



DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURES

THE USE OF HOMOPHOBIC PEJORATIVES AMONG GAMERS

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Slurs Within the
Gaming Sphere

Desirée Elveljung

Essay/Degree Project:	C essay/15 ECTs
Program or/and course:	International Language Programme/EN1321
Level:	First cycle
Term/year:	Spring term/2018
Supervisor:	Miguel Garcia-Yeste
Examiner:	Anna-Lena Fredriksson
Report nr:	

Title: *The Use of Homophobic Pejoratives Among Gamers: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Slurs Within the Gaming Sphere*

Author: Desirée Elveljung

Supervisor: Miguel Garcia-Yeste

Abstract: The aim of this bachelor's thesis is to analyze how homophobic slurs occur in the online gaming community in order to illustrate discriminatory language among gamers. This thesis also includes those not using such language, and how they react when homophobic slurs occur. Material was collected from the text chat in the online game World of Warcraft, as well as a forum thread on the American Blizzard forums that is centered around homophobic slurs in the online game Overwatch. The material was then analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to critically examine how homophobic language occurs in online gaming discourse. The results show that homophobic slurs are indeed used among gamers, and most instances can be connected to harassment and a need for power over other players. In other cases, the terms analyzed were sometimes used as descriptors rather than as slurs. Furthermore, players rarely object themselves to such language. The forum thread posts also show that players view homophobic slurs differently, with some criticizing homophobic language and others viewing them as a natural part of the gamer language that does not need change.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), online gaming, homophobic slurs, World of Warcraft, LGBT, online harassment, homophobia

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1. Introduction

Over the years, the video game industry has grown tremendously. It started as a mathematical-themed game machine in the 1940s, continued to the “Brown Box” system in the 1970s, and in the same decade subsequently grew to the beginning of what is now known as competitive play (Chikhani, 2015). Moving further into the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, the personal computer was released, and online gaming was breaking through. Once the MMORPG¹ called Runescape was released in 2001, the social aspect of gaming changed (ibid.). With the growth of MMORPG, communication among players grew as a vital part of online gaming. Today, with 1.8 billion participants worldwide (Skaugen, 2015), gaming is seen as a cultural phenomenon.

With the rise of online gaming and the Internet in general, communication has developed and formed between people on a new level. In a report from 2017, Entertainment Software Association concluded that “53% of the most frequent gamers play multiplayer games” in the United States (Entertainment Software Association, 2017). This figure indicates that communicative games have become a significant part of gaming today. However, along with the ability to communicate online, online harassment has grown and taken form, and is nowadays referred to as cyberbullying. Ballard and Welch (2017, p. 471) concluded that online gaming can be a hostile environment which may take various shapes, such as deliberately ruining the game for others. Aggression and hostility are often found through the text and voice chat options especially. In these contexts, discriminatory language may appear.

Discrimination within the gaming community has been researched (e.g. Ballard & Welch, 2017; Shaw, 2012), but significantly less focus has been put on discriminatory language specifically. For instance, slurs like *gay* and *fag* are commonly used to the point where they are not specifically aimed at someone within the LGBT² community. Because of how common such slurs are, some gamers might even refer to them as part of the “common gamer lingo” (Pulos, 2013, p. 87).

Using slurs such as *gay* and *fag* in discourse can be connected to power, a concept that is known as discursive power. Foucault (1978, p. 93, cited in Pulos, 2013, p. 84) described

¹ Massively multiplayer online roleplaying game

² Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

discursive power as a process that is “enforced and reinforced by individuals every moment”. He further noted that if this process “is left unchecked, individuals will accept this discourse as the norm”. Therefore, discriminatory language may, with time, become so integrated into the discourse of a community that it is indeed seen as common, ordinary language. Thus, the issue of discrimination is worth bringing attention to. Homophobic slurs should be problematized as they are not only seen as a part of the common language among gamers, but also have a connection to a marginalized group – the LGBT community.

With the discursive power Foucault recognized in the 70s, this study focuses on homophobic slurs among gamers, i.e. how such language is integrated and used among gamers, as well as how other players react to it – if they do. This will be done by first presenting previous research on discriminatory language and homophobic slurs online. Then, in the theory section, Critical Discourse Analysis will be explained and applied to this study. After the methodology has been presented, the data collected will be analyzed and discussed. Finally, the conclusions will sum up the findings and point at further research.

2. Previous research

With the interest in gaming steadily rising, and now involving close to 2 billion participants (Skaugen, 2015), discussing and problematizing issues within the gaming community, such as discrimination, is vital. However, when it comes to discrimination within the gaming sphere, researchers have put much focus on sexism. When the topic of LGBT and homophobic concerns is discussed, it has often been done in a general overview of racism, sexism and homophobia (e.g. Ballard & Welch, 2017; Shaw, 2012). In-depth research on LGBT related topics, and especially homophobic slurs, has been scarce.

This section is divided into two parts. In the first one, research on discriminatory language online in general is discussed. In the second part, the topic of discriminatory language will be continued, specifically reviewing previous research on slurs used online.

2.1. Discriminatory language online

Anonymity online offers new possibilities; people can now share their thoughts and ideas much more freely, as those thoughts and ideas are not easily traced back to the person behind the screen (Vamialis, 2013, p. 32). This, in turn, promotes freedom of expression. However, the amount of freedom the Internet provides also contributes to discrimination; because of the anonymity, users can distance themselves from their actual persona, and as such, harass others without any consequences from a real-life situation. Barlett and Helmstetter (2017) use a theoretical model to study cyberbullying – the Barlett and Gentile Cyberbullying Model (BGCM). They write that after cyber-aggressive behavior, the provocateur will often learn two things: “(a) the belief that his/her muscularity (or lack thereof) is irrelevant online [...] and (b) the perception that his/her behavior is anonymous” (2017, p. 2). By continually showing cyber-aggressive behavior, the provocateur will hold these two perceptions as true, which eventually leads to the provocateur allowing cyberbullying to be a part of his/her anonymous persona online (ibid.).

Individuals often behave differently between online and face-to-face interactions, likely because of the increase in unrestrained behavior online (Barlett & Helmstetter, 2017, p. 2). This either leads to an ease in conversing with others online, or “toxic online disinhibition,” i.e. an ease in using harmful behavior because of the anonymity provided. Because of the

connection between online disinhibition and anonymity, Barlett and Helmstetter argue that such a combination might predict cyberbullying (p. 3). Although said connection is not always clear, Barlett and Helmstetter suggest that anonymity is central in the discussion of cyberbullying and general toxic behavior online.

As online gaming has grown so massive, so has in-game communication. Similar to casually chatting with friends, competitive gameplay has become quite popular, as shown by the increased interest in e-sports³. According to researchers, competitive gameplay is a great part of the cyberbullying that occurs (Ballard & Welch, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016), as “power has been shown to be an important variable in harassment and bullying” (Tang & Fox, 2016, p. 518). Power, in this sense, could be a shown difference in in-game skill rank, for instance. And where social power can thrive, aggression and hostility most easily appear (Ballard & Welch, 2017, p. 470).

The use of discriminatory language among gamers is mostly aimed at females, non-white and non-heterosexual players (Ballard & Welch, 2017, p. 480); in fact, Maher (2016, p. 568) writes that racist, sexist and homophobic language is being used uncontrollably by players, for instance those known as trolls⁴. Concerning the issue of discriminatory language, trolls are regularly discussed as they may often be viewed as the group of players using such language the most. However, Jeffrey Lin, lead designer of social systems at Riot Games⁵, rejects this notion (reported in Maher, 2016, p. 569). On the contrary, he found that unacceptable behavior in the game League of Legends mostly came from the average player simply having a bad day. He further mentions that for the most part they behaved well, but on rare occasions, even a casual player would lash out. At the same time, discriminatory language has also occurred among professional players as well as famous gamer Youtubers (e.g. Vejnovic, 2018; Ohlheiser, 2017). Thus, discriminatory language is shown to not adhere to a specific group among gamers. Rather, anyone between the casual player and the professional one might use such language.

Games are generally created by men and catered to men (Tang & Fox, 2016; Gray, 2012). The view of a stereotypical gamer is typically a white, heterosexual male (Shaw, 2012, p. 29), and video games “have traditionally been perceived as a masculine space” (Tang &

³ Organized competitions for video games

⁴ Players purposefully ruining games for others and finding joy in it

⁵ Game development company behind League of Legends

Fox, 2016, p. 514). In connection to this, Tang and Fox speak of “deindividuation” – a loss of sense of self, further stating that when users interact online, they resort to more stereotypical ways because of the deindividuation effect, i.e. the identity of a white, heterosexual male that has been set as standard through the eyes of the public. Tang and Fox connect this to the online disinhibition previously mentioned, arguing that the deindividuation effect leads to antisocial behavior, which includes various types of online harassment such as flaming⁶, trolling⁷ and cyberbullying (ibid.).

Relevant to the discussion of discriminatory language is aggression. The debate on whether video games cause real-life aggression or not is a heated one, as there has been extensive research covering both sides; some researchers argue that there is no logical connection between video games and real-life aggression, while others say the opposite (Tang & Fox, 2016, p. 514). Nevertheless, aggression can sometimes be linked to discriminatory language (e.g. Vejnovic, 2018), which may further point to aggression being a reason behind such language.

2.2. Homophobic slurs online

Herbert (2017) has investigated slurs. While not focusing specifically on homophobic slurs used among gamers online, she provides a solid background for the topic of slurs, which is why her research is included in this section. On the topic of what constitutes and differentiates a slur from related concepts, Herbert (2017, p. 77) mentions five features:

Slurs mark out membership in a social group, they essentialize some (real or perceived) characteristic or characteristics of that group, they dehumanize or derogate members of the group, they draw on and are connected to a history of oppression of the group, and they set up norms for the treatment of members of that group.

Furthermore, Herbert points out that there is a distinct difference between slurs and insults; while insults are targeted towards individuals based on their behavior, slurs are, as previously mentioned, centered on membership within social groups. Thus, marking out members of a social group is one of the primary reasons behind using, for instance, a homophobic slur. In the case of gaming, however, they are used so regularly that they may have transcended the

⁶ Online arguments consisting of personal attacks by one or more parties involved

⁷ Deliberately irritating people online, often through dialogue

phase of simply marking out and targeting those within the LGBT community. Pulos continues on this, noting that players are “unwilling to realize the unequal structuring of sexuality” (2013, p. 86) and that using *gay* as a slur is not seen as homophobia or discrimination by players.

