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THE RELEVANCE OF ELF IN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

First and foremost it is essential that we examine in detail what precisely is the relevance of ELF theory and research in the professional development of language teachers, for both novice and experienced practitioners. Without doubt the most important aspect of ELF research from the point of view of ELT is what it tells us about effective lingua franca interaction. The findings of ELF researchers, as has often been commented (see e.g. Jenkins 2007; Kirkpatrick 2010; Mauranen 2013; Seidlhofer 2011), have major implications for the way we model English in language learning settings. In short, the evidence from ELF corpora shows very clearly that the dynamic and variable way speakers in lingua franca interactions tend to use and adapt language resources is very different from the way pedagogic materials present 'target' language structures and lexis, i.e. as discrete items of largely fixed standardized language norms (see Seidlhofer, this volume). This raises far reaching questions about the way language and communication are conceptualized in ELT, with some major rethinking required on the nature of the syllabus content in professional qualifications and teaching awards.

The relevance of ELF in language teacher education lies in both the language content of courses – that is, in relation to the way language awareness and language analysis are dealt with – as well as the way methodology is presented. In relation to methodology, a particular aspect of current pedagogic practice that needs some rethinking in light of ELF is the relationship between English and other languages in the students' and teacher's repertoires. Traditionally, in communicative language teaching and teacher education there has been a strong monolingual orientation to language in the classroom, with activities such as translation and code-switching either marginalized or even prohibited. A more plurilingual methodological approach would be far better suited to incorporating ELF in teacher education, especially in light of Jenkins' (2015) argument that ELF requires a retheorization that properly foregrounds its fundamentally multilingual nature. Our interest in this chapter though is predominantly with the language focus work of pre-service teacher education courses and with how linguistic and pedagogic awareness can continue to develop through in-service teacher development initiatives.

As discussed at some length in accounts of the pedagogic impact of ELF in practice (see e.g. Dewey 2012, 2014), however, the way ELT has conventionally

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tended to conceive subject knowledge in teacher education is no longer relevant or appropriate when we take into account the global lingua franca role of English. This, together with continued and widespread imbalance between practical teaching skills and relevant theory (at the expense of theory) found in many initial language teaching awards (see e.g. Hobbs 2013), makes it paramount that we a) investigate current levels of awareness of ELF among practising teachers, and b) examine ways in which ELF can be better integrated in language teacher education.

The number of publications focusing specifically on ELF and pedagogy has grown substantially in recent years. To date there have been several noteworthy projects that have begun to examine in depth some of the ways in which ELF can be incorporated in teacher education programmes. Bayyurt and Akcan (2015), includes several contributions that report on current initiatives to integrate ELF into the teacher education curriculum (see also Bowles and Cogo, 2015; Vettorel, 2015 for recent edited volumes on ELF and language pedagogy). These are undertaken from a range of different perspectives, but each shares the objective of moving the discussion beyond the 'implications' of ELF for pedagogy. Many of these comment on the importance of awareness raising as an initial impetus, but increasingly scholars are turning their attention towards considering practical ways in which ELF can have more impact on pedagogy (See e.g. Sifakis, 2014 on adopting a "transformative perspective" in teacher education; see Blair, 2015 on the concept of "a post-native, multilingual model" for teacher education).

In this chapter we discuss the integration of an ELF perspective in language teacher education. We focus on both initial teaching awards for novice teachers and ongoing professional development among experienced practitioners. We begin by discussing attempts to modify the syllabus content of initial teaching awards in the UK by introducing ELF in the curriculum, before then considering ways in which teachers can gain better understanding of and ultimately pedagogic insight from ELF by engaging in longer term professional development initiatives.

CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN IMPLICATION AND APPLICATION

In our view, if English language teachers are to become aware of ELF and associated implications for classroom practice, it is probably most productive to introduce all relevant concepts during pre-service training. This is essential given the current predominance for short, intensive teacher training courses, which may well have very little scope for theory and reflection, and may well be the only formal teacher preparation that teachers receive.

