

# English as a Lingua Franca

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## The Intellectual and Social Context

The worldwide spread of English, its predominant use in diverse international economic and cultural arenas, and the dramatic expansion of electronic communication have allowed the language to achieve the status of an international language or a global *lingua franca*. This international status of English generates four major implications for ELT professionals to consider. First, as a global lingua franca, the legitimate speakers of English are no longer exclusively the so-called “native-English” speakers (NESs) from what Braj Kachru, a key scholar in World Englishes, has classified as inner-circle countries where English is an official and a national language. These legitimate speakers of English also come from countries where English is an institutionalized language or outer-circle countries, as well as a foreign language or expanding-circle countries (see *WORLD ENGLISHES*). They acquire English within their bilingual and multilingual repertoires, use English and other languages in multilingual contexts, and use English to communicate predominantly with other bilingual and multilingual speakers of English. In fact, it is widely agreed that the predominant speakers of English today are these bilingual and multilingual speakers of English who should be viewed as *users* rather than *learners*. Second, the changing demographic background of English and the natural process of languages in contact have also brought changes to the form of language, contesting the notion of English as a monolithic and unitary concept. Thus, English is now a plurilithic language with diverse and complex pronunciations, grammars, vocabulary, discourse and pragmatic conventions, and cultural conceptualizations. Third, thanks to the explosion of advanced information technologies in today’s postmodern globalization era, the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the interlocutors with whom people communicate in English are often unknown. What is known is that today’s communicative exchanges take place between speakers whose cultural and linguistic backgrounds are diverse and complex. The variety(ies) of English being used, and the languages being used are also unpredictable and therefore diverse. Within communicative exchanges between users of English from diverse linguacultural

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backgrounds, it is not uncommon to observe how they employ various strategies from their multilingual and perhaps multidialectal repertoire to negotiate linguistic and other differences to ensure mutual intelligibility and effective communication. Fourth, as English is now widely recognized as an international lingua franca and used for intercultural communication, native-speaker norms and accuracy/correctness are seen as less relevant and important than having the ability to employ various communicative skills and strategies to negotiate meanings and reach mutual understanding among English as a lingua franca (ELF) speakers.

In response to this changing sociolinguistic nature of English, scholars in applied linguistics have called for the need for a reconceptualization of the English language. Different schools of thought have emerged to challenge the purist and elitist view of conceptualizing and teaching English. In addition to WORLD ENGLISHES, ELF, a vibrant area of inquiry in applied linguistics as well as a “movement,” has provided applied linguists and ELT professionals with a “picture” of the changing nature of the English language and its implications for communication in English as well as the teaching and learning of English. In fact, ELF was initially identified and advocated in the early 1980s by two scholars from Germany, Werner Hüllen and Karlfried Knapp, who claimed (a) the importance and relevance of ELF in teaching English and (b) the need to conduct further research studies on the formal and functional aspects of ELF that teachers could incorporate into their teaching. In the late 1990s, several scholars outside Germany—Alan Firth, Juliane House, and Jennifer Jenkins—attempted to “revitalize” ELF. Due to some terminological and methodological inconsistencies, their work received only minor attention and interest from applied linguists and ELT professionals until the birth of the groundbreaking empirical publication by Jennifer Jenkins in 2000 on ELF pronunciation, and the conceptual work of Barbara Seidlhofer in 2001 that strongly called for the need to describe linguistic features and practices of users of English, particularly from expanding-circle countries where English does not have a historically established presence. This call has resulted in a considerable number of English corpora in different sociocultural settings: Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) in Vienna; the Corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings (ELFA) in Helsinki, Finland; Alpine-Adriatic Corpus in Austria; and the Asian Corpus of English (ACE) in Hong Kong. Not only do these corpora aim to show the pluralizing nature of English, but also to critically challenge a deficit perspective of linguistic features and practices that may be different from those of NESs. These corpora have also generated pedagogical implications that question the validity and relevance of the native-speakerism-based approach to teaching and learning English. Today, ELF is highly relevant to a number of disciplines including contact linguistics, sociolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, genre theories, bilingualism and multilingualism, intercultural communication, World Englishes, English as an international language, language education, language change and variation, historical linguistics, and language planning and policy.

