

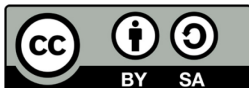
Teaching Queer Critical Literacies

Intersectional Considerations for a German ELT Classroom

Svenja Schillings^{1,*}

¹ Universität Bielefeld

* Contact: Universität Bielefeld,
Fakultät für Linguistik und Literaturwissenschaft,
Universitätsstraße 25, 33615 Bielefeld
svenja.schillings@uni-bielefeld.de



Dieses Werk ist freigegeben unter der Creative-Commons-Lizenz CC BY-SA 4.0 (Weitergabe unter gleichen Bedingungen). Diese Lizenz gilt nur für das Originalmaterial. Alle gekennzeichneten Fremdinhalte (z.B. Abbildungen, Fotos, Tabellen, Zitate etc.) sind von der CC-Lizenz ausgenommen. Für deren Wiederverwendung ist es ggf. erforderlich, weitere Nutzungsgenehmigungen beim jeweiligen Rechteinhaber einzuholen. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode.de>

Abstract: The constant negotiation of gender and sexuality – socially, politically, and individually – influences our thinking and actions in all areas of life, including education. Yet, the incorporation of such topics is tabooed in the classroom. This paper contains a unit that embeds queer life-worlds in already existing fields from the curriculum. It aims to demonstrate the instruction for challenging the cis- and heteronormative gaze in ELT. More specifically, it argues that teachers should centralize the students' personal interests to promote social justice. Therefore, the framework of queer critical literacies is suitable as it not only focuses on the education of gender and sexual diversity but also examines the reflection of underlying power dynamics, structural marginalization, knowledge, and agency. This cannot be done without an intersectional approach that provides a realistic and holistic view of identity.

Keywords: queer critical literacies; ELT classroom; intersectionality; diversity; Englischunterricht; Intersektionalität; Diversität

1 Introduction

School practice has an impact on the students' gender images. Schools serve as primary places where students learn about gender roles, often reinforcing traditional binary notions of masculinity and femininity (König, 2018, pp. 8–23). The interplay between gender and educational practices influences experiences, outcomes, and identity formation, making it critical to examine how gender dynamics operate within these environments. In adolescence, teenagers negotiate their sexual as well as gender-related orientation; schools should be a safe environment to support the development of their identities. Especially queer individuals often experience heightened vulnerability within educational settings due to systemic heteronormativity and pervasive social stigmas. Schools as a microcosm of broader society fail to provide inclusive environments that affirm diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (Summer & Steinbock, 2023, p. 78). Krell and Oldemeier revealed in their German study in 2017 that more than half of the interviewed trans and gender-nonconforming teenagers met teachers who derided their identities (Krell & Oldemeier, 2017, pp. 167–172).

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of addressing LGBTQ+ issues in academia, it remains a significant shortage of hands-on materials designed to counteract pervasive heteronormative perspectives and to empower agency regarding queer identities. This research gap is particularly evident in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), where diversity is and

should be taken up as an educational opportunity. Although progress has been made in the development of materials (König et al., 2015), there is still a considerable gap on the resources that teachers find accessible to teach and negotiate gender in ELT.

The article reacts to the inadequacy of available resources in teacher education, highlighting the necessity of frameworks such as queer critical literacies (QCL) to offer educators the tools and knowledge needed that foster a more inclusive and affirming learning environment for all students. It not only focuses on the education of gender and sexual diversity but also examines the reflection of fundamental power dynamics, structural marginalization, knowledge, and agency. Whereas queerphobia is a common practice in educational institutions, the reappraisal and inclusion of realities outside of cis- and heteronormativity are predominantly ignored (Gray, 2023, pp. 27–28). This cannot be done without an intersectional approach because the artificial separation of categories such as race, class, gender, and sexuality cannot demonstrate a realistic and complete prospect of identity (Gay, 2023, p. viii). This article aims to demonstrate how queer realities as well as the instruction for challenging the cis- and heteronormative gaze can and why it should be included in ELT. More specifically, it argues that teachers should centralize the students' personal interests to promote social justice regarding the representation of various genders and sexualities.

Hence, I begin by giving an insight into the theoretical concepts of taboo literacy, queer critical literacies, and intersectionality as they are closely related:

- The “suggested taboo categories are [...] related to issues of social (in)justice and (un)equal power relations, which can be related to the areas of race, class, gender, and disability” (Ludwig & Summer, 2023, p. 9). Especially the usage of language – how power dynamics are established, solidified, and shattered – plays a role.
- Even if Ludwig and Summer “introduce taboo literacy as a goal of critical literacy” (2023, p. 4), it cannot be equated. Critical literacies imply coming from a determined perspective and aiming to take responsibility for forthcoming social changes – strictly speaking social justice – and not only dealing with tabooed topics in school as they exist in every domain.
- The concept of queer critical literacies is shaped by Govender and Andrews's proposal. As a call for future academic work, they ask to see how their framework is used “to structure critically reflexive accounts

of curriculum design and pedagogical practice in primary, secondary, and higher education classrooms” (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 91).

I will lay the theoretical foundation to, then, ascertain if the regulated guidelines (curricula, textbooks) fulfill the line of the approaches. Consequently, this paper outlines the current intentions regarding gender and sexuality that are compiled in the curriculum and put into practice through the textbook. For exemplary visualization, I inspect the present curriculum from North Rhine-Westphalia. As a way to fill one segment of this gap in academic research and implementation in the school, this paper illustrates this discussion by means of a unit that embeds queer life-worlds within the existing materials.

2 Teaching social justice: taboo literacy, queer critical literacies, and intersectionality

The connection between social justice, gender, and intersectionality is foundational to understanding and addressing the complexities of identity within educational settings, including the ELT classroom. It is insufficient to merely educate students on isolated sociopolitical topics; instead, effective education must emphasize the intersections of these issues to foster a deeper understanding of how they interact and shape individual experiences. Reflecting on one’s identity requires an awareness of how societal classifications influence one’s position within various power structures. My approach to teaching critically is rooted in both political and identity-forming perspectives, recognizing that education is a powerful tool for social transformation. The following sub-sections will delve into the topic of teaching queerness by examining it through three key aspects: incorporating tabooed topics in school, exploring (queer) critical literacies, and educating with an intersectional approach.

2.1 The controversy of addressing taboos

When teachers introduce topics such as mental health, sexuality, or discrimination, they risk creating discomfort and ambiguity for every participant (Alter & Fuchs, 2023, p. 51; Braselmann, 2023, p. 171). In that, the field has long been praised by perspectives that education should remain ‘neutral’ ergo not include or negotiate sociopolitical topics that students encounter in and outside of the classroom anyway. Materials have been ‘norm washed’ in the past (Ludwig & Summer, 2023, p. 15), which impeded facing controversial topics through common textbooks. Issues that are a product of everyday lives are raw and unfiltered, but their adjustment for school can be time-consuming for teachers (Ludwig & Summer, 2023, p. 16).