Many English language teachers – and in fact a considerable number of trainers – do not seek or have opportunity for further formal training in linguistics or pedagogy for years after their initial qualification courses, if at all (see especially Ferguson and Donno 2003). The institutional culture in many ELT settings tends not to facilitate this: practising teachers lead very busy professional lives, with

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many demands on their time and resources, often with little or no financial support offered to fund further training. In addition, research is often perceived by the profession as belonging to a purely academic domain, having little to no direct relevance to the classroom. Theorists seldom make concrete recommendations that relate to teachers' professional concerns beyond what might be considered quite broad 'implications'. Research findings can also appear inconclusive, often contradictory, and sometimes counterintuitive, thus making it particularly difficult for teachers to integrate into their existing knowledge base and frames of reference. This in effect leads to a state in which the empirical research findings remain inaccessible to many practising teachers, with the result that many of the more recent studies are at risk of being ineffectively applied or not applied at all by large numbers of practitioners.

This is of particular importance when we consider the take up of ELF in relation to pedagogic practice. For example, one recent study of several experienced London-based English language teachers' willingness to put ELF principles into practice (Patsko 2013) revealed attitudes of mild interest but general complacence:

> "I'd heard [the term 'English as a Lingua Franca'] being used once or twice in the staffroom but not as often so I thought OK, it's not that relevant here, I don't hear people talking about it much, do I really need to know about this?"

This is probably still largely representative of many language teachers currently teaching in English language schools in the UK. (This is likely also to be the case for large numbers of practising language teachers worldwide, but for our purposes we will concentrate on the current situation in the UK). Typically to date, and despite the introduction of ELF in a growing number of language teacher education curriculums, teachers are only really exposed to the concepts of ELF during Master's degree programmes, if at all. Even where there is awareness of ELF, this is not readily translated into classroom practices (see e.g. Dewey 2012; Lopriore and Vettorel 2015).

THE APPEARANCE OF ELF IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHING AWARDS

In recent years the syllabus guidelines and specifications of the two main initial English language teaching awards administered in the UK (but widely available worldwide), generally referred to as CELTA and CertTESOL, have been updated to include specific reference to ELF and/or Global Englishes. Both schemes are 'certificate' qualifications, i.e. entry level awards for novice teachers with little or no prior teaching experience. Our reasons for focusing particularly on these awards are twofold. Firstly, both authors have been directly involved in the tutoring and administration of these courses in the past and are thus very familiar with these teacher training contexts. Secondly, these teaching awards are a popular way for teachers to enter the profession quickly and in theory 'qualify' to teach English – potentially anywhere in the world. The certificate courses are widely recognized internationally, and despite various shortcomings

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they continue to exert considerable (arguably disproportionate) influence on ELT globally. The principles and practices promoted on Cambridge and Trinity teaching awards have long been valued elsewhere, even if in many contexts these may be ill-suited to local educational conditions.

Typical Course Structure

We now consider in more detail the Trinity College London-accredited CertTESOL award. CertTESOL courses commonly take place within a private language school, last 4 weeks (full-time) and include both theoretical study and assessed teaching practice, balance of which is prescribed by Trinity in its Validation Requirements, the content of which is broadly outlined in the CertTESOL Syllabus (available at www.trinitycollege.co.uk). While the criteria in these documents must be shown to be met in order for CertTESOL providers to be formally accredited, individual training centres have a large degree of freedom in how they structure their timetable, as well as how they design and assess course assignments (including the practicum element).

The study reported in Patsko (2014) was carried out at a central London school. The CertTESOL course at the school comprised the following features:

- **90 hours of supervised "input sessions".** These cover language analysis, Communicative methodology and, occasionally, course admin.
- **6 hours of observed assessed Teaching Practice (TP).** This comprises 10 individual lessons, with lessons gradually increasing from 20 to 60 minutes' duration.
- **Mandatory guided observations of experienced and fellow novice teachers.** These are included within the course timetable to encourage trainees to become critical observers of methodological principles in peers' teaching, which could potentially also inform their own practice.
- **3 coursework projects**:
    - Teaching Practice Portfolio & Guided Observation Journal, comprising lesson plans, post-lesson reflections and tutors' notes for all 10 assessed lessons, notes on other lessons they had observed, and an overall self-evaluation of progress;
    - The Learner Profile, an extensive needs analysis of one student selected from the trainees' TP classes with recommendations for the student's future study and language development, including a 5-hour course plan;
    - The Unknown Language Journal, in which trainees participate in 4 hours of lessons, studying a language completely unknown to any of them, then submitted as a record of their experience and with written commentary.
- **45+ hours of extra study.** Trainees were expected to devote time outside the course schedule for independent work, preparing their lessons and course assignments.
- **2 Language Awareness tests.** These tested the trainees' theoretical awareness of English grammar, vocabulary and phonology, as well as how to

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teach these (according to established principles of a broadly communicative approach).

