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## **ELF-AWARE TEACHING PRACTICES: INSIGHTS FROM PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN A BRAZILIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY**

**PRÁTICAS DE ENSINO CONSCIENTES DO ILF: INSIGHTS DE ALUNOS-PROFESSORES DE  
INGLÊS EM UMA UNIVERSIDADE PÚBLICA BRASILEIRA**

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**ABSTRACT:** English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has been widely acknowledged in diverse areas (Seidlhofer, 2011; Baker, 2015; Mauranen, 2018), particularly in English language teaching (ELT), as classrooms become more linguistically and culturally diverse. However, most EFL textbooks still prioritize cultural representations from the UK and the US and their standard varieties (Leung; Lewkowicz, 2018; Guerra et al., 2022). In the Portuguese context, state schools have also become increasingly multilingual/multicultural (Oliveira, 2023). These contexts where ELF is naturally used are ideal for promoting Intercultural Communication (IC) and Intercultural Awareness (ICA; Baker, 2015). In this study, I discuss the perspectives of a group of pre-service teachers regarding cultural and accent representations in EFL textbooks, based on a questionnaire. These participants adapted two textbook activities (grades 7 and 10th) in a workshop session to address IC and ICA. Also, further suggestions for adapting teaching materials are provided. Therefore, this paper offers additional ideas and strategies for teachers to develop and adjust their materials to better address IC and ICA.

**KEYWORDS:** English as a Lingua Franca, Intercultural Communication, EFL textbooks

**RESUMO:** A relevância do Inglês como Língua Franca (ILF) no cenário sociolinguístico atual traz uma série de implicações pedagógicas que ainda não lograram a repercussão desejada na agenda do Ensino de Língua Inglesa. Posto que a formação inicial constitui momento e espaço oportunos para que os futuros professores de inglês possam encontrar maneiras de diminuir a lacuna existente entre as descobertas das pesquisas acadêmicas e as aplicações práticas em sala de aula, o presente estudo – recorte de uma pesquisa de Doutorado – busca investigar de que maneira a abordagem transformadora para a formação de professores conscientes do ILF pode impactar as práticas pedagógicas de alunos-professores do curso de Letras/Língua Inglesa e Literaturas de uma universidade pública brasileira. O estudo em pauta apresenta-se metodologicamente ancorado na

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pesquisa-ação e foi realizado com a participação cooperativa de 15 (quinze) estagiários ao longo do período em que cursaram componentes de Estágio Curricular Supervisionado. Os dados gerados por meio das notas descritivas e reflexivas do diário da professora-pesquisadora e dos relatórios de estágio II foram submetidos à análise temática (Braun; Clarke, 2006). Alinhado às teorizações do ILF *made in Brazil* (Duboc, 2019), este trabalho fundamentou-se em autores afiliados ao campo de estudos do ILF, a exemplo de Sifakis (2007, 2009, 2017, 2018, 2021), Cavalheiro (2015, 2017), Kohn (2015, 2019), Bayyurt; Dewey (2020), e Siqueira (2020a, 2020b). Os resultados evidenciam que a partir da imersão em um processo de conscientização sobre o ILF, os alunos-professores adotaram um conjunto de macroestratégias que possibilitou a integração dessa perspectiva em suas experiências práticas de ensino, tornando-as mais alinhadas com as demandas emergentes do ensino e aprendizagem de Língua Inglesa.

**Palavras-chave:** Inglês como Língua Franca. Conscientização sobre o ILF. Formação inicial de professores de inglês.

## INTRODUCTION

The *status* of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in today's sociolinguistic landscape undeniably influences both English Language Teaching (ELT) and teacher education programs, as it is grounded in a set of assumptions that challenge the *status quo* of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. In this context, the need to transform ELT practices and establish a link between ELF and EFL has become a recurring theme in recent ELF scholarship (Sifakis, 2017, 2018; Kohn, 2015, 2019; Siqueira, 2020a, 2020b; Bayyurt; Dewey, 2020).

Yet, as Bayyurt and Dewey (2020, p. 373) point out, "While we have seen extensive and in-depth discussion of the implications of ELF for ELT, there has so far been relatively little uptake in terms of application". From my perspective as a professor in the Supervised Teaching Practicum course in the English Language and Literature program at State University of Bahia (UNEB), Department of Human Sciences (DCH), Campus VI, I have observed that, even after engaging in discussions on the social and political role of English, as proposed by theorizations of ELF *feito no Brasil*<sup>2</sup>, pre-service teachers often remain unsure about how to design and implement practices that move beyond a

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<sup>2</sup> The Brazilian academic production that delimits the *locus of enunciation* (Menezes de Souza, 2019), that is, the specific site of speech, and constructs localized knowledge of the notion of ELF, with emphasis on the critical and political nature of the English language and the processes of its teaching and learning, is referred to by Duboc (2019) as *ELF feito no Brasil*.

structuralist view of language, one rooted in models shaped by colonialities<sup>3</sup> and informed by the normative and purist logic of modernity. Similarly, Jordão (2023, p. 350) observes:

Although many initial language teacher education courses (at undergraduate level) do include discussions on the importance of critical work within their syllabus—emphasizing how languages in general, and English more specifically, can be spaces of oppression needing to undergo critical conscientization—there is a distance between discussing and implementing.

In light of these reflections, and recognizing the potential of pre-service education as a space for bridging theory and practice, this paper – part of a PhD thesis – aims to investigate how an ELF-aware teacher education model can impact the pedagogical practices of student-teachers enrolled in the English Language and Literature program at a Brazilian public university.