Recent research in the field shows that taboo topics have long been sidelined in ELT: Ludwig and Summer (2023), for instance, have begun to fill a long overdue research gap. In academia, the exclusion of controversial topics is called ‘parsnip policy’. PARSNIP is an acronym for various tabooed topics such as porn, politics, alcohol, religion, and -isms – many topics that fall within the environment of students or teenagers in general. This is one important justification that makes ‘parsnip’ issues highly relevant for foreign language teaching. From the same collected volume, Summer and Steinbock’s study on student-oriented teaching, for example, shows the importance of involving tabooed topics. On one hand, half of the participants expressed that they are interested in the topic of sexualities in their spare time. Simultaneously, Summer and Steinbock state that “57.4 % of participants stated that they had never talked about homosexuality [...] [and] 77.6 % never addressed gender reassignment in class” (Summer & Steinbock, 2023, p. 75). Further on, the participants not only assess ‘parsnip’ issues as essential in school education but also ask for them in ELT (p. 77). As a result, it seems obvious that tabooed topics, especially gender and sexuality, are not as involved as the students would like them to be. Centering lessons around the students should not tolerate avoiding such issues because they might be uncomfortable to teach (Alter & Fuchs, 2023, p. 52; Braselmann, 2023, p. 170).

One way of handling discomfort is addressing a topic through fictional literature and characters. Considering a perspective that is separated from one’s own opens another space of discussion: the *Didaktik des Fremdverstehens*. It builds upon the elemental assumption that the switch to an internal perspective of another (fictional) person “allows them to incorporate hitherto alien aspects of the other culture into their world-view, and overcome prejudices and stereotypes” (Fuchs & Könemann, 2018, p. 137). The students learn to differentiate between their personal feelings and fictional ones, which can ensure privacy (Alter & Fuchs, 2023, p. 53). König describes the negotiation of fictional situations as a safer space because the student has the position of the ‘concerned friend’ (König, 2018, p. 139). This feeds two birds with one scone. Analyzing gender on the basis of fictional characters does not necessarily oppose another crucial concept, namely learner-centeredness, which is desired from both the students’ side and from critical literacies (Vasquez, 2017, p. 7). In fact, the concepts can be easily combined as the latter may include working with fictional texts as well.

2.2 From critical literacies to queer critical literacies

As presented in the previous subsection, teaching social justice is a delicate and highly sensitive topic. However, there are specific approaches in language education that can help both teachers and students work towards social justice in and outside of the classroom. The subsequent approaches give an insight into how to deconstruct injustice as well as power dynamics through texts and other forms of media.

Scholars describe the ideological perception that heterosexuality and being cisgender are the predominantly accepted systems in modern Western society (Regan & Meyer, 2021, p. 1). More specifically, this perception influences other domains in life like parenthood, the workspace, or relationships. When activities differ from the ‘norm’, these practices are socially rejected or stamped as ‘abnormal’ (Regan & Meyer, 2021, p. 1). Individuals and groups that challenge these norms are marginalized and discriminated against on a structural basis. The view of gender as a binary radically excludes queer people from society and impedes their daily lives. Vice versa, being seen as straight or cisgender unveils structural privileges and personal security. These patriarchal norms have more impact than consent or ethics (Regan & Meyer, 2021, pp. 1–2, 5–6). This contrast between exclusion and privilege underscores the necessity of critical literacies, which equip individuals with the analytical tools to deconstruct entrenched norms and challenge the narratives that perpetuate exclusion and inequality.

Critical literacies are rooted in different theories and teaching methods: The concept broadly originates from the Frankfurt School, a socio-philosophical school of thought from the 1920s that was highly influenced by critical theorists such as Marx, Hegel, and Adorno. Another influential work has been Freire’s contribution to critical pedagogy, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), which gave a ground-breaking insight into relations within the classroom and society, not only for Brazil but for the rest of the world as well. These two examples of 20th-century concepts show the interdisciplinary linkage of critical literacies (Vasquez, 2017, pp. 1–2).

Critical literacies can be defined as a methodology to analyze and reflect on any communicational media. For school practices, it can be a “political orientation to teaching and learning and to the cultural, ideological, and socio-linguistic content of the curriculum” (Luke, 2014, p. 21). The critical engagement with texts and media centers around power dynamics, contextualization, and social transformation (Luke, 2014, p. 25). Therefore, the learners do not

only focus on the content but also deconstruct the used language and how it transports power (Luke, 2014, p. 27). However, the definition of criticality and critical literacies are to this day very context-specific, making a broad, unanimous understanding almost impossible (see Louloudi, 2023; Pandya et al., 2022). To address this issue, several researchers have come up with a variety of elements that can help break down what critical literacies can look like in the classroom. Vasquez (2017), for instance, has defined key aspects of critical literacies.

- (1) Its main purpose is to focus on sociopolitical debates and inequalities – i.e. power dynamics, agency, and social issues like class, race, and gender – impacting our language and our actions. The learners are guided to question the system: Its main premise, that “the world is seen as a socially constructed text that can be read” (Vasquez, 2017, p. 7), should make the foundation of working with critical literacies. Every subject and object can be analyzed in the classroom as it is dependent on someone’s position and biases.
- (2) The teachers should initiate the investigation of multiple perspectives. Critical literacies suggest that teachers ask critical questions to examine the status quo in society from various angles and to find possibilities for change. This gives a better understanding that the learners’ understanding of the socially constructed object is influenced by their perspective.
- (3) Critical literacies demand student-centeredness. The reflective lens needs to be put into practice in connection to the students’ living environment, knowledge, and daily experiences. Bringing your own materials and personal opinions into the discussion can enrich the outcome (Vasquez, 2017, pp. 7–8). Nevertheless, teaching the diversity of genders and sexualities should not go along with pressuring the students to make a statement about their emotional state, sexual orientation, or gender. Teachers should not build the lesson on the personal experiences of all participants to minimize the risk of “violating their religious and political beliefs, their moral codex and sexuality” (Ludwig & Summer, 2023, p. 14) or traumas.

