Raising Teachers’ Awareness about English and English as a Lingua Franca

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Introduction

Teachers differ in terms of how aware they are of the language they have to teach, but in principle it would seem obvious to expect them to have a minimum level of awareness that will guide their teaching decisions. Non-native teachers have been described by Medgyes (1994) and subsequent authors comparing native and non-native teachers (Bayyurt, 2006, 2017; Llurda, 2005, 2015; Moussu and Llurda, 2008) as possessing a high level of language awareness, due to their L2 learning process. Conversely, native teachers may differ a great deal as some will have gone through extensive linguistic training but many others are appointed to teaching positions by the sole virtue of their native-speaker condition. Some may have never gone through linguistic training and in the case of monolingual speakers will even lack the expertise acquired during the process of learning an L2.

As extensively pointed out by Andrews (2007, and see the chapter by Andrews and Lin in this volume), teacher awareness is necessary and teachers need to develop awareness of the subject matter they are teaching. In the case of the teaching of English, the subject is English itself. Therefore, the subject matter and the medium of instruction are coincident. Furthermore, the current role of English as the most widely accepted lingua franca in the world needs to be brought up, as awareness of this situation is fundamental.

In this chapter, we will provide a review of the major aspects related to teacher awareness, with special reference to non-native teachers’ awareness of English as an International Lingua Franca (ELF), and will then provide an account of a hands-on practical approach aimed at introducing teachers in Expanding Circle countries (Kachru, 1985) to the challenges and implications of teaching a global language, thus transforming them into ELF-aware teachers who will be ready to convey such awareness among their students. We will focus on non-native English-speaking teachers’ (NNESTs’) awareness of the global properties of ELF. In order to support our suggestions in the light of a new model of transformative teacher education (Sifakis, 2007, 2014), we provide evidence from an on-going project on ELF-aware language teaching,
and we report NNESTs’ perspectives on what they consider to be an ELF-aware lesson, as well as teachers’ observations of how successful they were in raising their students’ awareness towards ELF (Bayyurt and Sifakis, 2015a, 2015b; Sifakis, 2014; Sifakis and Bayyurt, 2015).

Teacher Language Awareness (TLA)

The function and relevance of language awareness in language education has been questioned in some language teaching approaches and methods such as Communicative Language Teaching, the Audiolingual Method (ALM) or the Natural Approach (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Methodologies that find their inspiration in the acquisition of the mother tongue tend to downplay the role of awareness in second language acquisition. It has been claimed, most notably by Krashen, that language education should completely avoid promoting students’ awareness as it could only distract them from their natural learning process (see, for example, Krashen and Terrel, 1983). Such a vision has been strongly refuted by researchers who have found awareness to be a powerful tool in language learning. They claim that learners can greatly benefit from increased awareness (James and Garrett, 1992; Schmidt, 1990; van Lier, 1995). However, teacher awareness has been much less controversial, as no arguments have been provided against teachers being highly aware of the language and the learning process. Even critics of learners’ awareness do not appear to have any problem with teachers being aware of the language as long as they do not share such awareness with their students.

Andrews (2007: 9) argues that “the possession of an adequate level of TLA is an essential attribute of any competent L2 teacher” due to the positive impact of TLA on student learning. In spite of conflicting debates on the need to promote students’ awareness, Andrews convincingly argues for the need to develop teacher language awareness as a means to helping students better grasp the nature of language and thus increase their language proficiency. Unfortunately, language awareness has sometimes been confounded with grammar knowledge, as required in some widespread exams. The table of contents of this handbook clearly shows that language awareness goes beyond this narrow and rather limited aspect to encompass a wider understanding of language and its use. It is certainly not restricted to grammar knowledge, as it has to take into account language use in context, and teachers need such awareness if they want to develop ample understanding of the nature of language among their students. Understanding should include all levels of awareness, from the more formal aspects of language as a system to the functional aspects of language, and reaching up to a critical understanding of the impact of language usage in any given context and situation. Such an awareness is needed in order to integrate form and function and avoid falling into a very common inconsistency among language teachers who take a communicative approach when teaching functional situations but fall into a very formalistic teaching approach when dealing with grammar. This creates a radical division between form and content that does not reflect the true nature of language and contributes to consolidating the idea that language awareness is close to useless. Andrews (2007) distinguishes between the declarative knowledge of a specific language aspect and the awareness of what is needed in a given situation. Both are necessary, since teachers lacking specific knowledge of grammar may fail to respond to students’ demands of clarification, and so not provide rich, meaningful and productive input, and teachers lacking situation-based awareness...
will miss the point and will probably leave the student with the feeling of having wasted their time on irrelevant purely formalistic discussions.