On such intensive courses, there is typically a large amount of syllabus content to squeeze into a very crowded timetable, with very little time to engage in any given topic in depth. Trainees are therefore also expected to undertake a reasonable amount of autonomous work to keep up with these course demands.

Integrating ELF into a CertTESOL Course: A Case Study

In June 2013, Trinity published a new Syllabus and new Validation Requirements (Trinity College London, 2013), meaning training centres had to re-evaluate and potentially amend their course structures and content to ensure continued accreditation as CertTESOL providers. One key amendment was the introduction of ELF as a sub-requirement of the Language Awareness unit, which had just been mentioned for the first time in the CertTESOL Syllabus as follows:

> "Successful trainees must demonstrate the following learning outcomes in the context of initial training: [...] awareness of geographical varieties of English, *including the emergence of English as a lingua franca*, and associated implications for teaching" (Trinity, 2013, p. 11. Our italics)

At the school reported on in Patsko (2014), this entailed reconfiguring the existing timetable so that some input time could be assigned to introducing ELF, as awareness of ELF would now need to be demonstrated in trainees' TP and in their Learner Profile assignment.

In principle, the inclusion of ELF in the syllabus is a good indication that ELF is beginning to generate some impact at a policy level. As a result, we might expect this to begin being reflected in practice among teacher educators. However, in the case of the CertTESOL syllabus, the appearance of ELF occurs alongside the term "geographical varieties", with the official guidelines using the words "variation" and "variety" more or less interchangeably, with no clarification or definition. In addition, no further guidance is given in the documentation about what the "associated implications for teaching" might be. This is extremely problematic, as there is a clear risk that ELF and "geographical varieties" become conflated in the minds of practitioners. There is no way of knowing whether the syllabus writers or trainers on CertTESOL courses will approach the topic of ELF in a way that is compatible with an ELF perspective. If we take a closer look at the syllabus, this becomes even more apparent.

Only very cursory, often ambiguous, mention of ELF characterizes the course documentation, which is evidently NES oriented. For example, the phonological awareness trainees are expected to demonstrate when evaluating students' receptive and productive abilities includes "decoding natural native speech" (Trinity, 2013: 13), and "producing appropriate intonation patterns" (*ibid*.: 15). Trainees are expected to use "basic contrastive analysis" to diagnose and *correct* "pronunciation errors", but the Syllabus does not identify (or require trainees to identify) an appropriate reference model for such analysis. The following

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passages (Trinity, 2013: 15-16) are a strong indication that making reference to ELF does not, sadly, coincide with an ELF perspective on language and communication.

> "In considering applicants *for whom English is a second or foreign language*, Course Providers must ascertain that the applicants' levels of spoken and written English are of a *sufficiently high standard to enable them to perform the function of role models as language teachers*. [...] It is accepted that teachers from many parts of the world with English as an additional or foreign language may have distinctive features of pronunciation, grammar and/or vocabulary which conform to the model of English prevalent in their own linguistic/cultural group."
> [Our italics]

This text on the one hand legitimates NNES users, seeing them as speakers of English in their own right, but then swiftly goes on to delegitimize them by assuming that their speech poses an intelligibility risk.