By utilizing the Social Identity Theory, Tang and Fox (2017) reach new perspectives that other sources mentioned have not. Because of an individual’s high involvement in some specific games, that person might want to strongly identify himself/herself as a member of a group, therefore distinguishing themselves from other groups in that game. Membership, as such, invokes a strong will to protect and defend what is important to the individual gamer (p. 515). Perceived outside threats, such as scientific research pointing at side-effects of gaming, are examples of what members of a group would want to defend themselves from. Similarly, Tang and Fox argue that “men who are highly involved in games may be more likely to harass other players, perhaps out of a desire to protect or defend what they perceive as their space” (ibid.). Since slurs mark out memberships, the kind of mindset that Tang and Fox report makes people from other groups feel unwelcome and specifically targeted because of traits that are natural parts of their identity, and do not cater to the stereotypical image of a white, heterosexual male.

Online games commonly include a profanity filter, in which LGBT-related terms are typically included. Some terms, however, bypass the filter. For instance, in the game *City of Heroes*, Kelley (2012) reports that while *dyke*, *lesbian* and *homosexual* can be used, *fag*, *gay* and *queer* cannot (p. 193). If they are used, they are censored with asterisks. Many game development companies are similar in this aspect, Kelley writes. For instance, Blizzard⁸ has forbidden names that “incorporate vulgar language or which are otherwise offensive, defamatory, obscene, hateful, or racially, ethnically or otherwise objectionable” (p. 194). Thus, homophobic slurs are regulated in several online games, but the regulations do not apply to all terms relating to LGBT. In connection to this, LGBT-related terms are not always used in a derogatory way (p. 193), since gamers might use those terms as descriptors or in a discussion concerning LGBT topics. Nevertheless, only some terms are regulated, and it is therefore not always clear which terms are allowed or disallowed.

⁸ The game development company behind *World of Warcraft*, *Overwatch* and others.

Homophobic slurs among gamers share similarities with those used in sports environments (Tucker, 2011, p. 48). In both spheres, the ideology of masculinity is reinforced by harassing those outside of said ideology, or openly criticizing the concept of femininity or LGBT. By using terms such as *fag* to mock or ridicule, the idea that homosexuality is silly, or that homosexuals are inferior, is emphasized (Sabo, 1994, p. 103, cited in Tucker, 2011, p. 48). Furthermore, Tucker mentions the term “homohysteria”, which describes the fear of being homosexualized (ibid.). Through homophobic rhetoric, LGBT spaces and people are silenced and therefore made invisible in, for instance, sports or video game communities. The concept of homohysteria aims to explain how homophobic rhetoric and behavior occur based on how much, and in which ways, various sexualities are presented in specific groups.

3. Research aim

As previously mentioned, a “discursive power” becomes the norm if it is left to grow into one. Discursive power within specific groups has been analyzed many times before (e.g. Lazar, 2005; Villanueva-Russel, 2011; Edwards, 2016; Andrews, 2016); however, discriminatory language online is still relatively new. Discriminatory language is also a constant process, one that provides new information for research every day. When it comes to the gaming community, much less research has been focused on the homophobic language that occurs. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore what kind of homophobic language is used and in what context, by examining data from one game and one forum thread related to homophobic language. Since the Internet is a difficult place to gain full control over, the belief is that by presenting the problem this exploratory study will provide inspiration to further problematize issues with discrimination online. The research questions are therefore as follows:

- In what instances do homophobic slurs occur?
- Are power and dominance displayed through the use of homophobic slurs?
- How do other players react to the slurs used?

4. Theory: Critical Discourse Analysis

In this study, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used as the theoretical approach. CDA can be defined as “fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 2). CDA, therefore, investigates social inequality within a group of people by looking at how inequality is shown in discourse.

CDA is an analytical practice, and as van Dijk (2015, p. 466) further mentions, CDA is also a “critical perspective”. Thus, CDA is applicable in many various discourse studies; what differentiates CDA from other relevant theory approaches is that “CDA is discourse study *with an attitude*” (ibid.), meaning a stance is taken by examining the issue through the discourse that occurs.

This section first discusses two major concepts within CDA, namely power and dominance, then it moves on to Queer Linguistics and its relevance to this study. Finally, CDA is operationalized in connection to this research project by using a fitting framework model.

4.1. The concepts of power and dominance

The concept of power considers the notion that discourse is structured by levels of dominance. The dominance levels have eventually become normalized in how the discourse is played out in, for example, text. As van Dijk writes, “groups have (more or less) power if they are able to (more or less) control the acts and minds of (members of) other groups” (2015, p. 469). This indicates that some groups have the means to control other groups of people by using, for instance, money, status or knowledge. As such, there are different versions of power, and they are not always absolute. Power depends much on the situation or environment; a teacher may be powerful in a classroom, but outside of school, such power is not applicable. Similarly, the power some gamers have over others is dependent on the version of power, and the situation where communication occurs between players of, say, different status. For instance, this may apply to competitive gameplay, an aspect of gaming that has been researched and connected to power and dominance (e.g. Tang & Fox, 2016, p. 518; Ballard & Welch, 2017, p. 470). Harassment in competitive gameplay would not be

applicable outside of that game mode; thus, the situation and environment are both factors worth keeping in mind when examining language in competitive gameplay.

How power is displayed is not always obvious. As Wodak and Meyer (2001, p. 2) point out, opacity as well as transparency should be taken into account. While power can be explicitly shown in discourse, it is often also found in less transparent statements (and other actions than verbal message). For instance, Kirkpatrick (2017, p. 464) cites an excerpt from the magazine *Computer and Video Games* where a reader complains about a character in a fight game wearing ‘girl’s shorts’. The reader says that a player might be made fun of if seen with the character. This seems to indicate that a character wearing such shorts would therefore be less masculine, i.e. less strong, assertive, courageous et cetera. However, it is not stated in a transparent, explicit manner. It is implicit in the sentence, presented in a way that needs to be read between the lines to understand the message. Therefore, it is important in CDA to look not only at discourse, but also contributing factors to the power relations.

Reinforcing power, and therefore mind control, is often crucial in the varying levels of dominance within a community or group. Using power through discourse, people in power reinforce ideas into the minds of the those that are powerless, thus reproducing dominance (van Dijk, 2015, p. 472). As such, there is a link between discourse and cognition, and this link should be taken into account when utilizing CDA in research.

Van Dijk further writes that “CDA especially focuses on the ways *discourse structures* may influence specific mental models and generic representations of the recipients, and especially how beliefs may thus be manipulated” (p. 473). Discourse structures are presented in various ways; implications assert “facts” that may not be true, metaphors turn mental and abstract ideas into concrete ones, et cetera (ibid.). This can be applied to the discourse and power relations among gamers as well; as mentioned in the introduction, players often refer to homophobic slurs as a common part of the community’s language. What is argued through CDA, thus, is that it is a belief that has been manipulated, and is now seen as a part of the norm when using gamer language.

4.2. Queer Linguistics

CDA is a popular approach that is used within various fields, among them Queer Linguistics. Queer Linguistics is a field that focuses on the connection between language and social

inequality, much like the basis of CDA, but “the realm of sexuality is used as a starting point for its questioning practice” (Motschenbacher & Stegu, 2013, p. 520). Therefore, this bachelor’s thesis is a study within Queer Linguistics that uses CDA as an approach.

CDA in general focuses on “a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect” (Fairclough, 2012, p. 13, cited in Leap, 2015, p. 661). The social wrong that Queer Linguistics is concerned with is messages about sexuality and how these circulate in various forms, i.e. not all of them are evident and direct in displaying their intent. While the topic of interest is, in its basis, sexuality, Queer Linguistics is interested in interrogating the structures of normative authority and the concepts of power and dominance within a specific field, as well as how the messages are uncritically accepted (Leap, 2015, p. 662).

Furthermore, Queer Linguistics looks at the association between messages about sexuality and discursive practices (Leap, 2015, p. 663). Desire is one possible focus of analysis, but more interesting and relevant to this study is the focus on harassment, or derogatory language. However, it is important to understand that one cannot solely look at discursive production, reception and the outcomes of it. As Leap (ibid.) writes:

These associations are also informed by implicit assumptions about the sexual, assumptions that are grounded in ideological process and take the form of self-evident statements in everyday conversation and narrative. Examined carefully, these commonsense assumptions align with normative practices and regulatory authority.

Such assumptions should be identified as a part of the research when possible, as harassment, for instance, involves more than simple discursive production. However, what differs harassment among gamers from various other groups is that assumptions are not always a part in choosing to use derogatory terms, as a player’s sexuality is not always evident. When sexualities are not evident, other factors within Queer Linguistics are still relevant, such as power, normative practices, et cetera.

It is also important to not only look at the messages, but the context they are posted in. The order of the discourse should be examined instead of solely looking at the details of a message in which possible data occurs, as this helps to understand if, and if so how, the discursive practices “invite homophobic understandings” (Peterson, 2010, cited in Leap, 2015, p. 672). Furthermore, as Leap writes: “More recent discussions, particularly those aligned with a queer impulse, acknowledge that under the right circumstances, any text could express homophobic sentiments or be read by the audience as if it did” (2015, p. 672). Thus, research should be contextualized, critically examined and unbiased.

Queer Linguistics is concerned with a specific social issue, and the means of uncovering and problematizing the normative practices, power and dominance levels as well as regulatory practices is a difficult task, as studies of those practices are typically “embedded within complex systems of power and privilege; those systems will not be easily exposed, much less disrupted” (Leap, 2015, p. 676). As such, CDA provides Queer Linguistics with a fitting framework for research.

4.3. Operationalizing CDA

In this study, I will use Fairclough’s model from 2001, which includes five stages. In stage 1, Fairclough points out that “this approach to CDA is problem-based” (2001, p. 125) and then continues by asking: “who is it [the issue in discussion] a problem for?” As mentioned previously, CDA focuses on those affected and/or victimized by the oppression from the ones with discursive power in an ideology. In the present study, stage one focuses on those affected by the use of homophobic slurs. This can be both individual players, as well as the gaming community as a whole. Those affected may vary depending on the data samples and sources, as the data samples included are all vastly different. The basic notion is, nevertheless, that this issue affects the whole community.

