



## LSLP Micro-Paper 80: Queer Critical Literacies

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### Defining the Term

Queer critical literacies become a way of thinking, talking, living, teaching and learning. This way of reading and understanding the world draws from [critical literacies](#) and queer theory. On the one hand, critical literacies empower the possibility to change people's perspectives on topics that are hardly explored because of lack of exposure, coverage, or stereotyped beliefs. On the other hand, queer theory is a way of thinking that takes distance from heterosexuality or binary gender constructs, instead arguing for a more fluid concept of identity.

Queer critical literacies are then a way of questioning the texts that rule the politics of everyday life. They are an invitation to break the heteronormative and cisgender assumptions that govern the way in which every person must think, talk and behave to fit in the world. Queer critical literacies promote the creation of safer spaces and social justice for all the members of a community. They open the possibility to hear the voices of those who have been historically invisible in the construction of materials and practices in education.

Queer critical literacies are necessary to understand that when students learn the way society works, it is easier for them to organize themselves against the oppressors. If they know how to name their reality, they are able to call and fight against inequity and injustice. Queer critical literacies open the possibility to point at the difference between heteronormative and queer discourses, highlighting that queer realities continue being censured by hegemonic powers in the different governments in the world. Queer critical literacies teach people how to use the right terms to name other's realities that make part of the world where they live coexisting with all types of difference, diversity and pluralism as we are intersectional human beings.

### Connecting it to LSLP

The LSLP community considers [literacies](#) as our main object of research, being critical literacy at the core of queer critical literacies, as empowerment and perspective change on hardly-discussed topics. This kind of literacy

that goes deep in the words and allows people to rethink their worlds, recognizes that no text is neutral, then [indexicality](#) takes place as the opportunity to analyze how language forms and social meanings are linked and contribute to the perpetuation of wrong ideas about sexual and gender [identity](#). In this sense, we have to mention that as 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers, it is necessary to change the material we use in class, not only to motivate students but also to use diverse means to share real content and provide students with the opportunities to answer back to hegemonic discourses through [multimodal](#) texts.

### Expanding Second Language Research

As part of our research project, queer critical literacy is connected to our own experiences as language learners and teachers. We have found that queer topics are not visible in the materials and practices that teachers usually use in the second language classroom.

It is difficult to think that under conditions of privilege, most teachers are prepared to deal with content related to LGBTQIA+ issues with concepts that they barely manage. It is important to say that the positionality of the teacher is crucial in order to promote new practices inside the language classroom in relation with the concept of gender and identity as a creation from the interaction with others and not something standard from birth and heteronormative and cisgender constructions of society.

### References

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