

10. RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

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This chapter shows just how deeply affected English has already been through its unprecedented spread, and the unique function it has as *the* world language. It argues, however, that it would be premature to launch into a discussion of the teaching of this lingua franca before certain prerequisites have been met. The most important of these are a conceptualization of speakers of lingua franca English as language users in their own right, and the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of, and indeed the need for, a description of salient features of English as a lingua franca (ELF), alongside English as a native language (ENL). The presentation summarizes the empirical research into the lingua franca use of English, which has recently gathered considerable momentum. It sets this research in relation to other relevant work in descriptive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics for language pedagogy. Finally, it discusses the implications of this historically unique situation for potential developments in the pedagogy of English teaching and outlines some research questions that must be addressed if advances in the teaching of English as a lingua franca are to have a secure theoretical and descriptive base.

In the early 21st century, English in the world is in a state of delicate balance, or what physicists call “unstable equilibrium:” while the majority of the world’s English users are now to be found in countries where it is a foreign language, control over the norms of the language still rests with speakers for whom it is the first language. Beneke (1991) estimates that about 80 percent of verbal exchanges in which English is used as a second or foreign language do not involve any native speakers of English (also see Gnutzmann, 2000); thus Graddol concludes that “Native speakers may feel the language ‘belongs’ to them, but it will be those who speak English as a second or foreign language who will determine its world future” (1997, p. 10). This is, therefore, an interesting time for considering the increasing use of English in what Kachru (1992) has termed the Expanding Circle,¹ and to reflect on the consequences that the global spread of English is likely to have on the conceptualization, development, and teaching of English.

Defining Terms

English as an International Language

Wherever English is referred to as the preferred option for communication among people from different first language backgrounds, the denomination *English* tends to get modified by the addition “as a(n) x”: “English as an international language” (EIL) (e.g., Jenkins, 2000; McKay, 2002), “English as a lingua franca” (ELF) (e.g., Gnutzmann, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001), “English as a global language” (e.g., Crystal, 1997; Gnutzmann, 1999a), “English as a world language” (e.g., Mair, 2003), “English as a medium of intercultural communication” (e.g., Meierkord, 1996). The term *International English* is sometimes used as a shorthand for EIL, but is misleading in that it suggests that there is one clearly distinguishable, codified, and unitary variety called *International English*, which is certainly not the case.

In fact, the term ‘International English’ is sometimes employed for the English used in territories where it is a majority first language or an official additional language, as in Todd and Hancock (1986) and Trudgill and Hannah (2002). The same approach is also taken by the International Corpus of English, or ICE; see, for example, Greenbaum’s explanation “Excluded from ICE is the English used in countries where it is not a medium for communication between natives of the country” (1996, p.4). This definition of International English, limiting itself as it does to contexts with an *institutionalized intranational* role for English, (i.e., Kachru’s Inner and Outer Circles) is thus not only different but actually in complementary distribution with the lingua franca perspective of the Expanding Circle, which is the focus of this paper.

It is important to note that the term *International English* is thus used in reference to two quite different linguacultural situations: on the one hand, there are Kachru’s Outer Circle countries, where English can be said to be localized to meet domestic, intranational purposes. On the other hand, there is English as a globalized means for international communication, which, of course, transcends all national boundaries. The difference between localized and globalized forms of EIL naturally cuts across the Outer/Expanding Circle distinction, since communities that use English intranationally in the Outer Circle also participate in the global uses of English as do, of course, Inner Circle speakers. English has expanded in its use across all of the regions that Kachru has so clearly distinguished.

Whatever terms are chosen, then, it is obvious that the uses of English internationally are not only to be associated with the Expanding Circle but also include speakers of English as a native language in all its dialects (i.e., Kachru’s Inner Circle), as well as speakers of New Englishes, or indigenized/nativized varieties (i.e., Kachru’s Outer Circle). All these contribute to the phenomenon captured by the term *World Englishes* (for comprehensive overviews of which, see Jenkins, 1998, 2002, 2003; McArthur, 1998; and Melchers & Shaw, 2003).

English as a Lingua Franca

The term *lingua franca* is usually taken to mean “any lingual medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language” (Samarin, 1987, p. 371). In this definition, then, a lingua franca has no native speakers, and this notion is carried over into definitions of English as a lingua franca (henceforth ELF), as in the following two examples:

[ELF is] 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, p. 240).

ELF interactions are defined as interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue (House, 1999, p. 74).

While these definitions could be said to capture ELF in its purest form, it has to be remembered that ELF interactions often also include interlocutors from the Inner and Outer Circles, and can indeed take place in these contexts, such as at academic conferences in Madras or meetings of the United Nations in New York. Whatever the setting, ELF interactions often occur in influential networks, (i.e., global business, politics, science, technology and media discourse), “[so] it seems vital to pay more attention to the nature of ELF interactions, and ask whether and how they are different from both interactions between native speakers, and interactions between native speakers and nonnative speakers. An answer to this question would bring us closer to finding out whether and in what ways ELF interactions are actually *sui generis*” (House, 1999, p. 74).

What House identifies here is crucial for appreciating the current unprecedented linguistic situation. For the first time in history, a language has reached truly global dimensions, and as a consequence, is being shaped, in its international uses, at least as much by its nonnative speakers as its native speakers. This process has been accelerated by the dramatic expansion of electronic communication through the Internet, which has so far enhanced the social prestige attributed to typical global users of English—global players, indeed—although there are already signs that English may not always enjoy the status of the primary Internet language. For the moment, however, the situation seems to be as Brumfit describes it:

The members of the expanding circle who do use English are an increasingly significant group who operate in an increasingly global economy which has an impact on the economy in all countries . . . [and] the Internet, mobile phones and other technology increasingly establish the potential for use of English which is quite independent of the controls offered by traditional educational systems, publishing outlets and radio/television (Brumfit, 2002, p. 5).

Another factor accelerating language change is that the overall changes in the environments in which English is used mean that the language is used more and more for practical purposes by people with very varied norms and scopes of proficiency. Many interactions in English are between participants who do not control standard grammar and whose lexis and pronunciation do not conform to any recognized norm. We could describe this as a process of internationalisation and destandardization. Nonstandard, unedited English is becoming more and more visible (Melchers & Shaw, 2003, p. 195).

In short, then, ELF has taken on a life of its own, independent to a considerable degree of the norms established by its native users, and that warrants recognition. It is for this reason that ELF would appear to be the preferred term for this phenomenon—not because most lingua franca definitions restrict it to communication among nonnative users as such, but because it best signals that it is those nonnative users that provide the strongest momentum for the development of the language in its global uses as “agents of language change” (Brutt-Griffler, 1998, p. 387).