> However, Course Providers must recognise that trainees who are to be awarded Trinity's CertTESOL qualification are likely to be employed as teachers of English, not only within their linguistic/cultural group, but beyond it. It is essential that the trainees' language is *intelligible to a wide variety of linguistic groups*. It is important that this factor is taken into consideration when setting linguistic entry requirements. *Trainees can be failed by Trinity* on the moderator's recommendation *if it is decided that their standard of English is significantly below that required for a teacher of English*.
> [Our italics]

Note that only NNES course applicants are singled out here as being potential "sub-standard" users of English: potentially unable to "perform the function of role models as language teachers"; and potentially intelligible "only within their linguistic/cultural group". This suggests of course that the syllabus writers are entirely unaware of (or choose to ignore) ELF-related research that finds it is NS linguistic/cultural groups that most often compromise intelligibility among multilingual groups (see especially Alharbi, 2015).

Introducing ELF to Trainee Teachers

In such a short, intensive course, with so much syllabus content to be covered – awareness of which then needs to be demonstrated by trainees in TP – adding new subject matter poses an immense challenge for teacher educators. At the school described above, it was ultimately decided to change the requirements for contrastive analysis in the phonology section of the Learner Profile assignment so that trainees could, if appropriate, compare their chosen student's pronunciation with the requirements of the Lingua Franca Core (Jenkins, 2000) instead of with British or American accents, the reference models trainees were normally expected to use. This entailed the inclusion of and a short input session (only 45 minutes) about ELF on the penultimate morning of the course, as it was

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felt that no extra space could be afforded at the beginning of the course for anything other than existing sessions (a point we take up critically below).

A number of considerations were taken into account when designing the ELF input session:

- Trainees were likely to be overwhelmed and tired by this stage of a very intensive course. Most would have begun the CertTESOL with no prior teaching experience. They would have just submitted their final assignments and some would be teaching their final assessed lesson later that day.
- 45 minutes is very little to introduce the concept of ELF to trainee teachers, or to accommodate the extent and nature of topics for discussion which would inevitably arise.
- It was necessary to reduce and simplify terminology used in the session, both for the trainees (who have already been introduced to dozens of new concepts, terms, abbreviations, etc.) and for the tutors, who varied in their knowledge of sociolinguistics and phonology.
- Not all tutors worked on all courses. Depending on which tutors were assigned to a given course, trainees might have encountered ELF concepts much earlier than in this new Week 4 input session.

Given the need to be selective and succinct, PowerPoint slides were created with accompanying tasks for trainees (see Fig. 1, below), focusing predominantly on issues of phonology, as this was the specialist area of the tutor who prepared the slides, as well as the area tutors were most likely to be familiar and comfortable with (as opposed to, say, discourse features). More tasks were prepared than it was possible to cover in a 45-minute slot in order to allow flexibility and give tutors freedom to select which would be most relevant and engaging for a particular group of trainees. The slides were designed to create interest in the concept of diversity in English, and to pose questions about the identification of a suitable model of English for pedagogy. After generating interest in the global scope and diversity of English and raising awareness of the implications of this diversity for language teachers, participants were asked to discuss how an ELF perspective would contrast with a more traditional EFL one.

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So where do we go from here?

Concept	EFL	ELF
Goal		
Model		
L1 transfer		
Variation		
Accent		
Intelligibility		

Fig. 1 Example task created for the input session on ELF

The purpose here was to invite trainee teachers to reconsider their existing perceptions regarding lesson objectives, and to do so by contrasting what might be involved in adopting an ELF perspective as opposed to a traditional EFL one. Trainees were also invited to discuss what implications linguistic diversity in English and ELF research findings might have for the way we conceive teaching goals and models, the role of transfer in language learning, as well as the relationship between variation and intelligibility.

Supporting the Trainers

A number of considerations were also taken into account regarding the trainers themselves, many of whom had completed their own training years before, and who may not have kept abreast of developments in applied linguistics. Furthermore, at least one of the five available trainers for this course reported that he was not particularly open to the implications of ELF; and those who were more open to the concept tended not to know what this might mean in practice. Given that intensive initial teacher education programmes tend to operate on largely a craft-based approach, pre-service trainees often regard their trainers as oracles and authorities (see e.g. Roberts, 1998 on the shortcomings of a craft-based model), so lack of knowledge about ELF may have made some trainers uncomfortably aware of their potential difficulty in answering trainees' questions on the topic.