Following Tsui’s (2003) distinction between experience and expertise, Andrews establishes a link between expert teachers and teachers with awareness. Whereas experience does not necessarily bring awareness, expertise is tied to the notion of awareness, as teachers need to develop a comprehensive awareness of the language, the students and the learning situation. Experience may simply imply an accumulation of years with no awareness, in which case teachers will fail to achieve a global understanding that will contribute to student learning.

A competent speaker does not automatically make a competent teacher. Teachers need a wider understanding that will inform their pedagogical decisions. They obviously have to be competent in the language but they also need an awareness background that will support their day-to-day teaching practices. In Widdowson’s (1991: 20) words: “We are concerned here not primarily with what language users know but with what language learners need to know”. Only teachers who are aware of language and language usage will be able to make adequate pedagogical decisions based on their understanding of what learners need to know.

NNS Teachers’ Awareness

Unlike teachers of any other subject matter, language teachers can be divided into two broad groups based on whether they can be identified as native speakers or non-native speakers of the language they teach. Borg (2006) found that this was one of the distinctive characteristics that singled out language teachers from teachers of other disciplines. In spite of many arguments for discrediting the division between native and non-native speakers (see Llurda, 2016 for an extensive discussion on this matter), in practical terms, teachers have been allocated to either side of the line, and this dividing factor has had an enormous impact on the life and professional careers of many teachers on both sides. Thus, many teachers have been able to make a career in language teaching in spite of having degrees in completely unrelated areas of knowledge and not having been specifically trained for this job, whereas many others have completed several years of training only to find out that they would not be considered for certain jobs due to the fact that they did not fit into the ‘native speaker’ category. Within the last 25 years, several studies have looked at this division and the particular features that may be associated with each group of teachers. The first and probably the most influential of such studies was conducted by Reves and Medgyes (1994), who, among other differential characteristics between the two groups, claimed that non-native teachers tend to possess a greater amount of language awareness and awareness of the learning process than native teachers. The same idea has been sustained by other authors, like Seidlhofer (1996), Barratt and Kontra (2000), and Llurda (2005). The main argument used to support the idea that non-native teachers have a superior level of awareness is that they have gone through the process of learning the language as an additional language, often following methodologies that extensively rely on developing an awareness of the formal aspects of the language. Another implicit idea that holds non-native advantage is that the debate invariably refers to English as the target language, thus native speakers are equated to people born and educated in, say, the UK or the US, where the tradition in first language education has long disregarded language awareness (Hawkins,
1992), unlike what has traditionally happened in other countries. Thus, being a native speaker has been associated with being educated in a country with little or no emphasis on developing awareness in their L1, and this may have naturally reinforced (albeit in a rather unfounded way) the argument that non-native teachers come to the profession with a superior level of awareness. If we expand the language circle to encompass teachers of other languages, this assumption will need to be reformulated, as for instance French NSs are typically much more aware of their L1 than their British counterparts.

