

# ELF-Aware Teaching

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# ACTIVITY 1

If you haven't done so already, click the **link** under the video to do **Activity 1**

## What are your views on these questions?

1. Do you believe that your EFL learners **use** English **outside** your EFL classroom? If so, **where**? Give some examples
2. Do you believe that **ELF** is **useful** in your EFL context? Why/Why not?
3. If so, do you think that ELF should **replace** or become **integrated** within EFL?
4. Do you believe that it is **possible** to **teach ELF**?

# Prerequisites to understanding ELF awareness

1. Many **EFL learners** are **ELF users** (to some extent) outside the EFL classroom
2. ELF should **not replace** EFL—It should **become integrated** within it
3. ELF is **not a linguistic variety** that can be taught, in the same way that EFL (i.e. Standard English) is
4. ELF is **not a thing** (i.e. a language) **but a way** (i.e. skills and strategies)

# Defining ELF awareness

What is it?

“...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.”

(Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2018: 459)

# Three components of ELF awareness

- Awareness of **language** and **language use**
- Awareness of **instructional practice**
- Awareness of **learning**

(Sifakis, 2019)

*ELF awareness is  
MORE than awareness of ELF*

# *I—Awareness of language and language use*

- An **engagement with language in communication**
- Knowledge of syntactic, morphological, lexical, phonological, pragmatic, sociocultural features
- Sensitivity, noticing, alertness, orientation to stimuli
- Awareness of **linguaging** and **translinguaging** processes
- Awareness of own **preconceptions** about normativity, appropriateness, comprehensibility, ownership

## **In practice:**

- ✓ **Develop metalinguistic activities: why does ELF communication work as it does?**

## *II—Awareness of instructional practice*

### **ELF awareness is MORE than awareness of ELF**

- **Teacher-centred practice:** what Ts do / do not do
- **Curriculum-oriented:** what textbook “allows”
- **Personal theories** about instruction, corrective feedback, meeting learners’ needs
- **Self-perception** about T role as language user, as role model, as professional

### **In practice:**

- ✓ **Develop metacognitive activities: what is the *origin* of these perceptions → ask WHY**

# *III—Awareness of learning*

**ELF awareness is MORE than awareness of ELF**

## **Impact of USE on LEARNING**

- Where learning takes place (formal/informal settings)
- English is not a foreign language

### **In practice:**

- ✓ Integrate authentic tasks with realistic communicational goals
- ✓ Ask learners to reflect on their own convictions about what works in communication in English



# ACTIVITY 2

Click the link under the video to do **Activity 2**

**10 sentences** with questions for learners: Are they **metalinguistic** or **metacognitive** ones?

- **Metalinguistic questions:** *Thinking about language*—ASK: What is going on? Why is it going on?
- **Metacognitive questions:** *Thinking about thinking*—ASK: Why do I hold these perceptions / convictions (about native speakers/corrective feedback/etc.)?

<b>Metalinguistic</b>	<b>Metacognitive</b>
<p>Are the people on the video native or non-native speakers? What made you say they are native or non-native?</p>	<p>What do you think about the way the people on the video use English and why (e.g. why do you think that “it was very good”)?</p>
<p>Did you notice any ‘errors’ in the English of the people in the video? What role did these ‘errors’ play in their communication?</p>	<p>What do you think about ‘errors’ when using English and why (e.g. why do you think that “they must be avoided”)?</p>
<p>While using English, a speaker in the video mentioned a popular expression in his mother tongue. Why did he do that? How did the other people react and why?</p>	<p>What do you think when someone uses his/her mother tongue when communicating in English and why (e.g. why do you think that “it is sometimes unavoidable”)?</p>

<b>Metalinguistic</b>	<b>Metacognitive</b>
<p>What do you do when, while using English, you realise that other people don't understand what you want to express?</p>	<p>What do you think when, while using English, other people don't understand what you want to express and why (e.g. why do you think that "it is your fault")?</p>
<p>What similarities/differences can you spot in the English you use when chatting with your friends and the English you use in the classroom?</p>	<p>What do you think about you as a user and a learner of English and why (e.g. why do you think that "your English is poor and you have to be more careful in class")?</p>

# ELF awareness: What teachers should know

## *Know thy teaching context—*

- Not all teaching situations are the same; different goals, different expected practices

## *Know thy learners—*

- Make it about themselves

## *Know thyself—*

- Teacher roles: guardian/custodian of “proper English” vs. facilitator/prompter of authentic interactions

# ELF awareness: What teachers should know

*Welcome change*—convictions concerning:

- What is taught is not always what is learned (or learnable): *rethink correction and feedback* strategies
- Go beyond EFL (what learners SHOULD do) and build upon what learners **ALREADY DO** with English
- Understand that ELF awareness is an opportunity for **professional development**, and therefore...