Stage 2 looks at how the social life within the relevant group of people is structured, and what the obstacles are to the problem being tackled (Fairclough, 2001, p. 125). Factors such as the size of the gaming community should be considered here, as the high number of players makes the issue resistant to an easy solution. How this stage is taken into account also depends on the data and its source; for instance, data from a game could display the structure of social life in a different manner than other data sources. The issues with tackling the societal problem might also differ. Such variations in what the data presents will therefore be considered as well.

Moving on to stage 3, a question is asked whether the social order needs the problem, and if so, how. The point of this stage is that if one can establish that a social order has created problems within a community, and needs those issues to sustain itself, one can also conclude that this is a cause for radical change. Thus, the issue of discriminatory language must be analyzed carefully through the eyes of CDA. Specifically, investigating power

relations among gamers may point to whether the social order needs the problem or not. The concept of power and dominance is therefore of high relevance throughout the analysis.

The focus in stage 4 is on those resisting the social order by showing difference or resistance. Stage 4 also looks at other factors, such as gaps, contradictions or failures among those dominating in the social order. Conclusively, stage 4 can be examined in different ways, although they are all relevant and of importance. Data of such occurrences is included in the analysis, highlighting the way players react to the use of homophobic slurs. The concepts of showing difference, as well as resistance, are shown in various data samples.

Finally, the function of stage 5 is to look back at the study and indicate any gaps. Here, it is important to ask questions such as: How effective has this research been in criticizing the social order mentioned? Does it contribute to a change? It is essentially a matter of indicating the research's own contribution to the problematization of the issue. This will be done by summarizing what was found in the data and connecting it to the research questions. After reflecting on this study, further research will be discussed and recommended.

5. Material

As the topic of the study is homophobic language among gamers, the data was collected from two sources where such language and discussions concerning the subject occur.

In this section, collection of data is discussed before moving onto how the data was selected, as well as what challenges and limitations there were. The two sources, i.e. one game and one forum thread, are both discussed in each of these subsections.

5.1. Collection of data

Data was collected from one game called World of Warcraft, a MMORPG. The second source used was the American Blizzard forums, where various topics regarding the game were discussed. The reason behind choosing these sources was that at least one game was necessary to collect the data in the environment that is discussed in this study. World of Warcraft was then chosen based on its immense popularity. Furthermore, because World of Warcraft and Overwatch are produced by the same company, the forum specifically catered to Overwatch was chosen. Therefore, the sources are centered around two different games that hold similar regulations regarding, for instance, discriminatory language.

The choice of using two sources was heavily inspired by Pulos (2013) who used the World of Warcraft forum in a similar way to this study. Because a game had already been decided in an early stage, the decision to use a forum thread came later after reading Pulos' article.

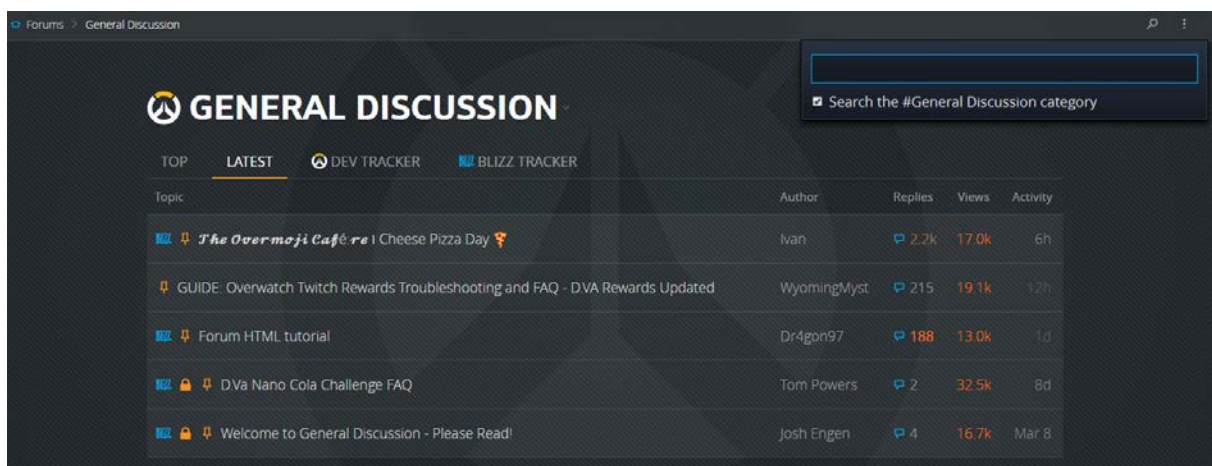
The data from World of Warcraft was not collected by active participation in the gameplay. Data was instead collected in Goldshire, one of the towns in the game where players meet up to relax and converse. The discriminatory language, therefore, occurred in conversations where actual gameplay was not a part of the various situations. Furthermore, data was collected through the chat log that online games with communicative options provide. As World of Warcraft does not provide the options of saving the chatlog, data had to be collected through saving samples as screenshots, i.e. screen photos of the chat box. When a slur would occur, the conversation was screenshotted in order and the pictures were saved under the date when they occurred. All instances of homophobic slurs are shown in table 1 in

the analysis. Each instance of a slur is counted as a single word, making the total 64 words. Every data collection is shown in the appendix as well, in the form of the original screenshots.

The type of data collection was, in its basis, a naturalistic type of collection, i.e. data collected from conversations that occur naturally. However, because specific, relevant data was selected from the overall collection, the data collection is no longer naturalistic. Since data from World of Warcraft was collected between April 1st and April 11th, the data is divided by these dates to more easily access the different data samples.

Data was also collected from the American Blizzard forums, primarily from the one catered to Overwatch topics. On the Blizzard forums, various navigation menus guide the reader to a specific category, and a search bar is available when searching for different topics and posts, as seen in figure 1 below:

Figure 1: The front page of one of the forum categories, displaying various threads and a search function.



All threads are then initiated by the original poster's message and followed by numbered messages from other users. The data was collected by checking the "general discussion" menu only. Simply by going through the latest threads there, several were found relevant as the topic of homosexuality was, in various ways, heavily discussed. Threads specifically about discriminatory language were also found by using the search function. The terms used in the search function were "homophobia", "gay", "slurs" and "lgbt", as the results from these terms showed both relevant threads as well as players using discriminatory language. Thus, data from this source is much more connected to the discussion surrounding homophobic

language, with comments both from users who identify as a part of the LGBT community, and users who do not.

All data collected is written data. Naturally, from sources such as forum threads, this is the only option, but online games typically involve a voice chat function as well. While discriminatory language tends to occur through both options, the text chat in games was chosen as the sole source of data in order to limit the research in an adequate manner.

5.2. Selection of data

Data was selected and analyzed based on the relevance of the slur/term. Important to note is that “slurs” in this essay are based on Herbert’s five features of what constitutes a slur, mentioned under section 2.2. Terms are therefore categorized as slurs when they are used to mark out someone’s membership of an oppressed group. When they are not used in such a sense, they are simply regarded as LGBT-related terms, such as the use of “lesbian” in this study’s collection of data. Fairclough’s model from 2001 was also used, as the different stages were of support when classifying the data as insulting vs. non-insulting. Regarding the forum thread, the criteria for choosing specific messages was that they should contribute to the debate with arguments and motivated opinions, or correlate to the research questions and/or what has been mentioned in previous research.

World of Warcraft provided data of four LGBT-related slurs and/or terms, i.e. *gay*, *twink*, *lesbian* and *fag* as well as non-homophobic slurs such as *retard* (see appendix). All slurs were saved, but unrelated slurs were excluded in the analysis as they do not contribute to the topic of this study. All slurs and/or terms relating to homophobic language were included as this shows that homophobic slurs occur in various forms. All instances collected were also classified into two categories, i.e. insulting vs. non-insulting. This was done by carefully examining the context, for instance if it was a hostile or casual conversation, with the help of previous sources (e.g. Tang & Fox, 2016; Barlett & Helmstetter, 2017 especially), as well as Fairclough’s framework model.

Many forum threads were found that related to homophobic language, LGBT inclusivity, homophobia et cetera. However, most of them were excluded as they could not contribute to the research questions; the topics and the messages were too arbitrary, such as players discussing if a picture of a lesbian couple should be added to the game or not. Threads

were only chosen when they focused on homophobic language specifically, and all other threads were, as such, excluded. Therefore, in the end, only one thread was included in the analyzed data. While it is only one thread, there are 123 messages posted to it, meaning the amount of data is enough to not include any more threads. The thread that was included (“Homophobia in OW⁹ community”) was also chosen for various reasons: it presents the issue of homophobic slurs from a gay player’s perspective, i.e. someone who feels directly targeted by the slurs. The thread also includes messages of people’s opinions on how slurs should be regarded and if they are worth problematizing, as well as what the original poster should do or not do when encountering discriminatory language. Specific messages were chosen to represent both sides in the debate and to illustrate how people react to a gay player’s criticism of discriminatory language.

5.3. Challenges and limitations

Collecting and analyzing the data from World of Warcraft proved challenging for several reasons. As mentioned in the previous section, all slurs related to homophobic language were collected, and thereafter divided into two categories. However, choosing the appropriate category was difficult. The context in which slurs and various terms occurred was occasionally unclear. For instance, the statements players made about their own sexualities were not always clearly serious, and some civilized conversations would turn antagonistic. Also, many conversations occurred at the same time. Therefore, determining when a slur was used in an insulting manner, as a statement or any other way, proved challenging as well. Although the analysis of slurs was done taking context into account, the context was sometimes unclear or not always given. There were many players to keep track of, and as such, keeping up with conversations and understanding the context in which they occurred was, at times, troublesome. For instance, the data collection from April 1st (shown in the appendix) consisted of several conversations at the same time, and quite a few of those included LGBT-related terms as well as slurs not related to LGBT.

⁹ Shortening for Overwatch

6. Analysis

This section is divided into two sub-sections corresponding to the two data sources. This is because the findings from the data were different between the sources and might therefore vary in their relevance to the three research questions. Specific data samples were selected to illustrate the analysis, but the whole dataset can be found in the appendices at the end of the essay.

6.1. World of Warcraft

World of Warcraft provided a high occurrence of slurs in the chat box in every instance of data collection. The findings have therefore been summarized in table 1 below. 64 instances were found in the collection of data, and they were then classified as either insulting or non-insulting.