To this end, as a first step, I present the theoretical-practical model proposed by Sifakis (2007, 2009), which enables both in-service and pre-service teachers to engage with ELF research, understand its implications for ELT, and envision how theoretical concepts can be applied in their own teaching contexts through critical, ongoing reflection. Next, I outline macrostrategies that have the potential to support teachers in translating these theoretical insights into ELF-aware practices.

## 1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 1.1 ELF-AWARE TEACHER EDUCATION MODEL

In response to the imperative need to reform ELT practices to address the challenges posed by ELF, Sifakis (2007, 2009) proposes an ELF-aware transformative framework as a feasible approach to preparing in-service teachers to meet the new

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<sup>3</sup> Although the colonialities are interconnected, it is possible to understand them separately: the *coloniality of power* (Quijano, 2005) refers to the interrelation between modern forms of exploitation and domination, positioning the white European man in a superior role; the *coloniality of knowledge* (Lander, 2005) concerns the role of epistemology and its influence in establishing a logic that excludes non-hegemonic forms of knowledge, privileging the thought, reason, and knowledge of the Global North; and finally, the *coloniality of being* (Maldonado-Torres, 2007), which involves invisibility and dehumanization as its primary expressions, pertains to the ontological level of the colonial difference, wherein people whose practices and knowledge are not legitimized are perceived as less capable.

demands of English language teaching. This model not only fosters a shift in teacher mindsets but also supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of action plans that are both contextually meaningful and sustainable.

It is worth noting that Sifakis (2007, 2009) develops this transformative approach, drawing on the theory of transformative learning developed by the American scholar Jack Mezirow in 1978, which, in turn, is based on and expands Freire's (1970) emancipatory model of social transformation and Boyd's (1991) analytical perspective on transformative education. Essentially, Mezirow's transformative learning theory – widely applied in adult education – aims at fostering autonomy, self-directed learning, and individual empowerment by

[...] bringing participants to confront and change their established viewpoints about a particular issue by providing hands-on information and asking them to (a) realize and critically examine their assumptions, (b) openly explore new terrains by trying new roles, (c) plan a course of action, (d) acquire knowledge and skills for implementing that plan, (d) build self-confidence in the new roles and (e) become reintegrated on the basis of conditions dictated by the new perspective (Sifakis, 2009, p. 346).

Building on these foundations, the framework proposed by Sifakis (2007, 2009) offers a structured five-stage process that guides participants through critical reflection and action planning.

In the *Preparation Stage*, the goal is to help participants get to know each other and the process itself. They discuss their educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, and professional interests. Participants also reflect on the English they use – its contexts, interlocutors, and purposes – and on basic concepts such as the notion of errors, which are revisited in later stages.

The *Identification Stage* invites participants to examine their implicit beliefs, attitudes, and reactions to what Sifakis calls *primary issues* of ELF discourse. They engage with authentic examples of spoken ELF to observe its features, including lexicogrammatical choices, intelligibility, negotiation of meaning, breakdown repair, L1 influence, communication strategies, and mutual support.

During the *Awareness Stage*, participants explore *secondary issues*, such as the hegemonic role of native speakers, the concept of Standard English versus global

varieties, the legitimacy of variation, and the broader cultural and ideological dimensions of English teaching. Selected readings, discussions, and group work encourage participants to critically examine these topics in relation to their own views of English.

The *Transformation Stage* focuses on sustained reflection about the influences and choices that shape participant's professional identities. They discuss their motivations for becoming teachers, the advantages and challenges of the profession, their future aspirations, teaching contexts, and adopted methodologies. By this stage, participants are encouraged to critically evaluate to what extent their role as guardians of Standard English matters to themselves, their students, and their wider communities.

Finally, the *Planning Stage* supports participants in translating theoretical insights into real-world practice. They are guided to design, implement, and evaluate an action plan informed by the principles discussed throughout the program. This stage reintegrates them into their teaching contexts and promotes the application of an ELF-aware perspective in ways that are meaningful and appropriate.

Although this model was originally designed for in-service teacher education, Cavalheiro (2015) highlights its adaptability to pre-service contexts and identifies two key reasons for this feasibility. First, many pre-service teachers already have some level of involvement in English teaching, whether in basic-level classes, private language schools, or through tutoring. Second, even those without prior professional teaching experience typically engage with real classrooms during their practicum, beginning with observation, moving on to collaborative teaching with mentor teachers, and ultimately taking responsibility for teaching a class unit. As Cavalheiro (2015, p. 191) notes, "In both cases, trainees gain classroom experience and the opportunity to reflect on certain practices and attitudes in order to later incorporate their new perspectives into their teaching practice."

Importantly, the framework does not prescribe fixed ways of incorporating ELF into ELT. Rather, it empowers ELF-aware educators to make informed pedagogical decisions based on their specific teaching contexts (Sifakis, 2018). As Siqueira (2020a) argues, the more pluralistic the approaches to navigating the differences between EFL and ELF, the richer and more aligned with today's world ELT classrooms are likely to become.

However, it is important to acknowledge that while awareness of ELF is a necessary first step, it alone may not enable (future) teachers to implement this

perspective in their classrooms. With this in mind, and drawing on the extensive literature on the topic, I examine a set of macrostrategies intended to facilitate the integration of ELF into their own teaching contexts.

## 1.2. MACROSTRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING ELF INTO ELT

The macrostrategies for integrating ELF into EFL teaching presented here are informed by theoretical, empirical, and pedagogical knowledge from ELF research. They are situated within the postmethod condition and align with the strategic framework for second language teaching proposed by Kumaravadivelu (1994). According to him,

A macrostrategy is a broad guideline, based on which teachers can generate their own situation-specific, need-based microstrategies or classroom techniques. In other words, macrostrategies are made operational in the classroom through microstrategies (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, p. 32).