**...so much MORE than awareness of ELF**

*Some examples...*

*adapting textbook input &  
activities*

## —EFL textbooks *typically*...

- ① ...use topics that **on the surface** are culturally / interculturally sensitive but do not fully exploit them (“playing it safe”)
- ② ...integrate **traditional tasks** that are negatively impacted by high-stakes testing (comprehension-checking)
- ③ ...**do not** favour **reflective / metalinguistic** questions

*[Photo of young teenagers of both sexes and all colours]*

**1.1 These children all come from different places.  
Where do you think they come from?**

*e.g. I think the boy in picture 3 comes from Asia because he has got slanted eyes.*

**1.2 What do you have in common with these children? Do you have any differences?**

*e.g. Both the girl in picture 8 and I have got an oval face.  
The boy in picture 6 has got fair hair, whereas I have got dark hair.*



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• **Large vs. Small culture tendencies—1.1 vs. 1.2**

## 2.1 Look at the pictures of Nuru and Tiki and answer the questions.

*[Two drawings of two boys. In the first one, **NURU** is seen walking in the dessert to school with another boy, one carrying a water container, the other a backpack. In the other one, **TIKKI** and another boy are on a small boat on a lake in North Pole, dressed very heavily and trying to fish.]*

1. Where does each boy live?
2. What are they wearing?
3. What is the weather like?
4. What are they doing now?

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1. Where does each boy live?
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- What kind of English would Nuru and Tikki use to communicate with you?
- Do you think it would be British or American English?
- Do you think you may have a problem understanding them?
- What would you/they do in order to be understood?

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- In what ways would the English used by Nuru and Tikki help them understand and appreciate their cultural differences?
- In what ways would it help them “connect” and identify their cultural similarities?

**2.2 Nikos, a student reporter, interviewed an anthropologist about the way people live. Complete the table below with information from the article Nikos wrote for his school newspaper.**

<b>People's characteristics</b>	<b>Scientists' opinion</b>

*[The actual printout of the article follows. The interview refers to explaining how people look the way they do, what makes some people's hair curly and others' straight, why some people's skin is dark and others' light. The answers the anthropologist gives link these features to the environment (terrain, altitude, temperatures, vegetation) and to "adaptation", or how parts of the body adapt to the weather conditions to help people survive.]*

## 2.3 Answer the questions.

- What is the main idea of the text?
- Why have people's bodies and characteristics changed throughout the years?

## 3.1 Look at the verbs in bold. Which tenses are used? What is the difference between them?

*e.g. Where is the boy going? He's **walking** to the spring. He **walks** there every day to collect water.*

## 2.3 Answer the questions.

- What is the main idea of the text?
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*e.g. Where is the boy going? He's **walking** to the spring. He **walks** there every day to collect water.*

- **This environment/physical characteristics represents an entrenched way of seeing the world—but is it really like that anymore?**
- **Link such differences to cultural and communicational differences.**
- **Ask learners to be ethnographers of their own world and to describe its patterns.**

# Learners as ethnographers of their own world ...and beyond

- **Do you enjoy playing video games?**
- **Do you chat with other players?**
- **What do you chat about? How often do you talk about stuff other than the video game? What is this stuff about?**
- **What language do you use when you chat? Why? What do you do in order to understand/be understood by the other players?**
- **How would you describe the English that you use when you chat/Skype w/fellow players?**



# ACTIVITY 3

Click the link under the video to do **Activity 3**

You will find a number of **ELT activities**

On the basis of what we have been discussing so far, how would you go about **integrating** tasks to render them **more ELF-aware**? Note down your ideas and suggestions

## *Hint*

Try to think of **metalinguistic** and **metacognitive** questions!