To prepare the trainers before introducing the new input session to the course, several internal training sessions were held, as part of the school's regular continuous professional development (CPD) programme. This raised the level of ELF awareness of the teaching and training staff in general; further meetings just among the CertTESOL trainers gave them the chance to discuss all changes to the

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course timetable, including the new ELF input session and the addition of ELF as an acceptable perspective from which to write up the Learner Profile project.

In keeping with a communicative methodology the session was designed to be interactive and discursive, with trainees given chances to consider and analyse English usage around the world – past, present and future. This also entailed adopting an 'open process' approach, in which trainees experience materials as learners and the trainer conducts a guided reflection on class procedures, a very common practice on Certificate courses in ELT. The accompanying tutor notes also included the following session aims.

- For trainees to develop appreciation of 2 key sociolinguistic principles: that variation is a natural feature of language, and that language evolves as a result of speakers' innovative use;
- For trainees to consider the implications of these principles, specifically that the majority of English users in the world are no longer *native* speakers of the language, with the result that linguistic innovation in English is taking place in an unprecedented way; and that this may impact the way English is learnt and taught;
- To encourage trainees to consider their learners' needs and how this relates to priorities for their English study.

Trainer and Trainee Responses

As reported by Patsko (2014), although the new input session was generally well received by trainees, ELF was perceived by some trainers to be too esoteric. Besides the co-author, only two tutors delivered this new input session. One was generally positive, took a general interest in ELF and participated actively in the aforementioned internal CPD sessions and had also previously taught using *Cutting Edge Advanced* (Cunningham, Moor and Comyns Carr (2007)), a popular ELT coursebook series which features an interview with Jennifer Jenkins about ELF. The other tutor only knew of ELF what he had learned in the school's CPD sessions and felt it "wasn't a priority" for this course. It became clear in follow up discussions that in his view ELF was an interesting concept but it was just "too much" for pre-service trainees. When he subsequently led a CertTESOL course as the principal tutor, he simply skipped this session. The other two course tutors avoided the session entirely and deferred to their two more ELF-aware colleagues to deliver it when it occurred in the timetable.

All things considered, it is still quite innovative to include ELF in pre-service Certificate courses, and there will inevitably be teething problems when a long-standing course with experienced trainers is altered in some way. Developing a more practice-oriented response to ELF in teacher education is likely to involve considerable rethinking (see Dewey, 2015). To integrate ELF more effectively in existing programmes of teacher certification, first of all any ambiguity in the syllabus will need to be resolved through far more rigorous and research-informed discussions of ELF.

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As in our case study, new syllabus developments on Certificate courses are typically introduced towards the end of the 4 week timetable, as these are generally seen as additional items to "fit in" at some point – usually after all the more "central" (i.e. traditional) syllabus content has been covered (see Hobbs, 2013, on the relative lack of substantial change to the CELTA/CertTESOL syllabus over the years). This is hugely problematic, especially given what research into teachers' perceptions of ELF and its practice relevance has so far revealed. Dewey (2012), for example, reports that even among participants who express very favourable attitudes towards ELF in theory, these teachers can struggle to reconcile a willingness to adopt ELF in practice with the contextual restrictions of schools and education systems that continue to operate on a norm-based orientation to language and language learning. ELF has continued to provoke controversy in ELT, as it requires a conceptual departure from a long-standing belief in Standard English norms. Therefore, if novice teachers are to benefit from an introduction to ELF in their pre-service training, this needs to happen not at the end of their course, but at the very beginning. This would provide the time necessary to reflect on the implications of ELF for their teaching practice, and would give space to explore materials and tasks from an ELF perspective.

ENGAGING WITH ELF IN ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section we consider the value of longer-term strategies that teachers may take up in order to remain informed about current developments in Applied Linguistics and ELT. In addition to more 'self-contained', pre-service training courses and formal programmes of in-service teacher education, some teachers undertake alternative forms of ongoing professional development, such as blogging and attending or giving presentations for conferences or webinars, as well as participating in online discussions via forums or live chat sessions (e.g. the weekly #eltchat and #eltchinwag events on Twitter). If teachers' initial training does not include a focus on ELF, it may be via one of these other modes that they first encounter the concept. In doing so, awareness of ELF would not only be raised, it would then also stand some chance of becoming part of their ongoing professional reflections. In line with the broad developments in teacher education that have taken place since Freeman and Johnson's (1998) call for a reconceptualized knowledge base for teacher learning, we view the development of professional knowledge and expertise from a sociocultural perspective. Freeman and Johnson argue that conventionally the knowledge base in language teacher education had been largely abstract, compartmentalized and decontextualized, with the beliefs and experiences of teachers (whether novice or expert) either downplayed or devalued. We feel that acknowledging teachers existing beliefs and prior practices is fundamental in the case of ELF.