## Major Dimensions

“English as a lingua franca” has been predominantly used by prominent scholars and researchers in the field to refer to the following. First, it refers to an intercultural communicative *setting* in which speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds use English as the medium of communication. Second, it refers to the various communicative *strategies* or *practices* that those speakers employ in intercultural communicative contexts. Third, it is a *paradigm* or an area of inquiry in applied linguistics that advocates the following:

- As English has internationalized and diversified, so have the users who are predominantly bilinguals, multilinguals or translinguals whose English and their plurilingual repertoire are creatively and strategically used in engaging collaboratively in meaning-making in an international communication context.
- The term “English as a lingua franca” does not suggest that certain users of English are included or excluded from communication. Nor does it promote a single monolithic variety of English being used as the exclusive or “core” model for communication. Thanks to the forces of globalization, neither the linguacultural backgrounds of the users of English nor the varieties of English encountered in today’s social communicative contexts are known and “predictable.” What is clear, however, is that these contexts are characterized by variations in linguistic practices and cultural behaviors.
- All varieties of English should be accepted in their own right. No varieties of English, be they native or non-native, should be viewed and approached from deficit perspectives. As English has become an international lingua franca, the ownership of English is shared among all users of English. There is also a shift from ownership to access in the sense that it is not about who owns English, but who has access to the linguistic and cultural resources associated with the English language.
- Underpinned by the theories of language contact and evolution, code-switching, code-mixing, code-meshing are a natural phenomenon of languages in contact, and bilingual and multilingual pragmatic resource.
- In language pedagogy, teaching a single monolithic variety shall not be the goal. Awareness of language variation and change, and learners having the agency to choose the variety(ies) of English suitable for their own needs, interests, and aspirations should be emphasized in ELF-driven English language lessons, curricula, and programs. Critical reflections on ELF-related concerns and assessment of their appropriateness to the teaching contexts and practices can be incorporated into a language teacher-education program to enlighten ELF-aware teachers.

## Changes Over Time

In understanding ELF and its advocated ontological and epistemological assumptions, it is crucial to understand the term “lingua franca” which is often used as the basis for conceptualizing, researching, and teaching ELF. The term is not a recent

innovation or a newly coined concept. Originally, *lingua franca* was employed to refer to an Italian-Provençal-lexified pidgin with elements of Arabic, French, Greek, Persian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish, which was used by early Crusaders and tradesmen as a trade language in the Levant, on the eastern Mediterranean coast, from the time of the Crusades until the 19th century. As a result of the difficulty the Arab Muslims in the area had in distinguishing among the different European nations, the Crusaders who were non-Muslims were referred to as the “Franks” who spoke “Frankish Tongue,” that is, “*lingua franca*.” In the 19th century, the above definition was no longer appropriate because the English language had spread widely across many geographic, social and cultural areas, and thus had had contact with many different world languages. Today, the term has also become elastic, leading to various conceptualizations of ELF. An explicit highlight of the differences in the definitions of *lingua franca* is important in order to avoid misrepresenting how ELF is conceptualized by the majority of ELF scholars.

On one hand, *lingua franca* is defined and understood as a common language or medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language. Based on this definition, ELF is defined as a contact language between people who do not share a common mother tongue or a national language, and who choose to use English as the foreign language of communication. According to this perspective, ELF communication does not involve NESs since English is not a “foreign” language to these speakers. In other words, ELF communication takes place between bilingual/multilingual and bicultural/multicultural users of English, for none of whom English is the dominant mother tongue. On the other hand, scholars who prefer to conceptualize *lingua franca* as any code used as a medium of communication between speakers of different first languages, view ELF as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages. Challenging the former perspective, this perspective of ELF advocates that ELF communication also involves NESs because English is also one of those different first languages, and that globalization has increased the frequency of transplanetary contacts between users of English from diverse lingual-cultural backgrounds. However, in ELF communication, NESs are likely to be the minority and will need to learn to understand the use of English that may be different from theirs. Thus, no one speaker or group of speakers is more superior and linguistically privileged than the other. It is this conceptualization of ELF, as opposed to the former, that is shared and advocated by most ELF researchers (Jenkins, Cogo, & Dewey, 2011).