Therefore, the macrostrategies in this section offer insights to support the development of microstrategies suited to local teaching needs and contexts.

### 1.2.1 Raising students' awareness of ELF

The first macrostrategy centers on raising learners' awareness of ELF, echoing Sifakis and Bayyurt's (2018) view that being an ELF-aware teacher means empowering learners to become competent, conscious users of English. Promoting this awareness helps free students from the unrealistic goal of imitating native speakers, reducing anxiety and frustration often tied to achieving "perfect" pronunciation and accent.

By understanding that English is not the exclusive domain of native speakers and that Standard English is just one reference among many, learners can position themselves as equal participants in global communication. This shift fosters confidence and ownership of the language, enabling them to see themselves as responsible contributors to the dynamic, evolving landscape of ELF (Bordon, 2020).

To achieve this, teaching goals should be reframed to promote both metalinguistic awareness (understanding how English functions globally) and metacognitive awareness

(reflecting on one's beliefs, attitudes, and willingness to change). Sifakis (2021) suggests using reflective questions to support these dimensions – metalinguistic questions prompt learners to undertake critical reflection on the diverse ways in which English functions worldwide, while metacognitive questions encourage learners to examine and potentially revise their beliefs about English.

Teachers aiming to make their practice more ELF-aware should integrate these reflective activities alongside regular textbook tasks, enriching classroom learning with opportunities to prepare learners for real-world communicative situations beyond the classroom.

### **1.2.2 Emphasizing learner agency**

The global spread and localization of English call for pedagogical practices that recognize non-native speakers' ownership of the language, making learning more responsive to their needs and aspirations (Kohn, 2011). In this light, Kohn introduces the idea of "My English", rooted in a socioconstructivist model where all learning and communication arise from individual cognitive and emotional construction shaped by social collaboration.

This macrostrategy emphasizes learners as active agents in creatively building their own version of English, moving away from the rigid pursuit of a single standard norm. Their "ownership" of the language emerges through individual construction influenced by their experiences, goals, and social interactions (Kohn, 2015).

Developing "My English" means learners adapt and negotiate their communicative competence based on personal needs and contexts, with success criteria open to change. Embracing this approach in the classroom aligns with ELF-aware teaching by empowering learners to see themselves as legitimate owners of the language, fostering agency, emancipation, and personal communicative success (Kohn, 2022b).

### **1.2.3 Exposing learners to different English varieties**

This macrostrategy emphasizes exposing learners to a wide range of English varieties from Kachru's (1985) circles, reducing the dominance of US and UK models. Traditional EFL teaching has favored a static, monolithic view of English, overlooking its

linguistic, cultural, and functional diversity. Matsuda and Friedrich (2012) highlight the need to revisit these practices and pose the question: Which variety should serve as the instructional model?

They discuss three options: I) teaching an international variety, like the *Lingua Franca Core*, which risks being context-dependent and impractical while potentially creating new hierarchies; II) incorporating learners' own local varieties to better meet their communicative needs, though these are often undervalued and lack clear instructional models; and III) adopting a well-established, widely accepted standard variety as the main instructional model while also exposing students to other varieties to reflect English's global diversity and prepare them for variation in real-world communication.

In line with Matsuda and Friedrich (2012), there is nothing wrong with using American or British English as the main instructional variety, as is common in Expanding Circle countries. The problem arises when these are presented as the only or superior varieties, ignoring course goals and learners' needs. Relying on a single model can create the impression that it is the only correct variety and may foster negative attitudes toward other varieties of English.

Kohn (2022a) further argues that, for teaching comprehension, exposing learners to diverse varieties enhances their inferential skills and ability to handle variation in ELF interactions. However, for production, this diversity can be counterproductive due to its inherent heterogeneity and instability. Instead, he calls for rethinking the role of Standard English, moving from rigid norms to a more open orientation that supports learners' emancipatory development of speaking and writing skills.

#### **1.2.4 Prioritizing intelligibility**

This macrostrategy argues that effective communication in international ELF contexts requires prioritizing intelligibility over strict adherence to Standard English norms or imitating native accents. Pronunciation is especially important given its link to speakers' identities. However, not all pronunciation features equally affect mutual understanding.

Jenkins's (2000) *Lingua Franca Core (LFC)* identifies key phonological features essential for intelligibility, such as consonant inventory, consonant clusters, vowel length, nuclear stress, and certain phonetic requirements. Other features, like /th/ pronunciation or vowel reduction, were deliberately excluded from the LFC due to their minimal impact on intelligibility.

Importantly, adopting LFC principles encourages teachers to focus on features that truly support mutual intelligibility while respecting learners' L1-influenced accents as expressions of identity. This approach helps avoid framing non-native speech as deficient and allows for conscious, context-sensitive choices about which pronunciation features to teach (Bordon, 2020).

Furthermore, exposure to diverse English varieties can enhance intelligibility by fostering familiarity, positive attitudes, and strategies for navigating linguistic differences. Rather than teaching specific "correct" sounds, educators can help learners develop the ability to understand, respond to, and repair communication across diverse global contexts (Bayyurt, 2018).

### **1.2.5 Fostering Intercultural Awareness**

ELF communication is inherently intercultural, involving speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Baker (2015, 2018) argues that both ELF and intercultural communication studies adopt a post-structuralist view, treating language, identity, community, and culture as fluid, negotiable, and dynamic rather than fixed within national boundaries. This perspective rejects the idea that English is inherently tied to Anglophone cultures, emphasizing instead its capacity to adapt and merge with diverse cultural practices through negotiation and co-construction of meaning.

