge. Furthermore, he argues that a happenstance allows us to gather knowledge from a different angle compared to what we normally would do by asking pre-prepared "interview guide-questions."

My happenstance occurred within the context of the interviews, I assumed the free flowing narrative would come to a natural conclusion, in that the two participants 'telling their stories' would expose their lack of appetite for school and a desire to want to learn, as a direct result of their lived experiences, as told in their stories. It could be suggested, reinforcing, to some extent, the negative discourse which surrounds young people, who have disengaged with the educational system, in particular the constructions of young males. (Moshuus et al. 2016) suggest that happenstances may offer a solution to the problem of meaning discrepancies. The happenstance is one of those moments that allow the researcher to temporarily bridge into the meanings of his or her informant and conclude by addressing how these happenstances, though they appear to be a product of pure accident, may become part of a systematic approach in discovering contextual knowledge.

This is significant to the study because it can be attributed to an aspect of the six elements of the Equalities Literacy Framework, as cited in (Stuart et al. 2019, p.15) exploring the self-position adopted by the young people. This may have a major impact on the identity, agency and social mobility then experienced by the young people within their educational environment. (Cote and Levine, 2002; Lawler, 2008, cited in Stuart et al. P.19) state that 'This further accounts for why there can be no fixed or determined trajectories of any individual or group. One person may respond to deprivation with resignation and victim mentality, whilst another may fight for a better outcome.' The young people within this interview, fought for a better outcome; participants who were telling their stories, within the contextual knowledge, disclosed their desire to learn and their attitude towards education. In all the conversations the young people had a thirst for knowledge, it wasn't that they avoided school due to lack of interest in subjects, they avoided schools (at times) in direct response to how they were treated at school:

Teachers just didn't care, even though I asked for help, erm I needed extra time in my maths and English, and they wouldn't give me time, erm and I had to go to ..... to get my like dyslexia test but that didn't happen for 6months and I was waiting for that until I could get the extra time and they just didn't help so I ended up leaving.

(Elliott. 1991) suggests 'action research is more about improving practice rather than producing knowledge'. However (Stuart et al. 2019, p.17) suggests that 'methods such as the indirect approach, and Participatory Action Research should be used to address the inequity' because we 'need to do more with our research findings'. Collating stories of inequality on our living room floors is not enough' (Fine. 2017, in Stuart et al. 2019, p. 17) who, challenges the lack of using stories to their strength ' Researchers have a moral obligation to lift their work to the macro level to support social justice at a systemic level'

This resonates with the research stories from Blackpool FC Community Trust. One young person in the study asked the researcher '*How do you feel you can impact on young people's experiences by doing this research?*' A very fair and direct question, based on the fact the young person had just disclosed his school and private life to a researcher they barely knew. This is particularly significant for this methodology as the key element to the in-direct approach is that the young person has full control of the interview. According to (Stuart et al., 2019, p.9) 'both questions and answers that direct the inquiry should come from the young person'. In this respect, the indirect approach is a participant led conversation enabling some levelling of the power dynamics innate in interview situations'

Perhaps, it can be suggested, young people have become 'numb' to the personal boundaries of telling their stories, divulging personal feelings and experiences. While the indirect approach advocates for the participant led conversations, ultimately we, the researchers need to acknowledge we are facilitating a narrative that brings with it potentially unpleasant and raw memories.

In answer, to the question posed by the young person, the collective articles will influence stakeholders and policy makers to listen and act upon young people lived experiences, while at the same support the young people involved to potentially take forward their stories and make an impact on future educational experiences. However, albeit the young people, had complete control over what they shared with the researcher, there still needs to be an acknowledgement of the power inequality relationship, within the research article. Albeit the ethical considerations for this research highlighted that due to the nature of the methodology, young people would have control over their answers and if required additional support and signposting will be available should this trigger issues or highlight a safeguarding issue. (Frostholm. 2018) highlights the need to have 'a good measure of trust and confidence to achieve a position whereby young people feel they can convey their stories and tell experiences.'