Table 1: LGBT-related terms used in Word of Warcraft between April 1st and April 11th

	“Fag”	“Gay”	“Twink”	“Lesbian”
Used in insulting sense	3	30	0	0
Used in non-insulting sense	0	28	1	2
Total number of utterances	3	58	1	2

As previous research has mentioned, LGBT-related terms (and others) can also be used as descriptors (Kelley, 2012, p. 193), which is one example of how the slurs are used in a non-insulting sense. The terms collected could therefore be used when describing oneself or others, or used when civically discussing the topic of LGBT. This applies to *gay* especially; one conversation between four players began when one of them, player 4, claimed that “erp is gay”¹⁰, which continued into a conversation about various topics related to homosexuality, primarily what makes a person homosexual. This, in turn, made the players attack each other

¹⁰ “ERP” stands for erotic roleplaying.

personally and call each other gay for liking traps¹¹. Transcription 1 below is a part of the conversation that occurred in World of Warcraft. As one can see, *gay* is sometimes used in a derogatory way, and sometimes not. However, as mentioned, the line between the two instances is not always clear. Either way, each instance of a slur counts as an individual collection of data in table 1.

Transcription 1:

Player 1: I love traps.

Player 2: I like traps.

Player 3: You know consciously that a trap has a dick, so you're 100% gay mate. Not that it is bad. I mean, I live in Amsterdam. We have gay pride here and &*!@. You don't have to deny that you're gay.

Player 4: That's gay.

Player 2: Everybody has different opinions, so no one gives a #@%^ about yours.

Player 3: It's not an opinion, it's a simple fact.

Player 1: And if I'm gay, then what?

Player 4: Then you're gay.

Player 1: Yes, but why are you pointing it out all the time? It makes no sense.

Player 4: Because it's gay as fuck.

Player 1: Maybe you're gay as well, because "it's gay as fuck" is what a gay [person] would say to hide [his sexuality].

Player 3: Not really.

Player 4: A pussy likes dicks, so you're gay.

Player 3: Maybe you'll accept yourself later. It's okay mate.

Soon after, player 2 takes a stand against the others:

Transcription 2:

Player 2: Homophobes. [You're] calling each other gay as if it's a bad thing. It's a sexuality.

Player 3: No, don't say that. We just state out the fact that liking traps is gay.

Player 2 does not reply, and after some bickering between the remaining three, players 3 and 4 eventually back away, and the conversation then ends.

A major concept within CDA, as previously mentioned, is power. By shifting the conversation into one where the players call each other *gay* repeatedly, in Transcription 1, players 1 and 4 are trying to take control of the other's mind. By trying to take control, and as such trying to reinforce their power, both players want to simultaneously establish dominance over the other. Furthermore, homosexuality is discussed as something negative, even though

¹¹ Slang referring to androgynous males

player 3 explicitly mentions in Transcription 1 that there is nothing negative about identifying as homosexual. The underlying message, i.e. the transparency of the message, can be understood by all parties. The link between discourse and cognition is then clearly shown; the players involved in calling each other gay all consciously know that by being referred to as gay, they are less powerful in the conversation. Player 2 explicitly points this out in Transcription 2 by criticizing their use of gay as a pejorative, thus openly marking their remarks as bad behavior. Player 2 then makes at least player 3 understand that partaking in a conversation where homophobic slurs are used, while discussing LGBT rights, can be seen as contradictory. After this, the conversation comes to its end. When it does, none of the players have successfully established power and dominance over the others.

Worth noting is that the conversation starts with a statement, followed by an assumption based on said statement. Assumptions, as mentioned in the section on Queer Linguistics, usually have a part in the derogatory language that follows. When player 3 and 4 assume player 1 and 2's sexualities based on the statement of liking traps, a conflict follows. The beginning of the conversation can therefore also be connected to players feeling less powerful when they are instantly referred to as gay.

Furthermore, this conversation illustrates an issue in tackling the societal problem, which is connected to stage 2 of Fairclough's model. The slurs are used commonly, and as the analysis points at, they are also used in an attempt to establish power over others. This data therefore shows that although the conversation is centered around LGBT, *gay* as a slur is so ingrained into a common gamer's vocabulary that changing said vocabulary and removing the use of LGBT-related terms as slurs proves difficult.

Many of the instances where homophobic insults occurred were clearly in a hostile environment from the start. The three uses of *fag*, for example, occurred in the same conversation, where players 5 and 7 used *faglord* and *nerdfag* when speaking to other players, trying to harass victims into giving them in-game currency. This manner continued for at least 42 minutes, until player 5 and 7 left.

Transcription 3 below shows one of the instances where *fag* is used:

Transcription 3:

Player 5: Please donate money to the church. We help retarded people such as yourself.

Player 6: No.

Player 7: Nerdfag, give me @%^& money.

As opposed to the players in the previous data sample, player 5 and 7 have already established their power level by continuously harassing others. Any effort in challenging them seems worthless; as can be seen in Transcription 3 above, simply by rejecting them and saying “no,” player 6 continues to be harassed. In addition, player 7 does so by adding a homophobic slur, which, in context, can be seen as marking his/her power over player 6 and other victims of their harassment. Thus, the display of power is also opaque. The offense is open and direct, and the slur is central in marking the difference between player 6 and 7 in this situation.

Regarding stage 4 in Fairclough’s model, the other players reacted to the slurs by mostly ignoring player 5 and 7. Few players told them to stop, but eventually chose to ignore them as the two continued their behavior anyway. The language used was never commented on, nor were any other of their actions. As such, players did not show any resistance to the slurs or other parts of the language used. Collectively ignoring the two players can be seen as a resistance to the social order displayed, although it is not effective as it lets them continue, which essentially marks harassment as acceptable behavior by other players.

The situation in which *twink* occurred was different, as the slur was not used to discriminate:

Transcription 4:

Player 8: Better gear at [the] start [means] faster levelling.
Player 9: Next expansion’s basic gear will be better than anything you can get now.
Player 10: Are you doing arenas or battleground at level 20?
Player 11: Twink!

In World of Warcraft, the term *twink* is used towards a low-levelled player whose character is dressed up for higher levels, making them stronger in-game than they should be. Therefore, *twink* is likely not used as a slur in this situation. Similarly, *lesbian* was not used in a discriminative way:

Transcription 5:

Player 12: I’m female.
Player 13: No, you’re not.
Player 14: You are?
Player 12: Yes, but I’m openly lesbian.

Because of the issue with the context sometimes being unclear, as previously mentioned, it is difficult to say what the topic of the conversation was (the conversation is shown in the appendix under April 7th). However, it can be noted that in Transcription 5, *lesbian* is used by player 12 to describe herself, rather than as a slur.

6.3. "Homophobia in OW community" forum thread

This forum thread comes from a gay player named Goose criticizing the gaming community. What follows are some of the messages posted that express different opinions regarding the use of homophobic slurs:

Transcription 6:

Goose (msg. 1): I've been called a [Edited by Blizzard] so many times over the last 6 months that it's really starting to get ridiculous. It's really cowardly to sit behind a keyboard and demean someone just because they 'sound gay'. There's a large portion of gay gamers in this community. Let's respect each other.

Kyaw (msg. 3): At this point I already disassociate that word with homosexuals.

DoomByCookie (msg. 7): I find it to just be a part of the list of insults people use.

TerraGem (msg. 30): You do realize that tons of people use that insults towards anyone even if they're not gay, right? I'm pretty sure that it wasn't because of your sexuality, so there's no need to take it personally. You'll just have to report and move on like many other people do.

Dearest (msg. 65): Sorry to hear this happens to you. I've seen situations like this happen and personally seeing/knowing this happened to me.

Xian396 (msg. 69): It'd be better if people in general started saying "Yeah. Homophobia sucks, I'm sorry you had to go through that" than "Welp. That happens, move on." The former shows sympathy towards victims of homophobia and puts bigots in a negative light while the latter normalizes homophobic actions.

The messages in the thread itself show how members of the community resist the social order and the normative, regulated practices of using derogatory slurs, i.e. stage 4 in Fairclough's model. Those resisting such language and power relations are consciously aware that it is an issue that is a) resistant to solution, and b) regulated to become the norm among gamers. This is especially evident in Xian396's message as well as those sharing similar stories of harassment, such as Dearest.

In contrast, many players in the thread – such as TerraGem and DoomByCookie – argue that hate speech is common practice, further insinuating that homophobic slurs have become a part of the gamer lingo. While this thread does not exhibit any use of such slurs, the discussion shows that a problem within the community exists, and many community members

see no reason in trying to resolve it. It can therefore be concluded that because the social order needs the issue to sustain itself, and because the community's view of the issue is very mixed, a change in the use of slurs among gamers is very much necessary.

As mentioned in the section on Queer Linguistics, a player's sexuality is most often hidden from others. In this case, however, the player's sexuality is made clear to others based on what they perceive as a stereotypical, homosexual voice. As such, assumptions are a part of the discursive production players actively choose when interacting with Goose, a homosexual gamer. As Leap writes (2015, p. 663), such an association with homosexuality aligns with the normative practices among gamers, i.e. discriminatory language. Because of said association along with normative practices, a member of the LGBT community is specifically targeted with homophobic slurs.

The instances in which Goose received homophobic slurs could be related to power relations as well. In the case Goose reports in the thread, power is displayed in a very transparent way as the provocateurs are using slurs explicitly. Once again, players reinforce their power and dominance levels by making it clear that because someone exhibits a trait that makes them vulnerable to discrimination, that person is also less powerful.

7. Discussion

To give the reader a better understanding of the findings and their correlation to this study, this section is organized around the three research questions.

7.1. In what instances do homophobic slurs occur?

The situations in which homophobic slurs were used differed. Most often, in World of Warcraft, slurs were used in a situation where players wanted to cause offense. This was sometimes done by trolling, as shown in Transcription 3. Other times, players engaged in a conversation that derailed into name-calling, i.e. Transcription 1-2.

When *gay* was used as a descriptor, it was either in a conversation where players discussed LGBT-related subjects, or when they described other people. In the latter case, it was often used towards players performing ERP and/or the concept of traps. Because data from World of Warcraft was collected in a place where ERP is common, several instances came from such situations. Furthermore, all data from World of Warcraft was, as previously mentioned, collected in a relaxing environment in-game meant more for conversing rather than actively playing the game. As such, no data from World of Warcraft (or the forum thread) showed what previous research (e.g. Ballard & Welch, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016) has pointed at, i.e. homophobic slurs in competitive gameplay.

