



Reflective Critical Analysis of a Case Study in ESL Learning Context: Challenges and Issues for Adult Asylum Seeker and Refugee English Learners in Wales, UK

Xuanmeng Lyu

Department of Linguistics and Translation, City University of Hong Kong

Abstract

This article evaluates a case study of language learning and teaching in adult asylum seekers and refugees ESL beginner learners in Wales, UK. Communicative and intercultural competencies are the two main focuses in this context, whereas social identity, motivation, and monolingual bias influence the outcome of English learning. Since the researcher was the course's teacher for ten months, this study examines the teaching environment and learners' behaviour through reflective critical analysis under Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988). Though the classroom used English as the lingual Franca, most learners whose native language is Arabic tended to use the translation method to enhance their understanding. This article reveals the challenges in this case study as (1) a potential information gap caused by an inaccurate translation that the teacher could not verify, (2) demotivated learners' willingness to participate impact their learning outcomes, and (3) incapability to link learners' existing literacy in English. This study also suggests several aspects to solve these issues, including (1) applying task-based learning and communicative language teaching to raise learners' intercultural awareness, (2) providing visual aids in class and adopting translanguaging as pedagogy to encourage learners to build connection with their prior knowledge, (3) use scaffolding to help learners improve step by step, and (4) encourage for group work collaboration to create a supportive community. The study provides valuable insights into English teaching to adult asylum seekers and refugees to teachers and relative parties. It can also inform future policy-making changes regarding ESL teaching to asylum seekers and refugees.

Keywords: intercultural competence, multilingualism, reflective critical analysis, teaching methodology, translanguaging