The indirect interviews were the first opportunity I had met the young people. As a youthwork practitioner I felt very privileged to be listening to young people's stories but I also felt as an intruder into personal life stories, that at times, were very painful to listen to.

(Cammack et al., 2018, cited in MaCe online 2018,) suggests 'Undertaking interviews through the in - direct approach becomes a search for how any life choices make sense within particular contexts of meaning. The approach proved more difficult than had been suggested. I found my youthwork practice was at times tested when using the indirect approach because I had innate tendencies to guide, support and facilitate the conversation. The project suggests 'as researchers we do not own the starts and the stops of the conversation.' Easier said than done for myself.

### **Social Mobility versus Inequality**

It is important to put into context the environment within which the young people, who took part in the study, live, work and play. This enables the research to explore the concept of an Equalities Literacy Framework model, (Stuart et al. 2019) by framing the pre-existing context and narratives of the young people and furthermore to also have a greater awareness of each young person's trajectory.

It could be suggested that a young person's trajectory is influenced by the opportunities available to them within their immediate environment. (Stuart et al. 2019) explains that 'Equality refers to the relative levels of access that people have, for example, to resources, information and opportunities.'

The Equality Trust (2019) suggests social mobility opportunities can be a measure of the impact of inequitable education opportunities. The Trust suggests that "*Education is often seen as a strong driver of social mobility.*" This theory supports the idea that the opportunities for young people to move within their social and economic environments are first influenced by their experiences in education. (Stuart et al. 2019) suggest 'Inequity has a negative impact on social mobility.' However (Reay. 2017, p102) argues 'social mobility is no solution to either educational inequalities or wider social and economic injustices.' Furthermore' Reay suggests 'we simply just shifted the goals posts for young people who are seen as disadvantaged.'

If we support the model of the Equality Literacy Framework within education using the experiences within a young person's narratives, we concur that 'without equalities literacy there is potential for unconsciously reinforcing existing power relations and therefore positions of inequality' (Bourdieu. 1979 cited in Stuart, 2019). The positions of power lead to the opportunities and therefore access or lack of access to social mobility which is flexible and responsive to the young person needs. Furthermore, those opportunities, it can be argued, which are experienced by young people, can be the golden thread which enables or disables a young person's equal status within the social mobility structural positioning. However (Reay. 2017, p 127) would argue 'social mobility in a deeply unequal society, like England's, is not the panacea it is made out to be'.

(Andrews and Leigh. 2009 in Stuart, p. p.1492 for the OECD 2019) , study tracked people from the 1970's to the 1990's globally and found 'those who grew up in more unequal countries were less likely to have experienced social mobility' This global finding can be positioned within much smaller demographic areas and be shown within the context of Blackpool.

The Fylde Coast is historically known for its tourism, within Blackpool, the fishing Industry in Fleetwood, and heavy agricultural presence in Fylde and Wyre. In terms of its opportunities and careers for young people, it can be suggested this is reluctantly perceived, as limited, in terms of long-term career pathways for young people and a reliance on a 'winter benefit culture. Blackpool Residents predominately employed into seasonal positions which run February to November, resulting in a reliance of claiming benefits from November through to February, with no guarantee of employment with historical employers. Zero-hour contracts are adopted as the norm and this uncertainty can have huge implications for family stability and social mobility.

Blackpool Pride of Place Town prospectus 2018 highlights "The average weekly salary for a Blackpool resident is £460, roughly £100 pounds less than the national average weekly wage"

Perhaps our starting point for any opportunity to understand young people's experience is to dissect the stories we are told and appreciate the influence of social mobility as a concept and that education, in isolation, cannot be responsible for an equitable solution.

(Banford. 2017 p 36) states that 'we know that when children and young people do not achieve what they're capable of achieving, it has a long-term legacy effect on society'.