The forum thread, “Homophobia in OW community”, showed less instances of when homophobic slurs occur, as the discussion was more centered around *why* they occur. The original poster, however, reported that he received homophobic slurs because of his feminine voice. This is one instance of assumptions being a part of discriminatory language, which Leap (2015, p. 663) previously recognized. The original poster’s message shows that slurs also occur towards an LGBT gamer when they recognize him as a part of that community. Furthermore, the original poster’s report shows that such language occurs through voice chat as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that homophobic slurs are not rare, and they are not fixed to a specific type of person, situation or game.

7.2. Are power and dominance displayed through the use of homophobic slurs?

Through the data collected from World of Warcraft, it could be concluded that the concepts of power and dominance are evident in conversations where players used homophobic slurs. This was supported by several factors, such as the idea of mind control that van Dijk observed (2015, p. 472), as well as the idea of transparency vs. opacity that Wodak and Meyer (2001, p. 2) discussed. Although power and dominance were not always explicitly shown, much because of the concept of transparency, it could still be concluded from many other determining factors that power and dominance were on display.

Assumptions regarding sexuality were mentioned in the section on Queer Linguistics as a part of studying discourse through the eyes of CDA, which could be connected to power and dominance. In World of Warcraft, a player's sexuality is not evident unless the player announces it. Because of this, most data did not include any contributing assumptions. Transcription 1, however, showed an assumption based on player 1 and player 2's interest in traps, which then grew into a conflict related to power and dominance. While a link between assumptions and derogatory language was found difficult to uncover, that specific link showed that once assumptions did occur, the concepts of power and dominance were evident through the use of homophobic slurs. Therefore, the findings were similar to what both Leap and Van Dijk previously discussed, regarding assumptions and power.

Although World of Warcraft did not show instances of homophobic slurs in competitive gameplay, similar hierarchy levels still existed. As shown in Transcription 1, players tried to take control over the other by using homophobic language. The same could also be seen in other instances, such as Transcription 3, where homophobic slurs were used to belittle others. As this is very much connected to the concepts of power and dominance, it can be concluded that the use of homophobic slurs displayed a need for power and dominance over other players.

7.3. How do other players react to the slurs used?

The forum thread showed the clearest examples of how other players react to homophobic slurs. After hearing the original poster's report on the slurs he receives, the response was

often to report and move on. Regarding the thread itself, criticism was sometimes directed towards the original poster for creating it, arguing that such a thread would add fuel to the fire and that it made the original poster look bad. Sabo (1994, p. 103, cited in Tucker, 2011, p. 48) discussed how homophobic rhetoric could silence LGBT spaces and people. This could be connected to the forum thread messages especially; the original poster's report on the slurs he received showed one instance of such an occurrence, and the following messages in the thread showed another. While slurs were not used in the thread, those opposing themselves to the original poster's issue could further contribute to silencing LGBT people.

However, several contributors disagreed. They stated that discussing the issue is essential in tackling the problem. When mentioning their own experiences with homophobic slurs, the typical way of dealing with discrimination was using the in-game report function against the offenders.

The reception towards homophobic slurs in World of Warcraft was mixed. Slurs were most often used freely as other players ignored and/or did not react to such language. Judging by the number of slurs collected from the game (as seen in Table 1), there were many instances where players could openly oppose themselves to those using slurs. This could be connected to the deindividuation effect discussed by Tang & Fox (2016, p. 514), i.e. a loss of sense of self that leads to antisocial behavior, including various types of online harassment. Users could, because of the deindividuation effect, be numb to such language occurring. Furthermore, the fast-paced environment meant making conversation was difficult. Also, discussions or oppositions to homophobic slurs might have happened through the whisper option between two players, making any data collection of such instances impossible.

Transcription 2 showed a clear instance of a player taking a stance against those using homophobic slurs by outright calling them homophobes and criticizing their use of *gay* as a slur. Transcription 3 showed a subtle resistance against discrimination through a simple "no", but nothing against homophobic language specifically. In fact, many players chatting at the same time as player 5 and 7 used homophobic slurs and general derogatory language themselves. There was no obvious reaction or resistance aimed at any of these players. In general, resistance occurred only a few times during the time data was collected from World of Warcraft.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to study in what way homophobic language occurs, as well as in what context. Within Queer Linguistics, CDA was used as an approach to the data, and was operationalized by a framework model made suitable for CDA research that included several aspects of observing the data.

Data was collected from two sources: World of Warcraft and the forum thread “Homophobia in OW community” on the American Blizzard forums. World of Warcraft provided data that showed instances of homophobic slurs occurring in conversation. This is possibly due to the anonymity offered in online gaming that Vamialis mentioned, as well as online disinhibition discussed by Barlett and Helmstetter. The data also showed instances of how the concepts of power and dominance came into play when players used homophobic slurs to cause offense. Likewise, the casual use of slurs in everyday conversation could also be observed, just like the use of LGBT-related terms in other ways than as slurs - i.e. as, for instance, descriptors. The two transcribed conversations (especially Transcription 1-2) showed intricate instances of *gay* as a slur, as well as how a casual conversation can derail into one consisting mostly of using homophobic slurs to gain power over the other. This could also be connected to Tucker’s (2011) point on “homophobia”, i.e. the fear of being homosexualized. The same conversation also showed an instance of a player rejecting the use of *gay* as a slur, which was another important part in this research project.

The forum thread further provided data of users showing resistance towards the use of homophobic language, with explanations on how they resist it in-game. Most users mentioned the report function that exists to punish those misbehaving. Although these posters in the thread were aware of the issue and consciously tried to resist the normative practices, several others reacted negatively to the discussion around homophobic slurs. The report option was further mentioned as the only way of solving the issue, as discussing it and causing debate would only make the situation worse. Tang and Fox (2016) observed this behavior with the Social Identity Theory, arguing that membership of a group could invoke a strong will to protect the group from perceived outside threats, such as criticism aimed at their discursive practices. Similar to this description, many players in the thread expressed their opinions by reinforcing the idea of free speech, further arguing that slurs such as *gay* and *fag* are simply a part of a gamer’s language at this point and have very little to do with homosexuality.

Because of how often homophobic slurs occur among gamers, and how normalized such language is, this topic is a hefty one to approach. There are many angles and areas to discuss, several of which this study did not manage to cover. Primarily, competitive gameplay was discussed by previous research as an area of online gaming where such language is clearly evident. In fact, while World of Warcraft provided enough data, said data was never collected in any actual gameplay. Furthermore, while the posts on the forum thread provided this study with data on how players view the use of slurs, data could only be collected from what they chose to say. Because there was no personalized questionnaire to elicit more elaborate responses, the data collected ended up being less in-depth.

Future research concerning competitive gameplay would be especially interesting and significant to see, as that area remains unexplored in this study. Furthermore, various online games could also be compared to notice the differences and similarities in how homophobic slurs occur. A questionnaire regarding if, and how, players use such slurs would also be significant to see, as this shows a more personalized answer to why players choose to use such language. Also, any questions regarding the difference between vocabulary used online versus real life could also further illustrate the use of homophobic language online, especially with regards to anonymity.

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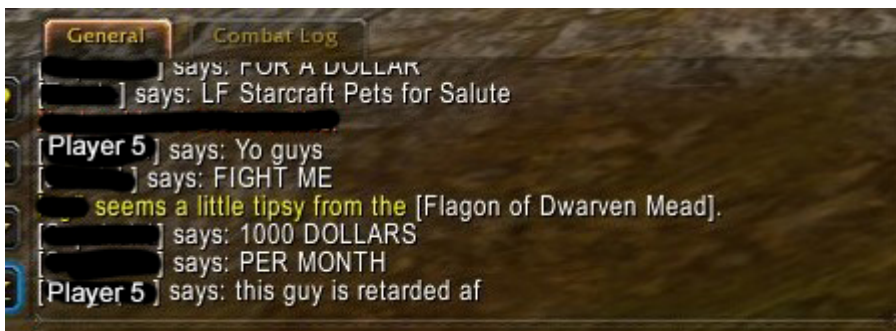
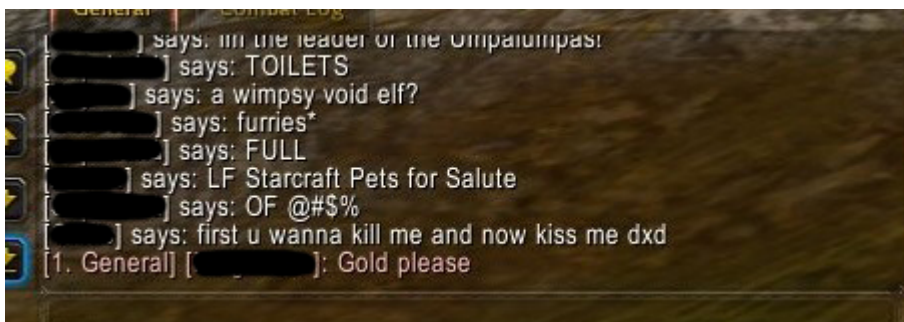
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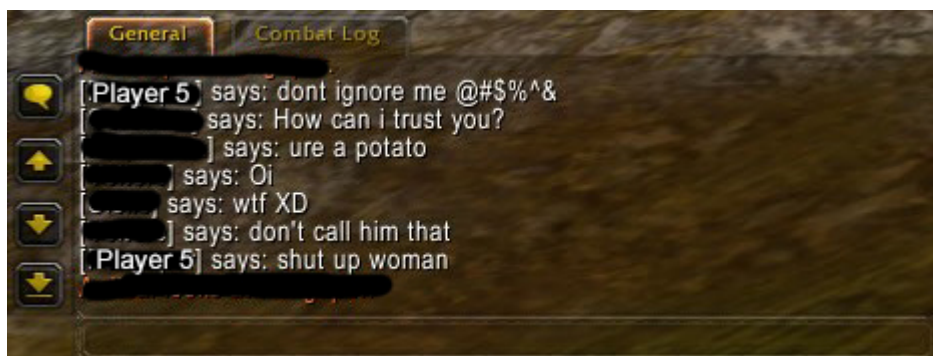
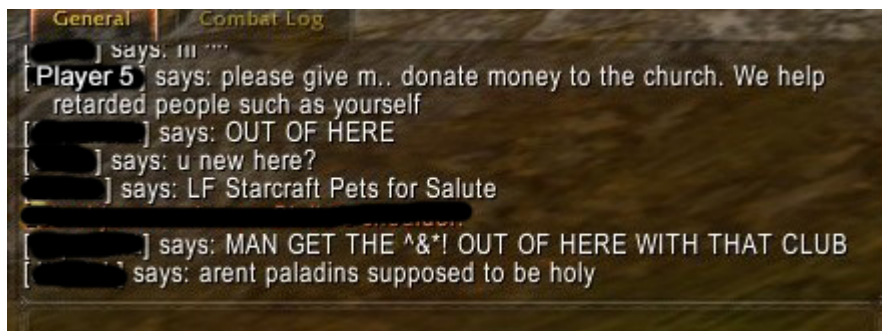
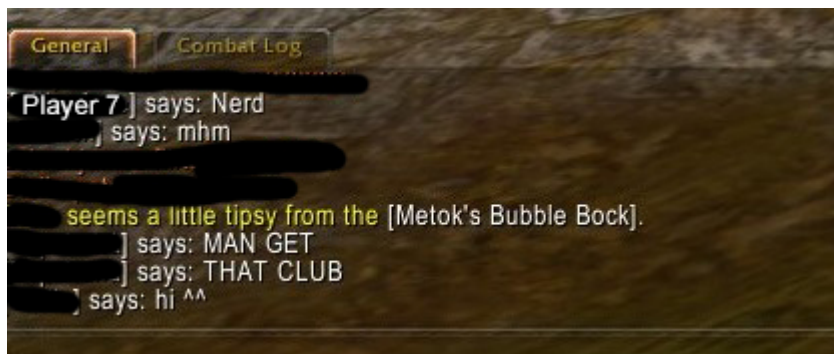
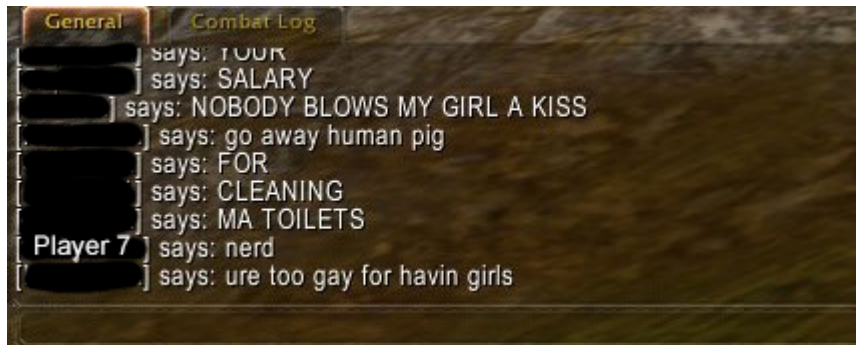
Appendices