To further understand how ELF is conceptualized by the majority of ELF scholars and researchers, there is also a need to raise the following questions that have sparked controversies in the field: (a) is ELF a single monolithic distinct variety of English spoken by expanding-circle users of English? and (b) is the ELF project promoting and advocating a single “core” variety of English? Critics claim that “Yes” is the answer after having observed ELF empirical studies that refer to ELF as a legitimate emerging variety of English, and that aim to “describe ELF varieties and identify systematic differences between these and NS [native speaker]

varieties" (Jenkins, 2004, p. 8) or "provide comprehensive and reliable descriptions of salient features of ELF... [which will be used as a] basis for an eventual codification" (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 215). The use of phrases in the discourse of the ELF movement such as "written ELF," "spoken ELF," "ELF speakers," "using English as a lingua franca," and a particular skill being constituted as "correctness in ELF" further confirms the view of ELF as a single monolithic variety of English spoken or collectively practiced by a group of speakers of English whose English is not their mother tongue. Not only has ELF been viewed as utopian and impractical, but several critics have also critiqued its promotion of an essentialist view of language and its potential in creating a binary opposition of a legitimate versus illegitimate variety of English especially in language teaching. Others have also argued that the features of a "core" variety of English or "lingua franca core" promoted by ELF scholars is based on English used by native-English speakers, making it not entirely free from native-speaker centeredness.

Echoing the dynamic nature of knowledge, ELF research directions, and hence the advocated ontological and epistemological assumptions, have shifted. Specifically, ELF has changed from "a system or structure-oriented approach to a more phenomenological or practice-oriented approach" (Ferguson, 2012, p. 177). The former, which is more characteristic of early ELF research and approach, conceptualizes ELF "as an emergent or potential variety, distinct certainly from L1 Standard English, which might eventually be codified once sufficient descriptive research had been carried out" (Ferguson, 2012, p. 177). Contesting the promotion of a reified view of language highlighted by the ELF critics, the recent ELF research and approach are based on the latter approach, which emphasizes the contingency, heterogeneity, variability, and flexibility in the way plurilingual individuals use English linguistic resources. Although many ELF research studies still continue to explore the linguistic features and practices of users of English from diverse linguacultural backgrounds in ELF communication, the aim or orientation is no longer to show distinctive characteristics of a particular variety of English used by a group or groups of speakers with an eventual aim of some kind of codification, but to investigate the processes underlying the choice of features used in ELF interactions. In other words, the interest is not in the "product" or *what* speakers of diverse linguacultural backgrounds do or say, but in the "process" or *how* they creatively draw on their communicative strategies and plurilingual repertoire in response to the immediate communicative needs. The details of the findings from the ELF empirical studies are discussed in the next section of this entry.

In addition, though the findings of the ELF empirical studies have been generated from research projects conducted in various geographical locations, ELF scholars argue that they should not be taken as having an association with English of those locations with a pedagogical implication that it should serve as *the* model for language teaching and learning. Rather, the findings should be read as presenting creative and innovative use of English and other languages (through code-mixing, code-switching, and code-meshing) in a communicative context that is multilingual and multicultural in nature. An important message that ELF researchers and scholars aim to convey is that even though the phonological, lexical,

syntactical, or discourse and pragmatic strategies found in ELF communicative settings may be different from those of the so-called NES varieties of English, they are not to be conceptualized and treated as inferior to NES varieties of English, interlanguage errors, or L1 interference, but as variants or differences. When certain groups of speakers overuse or underuse, avoid, or simplify certain structures or expressions, these are not necessarily indicative of having limited knowledge or resources at a particular stage of interlanguage. Rather, they need to be seen as communicative strategies.

