

# Language Ideologies and Classroom Interaction: A Critical Discourse Analysis of EFL Contexts

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<p>Received: 10 Sep 2025; Received in revised form: 24 Sep 2025; Accepted: 10 Oct 2025; Available online: 13 Oct 2025</p> <p>©2025 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b> – language ideology, classroom interaction, EFL, critical discourse analysis, and power.</p>	<p><i>Language ideology is widely recognized as a significant factor of classroom interaction, and it is especially true in EFL contexts where the beliefs about language, identity, and power are probably the most common ones and are the influence of the institution's practices. This study explores how language ideology is constructed, renewed, and contested in EFL institutions through classroom interactions. The study uses Critical Discourse Analysis where the principles of language ideology, discourse in the classroom, and power will be employed. The qualitative method used in the study to analyze the process of naturalistic discourse in the classroom. The analysis' findings revealed how the dominant ideology regarding standard English, native speakers, and language correctness is established through teacher-student interactions, participation, and language evaluations in the classroom. The current study is based on the principle that discourse in the classroom is a dynamic process where the meanings associated with language ideology are continually redefined.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pedagogical goals and linguistic content are among the many factors that affect classroom interaction in schools and universities. Social, cultural, and ideological factors shape the spoken language, its speakers, and its audience. Such factors have an influential impact in EFL classrooms. Language ideologies are the primary factors that shape these interactions, establishing the limits of the acceptable language and characterizing the proficient speaker. Usually, ideologies influence teaching methods, evaluation standards, and participation methods without open discussion. Woolard (1998) defines language ideology as the beliefs that connect language to social values and identities, influencing how the speakers perceive and interpret the linguistic forms and practices. In the case of

institutional classrooms, these beliefs may very often advantage the standardized varieties of English and native-speaker norms while pushing alternative forms of expression to the periphery. This ideology affects the language use of both the students and the teachers.

Language ideologies have a significant impact on such a classroom setting. Teachers possess the authority to determine correctness, manage interactions, and evaluate students' performance. By means of corrective feedback, questioning strategies, and evaluative comments, teachers not only transmit the English language but also strengthen it through their professional practice. These beliefs often create a division of power and are therefore quite unfair as they are applied to the different user groups of the language. These activities are not powerful and great,

but rather the power structures rooted in society, and the classroom is only their reflection. Fairclough (1995) claims that discourse simultaneously represents and reproduces social relations, which means that classroom conversation can serve as a significant area for the flow of institutional power.

This study is looking for language ideologies that emerge in communication between the teacher and students within the EFL setting, using the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis as the principle framework of analysis. The study, by observing the unrehearsed discussions happening in the classroom, aims to reveal how the ideological basis connected to the English language is found in daily educational practices. The purpose of the study is to explore how language in the classroom is assists not merely a method of language acquisition, but rather a field for language status questions, language rights, and language user identities to be formed and challenged. The study emphasizes that students should learn English not only from the linguistic perspective but also from the socio-cultural one. In this way, the study is contributing to the field of critical applied linguistics by focusing on the ideological aspects of classroom communication and their impact on equity and language education.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies in the field of language ideologies indicated that the use of language in the educational setting is directly linked with wider social structures and power relations. According to Bourdieu (1991), Language is considered a source of symbolic power, and various linguistic varieties are socially approved or disapproved based on the influence of institutions and society. These practices contribute to widening the gap between the already privileged and others by allowing only learners who possess the correct language forms to meet the institutional requirements and approach the expected standards.