Conceptualizing ELF

The global spread of English, its causes, and its consequences have long been a focus of critical discussion, but this discussion has not on the whole linked up with a consideration of what has been, and is, happening to the forms of the language as such. In other words, the realization of the global role of English has not so far led to any radical reconceptualization of this English. Instead, what we see is what has been referred to as a “conceptual gap” (Seidlhofer, 2001) in the place where ELF should, by now, be firmly established in people’s minds, alongside the notions of English as a native language (ENL).

One main reason for this state of affairs is perhaps that the notion of a language is so closely and automatically tied up with its native speakers that it is very difficult to open up conceptual space for ELF. The problematic and crucial role of the nativeness criterion is also reflected in Outer Circle Englishes. The terms generally employed to refer to Indian English or Nigerian English are nativized or indigenized varieties, although they are also called *nonnative* varieties, even by Kachru himself. What this nomenclature would seem to indicate is just how deeply ingrained the notion of nativeness is in any considerations of language theorizing, description, and therefore teaching, and hence how urgent, and how difficult, it is to shed the conceptual straightjacket of English as a native language when tackling the task of working out appropriate frameworks for ELF (see Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2002b; Seidlhofer & Jenkins, 2003, for discussions of the relationship of Outer and Expanding Circle theorizing and description). As a prominent Outer Circle scholar puts it,

in spite of the consensus on the viability of non-native Englishes, there are issues that still remain unsettled. These include the status of innovations in the nativization process, the continued use of

native norms as a point of reference, the ambivalence between recognition and acceptance of non-native norms, the adequacy of pedagogical models, and the overriding need for codification. Underlying these issues is the constant pull between native and non-native English norms. Innovations in non-native Englishes are often judged not for what they are or their function within the varieties in which they occur, but rather according to how they stand in relation to the norms of native Englishes (Bamgbose, 1998, p. 1).

Bamgbose is talking about the Outer Circle here, but the same point applies to ELF more generally. Due to the conceptual gap noted above, then, there is virtually no awareness that English as a lingua franca might be what House (1999) calls *sui generis*, a linguistic phenomenon in its own right. Instead, rather than a difference perspective with an acknowledgement of plurality, a tenacious deficit view of ELF in which variation is perceived as deviation from ENL norms and described in terms of errors or fossilization is still pervasive. This view has, of course, been successfully questioned for the Outer Circle, but hardly any recognition has so far been given to the fact that many of the same processes are taking place in the Expanding Circle, which is therefore still expected to conform to the Inner Circle.

The nonrecognition of ELF may also explain why, despite certain dissenting voices (e.g., Cook, 1999; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Kasper, 1998; Sridhar & Sridhar, 1986) virtually all SLA research operates with a native-speaker model and tends to construct nonnative speakers as defective communicators. It is also one reason why learner corpus research (see e.g., Granger, 1998) has so far been geared towards highlighting the difficulties specific L1 groups have with *native* English to make it easier for those learners to conform to ENL, and why dictionaries and grammars based on the large native-speaker corpora can lay claim to a monopoly of “real English.”

The current situation is thus characterized by an inverse relationship between perceived significance and relevance of English in the world at large and linguistic description focusing on the core native-speaker countries—one embracing pluralism, the other ignoring it. It may well be, however, that the balance of power in this unstable equilibrium is about to change. An important factor in this will be the availability of descriptions of ELF.

A quarter of a century after the groundbreaking work on Outer Circle English entered the mainstream, the same kind of conceptual appraisal is now occurring for Expanding Circle English. An important contribution in this respect comes from Brutt-Griffler’s *World English* (2002). Although there have certainly been discussions of the status and role of EIL from a sociopolitical perspective (notably Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992), Brutt-Griffler’s account provides a more detailed theoretical framework for the global spread of English, with more explanatory power than has hitherto been available. Brutt-Griffler identifies four central features of the development of global language:

1. Econocultural functions of the language (i.e., World English is the product of the development of a world market and global developments in the fields of science, technology, culture, and the media.)
2. The transcendence of the role of an elite lingua franca; (i.e., World English is learned by people at various levels of society, not just by the socioeconomic elite.)
3. The stabilization of bilingualism through the coexistence of world language with other languages in bilingual/multilingual contexts; (i.e., World English tends to establish itself alongside local languages rather than replacing them, and so contributes to multilingualism rather than jeopardizes it) and
4. Language change via the processes of world language convergence and world language divergence (i.e., World English spreads due to the fact that many people learn it rather than by speakers of English migrating to other areas; thus two processes happen concurrently: new varieties are created and unity in the world language is maintained.)

It is beyond the scope of the present chapter to elaborate on the significant ways in which Brutt-Griffler's perspective challenges accounts of "linguistic imperialism" and "linguistic genocide." In a nutshell, she demonstrates that English owes its global spread as much to the struggle *against* imperialism as to imperialism itself (2002, Ch. 4). The point to be emphasized in the present context, however, is that in Brutt-Griffler's account, bi- or multilingualism is an intrinsic design feature of World English. She provides a carefully researched and well-argued basis for acknowledging the active role of ELF users as *agents* in the spread and development of English: they are not just at the receiving end, but contribute to the shaping of the language and the functions it fulfils and so, as speech communities, take possession of the language. Clearly, this is a perspective with very considerable implications for the conceptualization of English as a lingua franca.

A reconceptualization of ELF, then, would appear to illuminate the following factors:

- Questioning of the deference to hegemonic native-speaker norms in all contexts
- Emphasizing the legitimacy of variation in different communities of use
- Highlighting the need to pursue the attitudinal and linguistic implications of the global spread of English
- Acknowledging the need for description and codification

Describing ELF

But it is clearly not enough simply to recognize the need for a reconceptualization and change of attitude. If we are to think differently about English, we need to know more about what forms it takes in different contexts of use, including lingua franca settings. In other words, changes on the conceptual and attitudinal levels have to be substantiated by descriptive work.

A lesson to be learned from work on Outer Circle varieties of English is that a conceptualization of ELF as discussed in the preceding section, even if its desirability is acknowledged in principle, is unlikely to happen as long as no comprehensive and reliable descriptions of salient features of ELF are available. Description is also important because establishing a linguistic reality, named and captured in reference works alongside ENL and Outer Circle Englishes, is a precondition for acceptance. At present, the idea that some time in the future there may be a descriptive basis for an eventual codification of ELF may sound controversial and utopian, but in fact empirical work on various levels of linguistic description has been under way for several years now. The objective of such research varies from study to study, but taken together, this gradually accumulating body of work will lead to a better understanding of the nature of ELF as such, and this fact alone is likely to have a positive effect on how it is regarded and to lend support to its recognition.