In the context of teaching, ELF is no longer about promoting a single monolithic core variety of English used by expanding-circle users of English in an international context. Neither is it about rejecting the relevance of NES varieties of English. An ELF perspective of English language education advocates the importance of raising students' awareness of language variation and change, and giving students the right to choose varieties of English that are suitable and relevant to their own sociocultural contexts. In addition, English language education is not conceptualized as the exclusive teaching of the English language per se to the students, but as facilitating the learners to become effective bilingual or multilingual speakers or users of English plus their first language(s). In language teacher-education or ELF-aware teacher-education, student-teachers should be engaged in a critical reflection on their beliefs on ELF-related issues in the hope that they can ultimately transform their convictions on those issues. This can be done by exposing students to reading literature in ELF and critical pedagogy and allowing them to conduct action-research projects in which the appropriateness and relevance of ELF-related concerns to their teaching contexts and practices are critically reviewed.

### **Current Emphases in Work**

This section presents the current emphases and findings in ELF research. Research on ELF ranges from defining ELF, describing features of ELF (for example, lexicogrammar, syntax, discourse, and pragmatics) and patterns for ELF communication, to communication strategies, interactional pragmatics, and English language teaching. There has also been research on regional ELF studies such as ELF in European (EU) countries and Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN). For example, researchers on the ACE have traced the development of English in the ASEAN area and explored the implications of ELF and teaching the national languages of ASEAN states for multilingualism in the region.

The current literature on ELF studies shows the following research areas: (1) levels of ELF analysis, for example, lexicogrammar, phonology, and pragmatics in academic English, grammatical variability, syntax in ELF communication, and cultural conceptualizations; (2) the relationship between the functions and forms of ELF; (3) sources and nature of ELF (mis)communication; (4) ELF and language policy; (5) context-dependent cultural forms, practices, and frames of reference through ELF; (6) ELF for specific purposes; (7) the role of the native speaker in

ELF; (8) the relationship between ELF and Standard English or English language standards; (9) broad areas of corpus-based ELF research: theoretical, descriptive, pedagogical, ideological, and application; and (10) modified terms of ELF such as English as an acrolectal lingua franca, English as an academic lingua franca, lingua franca English (LFE), and translingua franca English.

A review of relevant selected current ELF research reveals its major findings and emphases. One of the interesting findings about ELF research is how researchers describe what ELF is. Apart from discussions on whether ELF is a variety of English and who constitute legitimate speakers of ELF, there is also a view that ELF should be regarded as the “zone” of the three Kachruvian circles overlapping, or “a fluid, everchanging fourth space” (Prodromou, 2010, p. xiv). As a fourth space of interacting circles, ELF is being developed by both native and non-native speakers, locally and internationally. ELF has been rigorously researched at different linguistic levels, for example, lexicogrammar, phonology, discourse, and pragmatics. It has proved especially prevalent in domains such as business English, academic English, and English for specific purposes.

In terms of ELF syntax, some researchers argue that it is unlikely that ELF possesses a homogeneous form of syntax. “At the informal level, ELF is a syntactically heterogeneous form of English which is characterized by: (1) overwhelming correspondence to the rules of L1 Englishes; (2) transfer phenomena, developmental patterns and nativized forms; and (3) simplification, regularization and leveling processes” (Meierkord, 2004, p. 128). In academic context, non-native-like usage of morphosyntactic structures may not result in overt disturbance in dialogic speech. Despite the fact that ELF may not have a homogeneous form of syntax, some researchers are still in search of a grammatical common core for contexts in which English is used as an international lingua franca, particularly in mainland Europe.

In terms of the form and function of ELF, there has been a contestation regarding which has received more emphasis in research. Some researchers argue that there has been more emphasis on the *form* of ELF than its *function*. Others respond by stating that ELF is “an umbrella term that encompasses all types of communication among bilingual users of English in the expanding circle, but allows for local realizations as well as extensive use of accommodation strategies and code switching” (Cogo, 2008, p. 58). To deal with the contestation between the form and function of ELF, some scholars, for example Suresh Canagarajah and Alastair Pennycook, have explored and proposed different concepts, which are lingua franca English (LFE) and translingua franca English. The distinction between ELF and LFE is in their way of conceptualizing language. LFE views language as a living dynamic, moving, and unpredictable organism as opposed to a static and tightly knit system. Hence, ELF tends to be perceived as a preexisting variety of English while LFE does not exist as an established language system, but it emerges when individual speakers of English interact with one another. There is not much meaning attached to a form unless the form serves a particular function in an actual language practice.