### **Analysis of findings**

The narratives by the six young people were each recorded on a secure mobile device and transcribed. Each transcript was coded, using guidance from MaCE team. The codes were Context, positioning by others, Oppression and liberation, positioning by self and trajectory. The emerging codes from the six stories linked to the Equalities Literacy Framework were:

#### *Personal lived experiences*

Each young person within the study had attended a Blackpool High School and their context was very similar in terms of the areas they lived in, their economic background and the social discourse, they had endured, associated with young people who had left school and not progressed to an academic institution. Each young person was a 'drop out', 'push out' not in education, employment or training (NEET) and all attending a 'non-traditional academic route through a football club training provider. Their personal lived experiences were very similar in experiencing the bullying and intimidation by their peers and in some cases their teachers.

The following narratives concentrated on the extent of bullying and oppression within the school system by peers and teachers. The abstract from their story telling explores the impact of bereavement and mental health, which both young people experienced while at the school:

Student D: Someone said something about my mum and she had passed away when I was younger, and I'd made people aware of this and like people make mum jokes . Someone said something about my mum and I was like 'you cant say that to me' why did you say that... and because I had said that... I didn't hit anyone or that but because of that I got sent to isolation for a whole day and missed a whole day education and that was in my GCSE year.

Student E: That's like the same for me, Ms..... she did that to me a few times , I was out into isolation for 23 days because I threatened to have someone for them calling my parents, both who have passed away and again I missed out on those dates in my GCSE year.

Student D: I hated that school, there was only one teacher that we could all go to and trust in the whole of the school Miss ..... , English Teacher , she was really nice.

Student E: I never had her, but when I was going through a rough time, she just noticed me and asked if I was ok and talked to me about it. Say if I was upset no other teacher would come up to me and ask if I was ok. It made a massive difference.

Student D: You know like, people never notice if something is wrong, like we had a lad in our year who ended up leaving and he ended up killing himself year after he left High School. There were lads who should have been kicked out ages ago and they were still there at year 11. It proper impacts on you. Instead of moving them out of a class, they would move them up a set , either Set 1 or set 2 and then they would interfere with our learning. Cos we can't concentrate , the teachers are having to stop start the lesson to speak to them and that obviously interfering with us. The teachers got to a point when they wouldn't even send them out nothing would happen, you can tell on the teachers face there wasn't much they could do.

Student E: Like with the popularity groups if you snitched then you would get battered

Student D: It's down to the staff, especially at ..... (School) they need to stop the bullying straight away, they should just kick out the bully. No kid should go to school scared of being bullied or being jumped on, that's just not right.

Student E: I shouldn't have been worried about going to school

This culture lack of empathy resonates with the anti-discriminatory practice surrounding lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender in schools. (Guasp et al. 2014, in Terras, p. p. 5, 2018), highlights 86% of primary school teachers interviewed had not received any specific training on how to tackle homophobic bullying, within their school/classroom. Perhaps this can be linked to bereavement and mental health While this is bullying with a specific context it can be suggested it links clearly with a culture which can be argued, breeds ignorance and normalising of oppressive behaviour.

#### *Positioning by others*

The opportunity for young people to be socially mobile is key to their opportunities in life. Sometimes young people have little choice of who they are, where they live and what will be their social mobility. Department of Education (2017) stated 'In Britain today, the community where you grow up will shape your chances of attending a good school and your wider educational and career outcomes. Education and skills outcomes vary significantly across the country and are, in turn, one of the biggest drivers of regional variations in productivity.'

(Jones. 2016, in HealthField and Fusco, p.p 128, 2016) highlight that the 'working class young white men are increasingly established as a disadvantaged, unequal group, that has been to some extent marginal to the rhetoric of equality.' Furthermore (Hansbury, Lee and Batsleer. 2010, in Jones, p. p. 129, 2016) see gender stereotyping as underpinning the attention given by government. Young men are seen as antisocial involved in gun and knife crime' This misinterpretation and stereotyping resonates with Cohen (1972) who identified the social construction of folk devils and moral panics especially within youth culture. Furthermore Smith (2013, in Jones, p. p. 128, 2016) suggests that 'teenage boys from poor families tend not to value education, and their schools don't have the resources to challenge so many connected problems' Smith also suggests that Ofsted, the Government's Office for standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, has identified the problem succinctly as the lure of the three Fs: fighting, football and fucking ' An identification which in itself reinforces gender stereotypes and misinterpretation of class and opportunity.