To prepare learners for such fluid, complex interactions, traditional models of Communicative Competence (CC), which focus on native-speaker norms and static cultural content, are insufficient. Instead, Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), as theorized by Byram (1997), is proposed to address this gap. ICC includes knowledge of one's own and other cultures, openness to differences, the ability to mediate between cultures, and a critical approach to cultural representations. However, ICC has been critiqued for its focus on specific national cultures, making it less suited to ELF contexts.

In response, the concept of Intercultural Awareness emerges, preserving ICC's focus on knowledge, skills, and attitudes while emphasizing the fluid, emergent relationship between language and culture in ELF communication (Baker, 2015). Intercultural awareness includes levels ranging from basic recognition of cultural practices to critical, advanced understanding of intercultural communication as inherently flexible and dynamic.

As Bordon (2020) notes, many textbooks only develop basic cultural awareness, which risks reinforcing stereotypes. More advanced levels acknowledge that cultural differences are not fixed, and misunderstandings can still occur despite knowledge of other cultures. Ultimately, intercultural awareness aims to prepare learners to navigate the hybrid, evolving cultural landscapes of real ELF interactions by decentering Anglophone norms and tailoring teaching to locally relevant communicative and cultural needs.

Building on this, Baker (2022) introduces the notion of transcultural communication, which challenges methodological nationalism by foregrounding hybrid and emergent cultural practices that transcend national boundaries. In ELF contexts, transcultural awareness complements intercultural awareness by equipping learners not only to recognize diversity but also to engage with the complex, interconnected realities of global communication.

### **1.2.6 Developing Communicative Strategies**

Successful communication in ELF contexts relies on using the language flexibly, adapting it to the interlocutor and the communicative situation. Communicative strategies are essential in this process because they help speakers construct, negotiate, and adapt meaning in intercultural interactions. Sperti (2021) notes that these strategies are employed to address linguistic and cultural challenges – such as lexical gaps or pragmatic differences – through linguistic resources as well as paralinguistic (intonation, gestures) and extralinguistic cues (eye contact), demonstrating a cooperative attitude and constant negotiation of meaning.

Therefore, it becomes clear that native-speaker norms are not decisive for mutual understanding in ELF interactions. Instead, teaching should explicitly address and raise

awareness of the pragmatic strategies widely used in these contexts. Incorporating such strategies into English language teaching materials and practices recognizes learners' own languages as valuable resources and legitimizes plurilingual practices such as code-switching (Vettorel, 2017).

Cavalheiro (2017) points out that traditional language teaching often overlooks these strategies in favor of promoting perfection and native-like performance, leaving little room for negotiation and natural communication. Thus, it is necessary to create opportunities for learners to practice these strategies in spontaneous conversations, using resources such as online corpora (VOICE, ACE), videos, or intercultural telecollaboration activities (Kohn, 2019), bringing English language teaching closer to the real demands of global communication.

Still grounded in Kumaravadivelu's (1994) principles, the macrostrategies above are not prescriptive or final. Rather than a fixed set of solutions, they are alternatives to be continuously reflected on, expanded, and refined in light of teachers' experiences, choices, actions, and the discourses they enact in the classroom.

## **2 METHOD**

### **2.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

Seeking to bridge the gap between academic research and classroom practice in teacher education, this study adopts action research as its methodological foundation. The dialectical nature of this approach, involving continuous cycles of reflection and action, shaped the development of both individual and collective understandings throughout the process (Franco, 2005). This approach allowed participants to engage critically with their own beliefs and practices while collaboratively developing context-sensitive solutions.

### **2.2 PARTICIPANTS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In this study, I served as both the course instructor and teacher-researcher, enabling the integration of classroom practice with systematic observation. This investigation involved 15 student-teachers (STs) enrolled in the English Language and Literature program at UNEB/DCH-VI. They were in their 5th semester during Supervised

Teaching Practicum I and in their 6th semester during Supervised Teaching Practicum II – two of the four 100-hour practicum courses in the program's final four semesters. Participation was voluntary, and all participants provided informed consent after being fully briefed on the study's objectives and ethical guidelines. To ensure confidentiality, they selected their own pseudonyms.

## 2.3 RESEARCH STAGES

### 2.3.1 First Stage: Familiarization and Reflection

The first stage of the research, designed to familiarize pre-service teachers with the theoretical and practical implications of the ELF teaching perspective, took place in the third unit of the Supervised Teaching Practicum I course in the second semester of 2019. It comprised eight 5-hour sessions, with sessions two through seven structured around Sifakis's (2007, 2009) five-stage ELF-aware transformative framework (see Table 1).

Table 1. Structure of the First Research Stage Sessions

Session	Phase	Description
1	Preliminary	Preliminary phase for action research (Franco, 2005).
2	Preparation	Gathering participants' beliefs, convictions, and experiences about using and teaching English.
3	Identification	Introducing how ELF functions and analyzing authentic ELF interactions to highlight its international nature.
4-5	Awareness	Reading and discussing academic texts on ELF to challenge existing perceptions.
6	Transformation	Encouraging critical reflection on changes in views about English use and teaching, as well as non-native English teacher identities.
7	Planning	Due to its complexity, this stage extended into the second research stage. This session focused on reflecting on practical implications for integrating ELF in EFL contexts, with particular attention to ELF-aware lessons analysis.
8	Evaluation	Collective evaluation of the formative process.

Source: Prepared by the Author

In addition to these sessions, participants completed 20 hours of observation in middle and high school classrooms. They were then divided into three groups of five to draft a Pedagogical Curricular Workshop proposal, as a prerequisite for Practicum I. Grounded in their theoretical discussions on ELF and drawing on the challenges they observed, each team identified a specific problem, outlined workshop's sequential stages, and designed corresponding activities and resources. Refinement, presentation, and implementation took place in the study's second stage.