All in all, what is lacking in the literature is empirical evidence of such superiority, as it may turn out that researchers have reached this conclusion based on an a prioristic reasoning rather than on evidence obtained from actual data. Reves and Medgyes’ (1994) argument is actually based on data obtained by asking teachers from many different countries to describe characteristics they would associate with either group of teachers: native and non-native. In a study involving MA TESOL practicum supervisors in North-American universities, Llurda (2005) asked for their views based on their experience observing native and non-native teacher trainees during their practicum. Practicum supervisors also considered non-natives as generally endowed with a superior awareness, although interestingly they pointed out that non-native teacher strengths would be more positively put to use in their home environment, where they would share their language and cultural background with their students.

Andrews (2007) highlights a difference between knowledge of language and knowledge about language and argues that, whereas native speakers are superior in the former, non-native teachers are generally superior in the latter, thus balancing out the initial advantage of native speakers due to their having learnt the language as their L1. The process of having learned an L2 after childhood is likely to have provoked a great deal of reflection on the language and the learning process, as well as on the sociocultural aspects involved in using and learning the language. In fact, teachers who have reflected on the process of learning a language have many chances of having also become used to thinking more critically and will more easily accept the complexity of language and its uses.

Seidlhofer (1996: 67) argues that non-native teachers can facilitate learning “by mediating between the different languages and cultures through appropriate pedagogy”, but in order to make informed choices that benefit the learner, “they need to be familiar with current issues in methodology” and “to be well informed about their own students’ specific requirements and the local educational framework they are operating in”. In other words, “they need to have an understanding of the principles underlying various (and sometimes conflicting) methodologies in order to make informed choices that benefit their learners” (Seidlhofer, 1996: 67). Yet “many teacher training courses do not actually encourage trainees to stand back and think hard about not only the choices that have to be made, but also about the choices that can be made, especially when those are far removed from current concerns and fashions in the Inner Circle” (Seidlhofer, 1996: 73). What is often forgotten in the ELT profession is that L2 learners are logically going to become bilingual or multilingual speakers. Therefore, teachers who are not at least bilingual will lack the necessary awareness of what it means and what it takes to develop L2 competence. The assumption is that only multicompetent speakers (Cook, 1992) will develop the awareness needed to incorporate an additional language that has to be integrated into a language system in which there already is at least one other language, if not more.
When English is taught outside Inner Circle countries, teachers must necessarily pay attention to the roles and uses of ELF, as this is the learning target of their students. They are not going to become speakers of English as a native language but users of the most widely used lingua franca in the world. As such, they will greatly benefit from teachers with an awareness of the international functions of English. Yet, many teachers do not seem to pay heed to this and still act as though they were teaching English to potential native speakers. This inevitably misses the point and deprives learners of a clear path to their own target based on their specific needs as potential lingua franca speakers. Such an awareness appears to be partly affected by teachers’ life and professional experiences. Llurda (2008) found that teachers with experience abroad had a higher appreciation of ELF, which can be attributed to a higher awareness of language diversity of forms, contexts and uses. These results suggest that the use of English in real communicative contexts increased teachers’ awareness of the actual roles of English beyond idealized native language uses, and thus gave them a wider understanding of learners’ needs for their development as lingua franca users. Similarly, Llurda and Huguet (2003) found a higher awareness among secondary school teachers over primary teachers in the Catalan context, which could be attributed to the different training received by those two groups of teachers. Whereas primary teachers receive a general education training with a small component of English language development, secondary teachers go through a whole degree centred on the study of the English language, literature and culture of English-speaking countries, as well as linguistics. This provides a far more sophisticated view of the English language and its contexts of use that undoubtedly contributes to a higher awareness of its functions at the international level.

