



## **LANGUAGE AWARENESS IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR B1 KARAKALPAK LEARNERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Language Awareness has been suggested using in methodology by foreign linguists and researchers. Language Awareness is an essential dimension of learning and teaching the language. It develops a good knowledge and conscious understanding about language, effects to language use, language learning and teaching. This paper considers how Language Awareness has been defined and examines which aspects are foregrounded in various conceptions of language awareness. The significance of Language Awareness in teaching Foreign languages, the importance of raising learners' awareness and implementation of Language Awareness in methodology have been investigated in the article.*

**KEY WORDS:** *language awareness, language acquisition, language teaching, activity, grammar, vocabulary.*

### **DISCUSSION**

Current educational process demands highly developed and accurately arranged teaching system which involves effective approaches, innovative methods and techniques for training foreign language by dent of its importance in all spheres of education. Through focusing on relevant and effective method in teaching and learning foreign languages both teachers and learners achieve their goal of foreign language acquisition. The range of approaches, methods and techniques are numerous in type as users choose them taking into consideration the suitability and usefulness for teaching and learning process.

One of the most essential approaches of foreign language learning is considered Language Awareness that has been stood out in the field of language education in recent years. The concept of awareness was first associated to language in the late 1950s, when linguists and researchers in Australia and scholars like Hawkins or Halliday in Great Britain supported the idea that language teachers should not limit to help their students learn the target language, but ought to guide them about how to cope with issues related to language in general, to culture

and to learning. This view was not widely accepted by academics in those days, but in the lasts two or three decades the so-called "language awareness movement" has re-emerged in the field of language learning, in part, thanks to the work of Hawkins who claimed that the observation of languages promotes linguistic reflection and favors the acquisition of the metalinguistic competence [1999; 122-124].

The precise definition of Language Awareness was presented by the Association for Language Awareness (ALA): "Language Awareness is an explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use". Language awareness issues include exploring the benefits that can be derived from developing a good knowledge about a language, a conscious understanding of how languages work, of how people learn them and use them. Several linguists and researchers favored the idea of Language Awareness and scrutinized the essence of its utilization in wide length and gave own justifications. One of the most impressive and commonly cited definitions of Language awareness is given by Donmall G in her



report prepared for the United Kingdom National Congress on Languages in Education (NCLE):

“Language awareness is a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of language and its role in human life.”

Language is a social phenomenon that plays an essential role in human lives. All human beings begin to acquire a language as they start to talk and get to a proficiency level when they are children, though this is an unconscious process. That is, they are able to use the language quite well but are not able, for example, to recognize the grammar or explain what they have used. However, learning another language when the students are adults becomes a conscious process for they have already learned their native language and had other background knowledge which may facilitate or interfere with their learning [2012; 23-33].

In accordance with the definition of the linguist Donmall that learners own particular notion about the language which they speak or learn and spontaneously utilize the function, follow the structures and produce the language as the result of this notion which appeared in individual’s mind. Language awareness directs the knowledge of learners to the correct utilization of the language and forms the effective production as background knowledge can help to develop consciousness and sensitivity.

Language awareness is an internal, gradual, realization of the realities of language use. Language awareness is input processing by using cognitive strategies such as noticing, hypothesis testing, problem solving, and restructuring, that allow the student to notice how the language works and contrasting his/her interlanguage with the target language to make the necessary adjustments to his grammar learning. It is aimed to raise learners’ awareness of important linguistic features and help students construct their own grammar using personal exploration. As language awareness is essential in teaching, learning and using the language, there will be a need for increasing students’ language awareness. Learners cognize in their mother tongue, develop ideas and speech, study grammar rules and while learning the foreign or second language they learn by heart the new words through the translation, compare the grammar rules, take their first language as a guide for acquiring the new language. Taking into consideration the given explanation, it can be identified that the prime point of gaining the language is practice which involves doing various kind of activities and put the language in active utilization.

As activities work for the enhancement of the language acceptance and production, lead to revise and strengthen the language in practice, obtain

background knowledge and enlarge the intuition. Schmidt has explained the importance of language awareness activities as following: “Students have to explore structured input and develop an awareness of certain linguistic features by performing some activities” [1993;13,206-22].