### 2.3.2 Second Stage: Planning and Implementation

The second stage of the research occurred during the Supervised Teaching Practicum II course and comprised two main phases, both conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of the Second Research Stage

Phase	Unit	Duration	Focus and Activities
1	First unit of the course (second semester of 2020)	25 class hours: • Five 4-hour sessions • One 5-hour session	Presentation and discussion of a set of macrostrategies for effectively integrating ELF-informed theories and concepts into classroom practice.
2	Second unit of the course (first semester of 2021)	30 class hours: six sessions (each with 3 synchronous + 2 asynchronous hours)	Planning, promotion, and implementation of virtual Pedagogical Curricular Workshops.

Source: Prepared by the Author

When engaged in the cycle of pedagogical curricular workshops, each group developed three action plans, totaling 8 class hours. During the planning and refinement stages, STs were encouraged to tap into their individual potential, move beyond pre-set answers, and collaboratively design teaching strategies aligned with the sociolinguistic realities of English.

Consistent with a core principle of action research – which emphasizes the researcher’s active involvement at every stage of the project (Franco, 2005) – I observed selected segments of the pedagogical workshops conducted by each of the three groups.

#### 2.4 INSTRUMENTS AND ANALYSIS

To meet the specific aims of this study, the phases of thematic analysis (Braun; Clarke, 2006), designed to identify, categorize, and report patterns and emerging themes, were applied to a data set comprising entries from the teacher-researcher’s journal as well as materials from the Practicum II Report related to the workshops. In the following section, I describe the ELF-aware teaching practices developed and enacted throughout these workshops, and then discuss how the effects of an ELF-aware teacher education model resonated in the ST’s pedagogical actions.

To protect participants’ identities, I refer to the workshops generically as Workshop 1, Workshop 2, and Workshop 3.

### 3 AN OUTLINE OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ELF-AWARE PRACTICES

Workshop 1, designed by Esther, Maria, Nathan, Penny, and Renata (hereafter Group 1), aimed to foster high school students' autonomy in learning English through apps, games, audiovisual materials, comics, and music, while highlighting ELF-related issues throughout the activities. In their Practicum II report, when discussing Krashen's hypotheses, the group noted that:

awareness of ELF is directly linked to the affective filter hypothesis, since discovering that they do not need to imitate native speakers to become competent users of English can boost learners' motivation and self-confidence, while reducing anxiety, as their goals may seem more attainable. (Group 1/ Practicum II Report)

With this in mind, on the first day of the workshop, before diving into the main topic – using apps and games to learn English – the group ran an interactive activity on the Mentimeter app featuring questions on key ELF-related concepts. During this discussion, they defined and critically examined the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker', questioned the relevance of sounding like a native English speaker, and addressed the diversity of English accents.

They then played the video Foreign English Accents<sup>4</sup>, showcasing native and non-native English speakers from countries such as China, Brazil, India, the United States, Italy, Indonesia, Spain, and Iraq. This was followed by a discussion on English varieties, intelligibility, and language ownership. Drawing from the slides used to support the discussion, the group made it clear that intelligibility does not depend on standard English or native accents; rather, the focus should be on clear communication. They also highlighted English's role as a global lingua franca and explained why it no longer fits neatly within the category of a foreign language.

On the second day of Workshop 1, I had the opportunity to closely observe the group. Maria opened the session by encouraging participants to see English as a global resource belonging to all its users, challenging the idea that it is tied exclusively to the U. S. or the U. K. After this moment of ELF-awareness, the group discussed how platforms

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<sup>4</sup> Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpcG-xqPgRM>>. Accessed May 30, 2021.

like YouTube, streaming services, and social media can support autonomous English learning.

Penny recommended various YouTube channels for both formal instruction and exposure to linguistic and cultural diversity. Maria also highlighted the usefulness of TED Talks as learning tools. As an example, they played *3 Ways to Speak English*<sup>5</sup>, in which African-American speaker Jamila Lyiscott reflects on the variations in her own use of English when communicating with friends, classmates, and her parents. The speaker challenges Eurocentric ideals and celebrates linguistic diversity, emphasizing that English is multifaceted. After an interactive Kahoot activity based on the video's vocabulary and content, Penny connected some of Lyiscott's points to earlier discussion on ELF, noting that

[...] even in a native speaker's discourse, it's important to recognize that linguistic variation exists depending on the communicative situation. Just like here in Brazil—such a vast country—Portuguese varies a lot! [...] So, can we say these variations are incorrect? What happens with Jamila's English, and also with Brazilian Portuguese, helps us understand what's happening with English worldwide! (Excerpt from Penny's statement/ Teacher-Researcher's Journal)

On the third day, the group focused on learning English through music and introduced different apps that support this approach. According to the methodology outlined in their action plan, the group not only emphasized how music can improve listening and vocabulary, but also pointed out how it can expose learners to English's linguistic and cultural diversity.

To explore this, the group presented non-native English-speaking artists from various cultural backgrounds, showing their photos, nationalities, and interesting facts about them. They then played the music video *Cheap Thrills*<sup>6</sup> by Australian singer Sia, featuring Jamaican artist Sean Paul, and led an interactive activity using the "Open the Box" feature on the Wordwall platform. This activity addressed metalinguistic and

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<sup>5</sup> Available at <[https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila\\_lyiscott\\_3\\_ways\\_to\\_speak\\_english](https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english)>. Accessed May 30, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYh-n7EOtMA>>. Accessed May 25, 2021.

metacognitive questions related to the native and non-native English varieties as demonstrated by the artists.