**Raising ELF-awareness among Expanding Circle Teachers**

**What is ELF-Awareness?**

ELF is understood as the (usually, but not exclusively, spoken) discourse exhibited in interactions in English involving speakers of different L1s in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Such discourse incorporates certain linguistic, pragmatic and cultural characteristics that are appropriated by those interactants and are context-specific and genre-dependable. This means that what is important in ELF interactions is not only the discoursal features exhibited but the underlying skills and strategies of the speakers involved that ensure mutual intelligibility and comprehensibility (Jenkins, 2015; Mauranen, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2012). It also implies that the focus is not so much on language itself, but on the users of ELF, “the community rather than the code” (Kalocsai, 2014: 2), the “discourse communities with a common communicative purpose” (Seidlhofer, 2011: 87). According to Jenkins (2015: 73), these ELF interactions develop a fluid “trans-semiotic system with many meaning-making signs, primarily linguistic ones, that combine to make up a person’s semiotic repertoire” (García and Wei, 2014: 42) and are compatible with the notion of translanguaging (García 2009; García and Wei, 2014). These contexts form a complex communication terrain of “multilingual communication in which English is available as a contact language of choice, but is not necessarily chosen” (Jenkins, 2015: 73).

In light of the above orientation of ELF, the notion of ELF awareness can be seen as a form of ELF literacy for English language teachers and learners, intended to serve
as an understanding of their engagement with the ELF construct. In this sense, ELF awareness may be defined as:

the process of engaging with ELF research and developing one’s own understanding of the ways in which it can be integrated in one’s classroom context, through a continuous process of critical reflection, design, implementation and evaluation of instructional activities that reflect and localize one’s interpretation of the ELF construct.

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ELF-awareness involves raising English language teachers’ awareness towards issues related to the international use of English in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Hence, it is a complex phenomenon. It becomes even more complicated when teachers face their own and other stakeholders’ attitudes and deeper convictions about ELF and ELF-related concerns, such as the function of Standard English, the role of non-native speakers as legitimate ‘owners’ of English, or the responsibilities of EFL teachers as custodians of ‘proper’ English for their learners, in contexts that are, more often than not, heavily dominated by a high-stakes examination culture (Bayyurt and Sifakis, 2015a, 2015b, 2017; Sifakis, 2009).

In this chapter we will adhere to Sifakis’ (forthcoming) notion and definition of ELF-awareness in ELT practice. He suggests “a dual continuum of ELF awareness” as “teachers’ awareness of notional ELF issues and of their own actions in the ELT classroom” and proposes the following three components of ELF-awareness in ELT practice:

Component 1: awareness of language and language use
Component 2: awareness of instructional practice
Component 3: awareness of learning.

Awareness of language and language use refers to teachers’ engagement with language (Svalberg, 2009). Such engagement may be conscious or explicit (Alderson, Clapham and Steel, 1997) and subconscious or implicit (Anderson, 2005), and usually refers to an awareness of the linguistic aspect of English (i.e. its syntax, morphology, lexical structure and inventory, phonology, pragmatic and sociocultural features) produced in interactions involving non-native users both inside and outside the classroom. Essential to this type of awareness, especially as regards ELF, are the processes of sensitivity and noticing, which refer to language users’ apprehension of and response to linguistic and paralinguistic stimuli (cf. Mackey, Gass and McDonough, 2000: 474). ELF awareness implies an understanding of the processes of languaging (namely, the ability to establish and successfully communicate meaning through language – Swain, 2006) and translanguaging (see above). As ELF by definition refers to functions and structures of English that creatively and justifiably deviate from standard norms, it is essential that ELT stakeholders also develop an awareness of their own perceptions about normativity, appropriateness, comprehensibility and ownership of English by both native and non-native users.

Awareness of instructional practice refers to an understanding of teachers’ own pedagogical practice. It also refers to their personal theories and deep-seated convictions about instruction, feedback, and about responding to learners’ cognitive and motivational needs. In this regard, teachers’ beliefs and convictions about the role
and centrality of Standard English in their practice and the orientation of ‘error’ in their learners’ performance are central. An additional dimension of this type of awareness are the expectations regarding the role of teachers as custodians of the native speakers for their learners, and this dimension is often impacted by the perceptions and attitudes of other stakeholders, such as learners’ parents, directors of studies, other teachers, etc., as well as by the orientation of the teaching/learning context (e.g. preparing learners for a high-stakes exam, or implementing textbooks and other instructional materials that prioritize a norm-bound orientation to teaching and learning) (Sifakis, 2004, 2009).