This study is not gender specific, but the theories do support the discourse associated with young people and how young people are placed and treated in society by others. For instance, in the study young people felt that there was an assumption that if you were from a working class family, looked after or a lone parent family you were not interested in your education and it didn't matter about personal choice.

Student D: I went to ..... name omitted.....for a year and it was like so bad I left half way through the year, but still passed. Teachers just didn't care, even though I asked for help, erm I needed extra time in my maths and English, and they wouldn't give me time, erm and I had to go to ...name omitted..... to get my like dyslexia test but that didn't happen for 6mnths and I was waiting for that until I could get the extra time and they just didn't help so I ended up leaving. I didn't really care it wasn't a course a really wanted to do, I just picked it cos everyone else was doing it. Err its about looking after old people with dementia and people put into care. It was so boring, really boring

Student C: The teachers even turned around and said at my school I don't care what you have to say..... they are just there for the money and just go, they're not bothered about our education

Students A: We wasn't part of the school really, we were put in an exclusion unit and didn't really go into the school. Yeh you didn't even get to go through into the school it was like where the double doors are and on the left there was like a room that you went through and that was the unit.

Student B: Yeh in the unit we just were told to do maths and English and we were like given work to do until we passed our GCSE. We were like there all day.

Student A: Some people got treat differently in our school , you know like, well if we did a small thing we would get a bigger punishment than if someone who wasn't in the unit did it...that always use to do my head in that... I remember I didn't turn up for a detention or something like that and I got 2 weeks of isolation and then someone had a fight and they got like a day of isolation. Just doesn't make sense like

The stories from this research demonstrate a different perspective by young people in relation to their attitudes towards education, when positioning themselves

#### *Positioning by self*

(Stuart et al. 2019) highlights that people self-position themselves based on a response to the context of their lives, the relative experience of others, their personal response to this combined with the technologies of the oppression and liberation. (Cote and Levine. 2002; Lawler 2008 cited in Stuart 2019) suggest 'Theory shows the self-position adopted may have a major impact on the identity, agency and social mobility then experienced. The experiences from two of the students supported the self-positioning theory and demonstrated the outcomes that is to rebel or be deviant:

Student C: None of the teachers really cared about what we did, our English teacher did not care at all what we did. She would say like, get your phones out, do this do that, she didn't care.....and none of us passed our GCSEs

Student D: My RS teacher was so picky, he was an old school teacher, but he still taught us, he taught us proper bad, like someone would put their hand up cos you forgot your pen and you had to ask permission for a pen and he would send you out into inclusion, so you would miss out on a whole day of learning, you would miss out on 3 other lessons, just for asking for a pen. And if he did that then we would all have to copy into a text book or write out of the bible.

Student C: To be honest we are just missed that lesson on purpose, cos we knew there was no point in going. It was the same from year 9 all the way up to year 11 for most of the lessons

Student D: We had a new head teacher, she is more strict but she doesn't do anything more than the other teachers. Literally a joke, like I look back and think it's a joke, you know I did alright in years 7 & 8 and then year 9 10 11 I just went downhill

(Green et al. 2006, p 138) quoting Bourdieu 1980, states' inequalities in education achievement by different social groups arise partly because of the unequal leaning advantages given to children from different social backgrounds'.



I would suggest as academics we already acknowledge this, however my observations from the transcripts are, in a school where the social backgrounds are similar there appears to be the emergence of multi-faceted class groups within the schools. These groups are automatically 'coded/classified/labelled' and have access to more cultural capital within the school depending on the power rationale.

In regards to equitable teaching opportunities Student A and B both explained that in Year 11 they had 4 English teacher and 10 science teachers.

(Reay.2017) offers insight into the culture beyond high school and explores when working class young people aspire through the social mobility ladder and find themselves placed in a University, this may be a success for the meritocracy ideology but in reality working class students still position themselves still as second class.