In Germany, the discussion on critical literacies is now gaining more attention in ELT. With his anthology *Kritische Fremdsprachendidaktik* (2020), Gerlach edited one of the few German contributions that directly addresses criti-

cal literacies. In this collection, Merse (2020) has highlighted how the teaching of queer life-worlds is implemented internationally, concluding that a monosexual view is seen as the norm in classroom practice. At the same time, heteronormative images are constantly reproduced by textbooks and other common materials. Still, queer theory in school should not stop here and only (better) portray and represent the queer community, but in doing so, also look at the hetero- and cisnormative character of the representation and how gender and sexuality are negotiated linguistically (Merse, 2020, p. 112). Exemplary depictions of LGBTQ+ realities should not simply be seen as an addition, but teachers should place them in existing subject areas in order to make productive use of content (Merse, 2020, p. 117).

As Merse's research has shown, many German ELT classes address this lack progressively: Plenty of German states, school laws, guidelines for sexuality education, and English curricula provide an option for dealing with the diversity of sexual and gender identities. These, then, are expected to be implemented and gain relevance in the classroom (Merse, 2020, pp. 107–108). It is insufficient to merely adapt the curricula; there is still a dearth of support for the implementation of the new guidelines. Consequently, there is a need for materials that engage in a rigorous examination of the social constructs. Merse suggests three dimensions of interventions for practical uses: the affirmative visualization of LGBTQ+ identities, the critical examination of heteronormativity, and the linguistic negotiation of sexual and gender identities (Merse, 2020, p. 112).

To better address this distinction, Govender and Andrews (2022) have framed an approach and techniques to challenge cis- and heteronormativity in schools within the setting of teaching and learning. Educating through the lens of queer critical literacies as well as dealing with gender and sexuality means

“confronting how (student) teachers, teacher educators, learners, institutions, curriculums, texts, media, academics, research, and even governments are implicated in those power relations that [marginalize] or actively oppress non-normative gender and sexual groups while serving the interests of heteronormativity and (hetero)patriarchy.” (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 82)

To do so, teachers are asked to pursue queering the context and content, disrupting the commonplace of the cis- and heterosexual ‘standard’. Together with the students, they analyze different products of society to uncover inequalities, stereotypes, and the use of language. Govender and Andrews suggest tracking the hegemonic power structures, such as the heterosexual male gaze, in texts and medial presentations. Queer critical literacies also go along

with teaching the history of LGBTQ+ existence, resistance, adjustment, and persecution. Lessons should examine “how non-conforming identities and representations are shaped and to what extent they challenge and/or reproduce a range of norms” (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 84), which cannot be done without keeping in mind intersectionality. Even if or maybe exactly because there is not one right way to teach queer critical literacies, Govender and Andrews propose a conceptual framework that includes five steps: 1. *Questioning Representation*, 2. *Questioning Reading Practices*, 3. *Questioning Policing*, 4. *Questioning Knowledge, Assumptions and Meaning-Making*, and 5. *Questioning Self*. Together, these phases aim to critically pursue the representation, agency, and policy of queerness and queer people in society.

2.3 Intersectionality and its practical use in the classroom

Demanding an intersectional approach is a common phrase that appears in the outlook of many academic essays on critical literacies (Low et al., 2022, p. 315). However, it is my impression that far fewer dare to combine these techniques in practice. In one way, this could be because both theories are not necessarily rigidly formulated or point to a clear path of implementation.

The academic world has broadly defined the framework and object of investigation of this complex approach: Intersectionality focuses on collective experiences, such as diverse discrimination forms that certain groups make within society (e.g. Collins, 2019; Crenshaw, 1989; Meyer, 2017). In other words, it recognizes discrimination as a structural issue leading to marginalization. Therefore, it does not look at singular characteristics of identities but rather at how specific sections like race, class, and gender are intertwined. These -isms and disempowerments stand in contrast to the personification of absolute privilege, namely the white, wealthy, elderly man (Meyer, 2017, p. 34).

Historically, intersectionality developed from a thought of criticism. Various theories of intersectionality are compiled by people who are adversely affected by it (Meyer, 2017, p. 22). It is deeply rooted in the research on the marginalization of U.S. black women. Hill Collins’s writings *Black Feminist Thought* (1990) and *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology* (1992, together with M.L. Andersen) and Crenshaw’s essays “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex” (1989) and “Mapping the Margins” (1991) are pioneer works for seizing intersectionality. They aimed to criticize the white or rather whitewashed, middle-class heterosexual, Western feminist movements of the second half of the 20th century (Meyer, 2017, p. 35). Crenshaw established to

recognize that intersectionality does not mean adding different forms of discrimination, but an intertwinement on different axes (1989, p. 149).

Discrimination is a structural problem that goes beyond individual experiences. This also means recognizing social inequality, which is determined by privilege and discrimination. Moreover, the marginalization of minorities limits their self-determination. They must conform to norms, which reinforces collective oppression. This leads to violence from the dominant society (Meyer, 2017, pp. 73–79). The resulting power grid is labeled as the ‘matrix of domination’ of intersecting power dynamics (Collins, 2019, p. 239).

Since this paper aims to show an exemplary insight into teaching the intersection of sex and gender in foreign language lessons, Butler’s *Gender Trouble* (1990) is essential for the previously illustrated discourse.¹ Butler overcomes the typically Western distinction between the socially constructed ‘gender’ and the supposedly natural ‘sex’. Both terms are socially constructed and are shaped through political discourse (Butler, 1999, p. 10). Women have to meet the standards of the male, white, and phallogocentric view. Butler recognizes the intersections of ‘sex’, gender, sexual practice, and desire: Western society heterosexualizes its participants and equates being female with femininity and being male with masculinity. Everyone is assumed to be ‘naturally’ heterosexual until proven otherwise (Butler, 1999, pp. 20–27).

By centering my paper around the intersection of gender and sexuality, I must recognize that this could easily fall into the trap of whitewashing intersectionality. Europe’s feminists tend to interpret gender as the most important component and exclude race from the academic discourse. This Eurocentric view disregards that black, female activists developed it to fight the marginalization within the feminist movement. In the past and today, the academic feminist dialogue is predominantly white (Bilge, 2014, pp. 175, 191–192).²

¹ Butler writes that the “masculine/feminine binary constitutes not only the exclusive framework in which that specificity can be recognized, but in every other way the ‘specificity’ of the feminine is once again fully decontextualized and separated off analytically and politically from the constitution of class, race, ethnicity, and other axes of power relations that both constitute ‘identity’ and make the singular notion of identity a misnomer.” (Butler, 1999, p. 7)

² Bilge identifies a change in the last years: Black scholars’ “knowledge production is now recognized if regulated by the principles of white science, though of lesser value and severely limited to their own kind. While whites still have the authority

Since intersectionality is such a complex concept, only a few scholars are committed to including it in teaching practices. Even fewer have tried to explicitly make intersectionality a topic in schools: Naples's article "Teaching Intersectionality Intersectionally" (2009) and Case's anthology *Intersectional Pedagogy* (2017) raise awareness on how to implement the approach in and around (adult) education. Especially one of the newest academic works on teaching intersectionality, Carter and Vavrus's *Intersectionality of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Teaching and Teacher Education* (2018), shifts its focus to "analyzing the empowering dynamics of the resistance, resilience, and transcendence [of] marginalized groups [engaging] in opposition to oppression and exploitation" (Gay, 2023, p. vii). Gay invites readers to not only perceive intersectionality as an approach but also as a call for change.