Finally, awareness of learning refers to the extent to which teachers appreciate the close link between using English in authentic interactions and learning English. At the core of this type of awareness is the recognition that English is extensively used by learners living in Expanding Circle contexts in their communication with people from all over the world and from their own country (i.e. internationally and intranationally), through mainly online and internet-powered means (such as video gaming, chatting, Skyping, etc.). This use of English outside the foreign language classroom increases learners’ familiarity with it and essentially robs it from its status as a “foreign” language (Ehlich, 2009: 27). Awareness of learning implies that EFL learners are, to a lesser or greater extent, ELF users (Seidlhofer, 2011), and that their experience with using ELF impacts on their learning of the language and should therefore be acknowledged by teachers, curriculum designers and textbook developers.

**Exemplifying ELF-Awareness**

In what follows, we will present brief examples of the different types of ELF-awareness as experienced by two participants of the ELF-TEd Project, a teacher education experience that was initiated in 2012–13 and involved pre- and in-service teachers in Turkey and Greece (Bayyurt and Sifakis, 2015a, 2015b). The project ran in two phases. In the first phase, participants were required to read selected published articles on ELF, EIL, World Englishes and critical pedagogy and respond to reflective questions based on these articles. These questions prompted them to engage with ELF-related concerns, become aware of their own personal theories and perspectives and relate them to their previous and current teaching experience and context. In the second phase, participants were asked to design activities or lessons that linked to their emerging ELF awareness, then teach the lessons to their own classrooms and evaluate the extent to which they were successful. The ELF-TEd project managed not only to inform participant teachers about ELF, but also to engage them more deeply in reflecting about fundamental concerns regarding communication, teaching and learning and, further, in experimenting with implementing original small-scale ELF-aware pedagogical interventions for their classrooms. The five examples below, then, are from teachers who participated in this project. In each of these examples, bold font (including bold italics for translations in Example 3) is used to show the parts to which we wish to draw readers’ attention for the purposes of this chapter.

**Awareness of Language and Language Use**

As explained above, awareness of language and language use refers to an awareness of language structures and functions and links both to the discoursal characteristics of ELF interactions and to the underlying skills and strategies of ELF users during those
interactions. In this sense, this type of awareness involves a pragmatic or sociolinguistic account of ELF. In the following example, the participant teacher Gamze (NNEST) realizes the multilingual and multicultural characteristics of English used in English L1 contexts. She goes on to link this experience with her teaching context.

Example 1: Gamze, 4 February 2013, Focus Group interview

…. I went to New York and there are lots of immigrants living there with different pronunciations with different grammar and they’re living there together what’s important is communication there we went to a restaurant Italian Portuguese I can’t remember and the waitress was speaking English but in a very different accent that I couldn’t understand and er… my host is a native speaker of English and she understood her very well and I asked her how did you understand her? I didn’t understand everything the key things and I’m accustomed to coming to this restaurant I know what she means so it worked well so why not – why do we have to be so strict in classes to the students …

In this example, Gamze portrays: (a) her awareness of the different linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of ELF, which distinguish it from Standard English varieties and illustrate the ELF speaker’s linguistic and sociocultural identity; (b) her own reaction to this ELF usage, which is at first negatively tinged by her native-speaker-oriented expectations but progressively gives way to an acceptance of this type of usage as legitimate; and (c) her awareness of the implications successful ELF interactions can have for her own teaching context. The example shows the close connection of the different types of ELF awareness. Gamze reminisces about this experience and at first expresses her negative reaction to the language used, but then she accepts that type of discourse as inevitable and successful and goes on to draw conclusions about acceptable linguistic and communicative norms for her EFL context.