Workshop 2 was facilitated by Gabriela, Helena, Marcelo, Paulo, and Viviane (Group 2). Its main objective was to raise awareness among high school students about the importance of learning English through the lens of ELF, using digital technologies to promote innovative, interactive, and dynamic teaching. In the introductory section of the Practicum II report, Group 2 justified their choice of topic by noting that this perspective remains largely absent from English classes. They argued that an ELF-oriented approach could increase student's interest in learning the language, as it helps deconstruct linguistic ideologies that often hinder their progress towards their goals.

As the central theme of Workshop 2, ELF was systematically integrated into every activity. On the first day, right after a brief introduction, the group presented key ELF-related concepts to set the stage for upcoming activities. After providing an overview of terms such as standard English, native/non-native speaker, intelligibility, World Englishes, interculturality, stereotypes, and communicative strategies, the group led the "Open the Box" activity on the Wordwall platform aimed to assess participants' understanding of the terms, as well as to assess their English proficiency level. As part of the asynchronous component of the session, participants were asked to watch *Chimamanda Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story*<sup>7</sup> and take note on points they found most compelling for discussion in the next session.

I joined the second day of the workshop. When I entered the virtual room, the discussion of the video was already underway. As participants shared their insights, the facilitators enriched the dialogue, fostering a deeper understanding of stereotypes, cultural representation, and diversity. While discussing stereotypes, Marcelo stated the following reflection:

[...] we have the tradition of Carnival in Brazil, which takes place in February, but foreigners often believe there's Carnival every day throughout the year. So, they generalize that every Brazilian knows how to samba and that Brazil is synonymous with parties and Carnival. These generalizations are harmful because, besides being inaccurate – since Carnival doesn't happen year-round – many Brazilian don't feel represented by this tradition or even dislike it, which can led to misunderstandings

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<sup>7</sup> Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC-bh1YARsc>>. Accessed May 30, 2021.

in intercultural interactions. (Excerpt from Marcelo's statement/ Teacher-Researcher's journal)

Next, participants completed a Google Forms activity addressing metalinguistic and metacognitive questions prompted by the video. Gabriela then introduced the topic of English varieties. She began comparing American and British English, as well as European and Brazilian Portuguese, before expanding the conversation to include global varieties of English – not just naming but legitimizing Jamaican English, Indian English, South African English, Canadian English, among others.

To illustrate the topic, the facilitators presented flags from twelve countries representing Kachru's (1985) concentric circles, including the USA, Portugal, Brazil, South Korea, Colombia, and India. Next, they carried out an activity based on excerpts of English songs by artists from those countries. Participants were asked to analyze lyrics and melodies and identify their country of origin. It was emphasized that songs reflect the unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds of artists, serving as meaningful expressions of identity around the world.

In the final activity of the day, Viviane presented Kachru's concentric circles diagram and offered a detailed explanation of the theory, while also addressing common criticisms of the model. For the asynchronous task, participants were asked to research a country from one of the circles and post the most relevant findings on an interactive Padlet wall, highlighting the role of English in that country.

On the third and final day of Workshop 2, facilitators revisited ELF concepts through interactive activities based on movie and TV clips created with the ISLCollective platform, as well as games developed on Kahoot. They also dedicated time to sharing apps that could support participants in learning English independently.

Workshop 3, organized by Amora, Bruna, Juliana, Katy, and Lenir (Group 3), invited first-year high school students to reflect interactively on the contemporary use of English, emphasizing its role as a global lingua franca. With this in mind, the group aimed to: "identify participants' possible learning blocks and beliefs, challenge the ideal of linguistic perfection, and encourage them to be confident as users of English, understanding it as a diverse and dynamic language" (Group 3/ Practicum II Report).

On the first day of the workshop, I observed Group 3 putting their planned methodology into practice. To prompt discussion on the relevance of English in contemporary society and, more specifically, raise awareness of ELF, the group used the ‘Random Wheel’, an interactive tool available on the Wordwall platform. Even as the initial task, it encouraged lively and meaningful engagement.

The next activity involved the music video *How Would You Think That Love*<sup>8</sup> by the international pop group Now United. Each group member, representing a different country, was introduced, opening space for a discussion on the linguistic and cultural diversity of English and how such diversity is shaped by individual background and experience. Highlights from the discussion included:

Now United engages in truly intercultural interaction. Regardless of one’s L1 or cultural background, English can be used to express identity. The group embodies this diversity, each member communicates in English while proudly showcasing their national origins to the world. (Excerpt from Lenir’s statement/ Teacher-Researcher’s journal)

It’s a real mix of cultures. Given this diversity, we can’t claim that “correct” English is the one spoken by native speakers. Now United reflects global reality—people from various nations using English to interact. What matters is being understood, not mimicking native speakers. (Excerpt from Juliana’s statement/ Teacher-Researcher’s journal)

Participants then engaged in an interactive Wordwall activity (Open the Box), where they shared reflections prompted by the video. Katy followed by linking the nationalities of Now United members to Kachru’s concentric circles. After a brief explanation of the theory, participants were assigned an asynchronous task in which they had to research a country within one of Kachru’s circles and post the following information on Padlet: (i) which circle the country belongs to; (ii) justification for this categorization; and (iii) two interesting facts about the country.

On day two, after participants had shared their Padlet posts, the group used the submitted cultural facts to initiate a discussion on stereotypes and generalizations, which expanded into broader themes of cultural diversity and interculturality.

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<sup>8</sup> Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTbYpSIF22s>>. Accessed May 25, 2021.