For two main reasons, this research is being undertaken preliminarily on *spoken* data: first, the language is at one remove from the stabilizing and standardizing influence of writing, and second, spoken interactions are overtly reciprocal, allowing studies to capture the online negotiation of meaning in the production and reception of utterances, thus facilitating observations regarding mutual intelligibility among interlocutors.

To make their scope manageable, scholars tend to limit their research primarily in terms of (a) level of language, (b) linguacultural background of interlocutors or (c) domain. These studies, as I have indicated, relate to spoken data, but ELF also manifests itself in the written mode, and this I discuss in the section on Modes of Use.²

Descriptions at Specific Levels of Language

In recent years, ELF descriptions have focused on two levels of language: phonology and pragmatics. In what follows, an overview will be given of the most important findings in these areas. An account will also be given of work on ELF lexicogrammar, which is only at its beginnings.

Phonology is a comparatively closed system, and virtually all ELF users speak the language with some trace (more or less pronounced, so to speak) of their L1 accent. It is therefore not surprising that the first comprehensive study of characteristics of ELF interaction should be available in this area, namely, Jenkins's

The Phonology of English as an International Language (2000). Here Jenkins gives an additional reason for focusing attention on phonological features; it is that, in her data, pronunciation was by far the most frequent cause of intelligibility problems in ELF interactions. Jenkins's work (see also Jenkins, 1998; 2002; in press; this volume), culminating in what she has termed the phonological "Lingua Franca Core," thus takes as its starting point the need for empirical data drawn from interactions between L2 speakers of English to assess which phonological features are—and which are *not*—essential for intelligible pronunciation when English is spoken in lingua franca contexts.

The data on which the phonological Lingua Franca Core (LFC) is based was collected from speakers with a wide range of L1s over several years and by a number of different means: field observation, in which the focus was on instances of miscommunication and communication breakdown in mixed-L1 classrooms and social settings; recordings of different L1 pairs and groups of students engaged in communication tasks such as information gap activities; and an investigation into the production and reception of nuclear (tonic) stress of a group of different L1 users of English. The analysis of the data was carried out to identify which pronunciation "errors" led to intelligibility problems for a different L1 interlocutor and which did not. Those that caused such problems were then incorporated into the LFC, while those that did not were considered, as far as ELF is concerned, to be non-core—different from NS production, but not for that reason "wrong." The core areas thus identified are as follows:

1. The consonant inventory with the exception of the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, and of dark 'l' [ɫ], none of which caused any intelligibility problems in the lingua franca data.
2. Additional phonetic requirements: aspiration of word-initial voiceless stops /p/, /t/, and /k/, which were otherwise frequently heard as their lenis counterparts /b/, /d/, and /g/; and shortening of vowel sounds before fortis consonants, and the maintenance of length before lenis consonants, e.g., the shorter /æ/ in the word *sat* as contrasted with the phonetically longer /æ/ in the word *sad*.
3. Consonant clusters: no omission of sounds in word-initial clusters, e.g. in *proper* and *strap*; omission of sounds in word-medial and word-final clusters only permissible according to L1 English rules of syllable structure so that, for example, the word *friendship* can become /frenʃɪp/ but not /frendɪp/ or /fredʃɪp/.
4. Vowel sounds: maintenance of the contrast between long and short vowels, such as the /i/ and /i:/ in the words *live* and *leave*; L2 regional vowel qualities otherwise intelligible provided they are used consistently, with the exception of the substitution of the sound /ɛ/ especially with /ɑ:/.
5. Production and placement of nuclear (tonic) stress, especially when used contrastively (e.g., He came by TRAIN vs. He CAME by train).

Worth emphasizing in the present context is that Jenkins's LFC does not include, for instance, some sounds which are regarded, and taught, as "particularly English" ones (and also as particularly difficult) in countless classrooms, such as the *th*-sounds /θ/ and /ð/ and the dark *l* allophone, [ɫ]. In the conversations analyzed by Jenkins, mastery of these sounds proved not to be crucial for mutual intelligibility, and so various substitutions, such as /f, v/ or /s, z/ or /t, d/ for /θ, ð/ are permissible, and indeed are also found in some native-speaker varieties. The sounds /θ/, /ð/ and [ɫ] are therefore designated non-core. The same is true of the following features:

- Vowel quality
- Weak forms
- Other features of connected speech such as assimilation
- Pitch direction to signal attitude or grammatical meaning
- Word stress placement
- Stress-timing

Jenkins has repeatedly pointed out that her LFC may need to be modified in the light of more data, maybe from additional L1s, but to date no studies that investigated her findings from the perspective of such additional languages have falsified her results. Whether or not modifications become necessary with more research, Jenkins's work is groundbreaking in that in the genuine difference (rather than deficit) perspective she takes, divergences from native speaker realizations in the non-core areas are regarded as perfectly acceptable instances of L2 sociolinguistic variation.³

As mentioned above, the availability of a substantial treatment of ELF phonology is primarily due to two factors, namely the importance of pronunciation for intelligibility and the relative manageability of its features. The interest in ELF pragmatics seems to be attributable to somewhat different reasons. With phonological matters, one is dealing with fairly specific features of the language itself; however, one is necessarily on less solid ground with pragmatics, which does not comprise a closed set of features for study. Pragmatics is thus less constrained and thus less manageable in research; furthermore, unlike the case for pronunciation features, violations of ENL pragmatic norms rarely lead to loss of intelligibility (in so far as this becomes manifest in interactions). Nevertheless, a range of studies has been undertaken in this area. This may be due to the perceptual salience of some pragmatic features (such as long pauses, overlapping speech, or abrupt topic changes), as well as to a tradition of taking account of pragmatics in studies of intercultural communication (see e.g., Blommaert & Verschueren, 1991; Bremer, Roberts, Vasseur, Simonot, & Broeder, 1996; Spencer-Oatey, 2000). It is worth emphasizing, however, that while distinctive features of pronunciation can be

observed even in short stretches of speech, and it is therefore possible to arrive at generalizable findings on the basis of a relatively small corpus, analogous pragmatic features are likely to occur much more sporadically, and therefore studies in the area of pragmatics would require much larger databases. Probably mainly for this reason, the existing individual studies of the (intercultural) pragmatics of nonnative–nonnative communication in English are not as easy to summarize. However, some fairly clear insights are emerging.