Awareness of Instructional Practice

Awareness of instructional practice involves teachers’ willingness to cast a critical look at the way they teach and experiment with the concepts raised in the ELF literature by developing ELF-aware pedagogical interventions in their classrooms. In Example 2, the teacher uses a TED talk given by a famous Turkish author in her attempt to raise her learners’ awareness of language (mainly) and (to a lesser extent) language use (the first component of ELF awareness) by applying an appropriate ELF-related activity (which portrays the second component of ELF awareness).

Example 2: Gamze, 7 April 2013, E-mail interview, comment on her “ELF-aware” lesson plan

This is my lesson plan on “the use of English in ELF contexts”. I believe that stories help people, especially teenagers, understand real life. I would also like my students to learn the importance of using both languages by keeping the identity. Elif Safak (a famous Turkish writer who writes her novels in English, our explanation) in her speech (TED Talk speech, our explanation) says “The commute between Turkish and English gives me the chance to recreate myself”. This talk might be a kind of
indirect message to be aware of ELF. Actually my students had the chance to spend five weeks with ELF speakers from Czech Republic and Malaysia. When they were with us in classes, I noticed that some of my students began to gain confidence and spoke English in class.

Regarding the lesson plan, the setting is a Turkish author, who lived for a period of time into a foreign country and my students who are ELF users who are in their own country communicating in English.

In my class there are 31 teenagers at the age of 16. Last year they had 20 hours of English and this year they are 9th-graders. I think my students need critical thinking skills, such as analysing, reasoning, decision-making and problem-solving, so I would like them to watch the talk and take some notes about the ideas they can get through the Turkish author’s speech. Then, I am going to ask them to be in groups of four to share the ideas and their own point of view about these ideas for 5 minutes. After that they are asked to swap the groups to share new ideas. Then one student from each group is going to report the group’s ideas. To support discussion in group work I am planning to prepare some questions to help them think such as which part of the speech do you like best. Do you agree with Elif Safak? According to Safak, what are the three stereotypes about Turkey? Do you agree? If so what should be done to get rid of it? Why are stories important to Elif Safak? Do they have the same effect on you? What did you get about her life and stories?

In Example 3, we have a description of what the teacher did in an ELF-aware lesson (as she describes it): she first chooses a video about varieties of English and then asks questions related to the video. The video is another English language classroom set in a different country (i.e. Brazil). It should be noted here that this example takes place in a teacher-centred class. The majority of the lesson time was spent on the video exercise which required students to pay close attention. This was later followed by a pair-work activity – i.e. instructional practice (Component 2). Italics are used to show translations. Italics in parenthesis signify our own translations for the benefit of readers. Italics without parenthesis signify translations spoken by participants in their classroom conversation. Bold font is again used to draw readers’ attention to specific utterance.

Example 3: Perin’s class, 4 April 2013, Lesson based on a video about Global English