In the field of applied linguistics, pragmatics has been the source of important revelations regarding the collaborative meaning-accomplishing process in dialogues. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of “meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener” (p. 3), which highlights the context as a decisive factor in

interpretation. This interpretation is highly applicable to classroom interaction, where teachers and learners are continually constrained by the institution to negotiate meaning. Thus, the pragmatic competence in EFL classrooms is not just about the linguistic form; it includes knowing when, how, and for what purposes the particular forms are applied and evaluated.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has also played an important role in recognising classroom interaction as a practice deeply rooted in social interactions. Fairclough views discourse as a social practice that both reflects and creates power relations (1995). Following this perspective, classroom discourse is not just the communication of content; it is ideologically charged as it influences who participates, how knowledge is conveyed, and the identities assigned to learners. CDA provides researchers with the tools to reveal when and how less preferred language ideologies can be transcended, often through the reinforcement of dominant ideologies associated with standardization and native-speaker norms.

Discourse studies in classrooms have revealed that communication in institutions is based on unequal power relations and expectations. Walsh states that a teacher's interactional decision makes a significant difference in the number of learners that can participate and to what extent they will be able to acquire the language competence (2011). Likewise, Levinson notes that social context and institutional roles are the main determinants of pragmatic norms. Levinson views the classroom as a setting where pragmatic meanings are negotiated and defined (1983). These studies demonstrate that classroom interaction occurs on two levels: pedagogical and ideological.

The reviewed literature emphasizes the importance of analyzing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom interaction using both critical and pragmatic perspectives. This research based on previous studies that are essential for understanding how language ideologies are enacted in educational institutions. By applying the multicultural theory of language ideologies, along with logic and Critical Discourse Analysis, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive interpretation of these dynamics.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, qualitative research is used to explore the relationship between language ideology, power, and identity in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The methodology employed is an interdisciplinary approach combining language ideology theory, Critical Discourse Analysis and classroom discourse studies. The integration of these disciplines leads to a thorough comprehension of the student-teacher interaction, focusing on the language beliefs that are shown in this interaction and their relationship with the power and authority of the institution in its broadest sense. Therefore, the established framework conceptualizes classroom interaction not as neutral communication, but rather as a discourse that is socially situated with all the ideological presumptions and institutional norms affecting it.

Language ideology theory serves as the main theoretical framework for exploring how social interactions are influenced by language and power dynamics. Silverstein (1979) defines language ideologies as the beliefs that speakers have about language, which are used to legitimize and maintain the status of certain linguistic practices and hierarchies. Such beliefs are not exclusively mental but are rather proven through everyday interactions, particularly in institutional places like schools. According to Woolard and Schieffelin (1994), language ideologies are linked to certain social values and identities through specific linguistic forms; thus, they become significant mediators of inequality reproduction in the educational setting. In EFL classes, the ideologies of standard English and native-speaker models impact both the teachers' actions and the students' identities.

Critical Discourse Analysis is a valuable tool to get the most important ideas behind the communication. Fairclough (1995) considers discourse as a social practice that mirrors the power dynamics and thus influences the social order significantly. The argument suggests that the dialogue involved in teaching and learning is not a simple interchange of various techniques, but rather a scenario where the language's strength and the participants' power are both shown and acknowledged. The application of

Critical Discourse Analysis forces the analyst to not only detect the interactional patterns but also to expose the ideological notions that are mining underneath them, especially those regarding correctness, competence, and legitimacy.

Studies of classroom discourse have indicated that the way teacher-student interaction is set up is one of the key factors influencing the learning process. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the primary factors influencing classroom discussions are the institutional roles and expectations regarding participation and assessment. According to Walsh (2011), the specific interactional strategies employed by teachers, such as how they manage turn-taking and the types of feedback they provide, significantly impact the involvement of language learners. The current study employs an interdisciplinary method that combines classroom discourse analysis with linguistic ideology theory and Critical Discourse Analysis to study how classrooms function as learning environments and ideological spaces. The method of research makes it possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of language policy implementation, as it reveals how institutions operate. These institutions, in turn, propagate and promote language ideologies in educational institutions where English as a Foreign Language is taught.

