

## 64. Developing Critical Language Awareness In English Language Classrooms<sup>1</sup>

Nazlı AĞGÜN ÇELİK<sup>2</sup>

**APA:** Ağgün Çelik, N. (2024). Developing Critical Language Awareness In English Language Classrooms. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (41), 1200-1226. DOI: <https://zenodo.org/record/13338035>

### Abstract

Although the field of teaching English as a foreign language has been influenced by the pedagogy of oppressed and critical language awareness studies, most of the English language teaching materials have still remained at the language awareness level such as teaching grammar and vocabulary. There is a need to shed light on the practical use of critical language awareness in the literature and bridge the gap between the theory and practices. This study aims to create new teaching materials based on the relevant literature, experience of 15-year of teaching experience and self-studies of the author on the concept. With the aim of raising critical language awareness of educators and learners, a series of language teaching activities have been prepared for various skills, levels and age groups. In this regard, the activities are composed of two sections: teacher reflection and classroom activities. These activities include discussion, reflection, yes/no questions and mini projects to deepen the knowledge of critical attitude. The topics of the materials are also critical ones that incorporate immediate attentions such as underserved learners, ecology and gender equality. As a result, teachers could implement and adapt them in a way that suits and responds their students' needs and preferences.

**Keywords:** Critical language awareness, English language teaching, classroom practice, teaching materials, critical topics, teachers' involvement

<sup>1</sup> **Statement (Thesis / Paper):** It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation process of this study and all the studies utilised are indicated in the bibliography.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest is declared.

**Funding:** No external funding was used to support this research.

**Copyright & Licence:** The authors own the copyright of their work published in the journal and their work is published under the CC BY-NC 4.0 licence.

**Source:** It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation of this study and all the studies used are stated in the bibliography.

**Similarity Report:** Received - Turnitin, Rate: 5

**Ethics Complaint:** editor@rumelide.com

**Article Type:** Research article, **Article Registration Date:** 23.04.2024-**Acceptance Date:** 20.08.2024-

**Publication Date:** 21.08.2024; DOI: <https://zenodo.org/record/13338035>

**Peer Review:** Two External Referees / Double Blind

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, İskenderun Teknik Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu / Dr., İskenderun Technical University, School of Foreign Languages (Hatay, Türkiye), nazliaggun@gmail.com, **ORCID ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2705-109X> **ROR ID:** <https://ror.org/052nzqz14>, **ISNI:** 0000 0004 5896 2288

## İngilizce Dersliklerinde Eleřtirel Dil Bilincinin Geliřtirilmesi<sup>3</sup>

### Öz

Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretilimi alanı ezilenlerin pedagojisinden ve eleřtirel dil farkındalıđı çalışmalarından etkilenmiř olsa da, İngilizce öğretilim materyallerinin çođu dilbilgisi ve kelime bilgisi öğretilimi gibi dil farkındalıđı düzeyinde kalmıřtır. Eleřtirel dil bilincinin literatürde pratik kullanımına ışık tutmaya ve teori ile uygulamalar arasındaki uçurumu kapatmaya ihtiya vardır. Bu alıřma, ilgili literatüre, 15 yıllık öğretilim deneyimine ve yazarın kavram üzerine kendi alıřmalarına dayanarak yeni öğretilim materyalleri oluřturmayı amalamaktadır. Eđitmcilerin ve öğrencilerin eleřtirel dil bilincini artırmak amaıyla, eřitli beceriler, seviyeler ve yař grupları için bir dizi dil öğretilimi etkinliđi hazırlanmıřtır. Bu bađlamda etkinlikler, öğretilimlerin kendilerinin ve öğrencilerinin dil kullanımına eleřtirel yaklařmasını sađlamak amaıyla iki bölüm řeklinde hazırlanmıřtır. Bu faaliyetler arasında eleřtirel tutum bilgisini derinleřtirmek için tartıřma, yansıtma, evet / hayır soruları ve mini projeler yer almaktadır. Materyallerin konuları aynı zamanda yetersiz hizmet alan öğrenciler, ekoloji ve cinsiyet eřitliđi gibi günümüzde dikkat eken konulardır. Sonu olarak, öğretilimler bunları öğrencilerinin ihtiya ve tercihlerine uygun řekilde uygulayabilir ve uyarlayabilir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Eleřtirel dil farkındalıđı, İngilizce öğretilimi, sınıf ii uygulama, öğretilim materyalleri, eleřtirel konular, öğretilimlerin katılımı

<sup>3</sup> **Beyan (Tez/ Bildiri):** Bu alıřmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduđu ve yararlanılan tüm alıřmaların kaynakada belirtildiđi beyan olunur.

**ıkar atıřması:** ıkar atıřması beyan edilmemiřtir.

**Finansman:** Bu arařtırmayı desteklemek için dıř fon kullanılmamıřtır.

**Telif Hakkı & Lisans:** Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan alıřmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve alıřmaları CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

**Kaynak:** Bu alıřmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduđu ve yararlanılan tüm alıřmaların kaynakada belirtildiđi beyan olunur.

**Benzerlik Raporu:** Alındı – Turnitin, Oran: %5

**Etik řikayeti:** editor@rumelide.com

**Makale Türü:** Arařtırma makalesi, **Makale Kayıt Tarihi:** 23.04.2024-**Kabul Tarihi:** 20.08.2024-**Yayın Tarihi:** 21.08.2024; **DOI:** <https://zenodo.org/record/13338035>

**Hakem Deđerlendirmesi:** İki Dıř Hakem / ift Tarafalı Körleme

## Introduction

After the outbreak of coronavirus and the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, English language classes are also turned into the online instruction. All of the learners had the experience of learning even a grammar topic from a video class, collaborated with each other online and reached data at any time and any place. Although the schools started face-to-face education in two years' time, learning habits also changed in a way that could not be turned back. The internet has the huge load of language teaching data accumulated in the lockdown, and now learners need more reasons to come to class and wait for the teacher in the class on time. The fact that the burden of creating an engaging class time is on the back of language teachers who are supposed to be equipped with the knowledge of technology and rich language teaching methodology. Within the context of the rapidly changing world, this chapter recommends using the critical language pedagogy in the agenda of an English language teacher to enable learners to critically question the content of the current English language teaching materials which are produced by dominant authorities. The current materials which only aim to raise language awareness cannot offer an environment where learners can think critically, have control over their learning and make meaning (Crawford, 1978). Therefore, language cannot only be regarded as a linguistic system because of its link with society, identity and behaviours of individuals (Norton, 2006). In this regard, Arndt, Harvey and Nuttall (2000) state that teaching with critical language awareness can offer many advantages to both language teachers and learners, such as motivating learners to transfer the skills from the mother tongue to the new language, understanding English language from a wider perspective and learner's enjoyment of intellectuality that is necessary to communicate in a new language.

Critical language awareness originally came from Freire's (2020) critical pedagogy whose focus was on raising the critical awareness about inequities in the social system. For this reason, the critical pedagogy offers a theoretical framework to analyze power relationships and oppression in education. Freire (2020) gets the attention of everybody on how schools are formed in a way to serve the privileged and powerful class, and keep the others oppressed in the social system. To prevent this and ensure change for equality, critical pedagogy suggests critical thinking, liberation of the oppressed individuals, the neutrality of knowledge and culturally sustaining pedagogy. The theory has influenced many fields such as gender studies, gay theory, postcolonial studies, and anti-racist pedagogy (Pennycook, 2003). For instance, Van Dijk (1984) focuses on the context, discourse, power, and knowledge in the study of language. Fairclough (1992) also stretched the link between pedagogy of oppressed and language teaching, and thereby explained how society shapes discourse, power relationships and ideologies. Similarly, Canagarajah (1999) criticizes the schools that manipulate the teaching materials, methodology and the norm of the school to teach the students to serve the status quo. English language learners are supposed to develop their critical language awareness to see the hidden curriculum, and have a distant look at the dominant ideology in languages (Zinkgraf, 2003). However, the current English language teaching materials are still lack of providing critical language awareness, and the teaching resources traditionally follow and accept the ones which Westerners might find appropriate and relevant (Wallece, 1992).