1  T: yes that’s this [turns to the class] do you like the video?
2  Ss: yes
3  T: are they – are they different for you? the people? boys the girls?
4  Ss: yes
5  T: what about their speech? What – how do they talk? huh?
6  S: English
7  S: different
8  T: different English or standard? you hear from your book?
9  S: standard
10 T: kitabımızdan duydğunuz gibi miydı konuştukları?
   (was their speech similar to the one you hear from your book?)
11 S: no
12 S: yes
T: biraz daha farklı mıydı?
(or was it a little bit different?)
S: biraz daha farklıydı
a little bit different
S: farklıydı
(it was different)
S: [inaudible, they talk at the same time]
T: what are the differences for you? give an example neydi sizin farklı gördüğünüz?
(what was it that you thought was different?)
S: maybe they speak Brazil English
T: Brazilian English maybe their accent is different sometimes huh? their accent?
S: cümleleri cümleleri farklıydı their sentences were different
T: yes there is some sentences do you remember any example?
herhangi bir örnek hatırlıyor musunuz? do you remember any example?
S: hocam check’e çek demişti, teacher she said check to “check”
(pause)
T: they don’t speak standard English but you can understand them, kitabımızda duyduğumuz gibi inglizce konuşuyorlar doğru mu? biz anlayabiliyor muyuz? (they don’t speak English like the one we hear from our book right? can we understand them?)
Ss: yes
T: öyleyse (then) is there any problem?
Ss: no
T: no this is global English this is new English this is the world English okay? and now let’s look at your sentences let’s come to present simple –s
(pause)
T: okay let’s look at a different video about our lesson now you are going to watch a video about simple present tense there are some young people, ok? you know, like you they are students but they are different they are from different countries, so they speak different English okay? their pronunciation their accent is different, now you watch the video, they ask questions and you answer, soru soruyolar cevaplamaya calışıyorsunuz ok? (T translates what she said in previous sentence)
Ss: ok
T: [goes to the smart board] let’s start [video starts]
[T stops the video to ask a question] what does she do EVERY year?
Ss: no
t: put up your hands put up your hands
S1: birthday
T: birthday so: what do you do in your birthday? huh?
S1: [inaudible] kutlar celebrates
T: in English kutlamak celebrate you know? in English? Kutlamak (celebrate)?
let’s check it OKAY
(resumes the video and as it plays, goes to the white board)
watch the video and there are the words here
[draws a vertical line]
what is?
(after the boy in the video says “that’s X. she celebrates her birthday”]

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41
celebrates yes
[writes]
she celebrates her birthday
[then they watch the video and then the teacher gives them a worksheet and asks them to work in pairs]
T: no questions now look at the exercise (grabs the worksheets) we have got an exercise about the vocabulary active words do you remember active words in the video okay? work in pairs 5 minutes for you please help me Kadir [gives one pile to the group on the right] help me [to the group on the left] work in pairs 5 minutes for you please be quick take one – take one and give your friends 5 MINUTES work in pairs this is more practical [she goes around the groups to make sure] …
(Pause)

As a result, it can be said that almost all of the interaction recorded is in the typical I-R-F (initiation-response-feedback) format, which does not allow awareness of language use, and then the focus is on awareness of language (Component 1). For example, right after a discussion of Brazilian English and global English, she says “… let’s come to present simple” and then goes on to explaining the grammar use of this verb tense. Then, she goes back to the idea of diversity of English use in the world (Component 1), which is the main focus of the class. We can also observe that students use all the resources, including their L1, available in their classroom to converse in English. Although the teacher manages to conduct most of the lesson in English without the involvement of learners’ L1, students’ interactions are in both Turkish and English. This example also helps learners to become aware of different English language classrooms where people learn English in a similar way (both Component 1 and Component 2) as well as different varieties of non-native Englishes – i.e. Brazilian English, Chinese English and similar (Component 1). What this shows is that, instead of restricting the lesson to grammar use, the teacher keeps bringing up the idea of diversity and global uses of English, thus raising students awareness not only of language itself but also of language use, and incidentally raising awareness of their instructional practice.

Awareness of Learning

The two examples below portray the teacher’s realization that their teaching can be improved by integrating activities that reflect what ELF speakers (and her own learners) do when they use English outside the EFL classroom.

