牛津应用语言学丛书

English as a Lingua Franca: Attitude and Identity

英语作为通用语言：态度和身份

Jennifer Jenkins

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出 版 说 明

本世纪初，外教社先后引进“牛津应用语言学丛书”（19种）和“牛津应用语言学丛书（续编）”（10种）。这些图书由于内容权威、选择精当而受到了外语界的好评，在科研论文中被广泛引用，对推动我国外语教学和研究的发展起到了重大作用。

近年来，随着研究的不断扩展和深入，国内学界对研究资料有了新的需求，像“任务型教学法”、“英语作为国际通用语”、“二语习得的跨学科研究”等逐渐成为了热门的话题。有鉴于此，我们又从牛津大学出版社出版的应用语言学图书中精选了10本，以更好地满足广大教师和科研人员的需求。希望这次出版的这10本图书，能够和以前的29本一起，反映出国际应用语言学重要领域研究的前沿，为全面、深入推动我国外语科研起到新的作用，做出新的贡献。

Dedicated to the memory of Sara García Peralta
dear friend and colleague
1947–2004

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Finally, on a personal note, as I write I am about to take up a post at the University of Southampton, and am looking forward to developing ELF in a major way in an environment where this field will thrive. Such an environment of course owes much to the influence of the late Christopher Brumfit and his interest in and enthusiasm for the study of English as an International Language.

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Preface

In essence this is a book about language change and the responses it elicits among speakers of a language. Its specific focus is English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and in particular, though not exclusively, ELF accents. The concept of ELF is discussed extensively in Chapter 1, but for the moment, suffice it to say that ELF and EIL (English as an International Language) are one and the same phenomenon, and that both refer to lingua franca uses of English primarily among its non-mother tongue speakers. The term ELF has recently become the favoured one for reasons that are explained in Chapter 1. By contrast, at the time I wrote my first book on the subject, *The Phonology of English as an International Language*, few people had heard of ELF,[1] and for that reason, I chose then to use the term EIL. (See Jenkins 2000: 11.)

Despite the switch from 'EIL' to 'ELF', this book is in some ways a sequel to the 2000 book. In fact one of my reasons for embarking on the new book was the controversy that the previous one had elicited. I have therefore explored in depth, and with an emphasis on L2 English users' perspectives, the many, varied, and often contradictory or polarized responses to the changes that are currently being identified and described as ELF innovations, as well as the misinterpretations and misconceptions that characterize many of these responses.

It is often observed that English has become a global language, and that the majority of its non-native speakers (NNSs) use it as a lingua franca among themselves rather than as a 'foreign' language to communicate with its NSs. However, this development has not so far had much impact on English language attitudes, let alone English language teaching: users of English, NNS and NS, teacher, learner, applied linguist, world English scholar, and general public alike, are finding it difficult to make the conceptual leap needed in order to allow ELF a legitimate place alongside the Englishes of the inner and outer circles,[2] even at the descriptive level. For despite the fact that ELF, like any other instance of language change, is an entirely natural phenomenon, and attempts to arrest language change entirely unnatural, ELF is often not viewed in this way. Again, although ELF innovations could be said to reflect the identities of its lingua franca speakers, the identity issue is by no means as clear-cut as this suggests, and is affected in critical ways by language attitudes.

The aim of this book, then, is to explore the reasons for concerns about ELF. Regardless of the case for change in principle, it is essential to consider how it appears to those who will be most affected—in this case primarily

English language teachers and, by association, their learners—and to consider carefully and critically their alternative arguments and attitudes. By bringing these to the surface, ELF researchers will be in a much better position to evaluate the feasibility and validity of ELF as a potential provider of norms for English language teaching, rather than as an interesting new phenomenon that will remain the stuff of corpus description. In order to investigate these arguments and attitudes, I have analysed ELT and applied linguistics texts (spoken and written) from a content analytical perspective (Chapter 2) and discourse analytical perspective (Chapter 5), carried out a large-scale questionnaire study in expanding circle countries (Chapter 6), and conducted in-depth interviews with NNS teachers of English (Chapter 7).

It is my hope that the research findings in this book, in so far as they reveal the language attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, and identity conflicts that underlie many of the negative responses to ELF, will contribute towards a reappraisal that will enable ELF, one day perhaps, to be offered as a pedagogic alternative to (but not necessarily a replacement for) traditional EFL.