We can assume that the Equalities Literacy framework within which our research sits, allows us to view the scale of impact on a young person's choices and experiences, based on where a young person is positioned in the class system, be that from a privilege or deprived background. According to the Social Mobility Commission 2019 'Inequality is now entrenched in Britain from birth to work, and the government needs to take urgent action to help close the privilege gap'.

The Employment Gap research clearly reveals a gap between disadvantaged young people who had been eligible for Free School Meals, they are twice as likely to be Not in employment , education or training (NEET) than their peers, The research found 26% of disadvantaged young people are NEET, compared to 13% of their better-off peers.

Furthermore, the Social Mobility Commission states increasing numbers of students from disadvantaged families are entering university, but they are more likely to drop out before they graduate and five years after graduating, students who were eligible for free school meals were paid 11.5% less than their peers.

Living libraries is a powerful context to enable the voices of young people to be heard. The issue here and now is how do we take those voices, opinions, real lived experiences and make a difference, otherwise it would be a case of 'so what'. The living libraries narratives reinforce what we have known for some time, through our own practice as teachers and youth-workers as well as living within the communities.

We as a collective of young people, practitioner, students and organisations have a real opportunity to influence change through dialogue to readdress the positioning of young people within the educational environment. The Equity Literacy Institute (2017) advocate that, the Equity Literacy is a framework for cultivating the knowledge and skills that enable us to be a threat to the existence of inequity in our spheres of influence'.

There is further opportunity to analyse the inequalities which are so vivid in the transcripts by using Thompson's PCS Model (Thompson, 2006, in Terras, P. p. 7, 2018), explored homophobic bullying within a school setting and can be applied in generic context for this research article. Its application is exactly the same. Using Thompson's Model to analyse inequalities of practice within a school setting can explore the key themes from the Equalities Literacy Framework, which emerged from this research. Using the indirect approach Thompson's model unfolded:

*Level one - Personal or psychological*

How teachers interact with students and how their thoughts feelings and attitudes towards a certain group are shaped by our personal experiences. This was evident in the transcripts from the young people through the intimidation and bullying.

#### *Level two - Cultural*

A set of commonly shared ways or views of perceiving the world, what we consider is the norm and assumptions, what we take for granted as perceived as normal. So, for example using derogatory names/labelling students as a means to reinforce oppressive norms and personal values. It can be seen as a vehicle to drive forward as acceptable behaviour, such as the positioning young people from less privileged backgrounds or labelling as trouble-makers or wasters or failing GCSE's. This forms part of the Cultural level and becomes embedded into the normal acceptable discourse; eventually becomes the personal level because of how we react with it. Therefore teachers in a classroom or staffroom where there is bullying or persistent name calling or 'banter' between students and teachers, it is usually ignored as it is seen as culturally acceptable, dismissed as a social quality but reinforces the oppressive nature of the meaning. Once that is seen as acceptable in a classroom or staffroom it is difficult to be the one individual to challenge that behaviour, according to Thompson's research.

#### *Level three – Structural*

The network of social divisions, the institutions which are 'sewn into the fabric of society', the expectations of how oppressive practice draws its strength within a society or institution. The common discourse of youth culture. The notion that young people are consumers of the state, rather than creators. (Smith. 1982) explores the notion of the sources of power in a social or organisational setting 'if we are to avoid inequality in terms of reproducing the subordinate process, power has to be put into the hands of the group as a whole'. Furthermore Smith neatly sums up the role of us as the practitioners and social educators quoting Friere 'washing ones hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral'. Smith insists that we need to recognise that social education involves action at both an individual and a collective level.