Research has also been conducted regarding the sources and nature of misunderstanding in intercultural communication in ELF. Misunderstandings in

ELF communication are rarely attributed to differences in the ELF interlocutors' cultural backgrounds. Instead, the major sources of many of the misunderstandings in ELF communication can be traced to ambiguity in the interlocutors' utterances, mishearing, and lack of world knowledge, which are also sources of misunderstandings in intracultural communicative exchanges. To deal with misunderstandings in ELF communication, ELF users of English employ a range of pragmatic strategies. Based on an analysis of phone conversations between Danish export managers and their clients, Alan Firth has observed how ELF users of English work together to ensure mutual understanding despite the presence of nonstandard usage of English as well as unintelligible utterances. In particular, they employ a "let-it-pass" strategy where nonstandard usage and unintelligible utterances are unquestioned; and a "make-it-normal" strategy, when nonstandard usage is considered to be normal and is reformulated if it severely impedes comprehension of messages.

The majority of ELF research is empirical and corpus-based. There are primarily three types of research involving an ELF corpus: descriptive, application, and theoretical. To make sense of how ELF works and operates in different contexts usually requires a good database of naturally occurring data, or ELF corpora. Apart from the corpora mentioned at the beginning of this entry, that is VOICE, ELFA, and ACE, there are also other corpora compiled by researchers for specific research purposes such as the million-word corpus of examples of formal, written acrolectal English used by foreign workers in the UAE (Boyle, 2011). The results from this corpus study suggest that the patterns of use of nonfinite complement clauses and of transitive and intransitive verbs, in particular, are beginning to change and that the changes are systematic. In addition, there is also another empirical corpus-based investigation of how ELF speakers use the marker *you know* in interaction. This study puts forward the strong hypothesis that ELF use of *you know* is critically different from the way in which NS use it in that ELF speakers use *you know* predominantly as a self-serving strategy for purposes of creating coherence and "fumbling for words" in order to gain time for getting their message across (Juliane, 2009, p. 171).

In terms of ELF and language policy, there has been rigorous research in recent years in Europe and a wider global academic community. English has been used in the European Union over the past decades as the de facto lingua franca. Therefore researchers argue that governments and language policy makers should acknowledge the usefulness of English in its role in the European Union (EU), and that instead of ignoring what is happening in practice, they should build English into EU language policy (Cogo & Jenkins, 2010). In addition, with international universities turning to English on their websites, English has also been regarded as the lingua franca of the global academy in relation to English language policies and practices in these universities (Jenkins, 2014). Research in this area is ongoing; for example, a collaborative project involving ten countries investigating linguistic diversity and ELF communication on international university campuses has been carried out. The preliminary findings from the project reveal that those international universities lack critical thinking about the language of the universities' staff members and students. The so-called native-English speaking academic staff



members and those at the management level show minimal awareness of the difficulties that non-native English speaking students may have operating in their second or third language. Attitudes, beliefs, and practices that may be interpreted as parochial and ethnocentric are also evident. Thus, more in-depth investigations will need to be conducted, and the implications for language policies and practices will be shared at annual ELF conferences.

In terms of ELF use in the academic context, current research has suggested that cultural forms, practices, and frames of reference through ELF in an academic context may be viewed not as a priori defined categories, but as adaptive and emergent resources which are negotiated and context-dependent. Therefore, ELF needs to move beyond the traditionally conceived target language–target culture relationship to incorporate an awareness of dynamic hybrid cultures and academic skills to successfully negotiate among participants within the international academic community.