3 Relevant *Bildungspolitik*

The following teaching unit is planned for students in the *Einführungsphase* of a German *Gymnasium*. By scheduling this content at a later point in school, I want to make sure that gender and especially sexuality can be discussed as part of their life-worlds. Therefore, they need to acquire a special set of vocabulary that allows the students to negotiate a range of words in this stage of their life so that they start reflecting on complex and relevant issues. Learners at this age are teenagers who are confronted with puberty and its influence on their bodies and environment. The expectations that society has regarding their behavior change and contain a claim for responsibility. What makes puberty such a highly precarious situation is that the learners' experience is a finding process of their identity, negotiated between social media, social anticipation, and personal hopes.

Some of these students will be allowed to vote in German federal states or the EU and therefore should get in touch with political ideas, structures, and promises. Considering the politicization of queerness, knowledge on gender and sexuality has to be negotiated in school. Many right-winged parties – populist and extremist – actively stigmatize queer people and restrict the freedom of minority groups. However, teaching critically does not automatically need to orientate oneself towards a party, as it rather focuses on power relations and language. Democracy and social participation are to be encouraged (Gerlach, 2020, p. 18).

to produce knowledge on non-whites, the opposite is less valid" (Bilge, 2014, p. 193).

Queer adolescents deal with their non-heterosexual or non-cisgender experiences. This can be followed by insecurities about their inner coming out and thoughts about whether or how to communicate them to their environment and how to meet partners. Trans and gender-non-conforming young people might also experience physical developments during this time that do not correspond to their gender perception (Krell & Oldemeier, 2017, p. 193). At this age, the pressure to adapt to the cis- and heteronormative behavioral structures increases and can lead to psychological strain (Krell & Oldemeier, 2017, pp. 193–194). Aside from the internal pressure, discrimination, and external forces are common experiences for members of the LGBTQ+ community in educational institutions. Hushing non-heterosexual and non-cisgender lifestyles or making fun of queer people contributes to the fact that coming out in school remains ambivalent and difficult for many adolescents and young adults. Krell and Oldemeier's study illustrates that four out of ten adolescents state that they have experienced discrimination within places of education and work. More than half of the adolescents and young adults stated that they had experienced discrimination at school in the form of verbal abuse, insults, and ridicule (2017, pp. 105–114). Krell and Oldemeier's research shows that we cannot omit an intersectional perspective because the conceptions of lesbians and gays, for instance, differ in how society treats them.

The Ministry of Education in North Rhine-Westphalia published a new version of the curriculum in 2023 that, in contrast to the curriculum from 2014, explicitly addresses gender- and sexuality-related diversity (MSB NRW, 2023, p. 9). While the previous standard curriculum was centered around intercultural competencies, the subsequent one covers broader, multidisciplinary objectives like education on human rights, politics, democracy, digital media, sustainability, and gender (MSB NRW, 2023, p. 8). Thus, the teachers are instructed to encourage multiperspectivity in practice. This includes the willingness to meet other people without prejudice and critically understand individual life-worlds. Especially the newest curriculum for North Rhine-Westphalia's *Einführungsphase* of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* consolidated the thematic field of the opportunities and challenges of young people regarding ethnic, cultural, social, sexual, and gender diversity (MSB NRW, 2023, p. 18). Hence, one could argue that queer critical literacies could be understood as part of addressing diversity in the ELT classroom.

So, how do queer critical literacies and the standard curriculum in this German federal state align? To simply think that queer critical literacies are directly included would be short-sighted. Yet, both directions share certain val-

ues and aims in teaching. Particularly the current version sets political education, social responsibility, and social justice matters as fundamental goals for accomplishing the educational mission of schools (MSB NRW, 2023, p. 9). Still, intercultural communicative competencies, based on Byram's concept (1997), are a major aim of ELT. They have been criticized for their static view of culture and understanding of 'self' and 'other' (e.g. Louloudi, 2023, p. 333; Plikat, 2017).

Furthermore, the decision on what topics to cover should be student-oriented. The curriculum and critical literacies agree upon the aim to propose active and responsible participation in shaping their personal lives (MSB NRW, 2023, pp. 9–10). Nevertheless, the core issue of critical literacies, teaching to question power structures, individual and structural discrimination, and agency, is neither openly communicated nor requested. Including gender and sex issues is a corresponding sign toward queer critical literacies. What is missing now is a permanent critical view, with which topics like race, class, ability, and gender can be worked through.

Queer critical literacies are particularly suitable to teach in foreign language classes because they embrace the components of culture, literature, and language. König demonstrates how teachers can access gender reflection by analyzing the status quo of language. The alleged binary system of gender and patriarchal structures is constructed and can be uncovered in ways to speak. Various genders and sexualities are part of every society, which makes them relevant for intercultural learning and developing such competencies (König, 2018, pp. 34–35). Through foreign language negotiations of gender, the process of teaching and learning is slowed down and reduced in complexity. Then, the students have the possibility to translate step by step and talk about gender-related phenomena that are not (yet) normatively occupied in their minds. Some emotional topics can be verbally expressed in an easier way through another language because it builds a certain distance between the speaker and its content (König, 2018, pp. 36–37). Ideally, the teachers allow the students to have a say regarding content. Due to the learner-centeredness in critical literacies, the students' desire to communicate can rise. However, connecting to their life-world can carry the risk of initiating discomfort and silence (König, 2018, pp. 321–325). In the following, I will present a teaching unit that gives the students the possibility to address their personal interests without losing sight of the curriculum and to negotiate gender and sexualities in a productive manner.

4 Lesson design

The following teaching unit (see also Table 1) consists of five lessons, each of which will roughly be 90 minutes long. First, a general overview of the teaching unit is introduced to then focus on a more detailed presentation of one of the included lesson plans, with all the goals, competencies, and particularities relevant to the curriculum. It is my goal to follow the intersectional approach without confronting the students with the exact definitions and contradictions. In other words, I aim to break down the essence of intersectionality without simplifying it. Thorsten Merse pleads for including topics such as gender and sexuality in the already existing agenda considering that the curriculum is constantly loaded. Doing justice to the agenda and the students can be difficult for teachers. Queer critical literacies should be anchored and linked to the present subject areas (Merse, 2020, p. 117). One advantage is that the students will not get the impression of gender and sexuality as something that is separated from their daily lives. The linkage to existing knowledge gives relevance to topics outside the cis- and heteronormative ideology. This unit, for example, is tied to the curriculum by touching on topics like South Africa as an English-speaking reference culture, digital and social media, different forms of literature, challenges for young people, and shaping the future.