Most research in this area is being conducted by scholars in a number of Expanding Circle countries. Thus Firth (1996), Meierkord (1996, 2002), House (1999, 2002), Lesznyák (2002, 2003, 2004), and Wagner and Firth (1997) analyze data from a wide range of first language backgrounds. Their findings obviously vary with the research questions posed and the contexts in which the data were captured (e.g., dinner conversations, group discussions, simulated conferences, and business telephone calls). Nevertheless, some generalizations about the pragmatics of ELF can be made, all interrelated but listed separately here:

- Misunderstandings are not frequent in ELF interactions; when they do occur, they tend to be resolved either by topic change or, less often, by overt negotiation using communication strategies such as rephrasing and repetition.
- Interference from L1 interactional norms is very rare—a kind of suspension of expectations regarding norms seems to be in operation.
- As long as a certain threshold of understanding is obtained, interlocutors seem to adopt what Firth (1996) has termed the “let-it-pass principle,” which gives the impression of ELF talk being overtly consensus-oriented, cooperative and mutually supportive, and thus fairly robust.

While the finding of a high level of cooperation and mutual support is a general one across studies, House (1999, 2002) does sound a more skeptical note, pointing to the danger that superficial consensus may well hide sources of trouble at a deeper level, a caveat that needs to be taken seriously and investigated further. Other features of ELF pragmatics that House has pointed to are the tendency of interlocutors to behave in a fairly “self-centered” way and to pursue their own agendas and, in certain groups, to engage in series of “parallel monologues” rather than dialogues.

It will not come as a surprise that interlocutors’ cultural background and shared knowledge (or lack thereof) have been found to be important factors in ELF conversations. On the basis of her empirical study of small talk conversations, Meierkord concludes that lingua franca communication is “both a linguistic masala and a language ‘stripped bare’ of its cultural roots” (Meierkord, 2002, p. 128f.); while Pözl demonstrates that speakers’ cultural identity “can be asserted, negotiated or expanded in lingua franca contact situations” (Pözl, 2003).

It will be apparent that some of the findings summarized here actually seem to contradict each other. The explanation for this may be that work on ELF pragmatics is still very much in its initial phase, and the findings available to date result from research on a fairly limited database. It is therefore conceivable that further research might show some of the present findings to be a function of the type and purpose of the interactions investigated. Indeed, the differences in the analyses available to date would seem to underline the need for a far larger corpus and ideally, a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the same data from various angles, so that shared, generalizable features, and processes can be brought to light.

Lexicogrammar, the remaining level of language to be discussed here, constitutes the area in which, apart from a few initial observations summarized below, the smallest amount of description has been undertaken to date. This may be rather surprising because lexicogrammatical features are probably the most noticeable, intuitively accessible ones in ELF speech. Again, the reason for the current dearth of findings may well be that in order to arrive at reliable results, a very large corpus would be a prerequisite.

It is hoped that it will be possible to meet this need through a new research initiative which aims at the compilation of a sizeable and feasible corpus dedicated to capturing the use of ELF by speakers from a variety of first language backgrounds and in a range of settings and domains. The compilation of this corpus, the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), is now in progress at the University of Vienna under Seidelhofer's direction (see Seidelhofer, 2002a; 2002b).⁴

Like the other data referred to so far, what is captured in VOICE is spoken ELF. More specifically, it is unscripted, largely face-to-face interaction among fairly fluent speakers from a wide range of first language backgrounds whose primary and secondary socialization (i.e., upbringing and education) did not take place through English. The recorded and transcribed speech events range over a variety of settings (professional, informal, educational), functions (exchanging information, enacting social relationships) and participants' roles and relationships (e.g., acquainted/unacquainted, symmetrical/asymmetrical). They are realized as private and public dialogues, private and public group discussions and casual conversations, and one-to-one interviews.

While the primary aim of VOICE is to provide a basis for whatever type of research scholars wish to conduct, it is envisaged that a useful first research focus might be to complement the work already done on ELF phonology and the initial findings on ELF pragmatics summarized above by concentrating on lexicogrammar, an aspect that tends to be regarded as particularly central to language pedagogy. It is hoped that this general corpus will make it possible to take stock of how the speakers providing the data actually communicate through ELF, and to attempt a characterization of how they use, or rather co-construct, English to do so. The overall objective will be to find out what salient common features of ELF use (if any, notwithstanding all the diversity) emerge, irrespective of speakers' first languages and levels of L2 proficiency.

At this stage, no reliable findings based on quantitative investigations can yet be reported. But many theses and seminar projects conducted on VOICE data at the University of Vienna (e.g., Hollander, 2002; Kordon, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2003) have brought to light certain regularities that at least point to some hypotheses, which in turn are proving useful for formulating more focused research questions. In particular, typical “errors” that most English teachers would consider in urgent need of correction and remediation, and that consequently often get allotted a great deal of time and effort in English lessons, appear to be generally unproblematic and no obstacle to communicative success. These include

- Dropping the third person present tense *–s*
- Confusing the relative pronouns *who* and *which*
- Omitting definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in ENL, and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL
- Failing to use correct forms in tag questions (e.g., *isn't it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn't they?*)
- Inserting redundant prepositions, as in *We have to study about...*)
- Overusing certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as *do, have, make, put, take*
- Replacing infinitive-constructions with *that*-clauses, as in *I want that*
- Overdoing explicitness (e.g. *black color* rather than just *black*)

However, there are recurrent events in these interactions that do cause communication problems and misunderstandings. Unsurprisingly, not being familiar with certain vocabulary items can give rise to problems, particularly when speakers lack paraphrasing skills. Most interesting, perhaps, are cases of “unilateral idiomaticity” (Seidlhofer, 2002b), where particularly idiomatic speech by one participant can be problematic when the expressions used are not known to the interlocutor(s). Characteristics of such unilateral idiomaticity are, for example, e.g., metaphorical language use, idioms, phrasal verbs, and fixed ENL expressions such as *this drink is on the house* or *can we give you a hand*. Other ongoing work in this area (Dewey, 2003, on lexicogrammar, and Prodromou, 2003, on phraseology, particularly idiomaticity) seems to corroborate these initial findings.

Descriptions of ELF Used by Interlocutors from Particular Linguacultural Backgrounds

While most published descriptive ELF studies either try to include speakers from as wide a range of L1s as possible or leave that variable to chance, there are

others who prefer to clearly delimit which subset of speakers they want to investigate, concentrating on ELF in specific regions. For example, as the contributions to Kirkpatrick (2002) make clear, English in East and Southeast Asia is increasingly being used by nonnative speakers for communication with other nonnative speakers in the region (see also Okudaira, 1999). Thus English has become the de facto official language of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and empirical work is underway to describe how this ELF is used (see in particular the journal *Asian Englishes*, published by ALC Press, Tokyo). Chinese is often mentioned, alongside Spanish, as the most likely rival of English for global lingua franca status after 2050 (see Graddol, 1997), but current statistics demonstrate the remarkable spread of English in the Peoples' Republic of China, and recent estimates put the numbers of English speakers in China at "over 200 million and rising" (Bolton, 2002, p. 182). Accordingly, there are now descriptions of "China English," and already the question is arising as to whether it can be regarded as a nativized variety of English (Kirkpatrick & Zhichang, 2002).