Additionally, critical pedagogy is criticized in that it has more features of theory and less features of practice (Baladi, 2007). Hence, Crookes (2009) recommends preparing materials that raise critical language awareness so that language teachers can use them, take them as a model and understand how CLA practically works in foreign language teaching. It is hoped that a language teacher can develop critical language awareness to transform the education in possible ways and make a difference in the process (Janks, 1992). Gore (1992) also mentions the challenges of the application of critical language

awareness for educators due to the little support they get, in order to adapt it to the curriculum and teaching practice.

In this sense, this study aims to engage English language teachers with the concept of critical language awareness and application of it in the language classroom. Critical language awareness It starts with the literature review, which includes parts related to CLA. Being motivated and enlightened by these studies which are conducted to applicate CLA in English language teaching and having the fifteen years of experience in the field, the author aims to offer activities on CLA to English language teachers so that they can develop their CLA and benefit from these activities in their language classrooms.

The activities in this section are separated in two parts. The first part is entitled *Activities for Teacher Reflection on CLA* that aims to engage teachers with critical reflection sessions by some yes-no questions, and open-ended questions or tasks. As a consequence of this, teachers can evaluate their teaching in terms of CLA and take actions in the classroom with CLA. The second part is entitled *Activities for Developing Students' CLA* which aims to offer how applications of CLA can be practiced in the classroom. The part includes different activities for writing, speaking, reading and listening skills. Through these activities, English language teachers can engage with the concept, deepen their knowledge about the application of CLA in the class, and try to create some activities in their classroom

## Literature Review

### Critical Language Awareness in Foreign Language Learning

Application of critical language awareness in English language teaching has made the field of language education more intellectual, and CLA has provided a way to deepen connections between society, culture and identity. In her study, Janks (1999) put focus on the relationship between English language learning and thinking intellectually, and forming identity. With the journals of the learners, the researcher shed light on how English classes changed the way learners saw themselves, and asserted that an English language teacher could achieve more than teaching language, based on the possibilities of learning a new language. In a similar study, Britton and Leonard (2020) aimed to take the conventional teaching of English out of its form, and understand its relation with social justice, linguistic responsibility and critical reflection. The researcher found that when critical reflection was taught and encouraged in second language writing skills, the problems of learners related to sociolinguistic came out as well. Similarly, Ali (2011) integrated the skill of critical language awareness, using higher-order thinking in writing skills. The researcher found that the attempt to include CDA techniques in English classes increased the motivation of learners. Dar, Shams and Rahimi (2010) also aimed to teach students CLA techniques and measure their attitude towards learning English by means of news that has different points of view on the same issue, and motivation of learners to study English increased by 90% after the introduction of CLA techniques. Lastly, Ngwenya (2006) aimed to improve reading skill of law students in English language teaching. By teaching of grammar and vocabulary with critical language awareness, they found that this integration of CLA in reading skill enhanced critical literacy and learning English. It can be concluded from these studies that CLA complements English teaching in several different ways. English teaching has become more than memorization of grammar forms or frequent vocabulary list, rather has become alive with its dynamic links with society and actual concerns of learners.

## Respecting Mother Tongue in ELT

When English language teaching field is studied, the importance of the mother tongue in the class is rarely discussed. Mostly, the focus is on how to teach English in the most effective way. On the other hand, the topic of respecting mother tongue, thinking about its place or future in the world, and its vulnerability next to English language teaching need to be considered in English language teaching education. From this aspect, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) warns that language varieties will decrease in the next generation since schools have been replacing the native and local language with the dominant and popular ones. As an attempt to protect the mother tongue from the negative effect of English or other foreign languages, Erol and Karakaya (2020) developed a valid and reliable scale whose items measure individual and social awareness related to the proper use of Turkish language in daily life and social media. One of the items from the scale developed by Erol and Karakaya (2020) is, for example, “*Speaking with only Turkish words and words translated into Turkish is an indication of backwardness*” (p.540). This scale could be used by English language teachers to understand both their own and their students’ awareness of mother tongue. They could also create some activities which help learners realize that they could be part of protecting the mother tongue in the process of learning a new language. In fact, the concept of “*Critical language awareness*” also refers to the maintenance of mother tongue and developing positive approach to heritage languages and its various dialects (Beaudrie, 2015).

Another study that aims to put emphasis on mother tongue is conducted by Ducar (2022). The researcher points out that when teachers have the high critical language awareness for the local variation of Spanish Heritage Language, they start to develop respect for their students and consequently a more equitable educational environment is established. In the same study, Ducar found that regarding teaching Spanish speaking students, teachers expressed their feelings as “ineffective”, “useless”, “unable to understand”, or “no knowledge” prior to the training related to language awareness, and then their words turned into “identity”, “support”, “lack of representations”, and “acceptance” by following the instruction. Those studies on the maintenance of mother tongue and heritage languages strengthen the connection between the language and identity and the belief in preserving a world where every language and its variations are seen as unique and adequate.

## Teaching English as a Global Language

Just as English took place of French in the past as the new lingua, the reasons to learn English changed as well. In the past, there was a tradition of teaching English language with British or American culture. For instance, teaching materials would include the word of “thanksgiving”, and then the teacher would teach what the concept of thanksgiving means in its connection with the history of the USA. However today, English language learners have become more diverse than ever and English language teaching needs new approaches. Canagarajah (2014) defines English language teaching as “constituting socially constructed situational norms in specific contexts of interaction”(p.767). Canagarajah also says that since the context of teaching English is heterogonous and complex, the approach to teaching English should change accordingly. According to the researcher, the focus should be on pragmatics, context, and communicative strategies rather than the structure of grammar, or comprehension of the language.

Matsuda (2003) criticizes teaching English only in the standard and privileged dialect of English that serves for the inner-circle of the speaker of English. That type of attitude will not empower learners who may need to keep in communication with non-native English speakers. In addition, she mentions the necessity of understanding the background of the spread of English language across the world so that

learners could be aware of the abuse of power through linguistic imperialism. The researcher adds that the users of the language may need to know what they are exposed to. Similarly, Wang et al. (2021) realized that English language teaching materials do not represent the different English speakers from all over the world, and they aimed to equip students with a critical perspective to learning English. The results of the study showed that learners got better at intercultural literacy and started to criticize the textbooks from a wider perspective and with a critical approach.

Today, English language learners come together at online platforms with a common interest where the notion of country does not matter anymore. English language teaching offers a new complex context where distinguishing the native from the non-native speaker is no more valid. English language learners get engaged around the common interest and they need to produce English rather than simply comprehend it. To illustrate, a Turkish learner of English may wish to learn vocabulary and grammar structure to participate in an online discussion in English related to preparation of Turkish cuisine.