Where teachers are exposed to ELF during pre-service training courses, as we have already seen, there may be little scope for in-depth reflection. Traditionally in pre-service training (see Johnson 2009 for a critique) teaching is

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conceptualized as a discrete set of behaviours, which can readily be isolated and imitated. As a result the teacher training context may lack professional authenticity since the complex nature of teaching cannot be accounted for, and the impact on teacher development may ultimately be quite negligible (cf. Johnson 2009). Adopting a sociocultural perspective enables us to move beyond this more 'technicist' view of teacher preparation and thereby take much better account of relevant socio-contextual factors that teachers need to contend with when reflecting on new ideas. In relation to adopting a sociocultural perspective, Johnson & Arshaksaya (2011: 169) comment that socioculturally oriented teacher education has a responsibility to "present relevant scientific concepts to teachers but to do so in ways that bring these concepts to bear on concrete practical activity, connecting them to their everyday knowledge and the activities of teachers".

Instigating any kind of change in pedagogy is a complex process which must involve close consideration of teachers' contexts and experiences. Again, for many teachers this is likely to be especially so in relation to ELF for the conceptual departure mentioned above. As reported in Suzuki (2011), for example, her attempts to promote awareness of linguistic diversity in English, while successful in relation to teachers' cognition, resulted in very little practical take up. Suzuki's conclusion that 'single-shot instruction' (2011: 151) is not sufficient to promote lasting changes in teachers' orientations to English suggests that there is relatively little chance of an ELF perspective being adopted in practice if teachers only encounter this briefly during pre-service training. We argue here that in addition to early exposure to ELF concepts in initial teacher education, engagement in the kinds of post-qualification activities discussed below may well be crucial if teachers are to develop a working understanding of ELF and how this may inform classroom practices.

Blogging

There is now a very active online community of English language teachers, trainers, managers and materials writers who use personal blogs as a means of promoting and engaging in professional development, benefiting not only from reading and writing blogs but also from the comments and discussion which readers post in response. At least two blogs run by ELT practitioners and dedicated specifically to ELF were set up in 2013 (ELF Pronunciation (https://elfpron.wordpress.com/) and English Global Communication (https://englishglobalcom.wordpress.com/).

When explaining why they engage with this medium, several benefits are frequently cited by ELT bloggers (e.g. Loras, 2013; Millin, 2016; Tekhnologic, 2015).

- Processing new experiences and insights through reflection on one's own practice or on things one has read/heard elsewhere.
- Sharing and receiving ideas, tips and materials with others.
- Creating a portfolio to boost future employment opportunities.

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- Emergence and evolution of one's personal (as well as professional) identity and views.
- A sense of support and belonging within a broader interactive community by becoming part of an informal "PLN" (personal/professional learning network).

And blogging as a means of professional development and interaction with the wider ELT community is not limited to the grassroots level – there are several high-profile published ELT authors who also blog frequently and advocate its value for reflection and development (e.g. well known ELT author, Scott Thornbury, who explains his motivations for blogging on his own blog: https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/2011/09/18/b-is-for-blogging/).

Apparently in recognition of the importance of blogging for professional development and creating a sense of community among ELT professionals worldwide, international organisations and publishers now also have established blogs, and many encourage idea sharing via practitioners' own blogs. For example, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press and TESOL all curate content from numerous guest writers on their blogs (see respectively http://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/, https://oupeltglobalblog.com/, http://blog.tesol.org/).