Notes

1 At the time I was conducting my earlier research on ELF accents (1989–1995), a small number of scholars in mainland Europe were also researching and writing about lingua franca uses of English (for example, Firth 1990, 1996; Meierkord 1996), using terms such as 'lingua franca English' and 'non-native/non-native speaker discourse'. In the majority of cases, however, they were not talking about ELF in the sense in which it is conceived in this book and understood by most current ELF researchers. Firth's interest (1990, 1996) for example, was in demonstrating how English may be used successfully in lingua franca communication *despite* 'deficiencies' such as 'unidiomaticity' when compared with English native speaker use. ELF research proper investigates the phenomenon *in its own right* and not by comparison with an ENL baseline.

2 This is a reference to Kachru's three-circle model of English according to which the inner circle consists of the countries where English is spoken as a native language; the outer circle of the countries which were colonized by native English speakers and where English is spoken as part of a multilingual repertoire; and the expanding circle of the countries where English is learnt and spoken but does not serve institutional purposes. (See, for example, Kachru 1985.)

Contents

1

ELF: what it is and what it is thought to be

This chapter introduces the themes of the book and sets the scene for all that follows. As its title suggests, it is divided into two main parts. The first (and longer) takes up and develops the initial explanation of ELF provided in the Preface, as well as considering a range of orientations towards it. The second part examines a number of typical misinterpretations and misconceptions about ELF in general and ELF accents in particular.

What is ELF?

ELF stands for English as a Lingua Franca. Let us first consider what is meant by the term 'lingua franca'. In essence, a lingua franca is a contact language used among people who do not share a first language, and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language of its speakers. According to Knapp and Meierkord, '[i]n its original sense, the term "lingua franca" referred to a variety that was spoken along the South-Eastern coast of the Mediterranean between appr. the 15th and the 19th century' (2002: 9). Although earlier languages had performed lingua franca roles, this was the first variety to be explicitly labelled as such, while alternative terms have included 'contact language', 'auxiliary language', 'trade language', and 'trade jargon' (see Samarin 1987). This first lingua franca was 'a pidgin, probably based on some Italian dialects in its earliest history, and included elements from Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Turkish, Greek and Persian' (Knapp and Meierkord, ibid.). Its plurilinguistic composition, then, clearly exemplifies an intrinsic and key feature of lingua francas: their hybrid nature.

Turning specifically to *English* as a Lingua Franca, however, an immediate problem needs to be resolved *vis-à-vis* the traditional definition of a lingua franca and native speakers (NSs) of English. The historical lingua franca had no NSs, and this could be taken to imply that NSs of ENL (English as a Native Language) should be excluded from the definition of ELF. Because of the international spread of English that has been growing apace since the latter part of the 20th century (a situation recognized as unprecedented for

any other language hitherto), English is frequently the mutual language of choice in settings such as conferences, business meetings, and political gatherings. The difficulty here is that such interactions may include NSs of English as well as its NNSs, even though the former are generally in the minority.[1] Some scholars nevertheless prefer to stay with a 'pure' interpretation of a lingua franca. Firth, for example, describes it as:

> 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.
> (1996: 240; emphasis in original)

However, as I pointed out in the Preface, Firth was not at that time referring to ELF as it is now conceived, i.e. as an emerging English that exists in its *own right* and which is being described in its *own terms* rather than by comparison with ENL. Instead, he was talking about a 'foreign' language that happens to be English, and the ways in which successful communication is achieved in spite of its speakers' errors (as compared with the native language). If ELF is conceived as a foreign language in this way, then, by definition, none of its speakers can be native speakers of the language.

Like Firth, though not for the same reason, House defines ELF interactions as being 'between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, *for none of whom English is the mother tongue*' (1999: 74; emphasis added). Others differentiate between ELF and English as an International Language (EIL), the former excluding NSs and the latter including them. However, this distinction has become less frequent of late, perhaps because it runs the risk of causing confusion. Meanwhile, some scholars use EIL as a blanket term for all uses of English involving NNSs worldwide regardless of whether they are interacting with other NNSs or with NSs (for example, Llurda 2004), while still others use EIL to refer more specifically to NNS–NNS communication (for example, McKay 2002).