### **Developing a Positive Attitude to Variations of English**

Although variations and dialects are the inherent nature of the development and growth of a language, certain beliefs and prejudices are assigned to them. There is a tendency to see speakers of the dominant and standardized English as smart, dependable, and moral. On the other hand, the speakers who have a different accent are seen as people who do not have these traits (Garrett, 2010). Teaching and studying different variations of English in the school have been the interest of some researchers. Metz (2018) found that since all of the teaching materials such as reading and listening are produced in Standard English, it is hard for language teachers to include other language variations which are rarely presented, so teachers need support to learn how to bring critical approach in the class.

Godley, Reaser and Moore (2015) searched the development of critical language awareness in a study conducted with pre-service English teachers who were identified as white and the speaker of Standard English. Some of the topics in the instruction included increasing awareness about discriminative language, richness and uniqueness of variations of the language, the relationship between language and identity, and lastly language and prejudice about dialects of the languages. The results of online course aimed to develop understanding of language variation showed that participants started to appreciate different English dialects, and understand language ideologies and code-switching.

Similarly, Hankerson (2022) aimed to increase the critical language awareness of learners who speak African American in writing skills through a new curriculum. The curriculum was designed to fight against linguistic racism, linguistic hegemony, and inequities in writing education and enforce empowerment. The results of the instruction showed that students become better writers in term of macro and micro level of writing, and rhetorical and syntactic fluency. The writer suggested that such an intervention can assist struggling against racism and improve writing performance in second language writing instruction as well. Lastly, Godley and Minnici (2008) conducted a study on rich dialects in English with African American students. Classroom discussion with students on critical language awareness and variations of English helped students realize how one single variation of English dominates the perception of people. The result of the studies conducted in the classroom also showed that students who spoke African American Vernacular English started to see their dialect as the natural development of English language and become proud of who they were. Based on the results of studies on the variation of English, it can be said that both teachers and learners benefit from the critical language awareness. Both teachers and learner have a more intellectual way of thinking related to

language hegemony and inequality. The results of the studies also revealed that a change of perception in the variation of English could lead to a positive learning setting.

### **Active Involvement of Teachers in CLA**

Teachers are the most important stakeholders in building CLA in the classrooms. Hawkins and Norton (2009) describe language teachers as social mediators who are the first to meet immigrants and refugees in some contexts. In their study, Hawkins and Norton invite language teacher educators to reflect on their identity and their place in society so that they could understand complex relations they have formed from a wider perspective. The same researchers also mention that critical language teacher educators need to reflect on their own background in order to work with their students in an efficient way. Similarly, Pennycook (2003) says that teachers can succeed a lot in the classroom by encouraging students to question misuse of power in society in critical reflection sessions.

There have been several studies conducted to show how teacher training sessions could increase CLA. In their study, Carpenter, Achugar, Walter and Earhart (2015) prepare a teacher training program to teach the relationship between linguistic practices and social reality. The results showed that the teacher development program helped teachers to plan their lessons, and reflect on their pedagogy. In a similar way, Zinkgraf (2003) aimed to equip the university students who wanted to be English language teachers or translators with critical reflection. The results showed that when students were offered tools and knowledge to question the ideologies embedded in the texts, they showed great accomplishments and employed a new and critical approach to texts. Lastly, Chang, Torres-Guzmán and Waring (2020) studied the CLA workshops conducted for pre-service teachers who were bilinguals in Chinese and English. The field notes and interviews proved that the trainees realized how the languages and accent shaped their life and education. The participants of the study started to accept the accent in a more positive way and link it with the coexistence of the culture and language variety. It can be understood from these studies that CLA could be cultivated in English language teaching, and teachers could enrich their class and lessons with their knowledge on language, culture, power and inequality.

### **Active Involvement of Learners in CLA**

In addition to teachers, learners are also the important stakeholders to apply CLA in the classes successfully. Metz (2021) says that teachers' awareness will not be adequate without students' knowledge of CLA, and he found that when students could not understand where the language variations come from, they would refuse to communicate by the use of linguistics terms related to CLA. Metz notes that students have already formed some prejudice about what language varieties represent, and recommends that learners' life and belief should be placed in the centre of CLA studies in the class in order to overcome their resistance.

In a similar vein, Chaparro (2014) also focuses on the CLA of students and mentions that English language learners have more chances of communicating in diverse sociolinguistic environments. Some of the multilingual students, who may also be immigrants, get education with native speakers. In this asymmetric environment, some of the native speakers may not be willing to play their part in communicating with non-native speakers due to language variations or accents. Similarly, Merlo (2018) points out that education has been away from what people consider to be important in their daily life. According to Chaparro (2014), emerging multi-linguals themselves offer learning materials and new chances in the classroom to study critical language awareness.

Another issue that is worth mentioning is to include the real concern of students. Akbari (2008) put emphasis on the necessity of inclusion of student life into ELT classrooms in his study called “Transforming lives: introducing critical pedagogy into ELT classrooms”. Akbari criticized the classroom practice in that it falls behind what critical language awareness brought into the field and suggested some applications for the teachers. First of all, the instruction should be formed according to students’ local culture. Akbari also mentions that in practice, people use English to express their culture, identity or their belief instead of communicating the culture of the target language. Secondly, Akbari suggests using the mother tongue as a resource and warns teacher not to forbid the use of mother tongue in the classroom totally, but to respect the linguistic background of learners if learners’ voice is wanted to be heard. Thirdly, daily problems of the students, such as the difference between rural and urban students’ concerns, and between minority and majority students’ concerns, should be included in the content of the course. Accordingly, Akbari suggests using the class resources instead of imposing materials that are aimed to fit all and finally suggests raising awareness about marginalized groups. He claimed that transforming into a fair society is not possible through main course books which are prepared by following strict and inadequate guidelines.

In conclusion, students play the main roles since their diverse and rich life experiences with languages and society are the concern of CLA. Students should have confidence in expressing who they are and communicate with others with less prejudicial attitudes. Without questioning, English language teachers should not trust the textbooks or teaching materials to prepare students for meaningful communications because teachers could have the power to adapt the class in a way to serve the needs of their students.

### **Gender Equality in ELT**

English language teaching materials are criticized to be neutral and irrelevant (Akbari, 2008). On the other hand, language learners and teachers are exposed to these huge amounts of materials while they are learning vocabulary, grammar, or improving their language skills. Learners and teachers might have a richer experience with the materials when they are interesting, current and relevant for the students. In the field, there are some studies integrating gender equality into English language teaching. As an example, Banegas, Jacovkis and Romiti (2020) offer a gender point of view in an English language teacher training program in Argentina and the instruction program that aimed to bring gender equality included rich resources such as: TED talks on gender equality, developing lesson plans on the relevant topic, online forms, activity analysis, sexual assaults at schools, and reflecting on difficulties of preparing such lesson plans. The results showed that the participating teacher increased his/her language awareness about the gender quality both as a citizen and teacher.

Similarly, Parsaiyan (2019) took into account the need for the practitioner inquiry in critical language awareness studies in Iran and conducted a study, hoping to be a model for other teachers who were interested in the concept of critical language awareness. The participants of the study included twenty young female students who were studying English literature in a university. The students studied critical language awareness by using texts from advertisements and TV commercials, and focused on the critical analysis of literary works, news and journalistic writings during one semester. At the end of instruction, the students started to understand the meaning beyond the words, the complex relationship behind the texts and how the relationship between the words, text and context were formed according to language, ideology and gender expression.



In another study, Ho (2020) blended English language with critical sexual literacy. The results of the study showed that participants had a higher critical language awareness related to queers. At the end of the study, it is suggested that everyday discourse would enhance the critical awareness related to gender and sexuality. Similarly, Nemi Neto (2018) lays stress on including sexual and gender richness in language learning. They aimed to provide literature with tools and strategies through positive affirmation of marginalized individuals or groups since these groups that were seen as marginalized were omitted or their voices were silenced in language learning textbooks.