Online Discussion Forums

In addition to personal and institutional blogs, many teachers also engage in both asynchronous and synchronous discussion through forums and online chat sessions. Forums are typically hosted, monitored and maintained by institutions, and discussion typically takes place between their logged-in members. Most notably in ELF this includes research networks such as ELFReN (The English as a Lingua Franca Research Network (http://www.english-lingua-franca.org/forum/index), coordinated by Alessia Cogo and Marie-Luise Pitzl. Although ELFReN members are predominantly researchers, there is a significant minority of ELT practitioners who have joined the network. In June 2015, ELFReN ran its first thematic forum discussion, with a topic focus on ELF and ELT. The discussion involved 25 forum posts and received 1,635 views. It seems striking that the first themed discussion on ELF in the ReN was related to language pedagogy. And the number of posts and views are encouraging signs that the relevance of ELF in ELT practice is continuing to establish itself as a topic of interest.

There are also several websites devoted to professional development in ELT. One particularly notable example is Cambridge English Teacher (www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org/), which offers membership to individual teachers or institutions. The website provides courses, hosts forum discussions, has a panel of experts on hand to answer questions and organizes webinars and other live events. (At the time of writing the most recent of these was a question and answer session on ELF and pedagogy). In addition to dedicated research and professional online forums, there are growing numbers of online/distance MA

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programmes. Posts may be very short or run to a few hundred words, allowing forum participants to expand on and clarify their ideas much in the same way as a blog post invites further discussion in the comments section. Unlike teachers' blogs, however, topics are usually set and moderated by an agreed central authority (e.g. an MA course tutor or network convenor), active only for a fixed period of time, and open to contributions and responses from all members of a particular group (e.g. the students in one cohort or members of a research network), usually without requiring prior approval by the moderators before appearing publicly in the forum for others to read.

A less formally structured but increasingly popular format for online discussion is a regular Twitter chat session. Perhaps the most popular and long-standing example of a Twitter discussion among English language teachers is ELT Chat (http://eltchat.org/wordpress/), which was nominated for an ELTon Award in 2012 for Innovation in Teacher Resources (one of several categories in the annual international awards given by the British Council to recognise and celebrate innovation in ELT). To date, ELF has featured three times as a topic of the weekly ELT Chat discussion: in 2011, 2013 and 2015. We fully expect that it will continue to reappear as a topic in this and other discussion forums in the future.

This is already proving to be a popular and valuable resource for ongoing professional development, and its use is likely to continue to expand for the foreseeable future. We turn our attention for now though to a more conventional means for teachers to remain informed of current thinking and recent developments.

Conferences and seminar events

Conferences are an invaluable, if not always accessible, means by which teachers can keep up to date with developments in theory and research. As many readers will undoubtedly be aware, the (so far) annual ELF conference began in Helsinki in 2008. At the time of writing preparations for the 10th anniversary conference, also to be held in Helsinki are well underway (http://www.helsinki.fi/elf10/2017/), with an 11th conference event already planned for London in 2018. This conference series is a testament to the vibrancy with which ELF has emerged as a distinct research field and paradigm. But while considerable numbers of practitioners do attend the ELF conferences, and a good many individual papers and colloquia have focused on pedagogy – notably the themes of the Istanbul (2012) and Athens (2014) conferences were respectively "Pedagogical Implications of ELF in the Expanding Circle" and "Pedagogical and Interdisciplinary Perspectives") – for ELF to reach a wider audience of ELT professionals it needs to be present at more practice oriented conference events.

We therefore need to consider to what extent ELF has become a focus of interest in conference papers in practitioner directed conferences. Numerous profession based events are held every year at both national and international levels,

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offering teachers and other ELT professionals opportunities to learn, share and network – providing of course there is the appropriate institutional support for teachers to attend these. A recent study by Borg (2015) shows several perceived benefits for ELT professionals who attend international conferences, principally:

1 enhanced knowledge of ELT techniques leading to changes in practice;
2 networking with other ELT professionals; and
3 enhanced professional confidence and motivation.
(Borg, 2015: 39)

There is clear overlap between these advantages for professional development and those of blogging cited above. These include in particular the potential for conference attendees to meet other professionals, and thus be exposed to and exchange new ideas. However, to date, conferences in which ELF is a central theme continue to be more academic than practitioner oriented. The extent to which ELF has so far appeared in ELT oriented events is lamentably still rather limited. In the past 5 years, out of several hundred sessions at the two largest international teachers' conferences, IATEFL in the UK and TESOL in the US, the number with an explicit focus on ELF remains very low. The following table (Fig. 2) shows the number of papers in the 5 most recent annual conferences in which *ELF* and/or *English as a Lingua Franca* appear in the title or abstract.

