The ELF program

**ELF**: “a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication” (Firth 1996).

**ELF** is not monolithic and monocentric. Nor does it lack standards (Jenkins 2009: 202).

**ELF**: English learned for intercultural communication (with or without ICE speakers present).

**EFL (English as a Foreign Language)**: English learned specifically for communication with English native speakers (203).
The ELF program

ELF covers all three circles: Inner, Outer, and Extended

Altho’ neglected in research, the Extended Circle refers to the most widely used type of English.

ELF is an extension of World English (WE = OCE)

Seidlhofer talks about vigorously emerging regional and global discourse communities (2009: 238).

She notes “the possible emergence of ELF innovations ... as expressions of identities and evidence of the sense of ownership of the language.” (240).
Forms and function in ELF

Seidlhofer moves from “identification of particular linguist features” to ask about functions, pragmatic and creative processes, but repeats “form and function can be clearly seen as operating interdependently”; and she mentions

• communication accommodation theory;
• talks about resolving instances of miscommunication,
• establishing rapport,
• employing communicative strategies such as
• repetition,
• silences,
• considerate and mutually supportive communicative behavior. (Seidlhofer 2009: 241)
Forms and function in ELF

ELF-users signal cultural identity
• by code-switching,
• by creating their own on-line idioms, and
• their own inter-culture (Seidlhofer 2009: 241).

ELF can involve “code-switching, repetition, echoing of items that would be considered errors in ENL, the avoidance of local idiomatic language, and paraphrasing”

This is all fine; and, in fact, it is what people – anywhere, in any circle – do when they want to communicate.
Seidlhofer allows (would teach ?) the following:

1. *She look very sad.*
2. *a book who I like*
3. *[omission of articles]*
4. *They should arrive soon, isn’t it?*
5. *How long time?*
6. *advices, informations*
7. *I want that we discuss about my dissertation.*

(Prodromou 2007: 49)

“... we need to clear up the confusion arising from identifying ‘SE’ exclusively with the ‘native-speaker’. The conflating of ‘native-speaker’ with ‘Standard English’ conceals the fact that Standard English, barring certain items of vocabulary and idiomaticity, has been in use for a long time in indigenized varieties.” (50)
As Jenkins writes:

“At present there is insufficient evidence for researchers to be able to predict the extent of the common ELF ground.” (Jenkins 2009: 201)

Difference is not deficiency.

ENL errors “may instead be a legitimate ELF variant.”

“At present it is still to some extent an empirical question as to which items are ELF variants and which ELF errors, and depends on factors such as systematicity, frequency, and communicative effectiveness” (202).
“By ‘SE grammatical core’ I refer to the lexico-grammatical system *minus* native-speaker accents, lexical items that are distinctive in various ways (such as according to region or profession), and most especially, idioms, which are culturally elusive and opaque.” (Prodromou: 50)

In contrast he questions legitimizing “errors” or teaching oversimplified grammar, as Jenkins and Seidlhofer would have it. This is to ignore the realities of the world outside the classroom (Prodromou 2007: 48).

ELF cannot be compared to territorially based Englishes – ICE and OCE (49).
“Thus, it is a mistake to equate the whole of Standard English with ‘native-speaker norms’, just as it would be a mistake to impose highly native-centric idioms and pronunciation) on the diverse community of ELF users.” (Prodomou: 51)

“If students perceive their teacher as having an inadequate command of a prestigious form of the language, it will be all the more difficult for the L2-user teacher to provide a viable alternative to the hegemony of the ‘native-speaker’. It is, therefore, hard to imagine a teacher of L2-users who is not reasonably competent in Standard English grammar but may be less comfortable in the obscure cultural terrain of idioms.” (52)
ELF appeared to be seminal, empirical, devoid of ideology with clear proposals for teaching, where “it is not necessary to spend time and energy in teaching and learning all aspects of phonology in an attempt to emulate native speakers”; instead: core features (Saraceni 2008: 21).

The ELF reasoning ran:
• most users use English because of its convenience and as a practical tool; this is different from ENL
• ergo: ENL is not a valid model
• little has changed in English teaching
• a new model is needed (21)
• its basis should be “empirical description of the ways in which successful non-native speakers of English actually use this language as a lingua franca” (22)
The Epistemology of English as a Lingua Franca

WE and ELF are not antagonistic but two aspects of the same phenomenon, “namely the existence of varieties and uses of English outside and beyond ENL that need to be granted full recognition.” (Saraceni 2008: 23)

Problem: does ELF refer to a function or to a code (i.e. a variety, or set of varieties)? (24).