### **Eco-Critical Language Awareness**

In addition to gender equality, ecology is an immediate and critical topic that should be covered in English language teaching. Each language learner is also a candidate to be a world citizen and should know how to live in the world and what to do in order to protect the world in ELT classes. Micalay-Hurtado and Poole (2022) aim to extend the lens of ELT to ecology. Since CLA aims to bring social justice in the classroom, the climate change and its myriad influence are the most urgent topics to be covered in ELT today and in the future. The authors believe that language teachers may play a role in building a sustainable future, and empower the learners with the knowledge of ecology while teaching a new language.

Similarly, Xiong (2014) aims to analyze English language teaching materials to understand how environmental issues have been presented in China. According to findings, the textbooks only cover the issue on the surface level and require only observations of the readers. All in all, the researcher suggests that English language teachers and students should take actions, participate in the problems of environment actively and see English language teaching as a means of thinking critically and ecologically in the class.

### **Activities To Develop Critical Language Awareness In The Classroom**

In the previous sections, some of the significant studies on literature related to critical language awareness have been covered. These are understanding mother tongues, teaching English as a global language, active involvement of teachers and students in the process of CLA. This section aims to offer activities for the application of CLA in English language teaching in two sections entitled *Activities for the Teacher Reflection on CLA* and *Activities for Developing Students' CLA*.

The relevant studies in the field (Zinkgraf, 2003; Chang, Torres-Guzmán & Waring, 2020) have showed that when teachers are offered the training for CLA, their teaching experiences improve and the classrooms turn into a setting where the expression of the identity, the background and the language variations are welcomed. Thus, this section aims to present the teacher reflection activities to increase critical language awareness of teachers. It is hoped that when the teachers have sensitivity towards language discrimination, prejudices and the abuse of power in the classroom, they will have the power to challenge the spread of dominant power at schools, and the new English language learners will have more confidence in expressing who they are in the classroom and this, in turn, will contribute to have a sustainable future and fair society.

### **Activities for Teacher Reflection on CLA**

In this section, there are eight different reflection activities and each activity aims to encourage teachers' critical reflection about the different aspects of critical language awareness in English language teaching.

The reflection activities include issues, such as the power of the language, personal history of teachers with critical language, linguistic discrimination in the class, the real concerns of the students, analysis of teaching materials, gender inequality, and setting of the classroom atmosphere for underserved learners.

The aim and description of each activity is given at the beginning. Following that, there are reflection questions that are formed in why- or yes-no questions. The teachers are expected to read the questions, think critically and reflect on their own teaching and answer the questions honestly. The teachers could evaluate what they come up with and think of taking an action for a particular weakness related to CLA at the end of each activity. These reflection questions could improve teachers' development in CLA. As a consequence of these reflection sessions, they could intervene in their teaching materials and change their teaching habits for a more democratic and fairer classroom environment.

### **Teacher Reflection Activity 1**

This activity aims to help the teacher make connections between the ideas of researchers in the relevant literature and his/her personal practice in the classroom. The teacher reads the statement given below and reflects on his/her story or experience related to topic. The personal experience could have taken place when h/she was a student or teacher.

#### **Teacher Reflection on the Teacher's Stories Concerning CLA**

##### **Steps to Follow:**

1. Read the statement written below and reflect on your personal experience you have had related to the words and their power.

A) Words have power. They can make you better or they can make you worse.

2. Read the questions below that will help you reflect on your story and answer the questions if they are relevant to you.

A) Do you remember an event in your past that reminds you of the power of words?

B) When was that?

C) Where was it?

D) Who were involved?

E) What kinds of languages were used?

F) What was upsetting, exciting, or moving about the event?

G) How was it resolved?

H) How is that event related to what you have read in literature review section?

##### **Evaluation:**

Keep a dairy on the issue and note down the events related to critical language awareness, such as the feedback you have got from a student and your reflection on the teaching materials.

### **Teacher Reflection Activity 2**

This reflection activity includes yes-no questions related to the linguistic discrimination and inequality that can occur in the classroom. The teacher thinks of a class h/she has taught and reflects on his/her classroom management. Write “yes” or “no” next to the sentences below. The aim of the activity is to reflect on and check whether the classroom is set on fairness in term of the use of the language.

#### Teacher Reflection Questions

Please write yes/no

1. In my class time, nobody can make discriminative jokes and expressions or use a discriminative language\_\_\_\_\_
2. There have been a lot of times that I have focused on the language the students used, and corrected it with less discriminative ones\_\_\_\_\_
3. My students feel secure in expressing their beliefs or identity and participating in the class actively\_\_\_\_\_
4. My students feel secure in speaking English with a non-native accent and do not feel under pressure when I correct their pronunciation mistakes that lead to communication problems\_\_\_\_\_
5. When I have to teach an abusive word, a proverb or an idiom, I directly or indirectly mention the improper use of it or offer alternative language to those abusive words \_\_\_\_\_
6. When I have students from socially, culturally or economically disadvantaged backgrounds, I see them as an opportunity to enlighten my class\_\_\_\_\_
7. I take an action against linguistically discriminative language in my classroom\_\_\_\_\_

#### Evaluation:

Think of all of the answers you have given. Then, read the questions below and discuss the answers with a colleague.

A) How would you evaluate your answers? Do the answers lean to yes or no? How would you make all of the answers ‘yes’?

B) What do you need to change in order to establish linguistically confident class for everybody?

If your answers lean to yes, what do you owe your strength to? What has led you to think critically about the use of language in the classroom? Reflect on your story with an intervention related to the language discrimination or a story about taking an action to use an alternative form of an abusive word.

### Teacher Reflection Activity 3

This reflection session is composed of two steps. In the first step, the teacher finds what the real concerns of individuals in the school setting that can be seen in the classroom. There are some possible scenarios below to be selected by the teacher. In the second step, the teacher prepares a mini lesson to address the issue and offers the language tools to students in order to speak about the topic. The aim of the activity is to encourage the teacher to reflect on and then plan a lesson on the real concerns of his/her students.

Prepare a Mini-lesson based on the Classroom Reality

Steps to Follow:

1. Forget the ideal learning classroom and learners. Now, focus on your real students in the classroom instead. Consider the real problems your students would have. Alternatively, think of the location of the class and the challenges the environment may face. Some of the problems would be as follows:

A) Your classroom would be in a neighbourhood where gender inequality would be the highest. The number of male students would outnumber the number of female students or the female students would be less supported for education.

B) You would have a marginalized student in the classroom and h/she may not feel comfortable expressing himself/herself linguistically.

C) The honour issue would be still taking place in the location of your school, and in particular, your female learners would be indirectly affected by the situation.

D) The number of the immigrants would be high and they would be indicated with a negative language in the environment.

E) The local neighbourhood would have a different native accent and it would be judged by the rest of the people in society.

F) The ecology around the place of the classroom would be harmed either by a factory, garbage stocking or simply global warming.

G) There would be disabled students and their classmates are not sure about the way of referring to their disabilities.

2. Remember that such current issues above are not frequently mentioned for language teaching, yet as a teacher, you are supposed to teach the real concerns of your students and contribute to any possible and positive change that can be successful in English language teaching. Choose one of the problems above and start to prepare a mini lesson plan on it. For example, choose a reading passage from the internet related to the relevant problem. Prepare warm up speaking questions to start reading. Then encourage your students to write about the topic in the post-reading questions.