Another region where ELF is of very topical concern is Europe, particularly in the expanding European Union (see Berns, de Bot, & Hasebrink, in press; Cenoz & Jessner, 2000; Deneire & Goethals, 1997; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Graddol, 2001; Hartmann, 1996; Preisler, 1999; van Els, 2000). While the fear that English might take over the entire EU has given rise to a strong policy of supporting societal multilingualism and individual plurilingualism (Beacco & Byram, 2003; Phillipson, 2003; but see also House, 2003), there are, at the same time, efforts under way by linguists to establish whether there may be a distinct regional ELF developing in Europe. Penz (in press) discusses instances of successful intercultural communication among speakers from a variety of European languages. Jenkins, Modiano, and Seidlhofer (2001) mention recurrent features that they have observed in this "Euro-English", but also point out that empirical work in this area is only in its initial stages. A geographically more focused project is a corpus of English as a lingua franca in the Alpine-Adriatic region, currently in its pilot phase (James, 2000). This project aims to capture the English used in casual conversations among young people whose first languages are German, Italian, Slovene, and Friulian. James sets out hypotheses as to what findings the future analysis of this use of English might yield and links these up with current work in such areas as bi/multilingualism, (native English) casual conversation, and pidgin and creole linguistics. Outside the European Union, in officially quadrilingual Switzerland there is now a lively debate about English as a lingua franca for Switzerland, referred to as "Pan Swiss English" (Dröschel, Durham, & Rosenberger, in press; Watts & Murray, 2001; see also Murray, 2003).

Descriptions of ELF Used in Particular Domains

International business has long had to face up to the realities of ELF, but generally there has not been a great deal of interaction and cross-fertilization between what happens in multinational companies and what is investigated in descriptive linguistics. However, Firth (1996), Gramkow Andersen (1993), Hollqvist (1984), Louhiala-Salminen (2002), and Meeuwis (1994) illustrate the potential that empirical

research holds for a better understanding of how ELF functions in international business settings. In a recent study, Haegeman (2002) investigates ELF business telephone calls made by employees of companies in Flanders, Belgium, and in particular highlights the structural adjustments that the interlocutors make to orient themselves toward another's perceived variable competence in the language.

Academic communication is another domain in which ELF is prominent. Again, the study of spoken ELF in this area (as opposed to investigations of the written language, see next section) is in its infancy. At the English department of Tampere University, Finland, a corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic settings (ELFA) is now being compiled. This seeks to capture spoken interactions among speakers of different, mostly European, L1s in international degree programs and other university activities regularly carried out in English. Preliminary findings reveal both similarities and differences compared to NS academic speaking. One such similarity is that metadiscourse seems connected to hedges (as in *perhaps we could eh look an extract now*), while a difference that seems to be emerging is a particularly high occurrence of self-repairs (Mauranen, 2003, in press). These examples show how pragmatic functions are expressed in this domain of ELF talk, but they also raise the interesting question of how these are realized at the other levels of language. Thus such hedging may be realized lexicogrammatically in different ways in different domains and by speakers from different first languages. Equally, there may be similarities across domains and first language backgrounds in the formal realizations of these functions. It is precisely these empirical issues that call for further descriptive work.⁵ Another domain in which English has long been used as a lingua franca is international air and sea travel, and proposals have been made for designing an effective mode of communication for these purposes (see Weeks, Glover, Johnson, & Strevens, 1988). But it is surprising how little research has been undertaken to date in describing this lingua franca as it actually occurs (but see Intemann, 2003, and Sampson & Zhao, 2003).

As will be evident from the examples briefly reviewed here, the bulk of the descriptive work still needs to be done. However, what is clear is that this is a very active field of research that will be able to benefit from recent advances in computer-aided description and draw on a wealth of relevant sociolinguistic work on language variation and change, bi- and multilingualism, and language contact. Obviously, ELF is a natural language and can thus be expected to undergo the same processes that affect other natural languages, especially in contact situations—for instance, regularization is evident in most of the data analyzed so far. Another important insight from the study of intercultural ELF interactions is that proficiency in the language code only accounts for part of the success or failure of communication; at least as important is a more general communicative capability, such as sensitivity to the limits of shared systemic and schematic knowledge, as well as accommodation skills (the significance of the latter is particularly clearly demonstrated in Jenkins, 2000). Also of great interest is that this work will put to the test some of the concepts and analytic tools that have emerged from analyses of native-speaker language use but have, at least implicitly, been assumed to be universally applicable. As Meierkord puts it, “a lot of the existing definitions and categories are ethnocentric

constructs that do not stand a test with intercultural data and need a re-definition.” Analyzing ELF will thus be a challenging exercise seeking to combine continuity and change.

ELF and Modes of Use

The research reported above has been conducted on spoken ELF, for it is in the immediacy of interaction and the co-construction of spoken discourse that variation from the familiar standard norms becomes most apparent. But English has, of course, become internationalized across modes of written discourse as well, particularly as these have developed to serve specific academic and other institutional purposes, and a good deal of descriptive work has been done on identifying their typical generic features (e.g., Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990; and numerous papers in the journal *English for Specific Purposes*). Although lexically and generically distinctive, these modes of written ELF have, so far at least, conformed to the norms of standard grammar. It stands to reason that in written language use, where there is no possibility of the overt reciprocal negotiation of meaning typical of spoken interaction, there is more reliance on established norms, and these are naturally maintained by a process of self-regulation whereby these norms are followed in the interests of maintaining global mutual intelligibility (Widdowson, 1997a). Even here, however, questions have arisen about the legitimacy of these norms, and the extent to which written English (in articles in learned journals, for example) should be subjected to correction to conform to native speaker conventions of use, thus allowing ENL journals to exert a gatekeeping function based not on academic expertise but purely on linguistic criteria whose relevance for international intelligibility has not actually been demonstrated (Ammon, 2000, 2001). As these written modes become increasingly used and appropriated by nonnative users, one might speculate—in line with what we know about language variation and change in general and Brutt-Griffler’s notion of macro-acquisition in particular—that, in time, self regulation might involve a detachment from a dependence on native norms, so that these written modes also take on the kind of distinctive features that are evident in spoken ELF.