1. Forum thread (corresponds to Transcription 6)

- “Homophobia in OW community”:
<https://us.forums.blizzard.com/en/overwatch/t/homophobia-in-ow-community/20374/13>

2. April 1st (corresponds to Transcription 3 and 4)





General Combat Log
[] says: drop on girl
[] says: still need to mog them
[] says: with all the \$%^&
[] says: You are not worthy
[] says: ride this dragon..
[] says: we going where ?
[] shoos [] away. Be gone pest!
[Player 5] says: oy
[Player 5] says: faglord

General Combat Log
[] yells: i pay back
[] says: MY TOILETS
[] yells: hic
[] says: FULL OF *!@#
[] says: look*
[Player 7] says: \$%^&face, give me *!@#ing money
[] yells: work for it
[] has defeated [] in a duel
[] says: huh?

General Combat Log
[] says: YOU KNOW
[] says: WHATT I MEAN
[] says: WHEN I SAID THAT
[] says: you should
[] says: but the holy light choose me
[] says: im the best
[] says: I MEAN
[] says: WHEN
[] says: then ure holy gay

[Player 5] says: cause you are a paladin
[Player 5] says: 3 year olds are taller than you
[] says: not a warrior
[] says: I *!@#
[] says: THAT \$%^&
[] says: yeah but they also have hair
[] says: IN THE *!@
[] says: unlike you
[] says: well
[] says: HAHahaha
[] says: YOU KNOW
[] says: paladins are chosen gays
[] says: THAT
[] says: mabev i wanted to be a warrior
[] says: []

[Player 5] says: Yo ugly @\$ %^&!
[Player 5] says: came like a shock to me
[Player 5] says: HEy
[Player 5] says: stop it
[Player 5] says: GIVE MONEY ME TO
[Player 5] says: when i saw demon form
[General] [Player 5]: Quests are overated just beg
[Player 7] says: @\$%
[Player 7] says: GIVE
[Player 5] says: u hit like a woman ^&!@#
[Player 7] says: MONEY
[Player 5] says: i'll try for that
[Player 5] says: am i a warrior now?
[Player 5] says: I am looking for a shylock not an Iago
[Player 5] says: bounce away
[Player 5] says: please give m.. donate money to the church. We help retarded people such as yourself
[Player 5] says: kid

Say:

General Combat Log
[Player 5] says: please give m.. donate money to the church. We help retarded people such as yourself
[Player 6] says: no
[Player 7] says: nerdfag give me \$%^& momney

[Player 5] says: Come here Disgusting slave. You piece of lazy &!@. God, #\$\$%^ing slaves, amirite? Can't do &!@.
[Player 5] says: hehe
[Player 5] says: but now i am weak and sucks
[Player 5] says: same for you mate
[Player 5] says: if you need anything
[Player 5] says: how much ya pay for him?
[Player 5] says: just let me know

Say:

General Combat Log
[Player 5] says: 400K is a bit too much
[Player 5] says: 3 of them dragons
[Player 5] says: karma ain't pretty
[Player 5] says: YOU SAID ANYTHING
[Player 5] says: but i can help you with 12 mounts
[Player 5] says: oy im trying to help people
[Player 5] says: Lileess
[Player 5] says: hehe
[Player 5] says: im just trying to pay of my gambling de..
[Player 5] says: save retards in my retard shelter
[Player 5] says: yar a good person
[Player 5] says: brb, im gonna create the guild
[Player 5] says: Player 5
[Player 5] says: thnx bud
[Player 5] says: d

Say:

[] says: yeah
[] says: d
[] says: d
[] roars with bestial vigor. So fierce!
[] says: that's what it's all about
[Player 5] says: Oh [] looks like another idiot I can scam.. I mean Greetings traveler, [] Would you like to donate to the holy church of [] Player 5
[Player 5] says: hey dont ignore me
[] says: wat
[] says: now
[] says: Player 7
[Player 5] says: wanna donate money to my church?
[Player 5] says: please give m.. donate money to the church. We help retarded people such as yourself
[] says: what's yar story
[Player 7] says: i rape kids
[Player 7] says: so i lost my rights
[] says: that is not nice

[] says: in two weeks, i'll start studying like a beast for two months.
[] says: I can cut you for my dinner
[] says: So, even if i get it, i'll not use it.
[Player 5] says: Yeah try me
[Player 5] says: #\$\$%^&
[] says: i am rogue too
[Player 5] says: yeah walk away
[Player 5] says: coward
[] says: well its not only by having it but preparation to nex expansion too
[] says: And, when those two monts ends, it will be only two or three months until the expa.
[] says: ROFL
[Player 8] says: better gear at start faster leveling
[Player 9] says: Next expa basic gear will be better tnah anything you can get now.
[10] says: are u doing arenas or bgs?
[] says: Brb, gonna make myself something to eat.
[] says: I'm starving,
[] says: at 20 lvl
[11] says: TWINK

[Player 5] says: hey
[] says: i know this feeling
[Player 5] says: no
[Player 5] says: shut up
[Player 5] says: shut up
[] says: 7 mounths on trial
[Player 5] says: gimme the money
[] says: ooh??
[] says: in fcking draenor
[Player 7] says: I am an autistic black man, taken care of by the great Player 5 Clear the way for the great Player 5
[] says: it was so hard for me
[Player 5] says: remember who saved u?
[] says: sad
[] says: yes
[Player 7] says: I am an autistic black man, taken care of by the great Player 5 Clear the way for the great Player 5

[Player 5] says: typical women
[Player 6] says: sure i am
[Player 6] says: lol
[Player 7] says: she scared
[Player 5] says: they argue as they look
[Player 5] says: bad
[Player 7] says: typical women
[Player 7] says: worthless
[Player 6] says: nah i dont like ppl going in my personal bubble
[Player 5] says: no no
[Player 5] says: i am gay
[Player 5] says: ay wait
[Player 5] says: go stealth
[Player 5] says: unlucky
[1. General] [Player 6]: Mature(18+) Social guild <Player 6> is recruiting new active members whether they be socials or roleplayers. If you have any questions about the guild or want an invite just drop me a whisper.