Evaluation:

If you feel that you are not sure about your critical reflection, or the success of your plan, invite a

colleague for a peer observation. Alternatively, get feedback from the students in a formal or an informal way.

#### **Teacher Reflection Activity 4**

This reflection activity focuses on the personal history of the teacher related to the use of language h/she gets upset about both in English and mother tongue. The activity includes two steps. In the first step, the teacher finds what language phrases, expressions or words have touched upon him/her personally and internally in life. In the second step, h/she thinks of an alternative way to teach them in English. The aim of this activity is to encourage teacher to reflect on his/her own vulnerability and to prepare mini-plans to change it through a positive language.

Include your Agenda of Teaching

Steps to Follow:

1. Think of your childhood, school year or working life. Have you ever got upset due to a phrase, expression, or simply a word that is referred to you? Write the list of the word groups if there is more than one. That could be related to your physical appearance, your beliefs, gender, and age or so on. Cross the words out and write a similar, close or an alternative expression that can make you happy.
2. Rewrite the same event again in your own words based on your imagination. Turn the event into a positive experience. What words would have been said? How would the participants have behaved differently? What would their body language be like? What would have made you feel more involved or respected?
3. Now, imagine that you would teach the words and take part in the dialogue. Think of a technique to teach the new words. Turn the experience into a positive one.

Evaluation:

If you feel the activity is successful, you can include similar stories of your students as well. Think of how the dialogues taking place in the daily life could be a source of your CLA studies in the classroom.

#### **Teacher Reflection Activity 5**

This reflection activity aims to encourage the teacher to think about teaching materials and prepare them to take an action to intervene. The first step of activity requires the teacher to analyze the teaching topics and answer the questions. The second step requires the teacher to write the list of the topics that interest and concern the students.

Matching of the Content of Course Books with the Student Life

Steps to Follow:

1. Read and answer the questions about the teaching topics.

A) Pick up a course book randomly and open the first pages that include the content, the aim and methodology. What percentage of the content matches with the real concern of the students?

B) Would you intervene with that book? Which topics or aims would you cross out? Which ones would you focus on?

C) How often do you intervene in the content of the main book you teach?

2. Read and answer the questions about the list of the topics that interest and concern your students. Write down these lists of topics.

A) What are the real topics that really interest you and your learners' life?

B) Think of the hot topics that are discussed on social media/news/dialogues taking place in the local community. What percentage of the content in the main book matches with them? Write the list of the content that matches.

Evaluation:

Evaluate the length of the lists of topics that concern the students and you personally. If the list is short, you can scan social media posts, or interview your students for more interesting topics.

### Teacher Reflection Activity 6

This activity aims to familiarize the teacher with UNESCO guidelines related to the gender equality, which are retrieved from VOA Learning English (2017) and encourage him/her to create more guidelines from the perspective of English language teaching. Another aim of the activity is to question whether the teacher takes into consideration the gender equality in the classroom. The activity includes two steps. In the first step, the teacher reads the guidelines and thinks of more similar guidelines. In the second step, the teacher reflects on his/her classroom reality with regard to the gender equality.

#### Reading Guidelines for Gender Equality in the Classroom

Steps to Follow:

1. Read the UNESCO guidelines below critically. Do you think there are other guidelines that can be added to by taking into account the perspective of English language teaching? If yes, what are they?

A) Ensure that the class resources show both males and females in the same number

B) Ensure that the content in the classroom resources is linked to both female and male learners.

C) Note when only stereotypes are shown to refer to female and male learners.

D) Ensure that the same number of both male and female writers are used.

E) Ensure that both male and female professionals and leaders are used as examples.

Source: <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/how-to-identify-gender-inequality-in-teaching-materials/3996027.html>

2. How many of the features mentioned match the features of your class? Reflect on each guideline and

think of the possible reasons to match or not to match with them.

Evaluation:

Share your feelings and ideas about the UNESCO guidelines on the gender equality with your colleagues or with a teacher trainer/educator. As a result of the reflection activity, if you believe that your teaching materials or activities do not represent male and females equally, show a positive discrimination and select the resources that show images of successful women or the stories of women empowerment.

### **Teacher Reflection Activity 7**

This activity also aims to enhance the gender equality. In the first step, the teacher is supposed to read a text related to the weather and its effect on jobs. Then the teacher is expected to analyze it by using the UNESCO guidelines which are given in Teacher Reflection Activity 6. In the second step, the teacher is asked to intervene with the text and reflect on what kind of intervention h/she would do. This activity aims to enable the teacher to analyze a reading passage with the gender perspective and prepare and encourage the teacher to take an action when it is necessary for gender equality.

#### Establishing Gender Equality in ELT Classrooms

Steps to Follow:

1. First read the text retrieved from VOA Learning English (2017) and reread the text critically by taking into account the UNESCO guidelines mentioned in activity 6, and circle the guideline items that the text contradicts. Reflect on each guideline and discuss how the reading passage has failed to follow them.

#### The Weather's Effect

The weather of a place can affect our daily lifestyles in many ways. This makes the weather forecast something of significance to us. Weather influences to a very great extent the sort of food we eat, what we wear, how we live and work. Despite the advances made in science and technology, farmers and their crops are still at the mercy of the climate and the weather.

The fishermen, farmers, journalists, sportsmen, housewives and pilots are some of the persons who are directly affected by the weather. The fishermen must be sure that there are no strong winds and excessive rainfall before going out to sea. Farmers must know the weather conditions so that their crops can be planted at the right time. Do you remember when the El Niño weather phenomena caused a vast amount of crops to be destroyed?

Sportsmen cannot be engaged in sporting activities during certain weather conditions. Can you imagine a game of cricket or football being played during a period of heavy rainfall? The housewife, too, must know the weather for the day to be able to decide her daily activities, for example, laundry work.

Source:<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/how-to-identify-gender-inequality-in-teaching-materials/3996027.html>

Evaluation:

Imagine you have come across a similar text in your own teaching materials. Would you intervene? If yes, how would you do it? Mention a few actions you would take.

### Teacher Reflection Activity 8

This last activity aims to encourage the teacher to summarize the whole chapter with Yes/No Questions that aim to assess CLA of the teacher in the classroom. The questions include items related to the mother tongue, different dialects, underserved learners in the classroom, linguistic discrimination and gender equality as well as ecological issues. The activity may help to have a general look at CLA in the classroom. The teacher is expected to read the questions and check whether his/her class reveals the features of CLA.

#### Checking Awareness of CLA

Are you an English teacher who is aware of how to increase critical language awareness in the classroom? Check yourself with the yes-no questions.

Yes/no

1. I teach English as a lingua franca and see it as a tool to become an international citizen\_\_\_\_\_
2. I respect mother tongue while teaching English and I am cautious about the wrong use of it in English words, pronunciation and grammar\_\_\_\_\_
3. I include different English variations and dialects that represent a large spectrum of people in my class and present them as a sign of variety and uniqueness \_\_\_\_\_
4. I am aware of my role and power as an English language teacher applying critical language awareness\_\_\_\_\_
5. I use my students' concern, identity, belief, accent and talents as a resource in English language teaching\_\_\_\_\_
6. I intervene in the standard teaching materials or syllabus when I believe there is a room to develop critical language awareness\_\_\_\_\_
7. I pay attention to hinder any discriminative language and encourage all of my students to express who they are in my class time\_\_\_\_\_
8. I use critical topics such as gender equality and ecology, and conduct mini projects to enhance a positive change in the classroom environment\_\_\_\_\_
9. I believe that an English language teacher can help transform society and the world in a positive way by critical language awareness\_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation:

Evaluate your answers. Do they lean to yes or no? What would you do to make all of your answer 'yes'?