Example 4: Gamze, 4 February 2013, Focus Group interview

… about English when I couldn’t understand the waitress at that time. I imagined my students because I knew that in the past they said …. you told us many things but when we went there we realized that we didn’t learn English because they spoke things differently maybe we had to do something related to these things I was thinking of, er, asking them create a restaurant environment in class having some different ethnic minorities in that restaurant asking them to talk together maybe before that I would ask them go home and find from youtube how people are speaking one of them can be the native speaker of English one of them can be Portuguese lady who is living in there or one of them can be a Turkish one so we may talk about it these kinds of things I may think …
Example 4 shows the teacher’s realization that using English can have a significant impact on learning. This is evident from her awareness of her learners feeling inadequate as ELF users (“we realized that we didn’t learn English because they spoke things differently”) and her active involvement in developing lessons that reflect authentic uses of interactions involving non-native speakers. This realization will enable her learners to become better users of English. It is important to note that awareness of language use is important for the learning process as the ultimate aim of language teaching is to enable learners to become successful users of English in various domains of language use ranging from international gaming to formal instruction. As Bayyurt and Sifakis (2015a) indicate, the learners have multiple resources throughout their language learning process – i.e. the time they spend outside the classroom is also an important learning time for the students as many of them are engaged in online games with people from all over the world, surfing the internet and conversing with people on social media sites, and so on.

Finally, Example 5 shows the teacher’s essential transformation from accepting her role as a custodian (or representative) of native speaker, Standard English varieties for her learners, to one of challenging the status quo as a result of her realization of the importance of ELF.

**Example 5: Gamze, 4 February 2013, Focus Group interview**

… as an activity perhaps how can I adapt these things into my classes how can I also make my students be tolerant as well because they say we want to learn native – we want to learn e::h London English BBC English but no you don’t have to and in perhaps a few years you may see not – you won’t see any native speakers there may not be enough native speakers around the world …

The teacher appears to take up a rather extreme perspective, vilifying standard varieties and almost nullifying the importance of native speakers. This over-reaction is, of course, a result of her excitement that is caused by her hasty (and, arguably, superficial) ELF awareness; it is a feeling that should progressively give way to a genuine realization and acknowledgment of the role of both native and non-native users of English in their mutual interactions.

**Conclusion**

Whereas learner awareness has sometimes been viewed as a negative factor in the acquisition of a second language, teacher awareness has been mostly ignored but never openly criticized as detrimental to the learning process. In the literature on NNESTs, teacher awareness has been claimed to be one of the assets of NNESTs, in opposition to native English-speaking teachers’ (NESTs’) attributed lack of awareness. NNESTs have, by definition, learned the language after childhood and can also be considered ELF users, which gives them the opportunity to have an experienced vision of the use of English as a lingua franca in multilingual contexts.

In this chapter, we explored teachers’ language awareness in relation to changing paradigms of English language teaching – i.e. ELF-awareness. As explained above, knowledge of language and knowledge about language are important indicators of how NESTs and NNESTs conceptualize ‘awareness of language’. The former quality often refers to
NESTs’ understanding of language awareness, while the latter tends to refer to NNESTs’ understanding of language. In addition, in this chapter, we have further analysed language awareness in relation to the changing paradigms of English as a global lingua franca. We attempted to show how the development of an understanding of changing paradigms – namely ELF-awareness – complemented teachers’ overall language awareness. To illustrate how changing paradigms can contribute to teacher language awareness research, we have attempted to reflect on teacher language awareness by looking at two non-native teachers’ discourse and awareness-raising classroom practice.

Three components of teacher ELF-related awareness have been discussed, namely awareness of language and language use, awareness of instructional practice, and awareness of learning. The examples seen above illustrate those three components of awareness and show how the abstract principles included in ELF and global English theoretical formulations are adopted and implemented by two Turkish teachers, thus providing a window to understanding teachers’ awareness about English and ELF.

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Related Topics

ELF; teacher training; NNESTs; ELF awareness

Notes

1 This is based on Kachru’s (1985) classification of English-speaking contexts into “Inner Circle” (countries where English is the mother tongue of a majority of citizens), “Outer Circle” (countries where English has official status and recognition) and “Expanding Circle” (countries where English is increasingly learned and used).

2 Please see the following video: www.ted.com/talks/elif_shafak_the_politics_of_fiction

3 For more information about the site the students visit during the course, go to: www.globalingles.com

References