### IV. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The analysis of discourse is central to this study, which is qualitative in nature. The basis for the analyses consists of the communicative interactions conducted inside an EFL classroom. Such interactions can consist of teachers' classroom explanations, students' answers, and feedback from evaluations as performed within a learning institution. These interactions offers significant understanding into the dynamics of language authority negotiation.

The whole discourse will be analyzed with regard to the choice of words, the order of the statements, and the features of the evaluation actions. The instructors' words, the students' language, and the power of discourse will also be examined. This way of studying is in line with Fairclough's three-

dimensional model, which includes text features, discursive practices, and large social contexts (1995).

## V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Research on classroom interaction in EFL institutional contexts has revealed that language ideologies are not simply the teachers' thoughts but rather are generated, to a greater extent, through the daily practices in teaching. Teachers' communication, together with their teaching methods and feedback, continuously expresses their fundamental convictions regarding the nature of language, participation, and learning. The interaction patterns manifest these ideologies, allowing some language forms to be more predominant while others are left behind.

The data presents one of the dominant ideologies that involved the promotion of standard English norms, which are mostly associated with the native-speaker models. In the process of correcting their students' speeches, teachers give more importance to the grammatical correctness rather than the communicative proficiency, which is the main reason why this attitude is shown. In the case where a learner speaks fluently but employs an incorrect verb form, the educator may stop the learner and restate the sentence, thereby unintentionally communicating that correctness is prioritized over the understanding of the message. Such situations are very illustrative of the type of corrective feedback through which the language ideology is reinforced, and thereby it is concluded that the legitimacy of English usage is linked to conformity with the standard norms rather than to the ability to communicate effectively.

The classroom interaction reveals the fundamental notion of teacher power that regulates student participation in the debate. In the majority of situations, it is the teachers who select the speakers and propose the ideas and the direction of the discussion, which implies that they determine what is linguistically right and wrong. The question and answer format assesses students' answers based on content and expression. For example, the teacher remarking, "That is not how we say it in English," or "Use proper English," indicates the teacher's power to control the language. Critical Discourse Analysis would interpret the communication in such activities

as a representation of the power structure of the institutions, since they permit certain voices to be heard while others are silenced.

The study additionally presents the situations of imposition that are not only imposed but also accepted in a combative manner. Some teachers follow the disruptive techniques that put stress on the students' clarity and what they have to add to the discussion. One of the teaching methods is when a learner employs a word from his/her mother tongue; the teacher may, initially, interpret the word and afterwards suggest synonyms that are very close to it and thus difficult to differentiate. This strategy shows a more open-minded view, which regards multilingualism as a plus point instead of a minus point arising from non-conformity. The teachers' interactions with the students indicate that they interpret language as a dynamic phenomenon influenced by their teaching.

The patterns of participation in the classroom also show the ideological dimensions of the teaching debate. The students who are most familiar with the institutional honesty and fluency expectations are the ones who continuously receive more positive feedback and longer interactive space. On the other hand, students who are hesitant, frequently self-correct, or use non-standard forms are likely to receive little feedback or corrections interrupting their speech. These are indeed the indications that classroom interaction is playing a decisive role in the construction of learner identities, and confidence and linguistic legitimacy are not evenly distributed. Fairclough (1995) asserts that discourse significantly influences the formation of social identities within institutional contexts, including classrooms.

Another important finding is related to the tough language assessment discourse and its role in the continuation of language ideologies. In exam-dominated contexts, the teachers usually develop interactions in their classrooms according to the demands of the tests they are going to give. By saying "You need this structure for the exam" or "This will cost you marks," the teachers show their belief that learning a language equals measurement of one's performance. This way of thinking restricts classroom interaction and puts language in the position of examinable forms instead of being a means for making sense. As a result, students may

tend to focus on memorizing and conforming rather than on experimenting and taking the risk of being communicative.