[Player 7] says: aw you poort little snowflake
[Player 5] says: nothing wrong with that
[Player 5] says: we are rasing money for an autistic shelter too
[Player 6] says: *yawns*
[Player 6] says: u bore me
[Player 5] says: i mean i am hunter
[Player 5] seems to be sobering up.
[Player 5] says: gay class
[Player 5] says: yeah walk away
[Player 5] says: pussy

[Player 5] says: i whas just flag -carry only not usefull
[Player 5] says: how are you guys doing?
[Player 5] says: We are doing good!
[Player 5] says: we won 3-0 against Russia ppl
[Player 5] says: rbg?
[Player 5] has defeated [Player 5] in a duel
[Player 5] says: idk
[Player 5] says: i got 3 time flag cap
[Player 5] laughs.
[Player 5] says: it was 100% gay hunter)
[Player 5] blows [Player 5] a kiss.
[Player 5] says: the men says who wear pink
[Player 5] says: He did dmg<-i did cc and she carry flag->

3. April 3rd

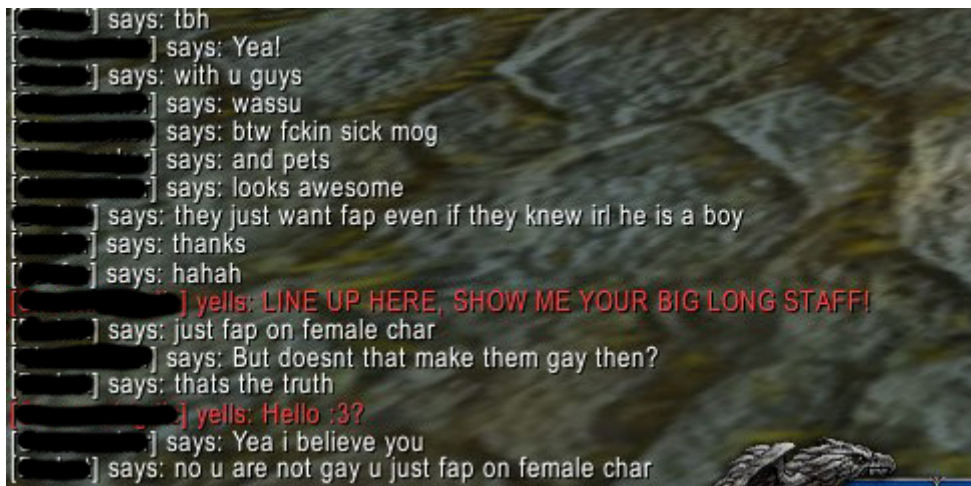
[Player 5] licks [Player 5]
[Player 5] clearly states, NO.
[Player 5] hugs [Player 5]
[Player 5] blows [Player 5] a kiss.
[Player 5] dances with [Player 5]
[Player 5] looks tipsy.
[Player 5] looks tipsy.
[Player 5] bows before [Player 5]
[Player 5] says: hmm
[Player 5] says: I could do this all day
[Player 5] bows before [Player 5]
[Player 5] says: dats gay
[Player 5] licks [Player 5]

4. April 5th

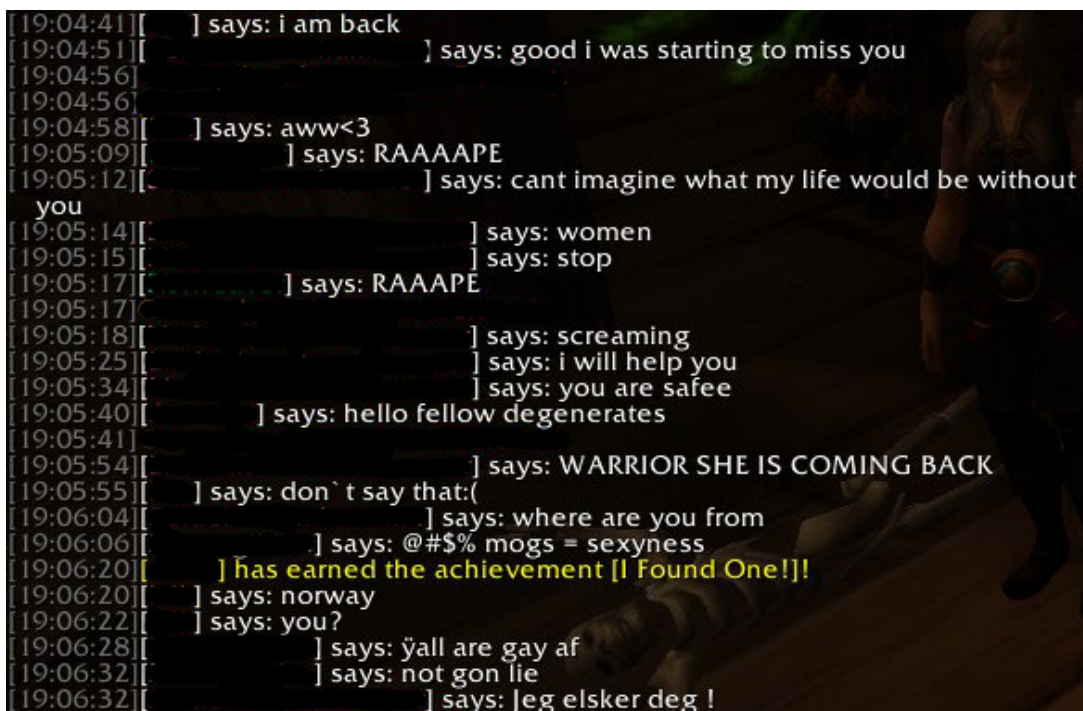
[] says: cmon man
[] says: thats stupid
[] says: Guards! Help me!
[] says: Guards! Help me!
[] says: my new song : i love pussy cat and i give it milk everydayeeee
[] says: ?
[] has defeated [] in a duel
[] says: thats amazing
[] says: !@\$ traps if u want
[] says: nice song?
[] says: yeah
[] claps excitedly for []
[] says: dont give a %^&*
[] says: :DD
[] says: noty that would make me kinda gay
[] says: hehe

[] says: you don't like
[] says: erprs
[] says: ey
[] says: []
[] says: NOPe i feel sorry for them actually
[] says: its sad :(
[] yells: my new song : i love pussy cat and i give pussy cat milk everyday
[] says: ouch
[] says: They should learn to interact with people in real life instead
[] says: of try come here and find some virtual girls
[] laughs at []
[] says: can I have that on my spotify playlist?
[] has defeated [] in a duel
[] says: hehe
[] says: in this virtual gaybar behind me
[] points over yonder.

[] says: why is everyone half naked in this town
[] says: free love
[] says: mate
[] says: I mean thats fine idc but you sold virtual girls that were actually guys though
[] says: the 60s
[] says: are back
[] says: <3
[] says: []
[] says: yeah, i don't got into details haha
[] says: bad for business :D
[] says: Exactly
[] says: Because people that erp dont want to know the answer
[] says: that's right :D
[] says: They want to believe its a girl so they can feel less gay :)
[] says: and they really hate the question :D



5. April 7th (corresponds to Transcription 5)



[20:03:02][] says: kittty.
[20:03:02][] says: do i look good?
[20:03:10][] says: Huh
[20:03:12][] says: Huh
[20:03:15][] says: I meant
[20:03:17][] says: I meant
[20:03:18][] says: Alright
[20:03:20][] says: do I look gay
[20:03:23][] says: Are you a guy?
[20:03:24] tells NO. Not going to happen.
[20:03:26][] says: and yeah
[20:03:29][] says: yes
[20:03:29][] says: no
[20:03:32][] says: no
[20:03:33][] says: Then it's even better
[20:03:36][] says: no
[20:03:37][] says: no
[20:03:39][] says: Yeah
[20:03:41][] says: Yeah
[20:03:41][] says: Yeah
[20:03:45][] says: its a #\$\$%^ing guy dude
[20:03:48][] says: Oh you're a chick
[20:03:52][] says: That's boring
[20:03:57][] says: Too much drama
[20:03:59] Player 12] says: hwy im a femake
[20:04:03][] says: ok
[20:04:05][] says: better now?
[20:04:06][] says: female
[20:04:08] Player 13] says: no you are not
[20:04:09][] says: wtf
[20:04:09][] says: ew
[20:04:10][] says: now its lesbian

[20:11:45] Player 14] says: you are
[20:11:49] Player 14] says: ?
[20:11:51][] says: yes.
[20:11:57][] says: Im
[20:11:59][] says: Im
[20:12:01][] says: !
[20:12:02][] says: !
[20:12:05][] says: ITS A TRAP!
[20:12:06][] says: ITS A TRAP!
[20:12:07][] says: ITS A TRAP!
[20:12:09] Player 12] says: yeah
[20:12:10][] says: like you
[20:12:11] gasps at
[20:12:13][] says: like you
[20:12:13][] says: like you
[20:12:13][] says: like you
[20:12:19] Player 12] says: but im openly
[20:12:19][] says: Now im a trap :3
[20:12:21][] says: but im openly
[20:12:22] Player 12] says: lesbiam
[20:12:23][] says: lesbiam
[20:12:25][] says: lesbiam
[20:12:25][] says: lesbiam
[20:12:26] claps excitedly for allen>

6. April 10th

16:50:38[] says: i belong to
16:50:42[] says: :3
16:50:42[] says: :O
16:50:46[] says: tf
16:50:48[]
16:50:49[] says: u been doing
16:50:51[]
16:50:52[] says: idk
16:50:55[]
16:50:58[] says: she licked me
16:51:00[] says: u liar
16:51:01[] says: This shouldn't take long...
16:51:01[] says: and then i said
16:51:04[]
16:51:06[] says: The invisibility liquor is ready for you.
16:51:09[] says: that that is harassment
16:51:11[] says: Ayy dwarf, you realised how many women are in here, that'sh
hilarious!
16:51:12[] says: so she paid 200 gold
16:51:14[]
16:51:15[] says: ez
16:51:16[] says: money
16:51:17[] says: lol
16:51:19[]
16:51:21[] says: hey
16:51:24[] says: dont say that
16:51:30[]
16:51:32[] says: thats what i say
16:51:36[]
16:51:39[] says: no
16:51:41[] says: You good?
16:51:41[] says: :;
16:51:41[] says: For sure a lot
16:51:42[] says: i also just said it
16:51:43[] says: yes
16:51:43[] says: (:
16:51:46[] says: :;
16:51:46[] says: yes
16:51:49[] says: im sad
16:51:54[] says: :;
16:51:55[] says: Boys that is just soo gay..not cuz ima against it..
16:51:55[]
16:51:57[] says: that was
16:51:59[] says: ehm
16:52:01[] says: i just
16:52:02[] says: interesting
16:52:02[] says: evil kitty
16:52:03[] says: wan sum fuk
16:52:04[] says: *burstsh into a drunken laughter*
16:52:04[] says: evil

[17:48:32] hugs
[17:48:36] hugs
[17:49:35] dances with
[17:49:47] dances with
[17:49:56[] says: Ur a guy irl
[17:49:58[] says: Ur gay
[17:50:03[] says: U disgust me
[17:50:07[] says: mites tänään? ^^
[17:50:10] hugs
[17:50:15[] says: Stop fapping
[17:50:16[] says: WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME BEING GAY
[17:50:18[] says: gay idiots
[17:50:26[] says: Gayness is a sin and is haram
[17:50:29] greets with a hearty hello!
[17:50:32[] says: God is dead
[17:50:32[] says: just ignore the dward. *chuckle*
[17:50:42[] says: All have mercy on thye
[17:50:49[] says: Btw dungeon queue
[17:50:51[] says: cya
[17:50:53[] says: gl