Table 1: Overview of the teaching unit (own presentation)

<i>Lesson</i>	<i>Queer critical literacies</i>	<i>Content</i>
1	Questioning Representation and Reading Practices I	Challenging heteronormativity
2	Questioning Representation and Reading Practices II	Cape Town as the ‘gay capital’, identities of queer people Exclusion within the LGBTQ+
3	Questioning Policing	Inclusion in and exclusion from politics, institutional handling of queer-ness
4	Questioning Knowledge, Assumptions, and Meaning Making	Restricted knowledge, safety on the internet
5	Questioning Self	Project design on queer representation and allyship

1. Govender and Andrews's plan is stipulated in a way that begins with *Questioning Representation of Queer People and Experiences*. To introduce the unit about queer identities, the teacher can ask the students about what they think belongs to the nature of identities. Most likely, terms like sexuality and gender will be named because they influence our everyday lives. Then, the teacher can initiate the use of a digital mind map while they deepen their knowledge of gender and sexuality. Braselmann suggests this method of drawing mind maps with -isms, privileges, and forms of discrimination to visualize possible overlaps and intersectional relations (2023, p. 175). The students should bring together their already existing knowledge on these matters. Thereafter, the focus needs to be drawn away from their own identity and experiences since access to queerness should not begin on a personal level that might overstrain their emotions. I propose to introduce one part of queerness through short stories. In the sense of queer critical literacies, the attention shifts to *Questioning Reading Practices*.

2. The second sequence of this unit also aligns with Govender and Andrews's *Questioning Representation and Questioning Reading Practices* to negotiate queer critical literacies. The primary learning goal is to deconstruct the exclusion within the queer community that underlies the concepts of intersectionality, sexualization, and capitalism. It is essential for students to understand the various forms of resilience, with Cape Town – renowned for its diverse and vibrant LGBTQ+ community – serving as an illustrative case study. A subsequent analysis will examine this session in greater detail, addressing the methodological and content-related aspects in a comprehensive manner.

3. The third lesson, *Questioning the Policing of (A)Gender and (A)Sexuality*, centralizes the school policy on gender and sexuality and reflects on the requirements of the North Rhine-Westphalian curriculum. In the first working phase, the students are invited to deconstruct school policies. The methodological-didactical implementation is linked to Chris Richards's requests for future research: He wishes to see an investigation into "how these identities are represented, if at all, in ELT materials and how this particular silence can be addressed in an inclusive way" (Richards, 2022, p. 172) after analyzing main-stream classroom materials like textbooks. In the second working phase, the instructor hands out the German and Scottish curricula. In the late 2010s, the Scottish government established an LGBTQ+ inclusive education working group and thereby embedded a queer-friendly teaching policy in their national core curriculum (TIE, 2020). Because the curriculum functions as the basic element for the construction of the textbook, the students need to

contemplate what effect the documents have on teaching and broadly on their lives.

4. *Questioning Knowledge, Assumptions, and Meaning-Making* is the focus of the fourth lesson in this unit. As an exemplary realization, I chose the topic of dating outside the cis-heteronormative concept. Digital media have had an enormous influence on the construction and empowerment of queer identities (Fox & Ralston, 2016, p. 635). Especially online dating is a part of queer culture because it can be a safer and more anonymous way to meet people for sex, friendship, and romantic intentions (Fox & Ralston, 2016). Individuals that do not fit into cis- and heteronormativity can use these platforms to avoid confrontations vis-à-vis and decide beforehand if they like to meet the person. Yet, the advantages can quickly become its downside: Anonymity can be exploited.³ To conclude the lesson, the teacher shows the website *Queering the Map* (<https://www.queeringthemap.com/>) to the students. Locations on the map are commented on by people from the LGBTQ+ community who share their experiences and associations with the chosen place. This collaborative cartography marks queer memories, unfolding their realities and their individual agency. The comments are set worldwide, showing queer love in countries where it is forbidden; every place has its own queer history.

5. In the fifth and final lesson, the students follow Govender and Andrews's *Questioning Self*. One essential part of critical literacies is the reflection of personal biases as socially constructed and the possibility to actively challenge the predominant power dynamics that cause systematic discrimination (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 89). Instead of implicitly enforcing this reflection like in the past lessons, this sequence aims to explicitly call for social justice and gives options to do so. On the basis that the teacher has built over

³ For many people, the internet functions as an intangible space where you cannot hold them accountable for their words. By the exclusion of topics that fall under the spectrum of PARSNIP-taboos, (media) literacy loses its authenticity. Haskins and Ludwig demonstrate in their article "Let's Talk about Sexting" how to implement such tabooed topics in the classroom and state that "in the digital age, it is important to encourage young adults to think about their own actions online and make them aware of possible (often life-long) consequences that may follow from them: essential skills in the digital skills landscape" (2023, p. 141). Many teenagers will probably use online dating platforms one day and should learn their benefits and risks rather than be told to demonize them. Not only dating platforms are used to connect with individuals romantically and sexually; *Instagram* and other forms of social media are filled with sexbots and people that show abusive behaviors.

the last sessions, the participants should negotiate their role as allies together. Being an ally also means being open-minded when situations and people occur that are not fulfilling the cis- and heteronormative view or the male gaze. These strategies are the foundation of respectful behavior and should be expanded to a point where the students will actively advocate queer realities and oppose individual and structural violence to enforce social justice.

As previously stated, this section will provide a more comprehensive overview of the second session (see Table 2). The topic of Cape Town is particularly suitable for English lessons as it is referenced in numerous textbooks on South African history and culture. This is likely to facilitate the consolidation of prior knowledge about the country and its history. Particularly the information on apartheid should already be firmly established in the students' minds, given the comprehensive nature of the lesson plan. Covering Cape Town in ELT offers an opportunity to challenge the Eurocentric perspective and reflect on stereotypes associated with African countries and their individual approaches to queerness.

