

Cultivating Critical Language Awareness in TESOL



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Critical Language Awareness in the TESOL Classroom: What Is It and What Does It Accomplish?

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In this presentation, I define Critical Language Awareness (CLA) as “an awareness about language ideologies in society and of one’s own in-class language use... that prompts interactional choices... to fully involve everyone in the class community’s learning processes and (re)structure social relations.” Drawing on studies of English-medium instruction in primary and secondary education, and a telling extended example from my own study, I provide empirical evidence to show that although CLA requires the cooperation of all class participants, it also requires the teacher to lead—through jointfostering pedagogy (Faltis, 2001) and framing of social relations (Gumperz, 1992). Explaining what brought me to this work and how I engage in it personally, I argue for TESOL to go beyond methods and strategies to consider the social relations needed for all learners to experience our classes as inclusive and educational (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). I conclude with resources for pursuing further study in CLA.



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