Every language is learnt, taught and used completely by practicing more, doing various exercise and activities. Through activities learners raise their awareness of language that they are learning. The more do activities, the more aware of the language. In our work we have investigated the importance, types and elements of activities which raise learners’ language awareness. Language awareness activities in our work devoted to the grammar. Through these activities students will be able to raise their awareness and language use. During doing activities learners should use their knowledge background of grammar.

In order to prove the significance of language awareness and develop awareness raising activities, we have designed a manual “Fly High English 9 Grammar & Vocabulary” which involves grammar and vocabulary exercises that help to strengthen the background knowledge and integrate language skills, raise learners’ awareness of language, prepare additional materials to consolidate the topic and provide extra activities to practice more during the lesson. The designed manual has become helpful for us initially to increase the number of source for teaching process; alternatively it has ensured data for making analysis of our research work to identify the essence of language awareness activities. The grammar explanations and activities have been learned and done by pupils of secondary school with whom we cooperated and made a research to determine the effect of the awareness raising activities.

We will demonstrate an example taken from the manual in order to confirm the process of doing awareness raising activities during the lesson. The learners are given the structure of the grammar topic Conditionals and demonstrated grammar activity. The procedure of the task fulfillment is focused on changeable PPPs that first learners are presented structure then they practice activities and get a product. Second version is that learners first practice the activities then teacher present them grammar structure and at last get a product. In both cases are applicable for the learners to produce the result by obtaining the language and practicing it. Learners become aware of the structure and produce the language by noticing the grammar, learning, understanding the language. Such kind of procedure of the activities help learners produce the language effectively and teachers explore the language productively.



**Grammar topic: Conditional**

**Conditional**

Conditional clauses consist of two parts: **if clause (hypothesis)**

**main clause.**

When “if clause” comes before the main clause, the two clauses are separated with a comma.

*Water turns into ice if it freezes. If water freezes, it turns into ice.*

There are four types of conditionals: **Type 0, Type 1, Type 2, Type 3.**

**Type 0 or Zero conditional**

**Zero conditional** is used to express *general truth, scientific fact, definitions.* e.g. *If water freezes, it turns into ice.*

**Structure**

If Clause	Main Clause
If/When+ present simple	Present Simple

**Activity 1**

e.g. If you water plants, they grow

Match the items in column A with those in column B in order to make correct type 0 conditional sentences, as in the example.

Column A	Column B
If you water plants	it stays fresh
If you mix blue and yellow	it falls to the ground
If you put food in the fridge	it becomes water
If you drop something	they grow
If it rains	carbon dioxide is produced
If ice melts	the roads get slippery
If you burn fossil fuels	you get green

**Activity 2 Rewrite the sentences using type 0 conditional.**

e.g. If Tina passes her exams, she becomes a student.

1. Tina wants to be a student. Pass exams/ become a student
2. Tom wants to be a champion. Win the match/ become a champion

3. Alice wants to be a surgeon. Get medical knowledge/ become a surgeon
4. John is interested in repairing cars. Learn to repair cars/become a mechanic
5. Peter loves playing the piano. Play the piano/become a pianist

The given structure and explanation of grammar topic and activities are based on forming grammar



background, raising awareness, developing vocabulary, consolidating and checking understanding of the learners. Grammar explanation is presented in an accurate, brief and relevant way that learners can grasp the form, function and meaning themselves by learning the given structure, explanation and examples. The understanding level of learners depend on teachers' method and own technique used during the lesson and learners' ability to acquire the knowledge.

The first activity is devoted to enlarge awareness of grammar structure and vocabulary, awareness of background knowledge of given data. Learners make sentences using the consciousness of demonstrated information following the grammar structure. At the same time they work on grammar & vocabulary, get additional information and sharpen their mind. This activity motivates learners to revise the structure and complete the task as they are interesting and easy to do. They automatically obtain the structure while matching and making the sentence, it does not make them difficult and bored.

The complexity rate of activities is sequenced as second activity is designed much more complicated and difficult to do. However, learners get practice from first activity and become aware of the structure for doing the task. In the second activity, it should be made a sentence which expresses the way of achieving their purpose that is given in the first sentence. Learners should make a complete sentence using the clauses focusing on the form and meaning of the Zero Conditional. This designed activity ensures practice to form sentences and use actively in speech and basically it helps to scrutinize the grammar topic.