## Activities for Developing Students' CLA

The following activities aim to integrate CLA in English language teaching: reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. Some of the focus of the critical language awareness is on the mother tongue, variations of English, ecology, and gender equality. The activity aims to teach learners about CLA so that they can take action in small steps to implicate or employ in their daily life. The level of English or the age group of the students have not been specified on purpose so that the teacher could directly use these activities in any classroom they teach, adapt or change them according to the needs of his/her class or simply h/she can get inspired to create similar activities to apply CLA in the classroom.

There are six different activities for the teacher to apply in the classroom to increase learners' CLA. Each activity has its own descriptions and aims presented at the beginning. Following that, there are some steps to follow in order to apply each activity. Finally, there is an evaluation part to reflect on the outcomes of each activity and plan the next step to take.

### Classroom Activity 1

This activity aims to raise awareness about the mother tongue so that the students can use the mother tongue in a proper way and protect it from the dominance of English language where necessary. The teachers can easily conduct this activity with any level and age groups.

#### Respecting Mother Tongue in ELT

Aims:

- A) To bring awareness related to the use of mother tongue in a proper way.
- B) To create an English classroom in which the mother tongue is respected and protected.
- C) To determine the amount of English vocabulary and words that have entered in the daily life.
- D) To learn the translation of English words in the mother tongue and to use the words in the mother tongue.

Steps to Follow:

1. The teacher starts a discussion in the classroom about the importance of the mother tongue. Students are asked to give examples regarding the misuse of the mother tongue, such as spelling and pronunciation of the words in English or with the American accent. List the examples on the board and ask your students to translate the words in both English and mother tongue.
2. Following that, students are asked to draw the pictures of the words they see in English, such as a road sign, café, menu or an advertisement. After that, students are asked to present each picture of the words in the classroom. Then they read the words and translate them into their native language.
3. As an out-of-class activity, hang a blank piece of paper on the wall and ask the students to write the words they have come across in one day. Spare 1 or 2 minutes to evaluate the number of English

words used in their local environment at the end of the day.

Evaluation:

Students are asked if there are too many English words that are used in the native language and asked if they think they need to invest more time and energy in that topic in the classroom. As a teacher, you can also think of other activities that can be done or actions that can be taken to protect the mother tongue.

### **Classroom Activity 2**

This listening activity aims to raise awareness related to variations of English. The teacher determines a topic and select two speakers who express their opinion about that topic. One of the speakers should have a standard accent while the other one should be a non-native speaker of English. The topics could be easily chosen from online according to the interests of the students. As an example, these topics could be retrieved from YouTube, TEDX, and a documentary channel and to name a few. The teacher asks the students to guess the speaker who is the expert. Then the teacher starts the discussion to elaborate on the relationship between the accents and prejudice.

Guess Who the Expert is:

Aims:

- A) To detect prejudice about the variations of English if there is any.
- B) To appreciate the expertise of non-native speakers.
- C) To encourage critical reflection on different dialects and accents of English.

Steps to Follow:

1. The teacher finds two speakers talking about the same topic. One of the speakers should have the standard English. And, the other speaker who is the expert on the topic should speak non-standard English.
2. Students are asked to listen to the beginning of their speech and try to guess who the expert of the topic is.
3. The teacher counts the right and wrong guesses in the classroom and compares them with the right answers.
4. Start a discussion about the accent of English and the prejudice. Evaluate the students' knowledge on English variations. If you feel they are lack of knowledge about the historical background of expanding of English, you might share some links of the reading passages or videos related to the relevant issue. Consequently, students have the chance to get acquainted with the knowledge about the background of CLA.

Evaluation:

Students are asked further questions about the accent or prejudice related to other accents and variations of English such as Canadian, Indian, African English or so on.

### Classroom Activity 3

This activity also aims to develop a positive attitude towards dialects and accents. The activity in which Nina Simone's song was used and as one of the symbols of 1980's civil war in the USA aims to introduce African American English. The teacher uses the song as a tool to introduce Black English variation and teach the relationship between the linguistic terms, history and culture. The song is called "Ain't Got No/i Got Life". The lyrics of the songs starts as follows, and scan the flow code for the rest of the song to listen.

Ain't got no home, ain't got no shoes

Ain't got no money, ain't got no class

Ain't got no friends, ain't got no schooling



Aims:

- A) To introduce African American English pronunciation.
- B) To teach grammar structures such as double negatives "ain't" and "no" in that variation.
- C) To connect the variation of English with the history and culture.

Steps to Follow:

1. The students listen to the song by Nina Simone. Then they are asked to reflect on the meaning of the song.
2. The teacher gives 10 minutes of research time to groups of students for the following questions:
  - A) Who is Nina Simone? Where is she from?
  - B) Who are the African American people? How were they called?
  - C) What year did the song come out? Why was that decade of the song important for the history of the USA?
3. The students are asked to underline the grammatical structures such as dropping the subject and the double negative that are not taught in standard English. They are asked to compare the grammatical structures of the song lyrics by Nina Simon with the standard English in their coursebook. The teacher starts a discussion related to "variations of English".
4. The teacher makes the connections between the grammar in the song, Black English and 1980s civil wars in the USA.
5. Observe and evaluate the knowledge and attitude of the students based on African American English.

As needed, more songs or episodes from films or documentaries in Black English could be offered as homework or the out of class activity. Similarly, you may use other variations of English, such as India and Canadian English to draw a deeper connection between geography, history, culture and economy.

Evaluation:

Ask your students to share their feelings and opinions about the activity. Encourage the discussion related to CLA at the end of the activity.

#### **Classroom Activity 4**

This activity aims to encourage learners to introduce themselves or talk about their local place to the world in English. The teacher discovers the uniqueness of the classroom setting and motivates the students to advertise online in English.

Preparing an Online Classroom Portfolio

Aims:

- A) To reveal and show the uniqueness of the local place and people in English.
- B) To promote production skills in English, such as writing and speaking.
- C) To fulfill the confidence of learners about their linguistic, cultural and social background in the online English world.
- D) To familiarize learners with online world or context.

Steps to Follow:

1. The teacher starts a discussion about the local geography, culture, language and traditions in the classroom. And, the teacher states that people would like to discover these unique and local experiences and the rest of the world might be interested in having knowledge about them. To give an example, the teacher would say that a linguist might be interested in the rare language they speak, or a zoologist might want to know about the birds that are unique or particular to that geography.
2. The teacher asks questions to discover his/her students' talents such as playing the flute, drawing, playing a local game and speaking an additional language and so on.
3. Then, the teacher creates an online classroom blog that is open to all of the world, and students are asked to describe their local places and talk about talents they have and use there. To illustrate, the students who speak an additional or a foreign language could present simple greetings with English subtitles, or another student can draw the natural beauties of the local city and caption them with words in English.
4. Look out for the people who follow the online classroom portfolio. Reflect on the backgrounds of the followers as a class. Observe what the students has brought about. Try to applaud every little thing that comes up. Also, be prepared to present any new language tools that may be needed for the presentation of that specific local place. To give an example, the learner might not be able to find the English

equivalent of some local words.

Evaluation:

Ask your students to share their feelings and opinions about the activity. Encourage feelings of empowerment in their local environment.

### **Classroom Activity 5**

This activity is about the gender equality in ELT. The students are encouraged to read a text critically and answer the questions from the gender perspective to increase CLA.