Overall: too much emphasis on the form of ELF and not enough on its function (26).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IE</th>
<th>WE (+ OCE)</th>
<th>ELF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View of global spread of English</td>
<td>colonial-celebratory; modernization; laissez-faire liberal</td>
<td>ling. hybridity; post-colonial performativity</td>
<td>Modern-day connectivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implications for culture and dev.</td>
<td>inherently utilitarian; crucial for modernization; functional for pragmatic purposes</td>
<td>languages and cultures change and adapt; cultural politics of change, language, knowledge, and difference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedagogical implications</td>
<td>teach to those who appreciate it; teach to modernize; give people what they want</td>
<td>communication in ECE; no linguaculturae from ICE</td>
<td>independent development: pluricentric Englishes can be taught with the ELF core</td>
</tr>
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(table conflated from tables in Pakir: 226f)
IE paradigm:
• focus on language proficiency
• reducing learner deficiencies (e.g. accent reduction)

WE paradigm:
• phonological, syntactic, lexical codification of New Englishes;
• attention given to supra-features as in discourse analysis, genre analysis, pragmatic studies;
• recognition of sociolinguistic realities;
• ideological underpinnings of learning English; and
• cultural dimensions of use.
**ELF paradigm** seems to share with **WE** emphasis on
• pluricentricity,
• variety recognition,
• accepting lg changes,
• adaptation to new environments,
• highlighting discourse strategies of bilinguals (Pakir: 228).

The difference lies in the non-recognition by ELF of OCE- and ICE-users. ELF has no interest in nativization or identity-marking processes nor in new creative lit and new canons (229).

More recently ELF has emphasized the local in ELF (230).

**IE**: oriented toward a standard language ideology
**WE**: toward sociolinguistic realities
**ELF**: toward connectivity without the linguacultural material (230)
ELF: The Phonology of English as an International Language

- description and analysis
  - use of data from lingua franca contexts
- mutual intelligibility and acceptability
  - recommendation and prescription of goals in pronunciation teaching (2)
- nuclear L2 norms
- peripheral features: unconstrained use of local phonological norms
Lingua Franca Common Core

Motivation:
realistic learning and teaching goals (learnability and teachability)

Criteria:
• intelligibility in international contexts
• intellectual and socio-psychological needs
• distinguishing between productive and receptive phonology
• support from clear-cut generative rules
• not teaching what is too complex for the classroom (Jenkins 2000: 2), i.e. teaching not what is convenient to teach but what may be learned effectively (Seidlhofer/Dalton: 145)
• use by native speakers
• ease of articulation (Jenkins 2000: 138)
The Phonological Core: Consonants

1. No need to teach /θ/ and /ð/
   /f/ and /v/
   /t/ and /d/, esp. [tʃ] and [dʒ]
   /s/ and /z/ (Jenkins: 137f)

2. Not [Ɂ]
   [l] or [Ʌ] (138f)

3. Rhoticity: [ɹ] (139)

4. <t> as uniformly /t/: matter ≠ madder (140)

5. /p, t, k/ = [pʰ, tʰ, kʰ]: “Without the help of this puff of air, a listener will find it more difficult to identify the sound as voiceless.” (140)
6. Phonetic length distinctions: “shorten any vowel before a final fortis consonant and maintain the length before a final lenis consonant”: This is “simple and thus learnable in the classroom” (141)

7. Consonant clusters: “English syllable simplification is highly rule-found, and ... breaking the rules, particularly in the case of consonant deletion, is likely to be serious for intelligibility.” (141)
Of the two methods, “deletion and addition, the latter (comprising epenthesis and schwa paragoge) is less likely to compromise intelligibility since the underlying form is more easily recoverable.” (142)
Epentheses: examples of problems due to L1 influence

[ˈsɪtrəʊk] stroke

[ˈkaːtɛpɛtɛ] cartheft (Korean speaker)

Deletion: examples

[ˈpœɾpədʌktoʊ] product (Japanese speaker)

[ˈpɾədʌk] (Taiwanese speaker)

In the latter case the elided /t/ is acceptable because common in [ENL]. (Jenkins: 142)

Jenkins does not mention native speakers, but refers only to the “RP and GA” sounds (143 et passim).
“... pronunciation pedagogy should prioritize what is important for EIL intelligibility: that addition is preferable to deletion; that sounds in initial clusters should never be deleted; that where elision occurs in a final cluster, it is preferable to opt for a /t/ or /d/ where this is possible.” But the latter not before words beginning with a vowel, e.g. *strict order* (143).