Table 2: Second lesson: Questioning Representation and Reading Practices II (own presentation)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Materials</i>
Introduction	Evoke background knowledge: What do you remember regarding Cape Town and apartheid? How does Cape Town celebrate Pride Month?	plenum	textbook
Working (I)	Research different queer-friendly hotspots, events, places, and pictures on the internet.	group	pictures and texts from their research
Collecting	Describe what you have found in your research. Together, we can add the information to the digital mind map.	plenum	digital mind map
Transfer (II)	Read the following article on the South African language Gayle and point out the main aspects.	with a partner	Tanya Olckers's article "Gayle: South Africa's Secret Gay Language" (2023)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Materials</i>
<i>Deepening (III)</i>	Discuss how language can be used as a form of oppression or for the sake of reliance and empowerment. Write one tweet to explain your opinion and discuss the power of Gayle in a few sentences.	alone	online tool to collect all of the tweets
<i>Collecting</i>	Read out your tweets.	plenum	online tool

The lesson pursues the following learning objective: The students engage in a discussion on the extent to which language can be employed as a discriminatory and empowering tool. This is exemplified by the case of Cape Town. Students describe how Cape Town, as the ‘queer capital of the world’, focuses on white, gay, young men who enjoy numerous privileges. The representation of gay men is sometimes stereotypical and sexualized. For them, this form of tourism offers public spaces to meet, for instance, saunas, clubs, and nude beaches. Groups such as black people, trans people, and lesbians, who do not have as many privileges, are excluded. Conversely, they discuss the empowering potential of language for marginalized groups, such as Gayle, in Cape Town.

In the first working phase, the students are divided into small groups and use their technical devices. Their task is to research via search engines to find hotspots for queer people existing in Cape Town. Online maps, pictures, and reviews are helpful tools for finding such places. As already mentioned above, the practice of critical literacies contains that the teacher asks deconstructive questions. Suitable questions could be:

- What spaces are developed to support queer living in Cape Town?
- Where can they meet? For which queer group can Cape Town be a fun, safe travel spot?
- Does it recreate a cliché you have in your mind?
- How is queer sexuality portrayed?
- Which LGBTQ+ groups are not seen?

By dealing with these issues, the students will understand that Cape Town is not an inclusive place for every group within the LGBTQ+ spectrum:

“De Waterkant has in many instances not considered the inseparability of sexuality, race, gender, and class, and consequently, the particular dominance of gay white males within the Pink Village may raise questions about whether the physical space considers the inclusive rights of all oppressed communities and the extent to which pre-existing privileges (such as the white male privilege) have influenced the area’s demographic composition.” (Venske, 2015, p. 206)

Cape Town profits immensely from this kind of tourism and financial expenditure of white gay men. Lesbians, trans, or asexual people are not thought of in this kind of hedonistic experience. Simultaneously, the capital supports the cliché of the partying, young gay community. When the participants in the classroom take the online pictures into account, the photographed people are either shirtless and ‘homomasculine’ or dressed in drag. The existing cruising zones and saunas are commercializing and opening a safe space for the sexual activities of white, upper-class, gay visitors from Europe. The male gaze plays an essential role because the queer culture in Cape Town is developed and reinforced by the desire of wealthy men. Together with their knowledge of apartheid, the students can complete the picture of which groups are excluded nowadays from the flourishing pink tourism. By actively searching for queer spaces, they get an insight into a realistic scenario that queer people might face when looking for safer spaces. Finding a destination for vacation is done with caution for members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Reygan states that lesbian invisibility originates in the patriarchal structures of post-apartheid Cape Town. This especially applies to “Black lesbian women in South Africa, whose sexuality is constructed by reactionary voices as outside of ‘tradition’ and ‘Africanness’ and therefore subjected to a form of genocide and the attempted eradication of lesbian existence” (Reygan, 2016, p. 95). Proving his thesis, Reygan analyzed queer print media and explains the predominant lesbian invisibility in Cape Town’s history: Due to apartheid, lesbian sex was considered to be impossible. Lesbians, black queers, and people living in poverty are excluded from the consumerist ‘gay culture’ that develops into a privatized and monetarized neighborhood in South Africa. These groups within the queer community were silenced but actively work against their marginalization (Reygan, 2016, pp. 91–96).

Yet, teaching queer critical literacies goes beyond the confrontation of oppressive systems. The students are asked to think a step further and “[explore] resistance, reconstructions of identity, and subversion” (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 84). One form of resistance is Gayle, a language that emerged from the queer, non-white working class. Even if some words in Gayle were

adopted by the white, gay, male patriarchy, it originally secured safe discussions for people with fewer privileges. Gayle is a form of opposition against heteronormativity and a protective shield that enabled queer people to talk freely without fearing persecution. This language influenced subcultural identities and empowered communities. Queer critical literacies attempt to deconstruct language and its social effects since “it is linked to discomfort around sex and sexuality” (Govender & Andrews, 2022, p. 88) and allows questioning the power and influence of its use. Gayle disrupts the patriarchal hegemony and stands for diversity. The second working phase of the lesson involves a reading task: For the application to the classroom, I propose the reading of Tanya Olckers’s article “Gayle: South Africa’s Secret Gay Language” (2023) from the online platform mambaonline.com, as it not only informs shortly but also gives some examples. This text gives an insight into the exceptional language and can open the final discussion on how linguistics and queer resistance are intertwined.

5 Role of the teacher and possible limitations

Before discussing possible limitations of teaching queer critical literacies, the following paragraph outlines exemplary issues that teachers need to calculate when targeting queerness: recognizing color, sensitivity to discriminating language, as well as self-awareness and managing their own queerness. In promoting gender reflection in foreign language teaching, a basic knowledge of gender theory is necessary. Being a teacher is accompanied by different privileges and disadvantages due to the predominant power structures. Their self-awareness and the people’s external perception will shape the lessons fundamentally (König, 2018, pp. 226–228). Gay (2023) addresses the requirement of keeping the students’ identities in mind and writes that

“it is ironic that many teachers attempt to ignore their students’ race or ethnicity or gender by being colorblind and culturally mute, while claiming to be committed to maximizing these students’ individual and human potential” (p. viii).

This resilience against tackling racism also dismisses the hegemonic, patriarchal system that underlies our society. Individualizing discrimination cannot lead to social justice or activism in the next step, because then, everyone would be responsible for themselves.

On the basis of self-reflecting processes, queer teachers need to handle the dilemma of outing themselves in front of students. By coming out, they normalize queerness within the students’ everyday world, within the mainstream.

On the other hand, the learners might think that their queer teachers can represent a whole community and function as their personal ‘queer dictionary’. Here, the teachers should clarify that they can only speak from their own experiences and academic expertise. This does not mean those openly queer instructors should center their lessons around their anecdotes but this practice can establish a safer space for possible queer students. It is not to say that non-queer teachers should not also teach this sequence. It is important that all ELT educators deal with it professionally and reflect on their internalized biases, but queer teachers might struggle with differentiating between personal and professional knowledge. It might seem inauthentic for teachers to deal with challenging cis- and heteronormativity while hiding their own queerness. Nevertheless, it can be crucial: Before outing themselves, they should feel secure. Having LGBTQ+ people in the immediate environment has been proven to be the best way to break down stereotypes (König, 2018, p. 233).

