

## Micro-Paper 6: *Critical Literacy*

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### Defining the Term

Critical literacy is particularly concerned with how people interact with writing and reading, especially in today's social practices. The questions of how literacy practices make possible a more detailed reading of the world (as Paulo Freire would explain) and how people rewrite the world to better fit the interest present in their lives is an important issue in critical literacy.

In the case of schools, critical literacy explores questions about the kinds of texts we read and why we do it, both from pedagogical and ideological perspectives. In the case of literacy practices outside of school, critical literacy explores how written texts in different contexts of the city try to capture something beyond the meaning in which people represent a social and cultural perspective. Through critical literacy, researchers can explore literacy practices that, while not explicit in the social fields, have connections that help people interpret words and different signs such as graphs and drawings.

### Connecting it to LSLP

At LSLP, we operate under the assumption that literacy is a social practice that has felt the influence of the street, for example in the written texts that we discover there. As the city is constantly in motion, trying to express concepts and meanings in different languages, critical literacy helps us understand how people actually make sense of those texts in the city. We are using ideas from critical literacy to look at words as cultural instruments located in different historical parts of a city and to interpret their social purpose in different communities.

The use of critical literacy will open spaces for our research teams to give a real-life perspective to our work and to understand the realities of those communities we are studying, giving us ideas about the data we need to collect and analyze in those spaces. .

### Expanding Second Language Research

Critical literacy continues to find more spaces in second language research. Recent questions in this field connected to critical literacy are moving beyond traditional forms of reading and writing. Current questions are looking at the changes in the way people use languages and what influences that use.

Discussions of critical literacy linked to new way of literacies, such as multimodalities or virtual literacy environments have become more relevant, especially when talking about second language acquisition. If there are new ways for people to read and write, we need to ask strong questions about who appears in these texts and who does not participate in them in physical and virtual spaces.

### References

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