“Following its general principle of not introducing unnecessary complications and keeping sounds as close as possible to orthography, the LFC does not include this GA elision [/-nt/ + unstressed syllable -> /-n/], and GA speakers would themselves be expected to produce an unelided ‘-nt-’ cluster in EIL contexts” (ibid.)
Vowels

Monophthongs:
Generally they are unteachable because there is no model for them. The central principle is to maintain length distinctions as in ENL and to be consistent in vowel quality – even if different from RP or GA (144f). Only one rule involving vowel quality: /ɔː:/ instead of /ɑː:/, which is frequently used to replace it (146).

Diphthongs:
only three instead of eight (RP) are necessary /aʊ, aɪ, ɔɪ/ but not /eʊ, ɪə, uə/, which become /er, ɪr, ur/ and not /ʊə or əʊ/ and /eɪ/, which vary considerably among ENL speakers and may be monophthongal.

“The LFC … eschews considerations of diphthong quality, with the proviso that whatever quality is used, the length must be that of a diphthong or long vowel, and variant must be used consistently.” (145)
Weak forms

“... despite the fact that it is easy to formulate clear rules for weak form use they are unteachable. ... weak forms may actually hinder intelligibility in EIL” (147)

Hence don’t teach them; learners can still acquire them outside of the classroom.
Suggestion: shortened the weakened vowels but keep their quality (147f).

Other features of connected speech, such as elision, assimilation, catenation, linking /r/, intrusive /j/, /w/, and (in RP) /r/.

“As with weak forms ... the features of connected speech are not included in the LFC, though, like weak forms, they will need to be taught for receptive purposes” (149).
Rhythm
“Stress-timing ... is not a feature of the LFC although ... the lengthening of stressed (nuclear) syllables seems to be crucial to intelligible English pronunciation” (150).

Word stress
“This is something of a grey area. ... word stress rules are so complex as to be unteachable ... . On the other hand, misplaced word stress has a corresponding effect on the placement of nuclear stress and, as such, cannot be dismissed lightly. ... The full-scale teaching or word stress is not feasible and ... not crucial to the intelligibility of individual words in ILT” (150f).

But some rules are mentioned:
• initial stress on (most) two-syllable nouns and final on most two-syllable verbs
• note stress-bearing suffixes like {-ese} (Chinese) and {-ee}
• stress on the preceding syllable with {-ic}, {ion}, etc. (151).
**Intonation**

- pitch movement: lack of relevance ("very subjective ... and thus impossible to generalize"); whether "grammatical" or "discourse intonation": no need to teach it (152f).
- nuclear stress: unmarked vs. contrastive, the latter important for highlighting: "...stress production and placement require overt classroom teaching of rules" (154)
- division of speech into word groups: important for nuclear stress placement, for planning speech production, and for ease of reception, esp. for L2 speakers: no recommendations about teaching
Articulatory settings:
• apical-alveolar articulations
• lax consonant articulation
• more front-center vowel articulation
• little lip movement (rounding, spreading)
• low degree of muscular effort

“Problems in all these articulatory areas have the potential to lead to pronunciation errors at both segmental and suprasegmental levels, and thus to affect intelligibility” (157).

Voice quality:
• may affect intelligibility
• less intelligible: “raspy, husky, hoarse, throaty, breathy, muffled, muted, falsetto, soft, and/or low” vs. clear and sharp (Leventhal 1980: 20).

Jenkins emphasizes that many L2 speakers wish to keep at least some L1 accent so as to mark their identity or nationality.
Outside the points outlined above “… L2 variation should be regarded as regional accent variation akin to L1 regional variation” (159).

The principles:
intelligibility
teachability and learnability

English is different: “Most people quite simply do not learn English to speak to native-speakers. On the other hand, people learn Spanish … because they are interested in Hispanic culture for some reason (work or pleasure) and will therefore want a spoken and written model which will further this aim. There is a world of difference between English and, in fact, all other living languages at present” (Prodromou 1997: 19).
Sources


Sources, cont’d.