7. April 11th (corresponds to Transcription 1 and 2)

[17:10:39][Player 4] says: i kind of want to meet some thots down in the basement, want to see what the hell they're doing
[17:10:40][Player 1] says: im the only one named
[17:10:41]
[17:10:43]
[17:10:47][Player 3] says: u wanna pay them
[17:10:50][Player 1] says: im a thot
[17:10:50][Player 3] says: to be your slave
[17:10:51][Player 1] says: there u go
[17:10:52][Player 3] says: hehehe
[17:10:53][Player 4] says: no
[17:10:55]
[17:10:56][Player 1] says: ya
[17:10:57][Player 4] says: erp is gay
[17:10:57][Player 1] says: dont u see
[17:11:00][Player 1] says: ha
[17:11:01][Player 3] says: it is
[17:11:03][Player 1] says: im a thot
[17:11:04][Player 2] says: yup
[17:11:05]
[17:11:07]
[17:11:07][Player 3] says: like traps
[17:11:09]
[17:11:10]
[17:11:11][Player 2] says: an ugly thot

[17:11:13][Player 3] says: but these guys dont believe traps gay
[17:11:14][Player 1] says: traps aint gay
[17:11:17]
[17:11:17][Player 1] says: no
[17:11:19][Player 3] says: bro
[17:11:20]
[17:11:21][Player 3] says: XD
[17:11:22][Player 2] says: yes
[17:11:22][Player 1] says: only when u get hit by em
[17:11:25][Player 3] says: i knew u were ERPer
[17:11:26]
[17:11:26][Player 1] says: then there gay
[17:11:27]
[17:11:30][Player 1] says: but
[17:11:33][Player 4] says: traps are gay like futas
[17:11:36][Player 1] says: if u kill someone with a trap
[17:11:37]
[17:11:37][Player 3] says: yes
[17:11:37]
[17:11:39][Player 1] says: then that not gay
[17:11:41]
[17:11:44][Player 1] says: i bet
[17:11:46]
[17:11:46]
[17:11:46][Player 4] says: you're 50% gay if you like traps
[17:11:46][Player 3] says: wat
[17:11:47][Player 1] says: u have used
[17:11:48][Player 1] says: a trap
[17:11:50]
[17:11:51]
[17:11:53][Player 3] says: nah 100%
[17:11:54]
[17:11:55]
[17:11:55][Player 1] says: i love traps
[17:11:58][Player 2] says: i like trap
[17:11:58]
[17:11:58][Player 3] says: you know consciously
[17:12:02][Player 3] says: that a trap has a dick
[17:12:05][Player 3] says: so you're 100% gay m8
[17:12:05][Player 1] says: blueberries
[17:12:13][Player 1] says: getting tilt
[17:12:13][Player 2] says: Trap is nice
[17:12:17]
[17:12:17][Player 1] says: yes
[17:12:18][Player 1] says: ver ynice
[17:12:20]
[17:12:20]
[17:12:20][Player 3] says: not that it is bad
[17:12:21][Player 2] says: yea
[17:12:21][Player 1] says: traps
[17:12:21]
[17:12:22][Player 1] says: very nice
[17:12:23][Player 3] says: i mean i live in amsterdam

[17:12:27] [Player 3] says: we have gay pride here and &*!@
[17:12:30] [Player 2] says: everybody has diff opinions
[17:12:30] [Player 4] says: thats gay
[17:12:31]
[17:12:34] [Player 3] says: you dont have to deny that you're gay
[17:12:36] [Player 2] says: so none gives a #\$\$^ about yours
[17:12:38]
[17:12:40]
[17:12:40]
[17:12:43]
[17:12:43] [Player 3] says: its not an opinion
[17:12:44] [Player 1] says: and if im ga
[17:12:45] [Player 1] says: y
[17:12:46]
[17:12:46] [Player 1] says: then what
[17:12:48] [Player 3] says: aits a simple fact
[17:12:48] [Player 2] says: It is
[17:12:49] [Player 1] says: ?
[17:12:51]
[17:12:52] [Player 4] says: then you gay
[17:12:53] [Player 2] says: oh sure
[17:12:54]
[17:12:54] [Player 1] says: yes
[17:12:58] [Player 3] says: like dicks = gay
[17:12:58]
[17:12:58]
[17:13:00] [Player 1] says: but why u pointing it out
[17:13:02] [Player 3] says: like pussy = hetero
[17:13:02] [Player 1] says: all the time
[17:13:04]
[17:13:05]
[17:13:06] [Player 2] says: wth
[17:13:07] [Player 1] says: makes no since
[17:13:07] [Player 4] says: because it gay af
[17:13:09]
[17:13:11]
[17:13:12]
[17:13:12] [Player 1] says: yes it
[17:13:12] [Player 3] says: ??
[17:13:13] [Player 1] says: is
[17:13:14]
[17:13:15]
[17:13:16] [Player 1] says: so

[17:13:26] [Player 1] says: maybe ur gay aswell
[17:13:27]
[17:13:31]
[17:13:32]
[17:13:33] [Player 1] says: bc
[17:13:35]
[17:13:36] [Player 1] says: that gay
[17:13:37]
[17:13:37] [Player 3] says: im not
[17:13:37] [Player 1] says: af
[17:13:40]
[17:13:40] [Player 1] says: that is
[17:13:41]
[17:13:42] [Player 3] says: i only like pussy tho
[17:13:43]
[17:13:44] [Player 1] says: what a gay would say
[17:13:45]
[17:13:46]
[17:13:48]
[17:13:48] [Player 3] says: not really
[17:13:48] [Player 2] says: yup
[17:13:49] [Player 4] says: a pussy likes dicks
[17:13:49] [Player 1] says: to hide
[17:13:50]
[17:13:50] [Player 3] says: where im from
[17:13:50]
[17:13:50] [Player 4] says: so you gay
[17:13:54] [Player 3] says: xD
[17:13:54]
[17:13:57]
[17:13:58] [Player 1] says: u are both
[17:13:58] [Player 1] says: gay
[17:14:00] [Player 1] says: bc a
[17:14:01]
[17:14:02]
[17:14:05]
[17:14:06] [Player 3] says: ah man
[17:14:06] [Player 1] says: gay would say
[17:14:07]
[17:14:08]
[17:14:09] [Player 4] says: if i dont @#\$\$ anything im not gay
[17:14:10] [Player 1] says: they like pussy
[17:14:10]
[17:14:13]
[17:14:13] [Player 3] says: maybe you will accept yourself later
[17:14:14] [Player 1] says: just to hide
[17:14:16] [Player 3] says: its not gay
[17:14:17] [Player 3] says: its k m8
[17:14:17] [Player 1] says: the fact they are gay
[17:14:18] [Player 3] says: if you dont like it
[17:14:18]
[17:14:19] [Player 3] says: really

17:14:21 [Player 1] says: so
17:14:22 [Player 1] says: its ok
17:14:24 [Player 2] says: homophobics
17:14:24 [Player 3] says: im not even trolling
17:14:24 [Player 1] says: im ga
17:14:28 [Player 1] says: thats for sure
17:14:32 [Player 1] says: but
17:14:33 [Player 1] says: i dont get
17:14:35 [Player 3] says: gays are usually nice ppl
17:14:37 [Player 1] says: why u dont just admit
17:14:38 [Player 4] says: didnt say i didnt lik gay, just that im not
17:14:38 [Player 1] says: it
17:14:42 [Player 1] says: it aint that hard
17:14:46 [Player 4] says: and liking dicks is gay. and that's a fact.
17:14:55 [Player 2] says: calling people gay as if its a bad thing
17:15:01 [Player 3] says: nooo
17:15:01 [Player 2] says: its a sexuality
17:15:03 [Player 1] says: yes
17:15:03 [Player 3] says: don't say that
17:15:05 [Player 1] says: but u know
17:15:09 [Player 1] says: u to
17:15:12 [Player 3] says: we just state out the fact
17:15:14 [Player 1] says: know everythings a
17:15:16 [Player 3] says: that liking traps is gay
17:15:17 [Player 1] says: bout
17:15:18 [Player 1] says: gay
17:15:19 [Player 1] says: s

17:15:21 [Player 3] says: thats all man
17:15:21 [Player 2] says: no..
17:15:23 [Player 1] says: that is kinda gay
17:15:24 [Player 1] says: like
17:15:25 [Player 3] says: nothing else behind it xD
17:15:26 [Player 1] says: u know
17:15:26 [Player 4] says: we just say he gay because he like traps but he say he's not
gay, so he's the homophobic
17:15:28 [Player 1] says: yes
17:15:33 [Player 1] says: i like traps
17:15:35 [Player 2] says: omg
17:15:37 [Player 1] says: yes
17:15:38 [Player 1] says: i like traps
17:15:41 [Player 2] says: omg
17:15:42 [Player 1] says: so
17:15:43 [Player 1] says: so
17:15:44 [Player 1] says: u2 knows alot about
17:15:45 [Player 1] says: gays
17:15:47 [Player 1] says: so u2 must be gays
17:15:48 [Player 1] says: logic

[17:16:12][Player 1 says: thats
[17:16:14]
[17:16:14]
[17:16:15]
[17:16:15]
[17:16:15][Player 1 says: what i thought
[17:16:17]
[17:16:20]
[17:16:20]
[17:16:23]
[17:16:24][Player 1 says: blueberries
[17:16:26][Player 4] says: let's play find the thot
[17:16:28]
[17:16:30]
[17:16:30][Player 4] says: put your rp walk on
[17:16:33]
[17:16:35]
[17:16:35][Player 1 says: what is this trying
[17:16:36]
[17:16:37]
[17:16:38][Player 1 says: to switch
[17:16:40][Player 1 says: are talk
[17:16:41][Player 1 says: huh
[17:16:42][Player 3] says: noo
[17:16:42]
[17:16:44][Player 3] says: bro
[17:16:44][Player 1] says: yes
[17:16:45]
[17:16:45][Player 4] says: put rp walk on
[17:16:45][Player 3] says: its ok
[17:16:46][Player 1] says: u just did
[17:16:48]
[17:16:50]
[17:16:52]
[17:16:53][Player 1] says: u are gays
[17:16:54][Player 1] says: yes
[17:16:56][Player 3] says: traps are not gay to you
[17:16:56][Player 1] says: im gay
[17:16:58][Player 3] says: we get it
[17:16:59]
[17:17:02]
[17:17:03][Player 1] says: see

[17:17:03][Player 3] says: we dont have to change your mind

[17:17:04][Player 4] says: ok we get it traps arent gay