Whatever the focus of the descriptive work on ELF now being undertaken, it will be able to build on scholarship in the areas of native language variation and change (e.g., Chambers, Trudgill, & Schilling-Estes, 2001), indigenized varieties (e.g., Kachru, 1992; Schneider, 2003), and language contact (Goebl, Nelde, Stary, & Wölck, 1996), as well as studies of simplification in language use and language pedagogy (e.g., Tickoo, 1993), plus older conceptual and empirical work on English as an international language (e.g., Basic English; see Seidlhofer, 2002c). Two research projects that may prove to be of particular relevance for formulating research questions and hypotheses concerning the description of ELF are the International Corpus of English (ICE) and the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) already mentioned. ICE, which captures 1 million words of spoken and written texts each in over a dozen varieties is described as “the first large-scale effort to study the development of English as a world language” (ICE Web site: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/index.htm>, accessed November 19, 2003).

ICE components available at present are those of East Africa, Great Britain, India, New Zealand, Philippines (written only) and Singapore. But it needs to be pointed out that this world language is defined in terms of speakers for whom English is “either a majority first language . . . or an official additional language” (Greenbaum, 1996, p. 3). So although the corpus is indeed international and captures Englishes across the globe, it is important to realize that it actually excludes the use of English by the worldwide majority of English speakers, namely those for whom it mainly functions as an international lingua franca, most of whom are nonnative speakers of English. However, discussions such as those found in the contributions to, e.g., Greenbaum and Nelson (1996), Mair and Hundt (2000), and Renouf (1998) can serve as excellent sensitizing devices for processes of language variation and change that are likely to be at work in ELF as well.

There is also one large-scale project focusing on the English of learners from a great variety of first language backgrounds: the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) at the Centre for English Corpus Linguistics in Louvain, Belgium (see de Haan, 1998; the contributions to Granger, 1998; Granger, Hung, & Petch-Tyson, 2002; and more extensive studies based on this corpus, e.g., Lorenz, 1999). However, the main thrust of this research enterprise is not a description of ELF use as conceived of in the present chapter. Rather, ICLE intends, as indeed its name indicates, to identify characteristics of written *learner* English from different L1 backgrounds, with the objective to facilitate comparisons between these foreign-language productions and those of native speakers, and so to highlight the difficulties specific L1 groups have with native English in order to make it easier for learners to conform to ENL if they so wish. In this respect, investigations of ICLE data could serve as empirical tests of the points made in Swan and Smith (2001). The compilation of a spoken companion corpus, LINDSEI, is now under way (see <http://www.fltr.ucl.ac.be/fltr/germ/etan/cecl/Cecl-Projects/Lindsei/lindsei.htm>, retrieved November 19, 2003). The main difference between ICLE/LINDSEI and VOICE thus lies in the researchers’ orientation towards the data and the purposes they intend the corpora to serve. However, it is possible that some of the findings emerging from learner corpora could also contribute to a better understanding of English as a lingua franca. For instance, what is frequently reported as overuse or underuse of certain expressions in learner language as compared to ENL (e.g., Chen, 1998; Lorenz, 1998) may turn out to be features characterizing successful ELF use. In other words, some so-called deviations from ENL norms reported in learner corpora research could serve as pointers in the process of profiling ELF.

Teaching ELF?

It seems, then, that the growing awareness of the unique global role of English and its cultural, ecological, sociopolitical and psychological implications is gradually leading to the realization that these momentous developments also have linguistic consequences that are waiting to be noticed and described. Although this descriptive work is only in its early stages, the fact that it is being undertaken does raise the question as to what implications the eventual availability of ELF descriptions may have for the teaching of English (see Gnutzmann & Intemann, in

press). Obviously, if a language is perceived to be changing in its forms and its uses, it is reasonable to expect that something in the teaching of it will also change. However, this is not to say that descriptive facts can, or should, determine what is taught. This caveat is an important theme in Widdowson (2003), a book that combines considerations of the global role of English with a critical evaluation of the pedagogic relevance of linguistic description. As Widdowson puts it, “linguistic descriptions cannot automatically meet pedagogic requirement,” and it would therefore be wrong to assume that “findings should directly and uniquely inform what is included in language courses” (Widdowson, 2003, p. 106). Language pedagogy should thus refer to, but not defer to, linguistic descriptions.

In the case of ELF, then, the crucial recent innovation is that linguistic descriptions that teaching professionals can refer to if they so wish *are* becoming available. So far, the absence of sufficient descriptive work as a necessary precondition for ELF-focused curricula has been an obstacle to the adoption of ELF for teaching, even where this is perceived as appropriate. This has made it difficult for resistance to ENL norms in pedagogy (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 1999) to move from programmatic statements to realizations in teaching practice. This lack is gradually being remedied by the linguistic research described here, now being carried out with increasing intensity, and in a favorable climate of opinion which is critical of the hegemony of traditional norms of language use. Thus research on ELF is consistent with work undertaken on indigenized varieties of English in postcolonial contexts (for example, in the journals *English World-Wide* and *World Englishes*), in the book series *Varieties of English Around the World* (published by Benjamins), and with positions taken on linguistic imperialism (e.g., Phillipson, 1992), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997), and the sociopolitics of language teaching (e.g., Hall & Eggington, 2000; Ricento, 2000; Singh, Kell, & Pandian, 2002). These intellectual developments are of course responses to both the current rate of globalization in general, and to the spread of English as the epiphenomenon accompanying it. Both have speeded up in recent years, particularly due to the pervasive influence of the Internet, which is “going to change the way we think about language in a fundamental way” (Crystal, 2001, p. 238). As Melchers and Shaw put it, “wide use of English is a natural consequence of the way the world is now” (2003, p. 196).

So it would seem that a critical mass has been gathering that will make possible an eventual reconceptualization of the subject ‘English’ in terms of ELF where this is deemed desirable. Thus McKay argues for the development of “a comprehensive theory of teaching and learning English as an international language” (2002, p. 125). This theory needs to take into account the crosscultural nature of the use of English in multilingual communities, the questioning of native-speaker models, and the recognition of the equality of the varieties of English that have resulted from the global spread of the language. As for actual teaching goals and approaches, McKay (pp. 127 ff.) identifies the following priorities:

Goals:

- Ensuring intelligibility rather than insisting on correctness
- Helping learners develop interaction strategies that will promote comity (friendly relations)
- Fostering textual competence (reading and writing skills for learner-selected purposes)

Approaches:

- Sensitivity in the choice of cultural content in materials
- Reflexivity in pedagogical procedures
- Respect for the local culture of learning

McKay's proposals for "rethinking goals and approaches" (her subtitle) usefully present the state of the art of approaching EIL pedagogy. An important next step will be to take into account new developments in the conceptualization and description of ELF because, after all, it is the language itself that constitutes the essential content of language teaching. The most radical changes in English teaching are likely to happen once rethinking in pedagogy and reconceptualization in language description find expression in new curricula and materials (see Smit, 2003; and also Whittaker & Whittaker, 2002, for an example of a textbook explicitly aiming at ELF rather than ENL).