As far as implications for ELT are concerned, relevant ELF research has addressed issues regarding the nexus between ELF and TESOL vis-à-vis English language standards and Standard English. The notions of competence and proficiency have been critically revisited and revised. The goals of teaching English have also been redirected towards developing knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are appropriate for learners' communicative, sociocultural, and sociolinguistic contexts. A competent multilingual user of English, rather than the so-called native-English speaker, has been suggested as the role model for English language learners. It is the social responsibility of English language educators to use the aforementioned suggestions to inform their English language learning materials or classroom teaching. To help them do that, English language teacher-education programs will need to incorporate research findings from ELF projects as well as arguments put forward in ELF that can help raise student-teachers' awareness of the recent changes to the use of English and its implications for teaching and learning. For example, based on a research study on lexical variation among World Englishes users for ELF communication, English teachers and students in various classroom and cultural contexts need to be aware that (1) common English words may not share identical meanings among World Englishes speakers; (2) meanings of English words change and vary in accordance with ELF contexts; (3) World Englishes speakers co-construct and negotiate meanings in ELF communication; and (4) there is a high degree of fluidity and dynamism in the meaning-making process, particularly involving connotative meanings of lexical items used by World Englishes speakers for ELF communication (Xu & Dinh, 2013). In fact, many accredited language teaching awards have already made explicit reference to ELF, Global Englishes, or both. Several research projects that interview English language teachers who have been engaged in discussing ELF perspectives in their teacher-education course have revealed their acknowledgment of the dynamic and ever-changing nature of the English language, and their critical views of the native-speaker orientation to teaching English. Some teachers have expressed how the ELF-oriented classroom discussions have boosted their self-esteem and confidence as English language users and therefore, teachers. Some have shown great enthusiasm in putting the theoretical aspects of ELF into practice by proposing to

develop language teaching materials and pedagogical strategies that aim to raise their students' awareness of the pluralization of English. However, there are those who still hold onto or prefer to believe in a native-speaker oriented view of English language use, learning, and teaching.

A new dimension of ELF research has emerged, and it is about how ELF is employed in virtual networks where English works as a lingua franca. Studies on this topic have shown how ELF bloggers deploy an array of resources to their expressive and interactional aims, combining global and local communicative practices.

ELF has generated a wide range of research. However, there has been a prediction that English is going to be the last lingua franca, that no triumph of any languages or lingua francas is permanent, and that all languages rise and fall (Ostler, 2010). It is no exception that English, like all previous lingua francas including Arabic, Greek, Latin, Persian, and Sanskrit, will cease to function as a lingua franca. It can be argued that in the future as in the past, linguacultural landscapes will change in line with political, economic, and sociocultural realities. In the next section of the entry, we explore the future directions for ELF research.

### **Future Directions in Research, Theory, and Methodology**

Although ELF has made significant epistemological contributions to applied linguistics and ELT, there are a number of gaps that still need further exploration and clarification.

First, the data from the ELF projects and their implications are mostly based on spoken interactions. Data from written interactions are still relatively insufficient to the extent that convincing implications can be drawn. Despite several ELF works on writing in an ELF context and its pedagogical implications, as well as the corpus of written English as a lingua franca in academic settings (WrELFA) that is currently being assembled at the University of Helsinki, there is still a major gap in ELF research that needs further investigation. It is likely to be an important investigation with significant practical implications because the pluralistic conceptualization of English and of writing in English still has not yet been welcomed by tertiary educators, language practitioners, and academic "literacy brokers" such as proof-readers or publishing editors who, driven by the native-speakerist ideologies, still insist on conformity to conventional expectations of academic writing as well as NES varieties of English.

Second, critics of ELF projects have raised concerns about the representation of the speakers of English from diverse linguacultural backgrounds whose spoken or written communicative strategies are used as the source of data for ELF projects and therefore the premise on which they formulate their claims. They have questioned whether these selected speakers of English are in any way representative of the actual population of speakers of English and the situations in which they actually use English on a global scale is unsure. Specifically, the data for VOICE and ELFA corpora are predominantly based on the usage of "a narrow range of bilingual elites in globally rarefied international business, education, research, and

leisure domains” (O’Regan, 2014, p. 8). In other words, the communicative strategies as well as the linguistic and cultural practices documented in those corpora are likely to be strategies and practices of the bilingual cosmopolitan elite users of English who have luxurious access to social, linguistic, cultural, and economic capital. Those who do not possess high quotients of economic capital do not have the opportunity to have their linguistic or cultural practices and strategies included and represented in the corpora. Therefore, the ELF movement has overlooked “the responsibility of capitalism—particularly in the guise of neoliberalism—for generating global and national class stratifications and, as an ineluctable part of this, the social prejudices attached to the forms of English which circulate within them” (O’Regan, 2014, p. 8). The question that may need to be further addressed by scholars in this area of inquiry is whether or not the ELF movement, like the advocated ideology, truly puts everyone on an equal footing.