From a critical viewpoint, the listed interactional practices point out the discourse that is already established as a result of institutional pressure. Therefore, teachers who are familiar with alternative pedagogical methods must still work under the curricular and assessment frameworks that limit their interactional flexibility. The above-mentioned issue brings out the complexity of language ideology in education, where the individual's belief coexists with the institutional demand. Therefore, the mainstream educational ideologies sometimes appear through classroom discourse, often unwillingly due to routine interactions.

The interaction analysis, however, points to the fact that EFL classrooms are very much ideological in terms of language. Language ideologies are present in the practices of correction, structures of participation, and oral discourse focused on assessment, thus affecting the language learning experience and its evaluation. In fact, the study made through the Critical Discourse Analysis perspective shows how the daily communication in the classroom is contributing to the persistence of linguistic hierarchies while, at the same time, providing the opportunity for change.

## VI. FINDINGS

The findings of the study indicate that the ideology of language is often the most important within the interactions regarding English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the context of an institution. The teachers' practices and decisions during the interactions always mirror their opinions about the validity of different languages, especially concerning the creation of standard English norms and the importance of correctness in performance. These ideologies are practiced through corrective feedback, turn management, and evaluation, which not only promote the teacher as the main authority on the language used but also sanction the type of authority vested in the teacher. On one hand, those learners who meet the institution's requirements to a great extent possess more opportunities to interact and receive positive feedback, whereas the other group

experience their communication either interrupted or restricted. The pattern indicates that the classroom talk is not just a way of teaching but also a very skillful means of asserting language hierarchies.

The findings suggest that there are different and disputable linguistic ideologies in the classroom. Open interactions that prioritize clarity and meaning over formal correctness signal a diverse ideological orientation that appreciates multilingual proficiency and learner autonomy. Faculty members frequently first recognise the students' input and then restate it, or they interact with their peers in a manner that reduces the power difference. This way of communicating shows that communication in the classroom could be a tool for the negotiation of ideas; hence, it might either conceal or give a new interpretation to the existing linguistic ideologies. The result usually uncovers that communication in institutional classrooms has a double nature: it might be a place where ideas are reiterated and also a place where teaching methods change.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to explore the practices that contribute to the formation and application of language ideologies in communication within EFL contexts. The study carried out the Critical Discourse Analysis perspective as its basis and utilized comprehensively the concepts of classroom discourse and language ideology. The study reveals that there is considerable ideological contact among classroom members. In addition to developing language skills, classroom discussions shape students' perceptions of appropriate participation and effective learning. Institutional principles such as standardization, power, and assessment penetrate classroom discourse through everyday teaching practices.

Through the interactional activities, the inquiry has once more evidenced the crucial role of the teachers in the dissemination of the views. For example, the teachers' remarks, turn-taking, and feedback mirror and strengthen the prevalent assumption of a connection between language skill and accuracy being the case. Habits and status in the class may affect students' self-esteem, participation, and their perception of their language proficiency. However,

the study findings reveal a connection between behaviors, institutional expectations, curriculum requirements, and evaluation that limit the teaching techniques and are not only influenced by the ideas of the individual teacher.

This study emphasizes the importance of classroom discussions which operate in both reproductive and progressive ways. The teacher's choices regarding the material, the way he/she communicates, and the students' participation may cause ideological clashes in the class. The changed interactions could not only increase participation but also challenge the students' perception of language abilities as negative. So, the cases show how the limits of language and learning and their various interpretations can change classroom discourse.

This study contributes to a critical understanding of interaction in EFL classrooms while continually foregrounding the ideological concerns significant to critical pedagogy and applied linguistics. The results indicate that most educators fail to acknowledge the significant influence of linguistic ideologies, and hence, their influence on the self-identification and involvement of the learners is rather covert. The integration of findings from this study is likely to lead to the enhancement of teacher training, curriculum development, and also aimed at eliminating the inequitable, non-inclusive methods of language teaching that do not take into account the future social and cultural realities. The latter is done by situating classroom discussions in wider social contexts.

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