Next, the group used the song *Cheap Thrills*, by a native English-speaking singer featuring a non-native English-speaking singer, to explore native speaker ideology and standard language norms. The Jamaican accent featured in the song led to rich discussion on norm decentralization and intelligibility, followed by a Kahoot quiz with true-or-false questions.

For the asynchronous component, participants were asked to find and share on Padlet a video of a non-native English speaker, answering the following questions: *Why did you choose this video? What did you think of the speaker's English? and What was the video about?*

On the final day, Group 3 reviewed participants' Padlet contributions, prompting metalinguistic and metacognitive reflection on non-native English usage. To enrich the discussion, they played the video *Brazilian celebrities speaking English*<sup>9</sup>, followed by new guiding questions to enhance participants understanding of English language diversity.

#### **4 DISCUSSION**

Given the outline of the STs' pedagogical practices, it is clear that all groups made a great effort to integrate the ELF perspective into the activities planned for the three-day workshop. They explored various macrostrategies for incorporating ELF, implementing different microstrategies and the using of a range of online tools and resources. Although the macro/microstrategies are often intertwined, Table 3 presents them separately to offer a clear look on the emerging themes.

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<sup>9</sup> Available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTbYpSIF22s>>. Accessed May 10, 2021.

Table 3. Macro/Microstrategies applied in the workshops

MACROSTRATEGIES	MICROSTRATEGIES
<b>I. Raising students' awareness of ELF</b>	i) Introduction of ELF as a concept and perspective; ii) Reflection on the global spread of English; iii) Use of metalinguistic and metacognitive questions; iv) Reconceptualization of the reasons for learning English;
<b>II. Emphasizing learner agency</b>	v) Identification of learners' needs and learning goals; vi) Encouragement of students' autonomy in the English learning process; vii) Promotion of English as a global resource;
<b>III. Exposing learners to different English varieties</b>	viii) Reflection on the dynamic and adaptable nature of languages; ix) Exposure to the broad variety of English, including both hegemonic and non-hegemonic countries; x) Presentation of successful and multilingual non-native English speakers as role models; xi) Use of authentic materials;
<b>IV. Prioritizing intelligibility</b>	xii) Focus on intelligible communication; xiii) Decentralization of linguistic normativity;
<b>V. Fostering intercultural awareness</b>	xiv) Deconstruction of traditional cultural categories; xv) Integration of cultural elements from different parts of the world; xvi) Discussion of stereotypes and generalizations; xvii) Reference to learners' own cultural context;
<b>VI. Developing communication strategies</b>	xviii) Discussion of the importance of communicative strategies.

Source: Alves, 2024

Most of the themes identified were shared across the three workshops. All groups were committed to explicitly raising participants' awareness of ELF. On the first day of each workshop, one of the initial actions taken by the STs was to introduce the concept of

ELF and briefly discuss related issues. In order to emphasize the status of English as a global lingua franca and the spread of non-native English speakers worldwide, Groups 2 and 3 presented Kachru's (1985) model of concentric circles. Group 1, in turn, highlighted that English can no longer be viewed solely as a foreign language, given its dominant global role.

All three groups posed metalinguistic and metacognitive questions to guide reflections throughout the workshops. In each case, it was clear that facilitators encouraged participants to reconsider their motivations for learning English and reflect on the meaning of aiming for native-like pronunciation. As a result, participants reportedly felt more comfortable, motivated, and confident in their learning.

Aligned with the macrostrategy of emphasizing learner agency, the groups expressed, from the very beginning of the workshops, a genuine interest in understanding participants' motivations for joining the workshops, their reasons for studying English, and the significance of this language in their lives. This seemingly simple initiative demonstrated a clear commitment to creating space for learners to reflect on their goals and take responsibility of their learning processes.

While many learners feel connected to the global community and aim to use English as a lingua franca, others may also aspire to align with more privileged Anglo-American varieties. As Kohn (2015, 2022b) argues, learners construct their own version of English based on their personal requirements. Therefore, teachers must navigate the tension between global realities, local needs, and personal aspiration, incorporating these elements into curricula, methodologies, and assessments (Selvi, Galloway; Rose, 2023).

Still focusing on learner agency, Workshop 1 centered on encouraging learners' autonomy in constructing their own linguistic knowledge. Workshop 2, particularly on its final day, also addressed this goal. Both groups introduced a variety of resources – websites, apps, games, streaming platforms, social media, music, series, and films – to demonstrate that learners can take responsibility for their own learning beyond the classroom.

Group 1 also emphasized the idea that English belongs to a global community rather than being exclusively “owned” by inner-circle countries. The facilitators in this group appeared to have transcended feelings of linguistic inferiority imposed by hegemonic norms by actively rejecting native-speakerism and embracing English as a pluricentric,

dynamic language. This stance aimed to empower learners by validating their identities and promoting confidence in their language learning journeys.

A key macrostrategy present in all workshops was exposing learners to different English varieties. Each group contributed to raise participants' awareness of the linguistic diversity within English by incorporating models from the Kachru's three concentric circles, underscoring the dynamic and evolving nature of languages. In Workshop 1, facilitators highlighted that even within the UK and the US, English is spoken in variety of ways. Jamila's TED talk was particularly impactful, providing a native speaker's perspective that reinforced the complexity of English and the impracticality of adhering to a single global standard.

The groups integrated multiple English varieties into listening tasks, not with the goal of teaching their specific features, but rather to raise awareness of linguistic diversity. This approach helps prevent learners from perceiving unfamiliar varieties as incorrect or inferior. As Selvi, Galloway, and Rose (2023, p. 34) argue:

Unlike many other foreign languages where 'native speakers' are in majority and may serve as the ultimate (and in some cases, only) future target interlocutor in communication, the situation in English is drastically different. [...] If materials, curricula, and assessment represent only 'native English speakers' from a particular Inner Circle country (e.g., the United States), or an exclusive focus on 'native English speakers' from Inner Circle countries communicating with 'non-native speakers', it means that they are not in sync with the current realities of English users around the world.