It will thus be apparent that it would be premature to make detailed pedagogical suggestions at this stage. However, it is worth attempting a broad outline of likely consequences of an orientation towards teaching ELF. Some of these would simply result from the recognition of excellent proposals and practices already available in the public domain, so far not taken up in mainstream English teaching but likely to be found supremely relevant to EFL contexts. For one thing, a reorientation of English away from the fascination with ENL and toward the cross-cultural role of ELF will make it easier to take on board findings from research into the related areas of *intercultural communication* (e.g., Bremer et al., 1996; Buttjes & Byram, 1990; Byram & Fleming, 1998; Byram & Grundy, 2003; Gumperz & Roberts, 1991) and language awareness (e.g., Bolitho, Carter, Hughes, Ivanic, Masuhara, & Tomlinson, 2003; Doughty, Pearce, & Thornton, 1971; Hawkins, 1991; James & Garrett, 1991; van Lier, 1995; and Widdowson, 1997b).

Abandoning unrealistic notions of achieving perfect communication through 'native-like' proficiency in English would free up resources for focusing on capabilities that are likely to be crucial in ELF talk. These are discussed in work on communication strategies (e.g., Kasper & Kellerman, 1997) and accommodation skills (e.g., Giles & Coupland, 1991; Jenkins, 2000, Ch. 7). They include the

following: drawing on extralinguistic cues, identifying and building on shared knowledge, gauging and adjusting to interlocutors' linguistic repertoires, supportive listening, signaling noncomprehension in a face-saving way, asking for repetition, paraphrasing, and the like. Needless to say, exposure to a wide range of varieties of English and a multilingual, comparative approach (in the spirit of the Language Awareness/*Eveil aux Langues* project of the Council of Europe; see, e.g., Candelier & Macaire, 2000; Masats, n.d.), are likely to facilitate the acquisition of these communicative abilities. Such synergies achieved through the meeting of languages in classrooms would also make overlong instruction in English (conceptualized as ENL) superfluous. Indeed, it would no longer be self-evident that a subject called English needs to remain in all language teaching curricula—for some contexts, it might be worth considering whether so-called English courses in secondary school that often range over up to nine years or more could be replaced by a subject designated *language awareness* which would include instruction in ELF awareness as one element. The focus here would be on teaching *language* rather than *languages* (see Edmondson, 1999). The assumption underlying this admittedly bold idea is that the demand for English will be self-sustaining, both societally and throughout individuals' lives, and need not—and indeed cannot—be met within the confines of a school subject. What can be done in teaching is to provide a basis that students can learn and can subsequently use for fine-tuning (usually after leaving school) to any native or nonnative varieties and registers that turn out to be relevant for their individual requirements (see Widdowson, 2003). Such a basis for subsequent learning could indeed be formulated with reference to the core features of ELF that current descriptive research aims to establish.

Obviously, changes in teaching also bring with them changes in assessment. In her book on the phonology of English as an international language, Jenkins comes to the conclusion that “an overhaul of pronunciation testing” (2000, p. 212) will be necessary. She argues that instead of assessing learners' approximation to a NS accent, greater account will have to be taken of “the ways in which [candidates] adapt their pronunciation to facilitate one another's understanding, and the extent to which they successfully achieve mutually intelligible pronunciation” (p. 213). Focusing on lexicogrammar, Lowenberg (2002) presents a strong argument for reviewing testing practices once nativized forms are found to be developing in the Expanding Circle. He concludes with the observation that “the existence of [such] norms casts serious doubt on the hitherto assumed validity in the Expanding Circle of certain item types in English proficiency tests that are based solely on Inner Circle norms” (Lowenberg, 2002, p. 434). In this process of attitude change, the recognition of Expanding Circle language rights is likely to benefit from the pioneering work for the codification and acceptance of indigenized Outer Circle varieties (e.g., Bamgbose, 1998).

All these developments are bound to affect teacher education in a major way. Teachers of English need to understand the implications of the unprecedented spread of the language and the complex decisions they will be required to take. While in a traditional foreign language teaching framework it has been possible to rely on fairly clear and stable norms and goals, these certainties have been called into

question by the recognition of the global lingua franca role English has to serve. As a result, the teaching of English is going through a truly postmodern phase in which old forms and assumptions are being rejected while no new orthodoxy can be offered in their place. This state of affairs makes the familiar distinction between education and training more relevant than ever: Rather than just being trained in a restricted set of pre-formulated techniques for specific teaching contexts, teachers will need a more comprehensive education which enables them to judge the implications of the ELF phenomenon for their own teaching contexts and to adapt their teaching to the particular requirements of their learners. Such teacher education would foster an understanding of the processes of language variation and change, the relationship between language and identity, the importance of social-psychological factors in intercultural communication and the suspect nature of any supposedly universal solutions to pedagogic problems.

As an illustration of the kinds of issues teachers will have to take an informed stand on, two very different opinions about the spread of nonnative forms of English are juxtaposed below. The first one comes from a chapter entitled “Global English (?)” in Görlach’s (2002) book *Still More Englishes*. The second quotation, which seems to be on its way to the status of a classic, is from Jenkins’s *The Phonology of English as an International Language*:

The demand for English will continue and possibly increase, which means that more and more people will acquire broken, deficient forms of English which are adequate to the extent that they permit the communicational functions they were learnt for. . . . However, the incomplete acquisition reflected in such instances will never become the basis for a linguistic norm, which is, and has always been, based on the consent of the learned and guided by the accepted written norm, which has remained surprisingly homogeneous around the globe. . . . There is no danger of such deviant uses “polluting” the standards of native speakers even if they become a minority in the global anglophone community. Int[ernational] E[n]glish will not be corrupted by such uses . . . (Görlach, 2002, p. 12–13)

There is really no justification for doggedly persisting in referring to an item as ‘an error’ if the vast majority of the world’s L2 English speakers produce and understand it. Instead, it is for L1 speakers to move their own receptive goal posts and adjust their own expectations as far as international (but not intranational) uses of English are concerned. . . . The perhaps unpalatable truth for NSs is that if they wish to participate in international communication in the 21st Century, they too will have to learn EIL. (Jenkins, 2000, pp. 160, 227).