Third, although the findings from ELF empirical studies in the previous section have convincingly illustrated how much English has changed, little has changed in practice—specifically in teaching, publishing, and testing—so far, which therefore demands further research. Since variation and fluidity have been emphasized as the key characteristics of ELF, more research is still needed to explore how these characteristics can be incorporated into teaching in ways that can be accessed and digested by learners. In order to do so, voices of both learners and teachers need to be made more audible when incorporating English language variation into ELT. Even though there have been English language teacher-education programs that have made explicit reference to ELF, many English language educators or student-teachers have expressed their uncertainty about or skepticism towards the idea of incorporating an ELF perspective into their own classrooms. Although they appreciate the liberating ideology promoted by the ELF movement, they still struggle to see how it can be implemented in classroom teaching. Specifically, they experience difficulties in finding effective and nonconfrontational ways to challenge deeply rooted, well-entrenched, and institutionally recognized views and beliefs about language(s), standardness, a language role model, language norms, and language pedagogy. This experience has prompted some language educators and student-teachers to express their preference for using the native-speaker model of language teaching as there is already something “fixed” to which they can refer in their lesson development and delivery. In light of this, there need to be further collaborative projects between ELF academics, teacher-educators, and language teachers on the reexamination of the ontology of English promoted in the current pedagogical strategies and curricular materials; and how these can be strategically modified in order to reflect the local sociolinguistic landscape of English and the changing nature of English. In order for this to happen, it is no longer sufficient to simply raise English language teachers’ awareness of the changing sociolinguistic reality of English. There is an urgent need for developing an ELF-aware teacher-education program that offers student-teachers opportunities to critically *reflect on and discuss* the existing beliefs, myths, or deeply rooted assumptions about language using, language learning, and language teaching; to *experience and*

*apply* theoretical knowledge of teaching the plurality of Englishes in a real classroom setting; and to *evaluate* how such knowledge can be implemented in their own teaching context, classroom, or both (Marlina, 2017).

To develop an ELF-aware program or a curriculum, the availability of teaching materials or resources for engaging student-teachers in changing their beliefs as well as their teaching practices is crucial. In this case, support from the literacy brokers is needed. However, though publishers have been relatively keen to publish books that discuss developments in ELF at the theoretical level, they still seem to be relatively reluctant to publish works that would enable language educators to put theory into practice. Thus, there needs to be more empirical evidence that addresses this issue, and demonstrates whether academic publications in a range of disciplines are moving towards a similar position on ELF. Even if there are already publications that incorporate research findings from the ELF research studies, further research on those published materials still needs to be carried out especially on how English language variation, multilingualism, and users of English from outer-circle and expanding-circle countries are portrayed and constructed. Currently, differences in using English can be treated as “deficiencies” as opposed to a natural outcome of languages and cultures in contact. Multilingualism may not always be welcomed, and users of English from outer-circle and expanding-circle countries are portrayed as learners rather than legitimate users of English.

Another major gap in “practice” that has not yet been sufficiently researched is the adoption of an ELF perspective in language testing. Although there has already been a proposal for ways to use ELF research findings to inform language assessment, still little is known about whether the global examination boards, such as TOEIC, TOEFL, Cambridge ESOL, and IELTS, are taking account of ELF, are willing to engage in conversations with ELF researchers about incorporating ELF research studies into their testing materials, or are even willing to revise their materials, grading systems, and assessment criteria. The notions of correctness, appropriateness, proficiency, and competence promoted by international English language tests such as IELTS and TOEFL are still predominantly informed by the ideology of native-speakerism. The test-takers’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as their communicative and expressive needs in the current, prospective, or potential communicative settings are largely ignored. Thus, further research in language assessment needs to take into account the global sociolinguistic reality of English and devise approaches to test receptive and productive skills that are relevant to that reality and to the test takers’ sociolinguistic and sociocultural realities.

**SEE ALSO:** Future of English; Glocalization of English; World Englishes

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