On the other hand, while arguing that the conceptualization of ELF must be separated from a 'nativeneness criterion', Seidlhofer considers that 'it has to be remembered that ELF interactions often also include interlocutors from the Inner and Outer Circles' (2004: 211–12). In other words, according to her interpretation, ELF is not limited to members of the expanding circle, and those who also speak English intranationally, whether they come from an inner or outer circle country, are not excluded from ELF communication. Or, to put it another way, ELF does not stop being ELF if inner or outer circle members happen to be present. Seidlhofer's only proviso is that empirical work on describing ELF should not involve too many NS informants. This is because they would confound the data with non-ELF forms and make it more difficult to identity emerging ELF norms, i.e. to find out 'whether and in what ways ELF interactions are actually *sui generis*' (House ibid.). NSs, then, are to a large extent excluded from ELF corpus research (VOICE, for example, allows only up to ten per cent of NSs of English in any specific

speech event)[2] and perhaps, for the same reason, this should also apply to speakers of established (nativized) outer circle Englishes.[3] My own position on the NS-ELF question and the one taken throughout this book, is very much in line with Seidlhofer's. That is, ELF does not exclude NSs of English, but they are not included in data collection, and when they take part in ELF interactions, they do not represent a linguistic reference point.

Terminology

This leads to the reasons for preferring 'ELF' to any of the other terms currently in circulation, an issue that is less trivial than it might initially appear. As was mentioned in the Preface, at the time when I first employed the term 'ELF', it was also in use, if not extensively, among scholars in mainland Europe. On the other hand, both the term and—to a considerable extent—the concept it represents, appeared to be unknown to applied linguists and ELT professionals almost elsewhere else. This was still largely the situation a few years later when I explained my decision to stay with EIL:

> ... it remains to be seen whether ELF ultimately catches on. In the meantime, I will for present purposes restrict its use to describing the core of pronunciation features that I identify ... as a model for international English phonology—the 'Lingua Franca Core', and will continue to use the more widely-acknowledged EIL.
> (Jenkins 2000: 11)

Since then, however, change has occurred rapidly. The concept of expanding circle English (by whatever name) as involving communication predominantly among NNSs rather than between NSs and NNSs, has become widely known, if not necessarily widely approved. During the same period, the term ELF itself has figured prominently in a number of publications by ELF researchers (for example, Knapp and Meierkord 2002; Mauranen 2003; Seidlhofer 2004) and in their conference papers (for example, House 2004; Jenkins 2004; Seidlhofer 2002; Seidlhofer and Jenkins 2003). As a result, the term has finally begun to be employed (usually in preference to EIL) in publications by academics who are not themselves engaged in ELF research (for example, Phillipson 2003), and has even been accorded sufficient status to merit an entry (by Gnutzmann) in a recent encyclopedia of language teaching and learning (Byram 2004: 357–8).[4]

ELF has a number of advantages that are not shared by other terms such as EIL, International English, Global English and the like. To repeat what I said a few years ago:

> ELF emphasizes the role of English in communication between speakers from different L1s, i.e. the primary reason for learning English today; it suggests the idea of community as opposed to alienness; it emphasizes that people have something in common rather than their differences; it

> implies that 'mixing' languages is acceptable ... and thus that there is nothing inherently wrong in retaining certain characteristics of the L1, such as accent; finally, the Latin name symbolically removes the ownership of English from the Anglos both to no one and, in effect, to everyone. (Jenkins 2000: 11)

Last, but by no means least, as Seidlhofer (2004) points out, ELF is preferred not so much 'because most lingua franca definitions restrict it to communication among nonnative users as such, but because it best signals that it is these nonnative users that provide the strongest momentum for the development of the language in its global uses' (p. 212). That is, ELF more than any of the alternatives implies that it is NNSs rather than NSs who are at the forefront of innovation and change in lingua franca English, an issue which will be taken up later in this chapter.

In addition to these benefits, ELF is more likely than its most frequent alternative, EIL, to discourage some of the kinds of misconception that are discussed in the second part of the chapter. One such misconception seems, according to Seidlhofer (op. cit.), to have been brought about by the use of 'International English' as 'a shorthand for EIL'. This, she argues, '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' (p. 210; emphasis in original). In addition, the use of this term is also ambiguous in that it is used to describe an entirely different communicative situation: the English of countries where it is the first language of the majority (the inner circle) and/or of countries where it is an official second language (the outer circle). In other words, it is used to describe an entirely different linguacultural context from that which obtains for ELF communication. Others use it to mean merely the international circulation of an NS variety of English, for example, City and Guilds Pitman 'International English Qualifications' in 'International ESOL' and 'International Spoken ESOL'. Meanwhile, the terms 'English as a global language' or 'Global English' are not only vague as regards what type of communication they represent, but also imply—wrongly—that English is spoken by everyone around the globe, whereas statistics suggest that around a quarter of the world's population speak English fluently or competently (Crystal 2003: 6).

To summarize, then, ELF is the preferred term[5] for a relatively new manifestation of English which is very different in concept from both English as a Second Language (ESL)—the label frequently given to outer circle Englishes, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)—the traditional, if to a great extent anachronistic, label for English in the expanding circle. Unlike ESL varieties, it is not primarily a local or contact language *within* national groups but *between* them. And unlike EFL, whose goal is in reality ENL (English as a Native Language), it is not primarily a language of communication between its NSs and NNSs, but among its NNSs.