#### **Conclusion**

This article, was underpinned by action research embracing a multi-faceted co-creation model, working alongside academics, researchers, students and young people, using their stories to create the equitable solutions to education inequality in schools and further education. The research also acknowledges the relationship between the student researchers and the young people and recognises the influence of possible inequality and possible privileged positions. This research challenged me both professionally and emotionally especially the happenstance experience which pushed me to reflect on my practice and thus acknowledging my privileged position. (Stuart et al. 2019) who states 'the Equalities Literacy Framework highlights the need for researchers to reflexively acknowledge their privileged position and to understand how that interplays with the position of their participants.' (Freire. 1970, in Reay, p. p. 191 2017) identified two function of education in society, one being as an instrument of conformity , the other to act as practice of freedom, enabling children and young people to engage critically and reflexively with the society they are part of and to learn how to participate in transforming it for the better.' I know which one I am aiming for within the in direct approach.

#### **References and bibliography**

- Blackpool Opportunity Area 2017-20: A local plan to deliver opportunities for children and young people in Blackpool: Department of Education  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/650036/Opportunity\\_areas\\_selection\\_methodology.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/650036/Opportunity_areas_selection_methodology.pdf) {accessed 12.12.18}
- Blanford, S. (2017) Born to fail. Social mobility: A working class view:London: John Catt publications

- Business in the Community Pride of Place Blackpool Prospectus 2030  
<https://www.bitc.org.uk/media-centre/news/blackpool-pride-place-partnership-launches-plan-grow-blackpool-economy-%C2%A31bn-2030> {accessed 10.1.19}
- Cohen, S. (2002) *Folk Devils and Moral Panics The creation of the Mods and Rockers* 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed: London; Routledge
- Denscombe, M. (2007) *The good Research Guide, for small scale social research projects*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, McGrawhill: London: Open university Press
- Department for Education (2017) *Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential. A plan for improving social mobility through education.* <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications> {accessed 17.5.19}
- Equity Literacy for Educators: Definition and Abilities <http://www.edchange.org/handouts/Equity-Literacy-Intro-Abilities.pdf> {accessed 17.5.19}
- Frostholm, P: *An introduction to the in - direct approach.* MaCE Online Canvas 2019
- Government of Western Australia Department of Mental Health: *Living Libraries Evaluation Report 2008*  
[http://www.health.wa.gov.au/docreg/Education/Population/Health\\_Problems/Mental\\_Illness/Mentalhealth\\_Living\\_libraries\\_evaluation\\_2008.pdf](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/docreg/Education/Population/Health_Problems/Mental_Illness/Mentalhealth_Living_libraries_evaluation_2008.pdf) {accessed 26.6.19}
- Moshuus, G.& Eide, K. (2016). *The In - direct Approach: How to Discover Context When Studying Marginal Youth.* *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* Green, A., Preston, J., & German Janmatt, J. (2008) *Education equality and social cohesion:* London: Palgrave
- Guasp, A., Ellison, G., & Satara, T. (2014). *The Teachers Report: Homophobic Bullying in Britain's Schools in 2014.* Available at:  
[http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/teachers\\_report\\_2014.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/teachers_report_2014.pdf) (Accessed: 12 April 2017)
- HealthField, M and Fusco, D (2017) *Youth and inequality in Education:* London: Routledge
- Hutchinson, J. and Crenna-Jennings, W (2019) *Unexplained pupils exits from schools: A growing problem?* Department of Education: Education Policy institute [https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/EPI\\_Unexplained-pupil-exits\\_2019.pdf](https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/EPI_Unexplained-pupil-exits_2019.pdf) {accessed 11.5.19}
- Reay, D. (2017) *Miseducation: Inequality, education and the working class:* London: Policy Press
- Smith, M. (1982) *Creators not consumers. Rediscovering Social Education.* Leicester: NAYC Publications
- Stuart, K. et al. (2019) *Developing an Equalities Literacy for Practitioners Working; with Children, Young People and Families through Action Research:* London: Routledge
- Social Mobility website <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/class-privilege-remains-entrenched-as-social-mobility-stagnates> {accessed 10.5.19}
- Thompson, N. (2006) *Anti discriminatory practice.* London: Palgrave.
- University of Central Lancashire Classroom handouts 2010 <https://www.usn.no/handbook/about-marginalisation-and-co-created-education-mace-article221433-33615.html> (accessed 28.06.19)