Being aware of language and its use is important in all languages. We will look through the importance of language awareness in Karakalpak language through examples. Through examples we identify the effect of language awareness to the vocabulary, realize the meaning of the words from the context, choose appropriate word, know all the meaning of words and its use in sentences. The examples are related to vocabulary of Karakalpak language: the meaning of words in the sentences and their definitions. Vocabulary is all the words in language and it is central to language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary learners can't understand others and express their ideas. Without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed, so learners expand vocabulary and teachers use vocabulary learning strategies effectively.

We learn to guess the meaning of words from the context, define the exact meaning of the word, understand and use correctly in a particular situation from the first example.

Example:

*Bunsha suw ishe berip ku'shala jedin'be?-dedi g'arri balag'a (Q. x.e)*

*You are drinking too much water. Have you eaten kushala?*

*(from karakalpak national story)*

In the sentence the word *kushala* is not clear not only non-native but also native speakers. But from the context we can realize *kushala* is something that makes people thirsty and guess *kushala* is food, vegetable or fruit that people can eat. If we need precise meaning of the word, we can look it up from dictionary.

*Kushala* is an acid plant grown in mountainous and hot territories, used as medicine for treatment. After knowing the definition it will be clear the objective of using and the meaning of the sentence. This sentence isn't used in everyday speech to say that somebody is drinking too much water without realizing the exact meaning of *kushala*. We can equalize this sentence with the sentence "*Onshama sho'llep baliq jedin'be?*" (*You are so thirsty. Have you eaten fish?*) and the last sentence is widely spoken in everyday speech. *Baliq* is a cold-blooded vertebrate animal that lives in water, moving the help of fins and breathing with gills. They become available to eat after being cooked Fried fish makes people thirsty and this sentence has become as a phrase to show exclamation for the people who become thirsty and drinking too much water. According to the meaning of the last sentence *kushala* may be thought to be a meal as *baliq*, but *kushala* is plant and both of them can make people thirsty. "*Onshama sho'llep bali'q jedin'be?*" is more common and widely used than "*Bunshama suw isheberip kushala jedin'be?*" but both of them are told to people who are thirsty and drinking much.

A word can define various meanings and we can identify from the context which meaning the word expresses. Through the following example we can realize the variety of meanings of a word, choose and use appropriate meaning in sentences.

*O'mirinde shayqalg'an jas qara tal,*

*A'miwdaya suwlarinan na'r alar*

(I.Yusupov)

*Young willow waving in life*

*Gaining its strength from Amudarya (Karakalpak poet I. Yusupov)*

The current meaning of *na'r ali'w* is "to eat". We use another meaning such as "take a pleasure", "strength" according to the meaning and use in the context. "*Na'r ali'w*" is more literal and usually used in poetry and prose. It strength the meaning and makes the composition more effective and expressive. In this poem *nar aliw* doesn't mean to eat, it means get power. We can realize it from the context while reading the poem.



Being aware of various meanings of words, its use in sentences, texts, poems, guessing and realizing from the context help us to gain positive attitude, integrate the knowledge and own rich vocabulary.

Each language has its own phraseological units but can be found equivalents from other languages. It can be a bit difficult to be aware of all the phraseological units, use permanently, choose suitable phrases in various cases. Phraseological units strengthen and enrich the idea, make the sentence more effective. Karakalpak language rich in phraseological units and we will define one of them.

*To`rt jag`i qubla*

*(Four side is south if we translate letter by letter)*

From the meaning of the words we can realize as “someone can go anywhere he or she wants” and it directs the way. But the phrases don’t usually define the same as its components. This phrase describes the person who “can afford everything he or she wants, calm and whose wishes came true”. This phrase combines several meanings such as rich, calm and happy. Language awareness is required to understand the phrases and use correctly, choose the suitable phrases in particular situations.

We have explained the importance, use of language awareness and integrate students’ language awareness through introducing them such kind of examples. By increasing students’ awareness, they are better able to understand, appreciate and use the language.

Abovementioned theoretical justifications represent the value and significance of Language Awareness and presented grammar explanations and activities prove the practical essence and necessity of Language Awareness in Foreign Language Teaching. From the observations it is precise that there is a need for Language Awareness to involve in Foreign Language Teaching process and develop the method by designing relevant awareness raising activities, form appropriate techniques, provide its implementation in the curriculum.

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