This teaching unit is only one idea of how queer critical literacies can be approached in the German ELT classroom; however, there are certain limitations that need to be explored with regard to our situated context: Daily news show what can happen if teachers deal with tabooed topics in the classroom. In Florida, USA, a school principal has reportedly been expelled for showing Michelangelo’s naked statue of David in Art class because parents complained about its ‘pornographic’ character (Zips, 2023). Nudity is falsely equated with pornography. This exclusion of both leads to the shameful handling of the body and its changes. There are numerous examples of teachers being fired due to queerness around the world. Incidents of such nature are not isolated cases.

North Rhine-Westphalia’s school laws regarding sex education determine that interdisciplinary school-based sex education complements the one provided by parents. It aims to gain responsibility towards themselves and others. Sex education should support young people in developing their own values in questions of sexuality and enable them to deal with their own in a self-confident manner. It serves to promote acceptance among all people regardless of their sexual orientation, identity, relationships, and lifestyles associated with them. Furthermore, parents should be informed about the implementation of this form of education (SchulG NRW, 2022/2005, § 33).

This opens room for interpretation as to whether the planned lesson counts as sex education or teaching general knowledge. For this reason, teachers should check their scope of action with the school administration and, in a second step, perhaps with the parents.

Ludwig and Summer suggest that the teachers should reflect on their reasons for educating the tabooed topics and that they might discuss them with the students' parents beforehand as the teachers must negotiate and justify these methods with legal guardians. Parents might be afraid of the school tempting or misleading their children in a way that is not compatible with their education at home (Ludwig & Summer, 2023, pp. 15–16). The students' legal guardians can intervene and sometimes will do so.⁴ Their possible involvement should not be interpreted as predominantly negative because they can bring relevant references to the teenagers' life-worlds when teachers decide not to shy away from the verbal exchange.⁵

6 Conclusion

Even if students are confronted with the topic of gender and sexuality in their everyday life, the incorporation of realities beyond cis- and heteronormativity is still stigmatized and tabooed in the classroom (Merse, 2020, pp. 107–108). The proponents of this policy seem to fear that teenagers, nowadays, will challenge the cis- and heteronormative traditions that predefine ethics and behavior without assessing the potential of these norms to harm and limit the LGBTQ+ community.

To counteract this silencing of queer realities in school, this paper has discussed the necessity of centering queer voices and challenging the cis- and heteronormative ideology, even if the education of gender and sexuality on a 'non-biological' level is tabooed in school. I have suggested considering Govender and Andrews's (2022) concept for teaching queer critical literacies because it provides guidelines for profound practice. Confronting the students

⁴ As Wallace has shown in her bachelor's thesis, parents can sometimes be hesitant when teachers introduce critical topics. The study suggests that the parents can feel threatened and uncomfortable (Wallace, 2023).

⁵ Speaking from my personal experiences, planning lessons to specifically teach intersectionality has been difficult. Its complexity and missing uniformity of definitions make the approach challenging to modify. Students should not be confronted with the extensive prevailing contradictions. This gives teachers the purpose to make it tangible, comprehensible, and close to their realities. The knowledge is explained to be adapted outside and inside the classroom as their democratic education goes beyond school walls. Educators should pursue the claim to present relations to democratic education in every unit because it is enshrined in German laws. This request can put pressure on teachers, but teaching with an intersectional lens is worth the effort.

with various cultural and social identities in ELT can only be feasible with an intersectional approach. It prevents a generalization of marginalized groups and reflects on agency and resistance. The teachers need to go through an ongoing process of self-reflection regarding their own biases and their attitude toward discussing issues of race, gender, sexuality, and class in school. Yet, teaching critical literacies must be student-centered and, therefore, needs to be flexible.

Moreover, my sample unit needs to be put into practice to test its implementability and utility. The preparation of the lesson cannot end with one unit. Queer critical literacies and intersectionality should be part of every lesson, sometimes more implicitly than explicitly discussed. Both approaches predetermine perspectives and possibilities that can be conveyed beyond the classroom. Additionally, one fundamental purpose is the dedication to social justice and, therefore, to promote respectful social interaction and democratic education to support students in becoming responsible citizens.

References

- Alter, G. & Fuchs, S. (2023). Taboo or Not Taboo? To Talk or Not to Talk? These Are the Questions. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (Eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 49–56). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701-7>
- Andersen, M.L. & Hill Collins, P. (1992). *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology*. Wadsworth.
- Bilge, S. (2014). Whitening Intersectionality. Evanescence of Race in Intersectionality Scholarship. In W.D. Hund & A. Lentin (Eds.), *Racism and Sociology* (pp. 175–205). Routledge.
- Braselmann, S. (2023). I'm Not Racist! Addressing Racism in Predominantly White Classrooms with Cooperatively Designed Multimodal Text Ensembles. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 168–180). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701-19>
- Butler, J. (1999/1990). *Gender Trouble* (2nd Ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203902752>
- Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Multilingual Matters.

- Carter, N.P. & Vavrus, M. (2018). *Intersectionality of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Teaching and Teacher Education*. Brill Sense. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004365209>
- Case, K.A. (2009). *Intersectional Pedagogy: Complicating Identity and Social Justice*. Routledge.
- Collins, P.H. (2019). *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478007098>
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, (1), 139–167.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour. *Stanford Law Review*, 43 (6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Fox, J. & Ralston, R. (2016). Queer Identity Online. Informal Learning and Teaching Experiences of LGBTQ Individuals on Social Media. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 65, 635–642. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.06.009>
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Herder and Herder.
- Fuchs, S. & Könemann, A. (2018). Changing Perspectives. Teaching Homosexuality in the EFL Classroom Using Short Stories. In M. Eisenmann & C. Ludwig (Eds.), *Queer Beats. Gender and Literature in the ELT Classroom* (pp. 133–150). Peter Lang. <https://doi.org/10.3726/b14721>
- Gay, G. (2023). Foreword. Considering Another View of Intersectionality. In N. Carter & M. Vavrus (Eds.), *Intersectionality of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Teaching and Teacher Education. Movement toward Equity in Education* (pp. vii–xi). Brill.
- Gerlach, D. (2020). Einleitung in eine kritische Fremdsprachendidaktik. In D. Gerlach (Ed.), *Kritische Fremdsprachendidaktik. Grundlagen, Ziele, Beispiele* (pp. 7–32). Narr.
- Govender, N. & Andrews, G. (2022). Queer Critical Literacies. In J.Z. Pandya, R.A. Mora, J.H. Alford, N.A. Golden & R.S. de Roock (Eds.), *The Handbook of Critical Literacies* (pp. 82–104). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003023425-9>
- Gray, J. (2023). Between Recognition and Redistribution. The Political Economy of Taboos in Foreign Language Education. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (Eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 23–30). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701-4>

