



LSLP Micro-Paper 83: Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies

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Defining the Term

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies (CSP) are the response to the new dynamics and the vast diversity we encounter in our classrooms. Understanding and acknowledging this richness and how our students, their cultures and identities are constantly changing, teachers' practices are called to be reshaped. A central tenet of education must be social transformation, through CSP, teachers are providing students with the necessary tools to succeed in a pluralistic, multilingual and multicultural world.

In the pursuit of social justice, CSP seeks to affirm, reposition, vindicate and preserve the culture of those who have been marginalized. It challenges us, teachers, to go beyond the acceptance of learners' cultures and step forward to center and sustain their histories and literacies to boost meaningful learning through students' realities.

Within this student-centered approach, teachers design their classes to create learning environments that empower students to become social agents who advocate for themselves and their communities. When and where CSP takes place in a classroom, it is imperative that it also permeates schools' curricula which eventually will propose a wider and more inclusive vision of national policies.

Connecting it to LSLP

CSP fits within LSLP's interests as we are constantly questioning ourselves about how we can improve our practices as teachers, as well as seeking frameworks that favor education equity. Therefore, it is our concern to find bridges, to achieve such goals. My proposal is about the intersection of CSP and [critical literacies](#) (CL) to create environments for social justice. To do so, it is necessary that students have a repertoire of literacies that enable them to engage in criticality.

CSP and CL are about giving voice from our language classrooms to interrogate hegemonic practices to enact the fluid cultures of our students. At LSLP,

framed under [socio-critical approaches](#), the conceptualization of [urban literacies](#) has help us to step away from the traditional view of English teaching to unveil and deconstruct relationships and [discourses](#) of power.

We are committed to honoring our ancestors, making visible what has been left behind and promoting a real transformation in our Colombian education. For that reason, we are inquiring about different forms to disrupt traditional and oppressive systems that do not recognize the cultural and linguistic background of our students and their communities.

Expanding Second Language Research

As second language teachers, we are constantly thinking about ways to ensure learning. CSP allows students and stakeholders to reimagine scenarios where everyone's voices are valued, making students more participative, critical and conscious on the communities and society they inhabit.

CSP must be considered not as a method to follow but as a mindset to be fostered where possible. Research can provide ideas on how teachers articulate CSP and negotiate with their curricula to close the gap between what has to be taught and what needs to be encouraged.

References

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