It will be evident from this chapter that a great deal of work remains to be done before ELF can become a well-founded reality in language pedagogy. In addition to the open descriptive questions, several areas of pedagogic research need

investigating. Thus Jenkins (2000, Ch. 7 & 8) identifies several issues that have to be addressed for a successful implementation of her Lingua Franca Core, such as the problem that the very tendency toward accommodation so helpful for phonological convergence in multilingual settings will probably prove to be counterproductive in monolingual classes, in which it is likely to reinforce learners' L1 identities and thus their L1 accents. Another problematic question posed by a focus on intelligibility rather than correctness is how to find a way to measure communicative success defined as the degree to which candidates understand each others' pronunciation (as well as lexicogrammar) and find it acceptable (see also Walker, 2001). A promising way forward in this respect is close observation and detailed analysis of ELF classrooms, ideally stretching over fairly long periods of time, such as the project conducted by Smit (2003). Apart from such pedagogic research questions, the important issue of attitudes towards ELF, by researchers, teachers, learners and the public at large, has only begun to be addressed. In this respect, Rubdy and Saraceni (in press), which includes contributions on ELF by Jenkins, Kirkpatrick, McKay, Prodromou, and Seidlhofer, promises to be an example of constructive debate.

In conclusion, it may be worth emphasizing some important social and psychological advantages that a proper conceptualization of ELF is bound to have for the actual speakers involved. For ENL, and ENL speakers, the option of distinguishing ELF from ENL is likely to be beneficial in that it leaves varieties of native English intact for all the functions that only a first language can perform and as a target for learning in circumstances where ENL is deemed appropriate, as well as providing the option of code-switching between ENL and ELF. This takes pressure off a monolithic concept of English pulled in different directions by divergent demands and unrealistic expectations, a state of affairs frustrating for speakers of both ENL and ELF.

Finally, if ELF is conceptualized and accepted as a distinct manifestation of English not tied to its native speakers, this perspective opens up entirely new options for the way the world's majority of English teachers can perceive and define themselves: instead of being nonnative speakers and perennial, error-prone learners of ENL, they can be competent and authoritative users of ELF. The language teaching profession has too long been obsessed with the native speaker teacher–nonnative speaker teacher dichotomy. The work on ELF described here offers the prospect of abolishing this counterproductive and divisive terminology which hinges on a negative particle, and which has had correspondingly negative effects on English language pedagogy.

Notes:

1. The term *Expanding Circle* can be understood as referring to the actual physical spread of English to various regions of the world. But it is worth noting that English is expanding across a range of different domains of use in which the Inner and Outer Circle speakers are also implicated, so in that sense they are also, of course, part of the expansion.

2. Distinguishing ELF in relation to domain and linguacultural background of speakers would seem to correspond to the distinction between register and dialect varieties, i.e., what Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens (1964) refer to as variety according to user (dialect) and variety according to use (register). It is important to stress, therefore, that although domain and linguacultural background will clearly influence the forms ELF takes since it is after all a naturally occurring and therefore adaptive means of communication, since it has no native speakers, ELF functions as a register—albeit an unusual one—and not as a dialect as this is usually defined (cf. also James, 2000; Widdowson, 1997a).
3. For a broader contextualisation and discussion of this work, see Jenkins, this volume; for full details of both core and non-core features, see Jenkins, 2000, Ch. 6.
4. See www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/VOICE. This project is being supported by Oxford University Press, hence the *Oxford* element in its name.
5. This also raises the question as to whether it is justified to refer to ELF as an emerging variety in its own right. Some people think it can ultimately be so described (e.g., Meierkord & Knapp, 2002), and Chambers (2000, p. 285) predicts “a supranational standard” for Global English in less than a century from now. Others are more skeptical (e.g., Gnutzmann, 1999b; Görlach, 1999, 2002). Everything, of course, hinges on the definition of the term *variety* and, importantly, on what emerges from the empirical work described in this chapter

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Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). *World English: A study of its development*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

This is a thorough and dispassionate enquiry into the underlying issues. It argues that English owes its existence as a world language not to imperialism alone but also to the struggle against imperialism. Brutt-Griffler's notion of “macroacquisition,” the insistence on the significance of societal (rather than individual) SLA, contributes to theories of language spread and language change in that it emphasizes the proactive and not simply the reactive role of users of English in these processes.

Gnutzmann, C. (Ed.). (1999a). *Teaching and learning English as a global language. Native and non-native perspectives*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg.

This collection of papers, which approaches the theme from a wide variety of perspectives, has to be given credit as one of the earliest concerted efforts to gauge the impact of the unprecedented global spread of English on pedagogy. In this sense, the volume offers a kind of snapshot of this new

area of enquiry finding its feet and so promotes awareness of a range of possible responses to new challenges and opportunities. However, the book predates the recognition of the crucial role of substantial descriptive work on ELF, which this chapter has argued is a prerequisite for a genuine reconceptualization of ELT.

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language: New models, new norms, new goals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book is a trailblazer for the teaching of ELF. It unequivocally follows the implications of the international role of English through in both description and suggestions for teaching. It argues that for international uses of English, what counts is mutual intelligibility among ELF users rather than approximation to native-speaker models. The focus may be on phonology, but the in-depth discussion of relevant sociolinguistic and sociopsychological research and its clear delineation of implications for EIL teaching make this book an essential contribution to the theme of this chapter in general.

McKay, S. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This handbook for teachers offers a comprehensive but accessible account of a range of issues that need to be considered for developing a thoughtful and culturally sensitive approach to the teaching of English as an international language. It brings readers up to date with current thinking in this area and offers an even-handed appraisal of different proposals which encourages teachers to draw their own conclusions based on their local expertise.

Seidlhofer, B. (2001). Closing a conceptual gap: The case for a description of English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11, 133–158.

In view of the global role of English the orientation to nativespeaker norms is now largely recognized as inappropriate and counterproductive for ELF contexts. But it persists because discussions about ‘global English’ on the meta-level have not been accompanied by substantial empirical work on the most extensive contemporary use of English worldwide, namely, English as a lingua franca, largely among nonnative speakers. The paper seeks to demonstrate that this is due to a failure to conceptualize speakers of lingua franca English as language users in their own right, and to acknowledge the need for a description of lingua franca English alongside English as a native language. The paper proposes a research agenda to remedy this situation and concludes with a consideration of the potentially very significant impact that an understanding of salient features of ELF would have for pedagogy and teacher education.

Widdowson, H. G. (2003). *Defining issues in English language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book is true to its title in that it puts its finger on the issues that need thinking through carefully in view of the global spread of English. It makes clear that the changing role and nature of the language requires a reconsideration of some common assumptions about English as a subject for teaching. This reconsideration involves a critical reappraisal of criteria for goals for learning, the relevance of corpus descriptions for the specification of course content and methodology, and the significance of the learner's first language in the learning process.

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