- Haskins, C. & Ludwig, C. (2023). Let's Talk about Sexting. Discussing Erotic and Sexually Explicit Messaging in Foreign Language Education. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (Eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 141–155). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701-17>
- Hill Collins, P. (1990). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Unwin Hyman.
- König, L. (2018). *Gender-Reflexion mit Literatur im Englischunterricht. Fremdsprachendidaktische Theorie und Unterrichtsbeispiele*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-20556-0>
- König, L., Surkamp, C. & Decke-Cornill, H. (2015). Negotiating Gender. Aushandlungs- und Reflexionsprozesse über Geschlechtervorstellungen im Fremdsprachenunterricht anstoßen. *Der Fremdsprachliche Unterricht. Englisch*, 49 (135), 2–8.
- Krell, C. & Oldemeier, K. (2017). *Coming-out – und dann ...?! Coming-out-Verläufe und Diskriminierungserfahrungen von lesbischen, schwulen, bisexuellen, trans* und queeren Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen in Deutschland*. Barbara Budrich. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvddzs8p>
- Louloudi, E. (2023). *Investigating Teachers' Perspectives of Critical Literacies. A Comparison of Case Studies in Canada and in Europe*. J.B. Metzler. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-68548-8>
- Low, D., Lyngfelt, A., Thomas, A. & Vasquez, V. (2022). Critical Literacy and Contemporary Literatures. In J.Z. Pandya, R.A. Mora, J.H. Alford, N.A. Golden & R.S. de Roock (Eds.), *The Handbook of Critical Literacies* (pp. 308–316). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003023425-36>
- Ludwig, C. & Summer, T. (2023). Introduction. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (Eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 1–22). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701>
- Luke, A. (2014). Defining Critical Literacy. In J. Pandya & J. Ávila (Eds.), *Moving Critical Literacies Forward. A New Look at Praxis across Contexts* (pp. 19–31). Routledge.
- Merse, T. (2020). Queere Interventionen in die Kritische Fremdsprachendidaktik. Theoretische Überlegungen und praxisorientierte Implementationen. In D. Gerlach (Ed.), *Kritische Fremdsprachendidaktik. Grundlagen, Ziele, Beispiele* (pp. 107–124). Narr.
- Meyer, K. (2017). *Theorien der Intersektionalität. Zur Einführung*. Junius.

- MSB NRW (Ministerium für Schule und Bildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen). (2023). *Kernlehrplan für die Sekundarstufe II Gymnasium/Gesamtschule in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Englisch*. Schulministerium NRW. https://www.schulentwicklung.nrw.de/lehrplaene/lehrplan/329/gost_klp_e_2023_06_07.pdf
- Naples, N.A. (2009). Teaching Intersectionality Intersectionally. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 11 (4), 566-577. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616740903237558>
- Olckers, T. (2023). Gayle. South Africa's Secret Gay Language. *Mamba Online*. www.mambaonline.com/2023/03/22/gayle-south-africas-secret-gay-language/
- Pandya, J.Z., Mora, R.A., Alford, J.H., Golden, N.A. & de Roock, R.S. (Eds.). (2022). *The Handbook of Critical Literacies*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003023425>
- Plikat, J. (2017). *Fremdsprachliche Diskursbewusstheit als Zielkonstrukt des Fremdsprachenunterrichts. Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Interkulturellen Kompetenz*. Peter Lang. <https://doi.org/10.3726/b10728>
- Regan, P.V. & Meyer, E. (2021). Queer Theory and Heteronormativity. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1387>
- Reygan, F. (2016). Black Lesbian (Non)Representation in 'Gay' Media in Cape Town. Constructing a Globalized White, Male, Affluent, Gay Consumer. *African Identities*, 14 (1), 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2015.1100105>
- Richards, C. (2022). Gender, Sexuality and ELT Course Books. Where Are We Now? In D.L. Banegas & N. Govender (Eds.), *Gender Diversity and Sexuality in English Language Education. New Transnational Voices* (pp. 159–174). Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350217591.ch009>
- SchulG NRW (Schulgesetz für das Land Nordrhein-Westfalen)*. (2022 [rev./] 2005). § 33 (Sexualerziehung).
- Summer, T. & Steinbock, J. (2023). Learner Perceptions of Taboo Topics in English Language Teaching. In C. Ludwig & T. Summer (Eds.), *Taboos and Controversial Issues in Foreign Language Education. Critical Language Pedagogy in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 71–80). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003220701-10>
- TIE (Time for Inclusive Education). (2022). *What is LGBT Inclusive Education?* Time for Inclusive Education. <https://tie.scot/about/faqs>

- Vasquez, V.M. (2017). Critical Literacy. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.20>
- Venske, E. (2015). Pink Tourism in Cape Town: The Development of the Post-Apartheid Gay Quarter. In A. Diekmann & M.K. Smith Channel (Eds.), *Ethnic and Minority Cultures as Tourist Attractions* (pp. 202–214). View Publications. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845414849-019>
- Wallace, H. (2023). Elementary School Parent Perceptions of “Critical Race Theory” in the Curriculum. *Honors Theses*, 1710. <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/honors-theses/1710>
- Zips, M. (2023). *Der nackte Wahnsinn*. Süddeutsche Zeitung. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/panorama/usa-lehrerin-gefeuert-michelangelo-nacktheit-florenz-kunst-ron-desantis-1.5776481>

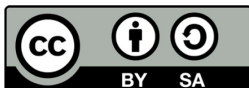
Information on the article

Quotation:

Schillings, S. (2025). Teaching Queer Critical Literacies. Intersectional Considerations for a German ELT Classroom. *PFLB – PraxisForschungLehrer*innenBildung*, 7 (2), 230–256. <https://doi.org/10.11576/pflb-7899>

Online accessible: 28.03.2025

ISSN: 2629–5628



Dieses Werk ist freigegeben unter der Creative-Commons-Lizenz CC BY-SA 4.0 (Weitergabe unter gleichen Bedingungen). Diese Lizenz gilt nur für das Originalmaterial. Alle gekennzeichneten Fremdinhalte (z.B. Abbildungen, Fotos, Tabellen, Zitate etc.) sind von der CC-Lizenz ausgenommen. Für deren Wiederverwendung ist es ggf. erforderlich, weitere Nutzungsgenehmigungen beim jeweiligen Rechteinhaber einzuholen. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode.de>