To help learners set realistic and achievable goals while reconsidering the ideal of native-like fluency, all groups presented successful, multicompetent non-native English speakers as role models. The videos featured individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Brazilian celebrities, alongside music by globally recognized artists such as Now United<sup>10</sup>.

To incorporate real-world diversity into the classroom, the groups used authentic materials such as YouTube videos, TED talks, music videos, popular songs, social media, blogs, and other resources. Unlike the view that inadvertently considers authentic

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<sup>10</sup>In addition to their songs, Now United members, like other public figures, share behind-the-scenes videos, interviews, and extra content on social media. These authentic materials offer opportunities to explore how they communicate in English in informal contexts, highlighting the diversity of linguistic styles and accents among them.

materials as those including native English speakers in contexts where Standard English is the norm (e.g., real newspapers, magazine articles, horoscopes, and advertisements), I am in line with Widdowson (1994), understanding that materials are truly authentic when they are rooted in the learners' own contexts of use.

Another common theme across all workshops was the emphasis on intelligibility. The groups reinforced that effective communication does not depend on sounding like a native speaker, but rather on conveying a clear message. Learners were encouraged to value their own voices and linguistic identities, which contributed, at times implicitly, to challenging native-speaker norms and promoting greater acceptance of variation.

It is true that many teachers are trained to correct every deviation from standard norms, often mirroring their own learning experiences. However, adopting a more flexible approach to language use promotes risk-taking, learning from mistakes, and the development of communicative competence.

Fostering intercultural awareness was another recurring theme, particularly emphasized in Workshops 2 and 3. Group 1 focused on raising awareness of cultural diversity and suggesting ways to engage with other cultures, but fell short of developing a deeper, more advanced level of intercultural awareness. As Baker (2018, p. 33) explains, intercultural awareness encompasses

[...] different levels of awareness moving from a general or basic awareness of communication as a cultural practice, to a more critical awareness of varied intercultural communicative practices and finally an advanced level of intercultural awareness where flexibility, dynamism and complexity are the norm.

This limited initial engagement reflects what Selvi, Galloway, and Rose (2023), describe as a common first step in intercultural work, in which teachers compare American or British cultures with students' own. However, the authors warn that "[...] this intuitive first step may lead to essentialised understandings of cultures and nationalistic characteristics of individuals" (Selvi; Galloway; Rose, 2023, p. 48).

In contrast, the practices observed in Groups 2 and 3 revealed more refined intercultural lenses, aligned with the idea of deconstructing traditional categories of

culture. These groups moved beyond static and superficial representations, fostering a more dynamic, critical, and context-sensitive understanding of cultural diversity. Both workshops intentionally integrated cultural elements from different parts of the world. Workshop 2 addressed cultural identities through songs by artists of diverse nationalities, while Workshop 3 explored the cultural diversity of Now United members and engaged participants in discussion about countries represented across Kachru's three concentric circles.

Demonstrating an awareness of the fluid and dynamic nature of culture, the groups engaged critically with stereotypes and generalizations. In Workshop 2, Chimamanda Adichie's video provided a springboard for discussing the danger of single stories. In Workshop 3, participants shared cultural facts – many of them stereotypical – about different countries. The facilitators responded by acknowledging the existence of such views and encouraging critical reflection, as recommended by Baker (2015). Building on these discussions, both groups addressed the complexity of intercultural interactions, promoting deeper reflection on the diversity and richness of cultures worldwide.

Throughout the workshops, all groups demonstrated sensitivity to learners' cultural backgrounds. By including Brazilian cultural references, showcasing varieties of Brazilian Portuguese, drawing comparisons between Brazilian and European Portuguese, and featuring successful Brazilians communicating in English, they fostered a sense of representation. This approach helped learners feel empowered and valued, creating a more inclusive environment and encouraging greater openness to exploring other cultures.

The macrostrategy of developing communicative strategies was explicitly addressed only in Workshop 2. On the first day, Group 2 underlined their relevance to intercultural competence and provided a few illustrative examples, but no practical applications were observed.

By drawing on the methodological procedures implemented throughout the workshops, this study showed that the experience not only prompted a significant shift in the STs' perceptions of English usage, teaching, and learning, but also enabled them to engage with ELF in a more concrete and practical way. Their growing awareness of this

perspective suggests that they are likely to make informed and reflective pedagogical choices in their future teaching contexts.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study aimed to contribute to the initial education of a new generation of teachers who are not only aware of ELF, but also confident in engaging with the linguistic and cultural diversity it brings into the classroom. By adopting an ELF-oriented perspective that fosters learner motivation and engagement, embraces linguistic and cultural diversity, and promotes more equitable and inclusive approaches to language education, participants demonstrated a growing awareness of the potential to reimagine English teaching and ground it in socially responsive pedagogical practices.

In this light, the findings offer a valuable contribution to the ongoing dialogue on integrating ELF into pre-service teacher education by advocating for pedagogical practices that reflect the plural, dynamic, and interconnected nature of today's globalized world. The outcomes of this research are especially relevant for fostering a critical, transformative, and proactive stance among pre-service teachers, supporting them in moving beyond abstract theoretical debates and enabling them to make autonomous, well-informed decisions about how ELF-related issues can be meaningfully integrated into their teaching. It is also hoped that this study may serve as a catalyst for further research, particularly on the long-term impacts of ELF-informed teacher education on classroom practices and educational policies.

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