Transform the Text toward Gender Equality

Aims:

- A) To read a text critically from the gender perspective.
- B) To intervene in a text that is lack of gender equality.
- C) To recognize vocabulary that defines both women and men equally.

Steps to Follow:

1. Students are asked to read the text entitled “The Weather’s Effect” in the “Teacher Reflection Activity 7”. While reading, students answer the following questions.

- A) How does the weather affect jobs? Give one example.
- B) According to the text, does the weather affect males or females differently? Does the text have a scientific support for the points it has made?

2. After students read the text, the teacher asks the questions below.

- A) Who do you think the writer is? Is the writer a male or a female?
- B) What kind of belief does he or she have about male and female jobs?
- C) Do you agree with him or her?

3. Then, students are asked to look up the dictionary to learn some words and answer the questions below.

- A) What do we call women who do sports?
- B) What do we call men who stay at home, look after kids and do the housework?
- C) Why are they not given in the text?

4. Finally, students are asked to rewrite the text with the new words they have learnt and share with the

author of the text.

Evaluation:

The students are asked to share their ideas and feelings about whether or not they find it normal to stigmatize a woman just as a house wife through language. In this sense, teacher can also note down his/her observations about the feelings and ideas of students that come out as a result of this activity. The teacher might plan further activities on the issue of gender equality by using materials that show the women empowerment in society.

### **Classroom Activity 6**

This activity that aims to raise students' awareness about the ecology in ELT is a mini project in which the students can recycle and learn English. The teacher can observe the students and see if the project will work well. If the students get excited, the project can continue for a longer time than the planned period and time. Alternatively, another mini project on ecology could start. For example, the students can plant different flowers or trees in the school garden and stick or hang the English names on the plants.

Recycle and learn English vocabulary

Aims:

- A) To be familiarized with linguistics tools that define ecology.
- B) To learn everyday words in English.
- C) To get the habit of recycling.

Steps to Follow:

1. The teacher brings language materials to the classroom on the use of recycling and starts a discussion on this topic.
2. Then, the teacher immediately puts *recycling* into practice. The teacher puts out three cardboard boxes and labels them as "paper", "plastic" and "metal". The boxes should be present in every English lesson in the classroom. Then, the teacher warns the students not to throw away their garbage but to recycle them. On the other hand, they should note down the name of each object they recycle in English. They may take the photos or draw pictures of the items if they like. At the end of a week, learners gather in groups and share the names of or the photos and pictures of the objects they recycled that week.

Evaluation:

Students are asked if they need further encouragement and motivation for participating in the act of recycling, and they are also asked how this type of activity makes them more aware of the use of words that define ecology.

## Conclusion

English language learners might be more motivated to engage in a new language when critical language awareness attitude is presented in the classroom (Arndt, Harvey & Nuttall, 2000). Nevertheless, English language teaching materials still follow the traditional Western way of teaching with the content that is lack of the varieties of English and critical language awareness attitude (Wallece, 1992). Language teachers, on the other hand, have the power to analyze the classroom materials and resources, and transform them into an approach that supports the position of English as a lingua franca.

To begin with, an English language teacher should be aware of the importance of the mother tongue and should pay special attention to protect it from the domination of English. Teachers can have a critical approach by analyzing their own identity and transform the discriminative language they suffer from. Similarly, they can reflect on their classroom reality and include their students' real concerns in the content of the lesson. In other words, teacher should stop seeing English as a way of bringing the Western culture into a classroom. Instead, they should use the language as a tool for their students to communicate their needs in the world. There is a need to include non-standard English variations and dialects in the practice of English language teaching as well. To illustrate, the content from African American English can be analyzed to understand the relationship between culture, history and dialect. Lastly, critical language topics, such as gender equality and ecology should be included in English language teaching.

As a thirteen year of English language teacher and researcher in Turkey, I have experienced that the English language teaching materials, and teacher training are lack of critical language awareness. Explanation of this could be related to the traditional attitude, which may not motivate to include politics from the local to the global in the classroom practice. Thus, critical topics such as marginalized queers, and discrimination against immigrants in Turkey could be challenging. Hence, the English language teachers are more comfortable teaching English with popular and neutral content that does not intervene with any significant problematic issues or topics that concern learners. Another explanation of this could be related to a great number of the Western course materials which are accepted as the high-quality teaching materials. On the other hand, few textbooks consider Turkish learners as the target consumer or plan the context of language teaching and learning according to their identity, needs and interests. Consequently, English language teachers may also be lack of the class materials which engage critical language awareness. Therefore, this chapter may motivate English language teachers to reflect on the concept of the critical language awareness with the reflection activities. The process of reflection might encourage teachers to invest some of their time concerning their English language teaching. In addition to teacher reflection activities, the activities developed for language learners and students aim to raise students' critical language awareness. Language teachers can use these activities, which are rare to find in the literature, or adapt them according to their needs in their classroom setting in the future.

## Suggestions For Further Studies

This chapter which aims to enlighten the language teachers about critical language awareness and its applications lays stress on some research gaps. For instance, although there are some studies that focus on some critical topics such as gender equality or ecology, they do not explain how to cover these topics in some countries or cultures where these issues can be sensitive or even forbidden. Another issue is the involvement of teachers' and learners' backgrounds in the linguistic discrimination. Since the critical language awareness includes the pedagogy of oppressed, relations of the power-abuse and analysis of

the use of discriminative language, the topic might cause tension or stress in the classroom. For instance, how would a disabled learner feel seeing new English words that describe their disabilities? Are English language teachers prepared to raise critical language awareness and handle or address vulnerability in this situation of the disabled learner? How do they establish the balance between critical thinking and language teaching? Researchers might conduct relevant studies to find the answers of these questions. In addition, there is inadequate information to implicate and conduct CLA with children. Teaching children critical language awareness is also a topic that needs close attention in literature. Therefore, there is a need for further studies that integrate English language teaching and other critical topics, such as positive body image, abuse of power, and ageism and so on. These critical topics to be taught in ELT could be studied separately. Further studies should be conducted to understand how CLA would be applied practically and successfully.

### Plain Language Summary

This study aims to engage English language teachers with the concept of critical language awareness (CLA) and application of it in the language classroom. It is hoped that when the teachers have sensitivity towards language discrimination, prejudgments and the abuse of power in the classroom, then they will have the power to challenge the spread of dominant power at schools. In the same way, learners will have more confidence in expressing who they are in the classroom and will contribute to have a sustainable future and fair society with CLA.

Being motivated and enlightened by the studies which are conducted to applicate CLA in classrooms and having fifteen year of experience teaching and researching English language teaching in Turkey, the author of the study created new classroom activities for educators. *Activities for Teacher Reflection on CLA* aim to engage teachers with critical reflection sessions by some yes-no questions, and open-ended questions or tasks. They include issues, such as the power of the language, personal history of teachers with language, linguistic discrimination in the class, the real concerns of the students, analysis of teaching materials, gender inequality, and setting of the classroom atmosphere for underserved learners. On the other hand, *Activities for Developing Students' CLA* aim to focus on the mother tongue, variations of English, ecology, and gender equality.

With these activities, teachers can engage with the concept, deepen their knowledge about the application of it, evaluate their teaching in terms of CLA and try to create some activities of their own. In addition to teachers, students can also take actions, participate in the problems of environment actively and see English language as a means of thinking critically. The results are valuable considering the challenges of the application of CLA for educators due to the little support they get (Gore, 1992).