Orientations to the concept of ELF

Characterized thus, ELF would seem to be an entirely logical and natural development arising out of new language contact situations in expanding circle contexts as a result of the changing role of English. This is very much how Brutt-Griffler sees it:

> One of the processes within the internationalization of English is what I call *transculturation*: the process by which varieties of World English increasingly become multicultural media within pluralistic communities. ... Transculturation is the process of transcending monoculturalism in language both within the world econocultural system and also within the varieties of World English. There is an interplay of forces in which these varieties influence one another and so each variety becomes itself more and more multicultural.
> (2002: 177–8; emphasis in original)

Brutt-Griffler contrasts what she sees as a natural development with the traditional orientation to English in international contexts, in which '... the "nonnative" user is situated along an interlanguage continuum, with the "native speaker" ... as the point of reference' (op. cit.: 179). According to this position, authority is 'granted' to the privileged speech community and it is assumed that 'the non-mother tongue user/learner seeks affiliation in the community of native speakers ... . Disguised as a relationship between individual English speakers', this is a uni-directional relationship in which 'the "native speaker" community is held to affect the "nonnative" without itself being affected'. (op. cit.: 179–80)

Similarly, in his chapter 'Teaching English as a world language', Brumfit (2001) points out how '[t]he major advances in sociolinguistic research over the past half-century indicate clearly the extent to which languages are shaped by their use' (p. 116). He then points out:

> Statistically native speakers are in a minority for language use, and thus in practice for language change, for language maintenance, and for the ideologies and beliefs associated with the language—at least in so far as non-native speakers use the language for a wide range of public and personal needs.
> (ibid.)

Brumfit adds that 'if a substantial number of non-native speakers did come to see themselves as a single group with major shared interests, the impact on the international language would be considerable' (ibid.). Meanwhile, Melchers and Shaw (2003) describe expanding circle English as currently 'exonormative' but add that it may be in the process of becoming independent:

> one can imagine two stages, one in which features of different varieties are mixed to create a norm, and the second in which regional expanding-

> circle Englishes develop which have unique features due to their own substrates, etc., like the outer-circle varieties.
> (p. 186)

Or, as De Swaan (2001) says, more directly and politically, quoting Bourdieu, '*Il faut désangliciser l'Anglais*'. De Swaan adds that 'Europeans might develop their own variety, the way Indians did, for example' and that '[n]ative speakers of other European languages 'trained in English at the language academies of the Union, could become authoritative editors and judges of style for an emerging European English' (p. 192). Such a group (or groups) as Brumfit describes and De Swaan implies is believed by many ELF researchers, to exist already, at least in embryonic form, and to be growing both in number and in strength of conviction. One of the purposes of the research underpinning this book is, indeed, to explore the extent of expanding circle speakers' identification with ELF speech communities at both global and local (for example, European, SE Asian) levels.

Widdowson approaches the situation from a very similar perspective, although for him it is not hypothetical in the way that it is for Brumfit, De Swaan, and Melchers and Shaw. Instead, he contends that the linguistic process is already under way, and that the critical issue is the need for the results of this process to be legitimized. His much-quoted 1994 article on the ownership of English was among the first (if not *the* first)[6] to point out the implications of the increasing international use of English. He then developed his argument in another well-known article (1997) in which he contrasted the phenomena of language distribution and language spread, arguing that they are in conflict with one another:

> Distribution denies spread. So you can think of English as an adopted international language, and then you will conceive of it as a stabilized and standardized code leased out on a global scale, and controlled by the inventors, not entirely unlike the franchise for Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken. Distribution of essentially the same produce for customers worldwide. English the *lingua franca*, the franchise language. There are no doubt people who think in these conveniently commercial terms, and if English as an international language were indeed like this, there would be cause for concern. But it is not. It spreads, and as it does it gets adapted as the virtual language gets actualized in diverse ways, becomes subject to local constraints and controls.
> (p. 140; emphasis in original)

Widdowson repeats and extends his claims in two chapters of a later book (2003), one on 'The ownership of English' (based on Widdowson 1994a), and another on 'English as an international language' (based on Widdowson 1997). And as evidence of his conviction of the importance and pedagogic relevance of international developments in English, he adds a final chapter to Howatt's second edition of *The History of English Language Teaching* (Howatt with Widdowson 2004), 'A perspective on recent trends'. Here he