## 4. Talking about us

**4.1** Describe someone from your class. Can your classmates guess who it is? *E.g. She wears glasses. She's holding a pencil case. She likes sports.*

**4.2** Work in pairs. Ask each other questions to find out about your habits. You can use the ideas below.

*travel abroad / go to festivals / go to the cinema...*

## 5. A child's life in...

**5.1** Imani lives in Sungo, a village near Lake Malawi in Africa. She is taking part in a documentary about the lives of children around the world. Listen to her talk about her daily routine and complete the chart below.

(1) ..... [7:00] get up, prepare breakfast, (2) ..... (3) ....., sweep school. (4) .....[10:30] classes begin.

**5.2** Complete the clock diagram with your daily habits. Use your notes to compare your daily routine with Imani's. What do you have in common? Are there any aspects of her life that you like / don't like? What are they?

Let us see how we could make these ELT activities **more ELF-aware** by **integrating** some **metalinguistic** and **metacognitive** questions!

- **Would you like to get to know Imani?**
- **What would you learn from Imani that you did not know before?**
- **Do you think that Imani speaks English? What level would you say her English is?**
- **Where do you think she has learned English?**
- **How often do you think she communicates with others in English?**
- **Do you imagine that Imani makes mistakes when she communicates with her foreign friends in English? How serious would these mistakes be? Would they impede communication between her and her friends?**
- **Do you think that Imani has/needs a B2/C2 formal certificate? Why?**

# Taking stock on ELF-aware task design

As you can see, **in ELF-aware tasks we do not teach ELF**: we *expose* learners to different aspects of it and prompt them to:

- ✓ Find and expand upon their own ELF speaker persona, gain confidence as NNSs
- ✓ Open up more towards ELF and its concerns

>>> This is what **INTEGRATE, NOT REPLACE EFL** means

*We can leave EFL tasks to do the job of teaching English, while we focus on facilitating interactions, providing feedback, boosting confidence*

**6.1** Read what Eva wrote about her new friend, Olga, in a letter to her English penfriend and take down notes about Olga. Compare your notes with your partner's.

1. Size and body: .....
2. Physical details: .....
3. Family: .....
4. Her past: .....
5. Interests: .....

**6.2** You have decided to enter a creative writing competition. The title of the competition entry is: “Describe an interesting person you know or a person who makes you happy”. Consider the following:

1. What are some important details about this person's appearance and character? Make a list.
2. What order should you put your information in?
3. How will you make your beginning or ending information?

## 6. Writing a description

*I want to tell you about a new friend of mine. Her name is Olga, she is my age and we're in the same class. ... She's got long fair hair ... not very tall but slim and fit. // Before she moved to my town Olga lived in Kiev ... Her parents are very likeable and friendly. ... // Olga and I sit together in class. She's very good at maths – not like me! I help her with her Greek when she doesn't understand something. We make a very good team. ... We listen to the same kind of music. ... // When she first came to school, some boys in the class made fun of her, which was not so nice. But she talks to everyone – even to those horrible boys. She's a very friendly person and we really understand each other. ... // Olga may not be from Greece but I don't care because we have a lot of things in common and it's never boring when we're together. I like her very much. She's great! I'm really glad that I met her.*

- **Eva and Olga are friends, but Olga’s Greek is not very good. What language do you think they use to communicate beside Greek? Why?**
- **When Eva and Olga talk, is it OK to shift between different languages?**
- **Do you have a friend/friends like Olga? What language(s) do you use when you talk?**
- **Do you always try to use “perfect” English?**
- **What would “perfect” English be for you?**
- **What if your interlocutors don’t fully understand what you’re saying?**



# ACTIVITY 4

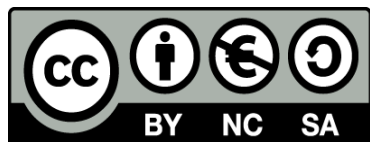
Click the link under the video to do **Activity 4** and share your views in the **Forum**

1. Select a **random activity** from your textbook
2. **Describe** it: To what extent is **ELF awareness** integrated in it? **Why**? Provide two or three reasons supporting your opinion
3. How would you **enrich** it to make it more **ELF-aware**? Provide as many ideas as you can

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