### References

- Akbari, R. (2008). Transforming lives: Introducing critical pedagogy into ELT classrooms. *ELT journal*, 62(3), 276-283.
- Ali, S. (2011). Critical language awareness in pedagogic context. *English Language Teaching*, 4(4), 28-35.
- Arndt, V., Harvey, P., & Nuttall, J. (2000). Alive to language: Perspectives on language awareness for English language teachers. In M. Williams & T. Wright (Eds), *Cambridge Teacher Training and Development Series* (pp.22-45) Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Baladi, N. (2007). Critical pedagogy in the ELT industry: Can a socially responsible curriculum find its place in a corporate culture?. (Unpublished master's thesis). Department of Integrated Studies in Education Faculty of Education in McGill University Montreal, Canada.
- Banegas, D. L., Jacovkis, L. G., & Romiti, A. (2020). A gender perspective in initial English language teacher education: An Argentinian experience. *Sexuality & culture*, 24(1), 1-22.
- Beaudrie, S. M. (2015). Approaches to language variation: Goals and objectives of the Spanish heritage language syllabus. *Heritage Language Journal*, 12(1), 1-21.
- Britton, E. R., & Leonard, R. L. (2020). The social justice potential of critical reflection and critical language awareness pedagogies for L2 writers. *Journal of second language writing*, 50, 100776.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Canagarajah, S. (2014). In search of a new paradigm for teaching English as an international language. *Tesol Journal*, 5(4), 767-785.
- Carpenter, B. D., Achugar, M., Walter, D., & Earhart, M. (2015). Developing teachers' critical language awareness: A case study of guided participation. *Linguistics and Education*, 32, 82-97.
- Chang, S., Torres-Guzmán, M. E., & Waring, H. Z. (2020). Experiencing critical language awareness as a collective struggle: methodological innovations in language awareness workshops. *The Language Learning Journal*, 48(3), 356-369.
- Chaparro, S. (2014). The communicative burden of making others understand: Why critical language awareness is a must in all ESL (and non-ESL) classrooms. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics (WPEL)*, 29(1), 41-59.
- Crawford, L. M. (1978). *Paulo Freire's philosophy: Derivation of curricular principles and their application to second language curriculum design*. (Unpublished Ph.D thesis). University of Minnesota, The United States of America.
- Crookes, G. (2009). 31 Radical Language Teaching. In M. Long & C. Doughty, (Eds.) *The Handbook of language teaching* (pp. 595-609). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Dar, Z. K., Shams, M. R., & Rahimi, A. (2010). Teaching reading with a critical attitude: Using critical discourse analysis (CDA) to raise EFL university students' critical language awareness (CLA). *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 3(2), 457-476.
- Ducar, C. (2022). SHL Teacher Development and Critical Language Awareness: From Engaño to Understanding. *Languages*, 7(3), 182.
- Erol, M. & Karakaya, İ. (2020). Development of Language Awareness Scale Regarding Daily Life. *International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education*, 7(4), 535-548.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). Introduction. *Critical language awareness*. New York: Routledge.
- Freire, P. (2020). Pedagogy of the oppressed. *Toward a Sociology of Education*. New York, Routledge.
- Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Godley, A. J., & Minnici, A. (2008). Critical language pedagogy in an urban high school English class. *Urban education*, 43(3), 319-346.

- Godley, A. J., Reaser, J., & Moore, K. G. (2015). Pre-service English language arts teachers' development of critical language awareness for teaching. *Linguistics and Education*, 32, 41-54.
- Gore, J. (1992). What we can do for you! What can "we" do for "you"? Struggling over empowerment in critical and feminist pedagogy. *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*, 54-73.
- Hankerson, S. (2022). "Why can't writing courses be taught like this fo real": Leveraging critical language awareness to promote African American Language speakers' writing skills. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 58, 100919.
- Hawkins, M. R., & Norton, B. (2009). Critical language teacher education. In A. Burns & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education* (pp. 214-223). Cambridge University Press.
- Ho, J. M. B. (2020). Queering CLIL: a critical sexual literacy curriculum for the Hong Kong context. *English Teaching & Learning*, 44(2), 193-210.
- Janks, H. (1992). Critical language awareness and people's English. *Southern African Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 1(2), 64-76.
- Janks, H. (1999). Critical language awareness journals and student identities. *Language Awareness*, 8(2), 111-122.
- Matsuda, A. (2003). Incorporating world Englishes in teaching English as an international language. *Tesol Quarterly*, 37(4), 719-729.
- Merlo, M. C. R. (2018). *Inglês para crianças é para inglês ver?: polı́ticas linguı́sticas, formaçãõ docente e educaçãõ linguı́stica nas sêries iniciais do Ensino Fundamental no Espı́rito Santo. 2018. 272 f* (Doctoral dissertation, Dissertaçãõ (Mestrado em Linguı́stica)–Universidade Federal do Espı́rito Santo, Vitória).
- Metz, M. (2018). Challenges of confronting dominant language ideologies in the high school English classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 52(4), 455-477.
- Metz, M. (2021). Pedagogical content knowledge for teaching critical language awareness: The importance of valuing student knowledge. *Urban Education*, 56(9), 1456-1484.
- Micalay-Hurtado, M. A., & Poole, R. (2022). Eco-critical language awareness for English language teaching (ELT): Promoting justice, wellbeing, and sustainability in the classroom. *Journal of World Languages*, 8(2), 371-390.
- Nemi Neto, J. (2018). Queer pedagogy: Approaches to inclusive teaching. *Policy Futures in Education*, 16(5), 589-604.
- Ngwenya, T. (2006). Integrating language awareness with critical language skills: a legal English experience. *Southern African linguistics and applied language studies*, 24(1), 23-33.
- Norton, B. (2006). Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language education. In K. Cadman & K. O'Regan (Eds.), *TESOL in context [special issue]* (pp. 22–33). Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Parsaiyan, S. F. (2019). "This Is a Food Ad but It Is Presenting Gender Stereotypes!": Practicing Critical Language Awareness in an Iranian EFL Context. *Two Quarterly Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning University of Tabriz*, 11(24), 227-259.
- Pennycook, A. (2003). Beyond homogeny and heterogeny: English as a global and worldly language. In C. Mair (Ed.), *The Politics of English as a World Language* (pp. 3-17). Amsterdam, Rodopi.
- Skutnabb - Kangas, T. (2000). Linguistic human rights and teachers of English. In J.K. Hall & W.G. Eggington. (Eds.). *The sociopolitics of English language teaching* (pp. 22–44). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1984). *Prejudice in discourse: An analysis of ethnic prejudice in cognition and conversation*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.
- VOA Learning English, VOA news (2017, August 22). How to Identify Gender Inequality in Teaching

Materials. Retrieved from <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/how-to-identify-gender-inequality-in-teaching-materials/3996027.html>

Wallace, C. (1992). Critical literacy awareness in the EFL classroom. In N. Fairclough (Ed.), *Critical language Awareness* (pp. 59-92). London and New York: Routledge.

Wang, X., Jiang, L., Fang, F., & Elyas, T. (2021). Toward critical intercultural literacy enhancement of university students in China from the perspective of English as a lingua franca. *Sage Open*, 11(2), 1-12.

Xiong, T. (2014). Shallow environmentalism: A preliminary eco-critical discourse analysis of secondary school English as a foreign language (EFL) text in China. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 45(4), 232-242.

Zinkgraf, M. (2003). Assessing the development of critical language awareness in a foreign language environment. Retrieved from [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_o=ED479811&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_o=n o&accno=ED479811](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_o=ED479811&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_o=n o&accno=ED479811)