Year	Conference	Number of sessions focusing on ELF
2012	IATEFL	5 (+ BESIG pre-conference event)
	TESOL	2
2013	IATEFL	2 (+ PronSIG pre-conference event)
	TESOL	1 (arguably 2, though only very vaguely)
2014	IATEFL	3
	TESOL	1
2015	IATEFL	2 (+1 in the PronSIG pre-conference event)
	TESOL	3 (+1 that was cancelled)
2016	IATEFL	5
	TESOL	0

Fig 2. IATEFL and TESOL conference sessions with an explicit focus on ELF

It is also important to bear in mind though that of these many of the papers referring to ELF are at pre-conference events run by special interest groups (e.g. the Business English and Pronunciation special interest groups, respectively BESIG and PronSIG), and so are not attended by the wider conference audience It is also worth noting that even at events where the number of ELF focused papers is relatively high, this is still a very small proportion of the total number. At IATEFL 2016, for example, only 5 sessions out of a total of approximately 500 had an explicit focus on ELF. With only a handful of sessions at such major English language teachers' conferences focusing on the use of English in lingua franca interaction, it seems that structured self-contained training courses, whether pre-service or in-service, may still be the primary place in which teachers have the opportunity to develop awareness of and engage in discussion

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about ELF concepts and reflect on their relevance for classroom practice. It is essential that further empirical research is carried out to determine how an ELF perspective on teacher learning and development can be more thoroughly integrated in practice.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we have seen, interest in ELF from a language learning and teaching perspective continues to grow. Many ELF researchers have turned their attention to language pedagogy, drawing on a range of terms to describe this. These include, among others, 'ELF-aware pedagogy' (e.g. Bayyurt and Sifakis, 2015; Sifakis, 2014), 'ELF-informed' pedagogy, (e.g. Kohn, 2015, who talks about creating a pedagogical space for ELF in the classroom; Seidlhofer, 2015; and Vettorel, 2016), and an 'ELF re-orientation' in terms of what gets focused on in pedagogy (see e.g. Patsko and Walker, in press for a shift in emphasis for pronunciation teaching). In order that we go beyond what Seidlhofer (2015) equates with a 'Groundhog Day' feeling that ELF continues to be dismissed as too controversial in ELT, teacher education has to be key. It is essential therefore that we continue to explore the role of ELF in the development of knowledge and expertise among English language teachers.

Our investigations into the introduction of ELF in initial teacher training courses (see also Dewey 2015 and Patsko 2014) reveal that despite reference to ELF in current syllabus guidelines, professional qualifications in ELT are still falling short when it comes to incorporating ELF in any practically relevant way. Teacher preparation in the UK continues to focus most predominantly on how 'best' to teach English, with considerable emphasis on methods and classroom procedures, with relatively little attention given to the nature of the subject itself. The input session on the CertTESOL course discussed in this chapter represents a promising first step in contributing to the introduction of ELF in the teacher education curriculum. However, the time-intensive nature of programmes such as this, as well as the likelihood of new sessions being timetabled late in these courses, will restrict the impact on how teachers approach language.

We feel strongly that there should ideally be an early focus on ELF in the teacher education curriculum for this to have a lasting impact on teachers' professional learning. It is our hope that by raising awareness of ELF and linguistic diversity early in the trajectory of a teacher's professional development, the practical relevance of ELF in teachers' perceptions of expertise will feature more prominently in their approach to language learning materials and tasks.
To date teachers have tended to become exposed to ELF only during high-level in-service programmes, typically MA Applied Linguistics/TESOL modules. These generally focus on theory and debate regarding ELF, with little opportunity for teachers and educators to consider the practicalities of incorporating ELF in the classroom.

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It is essential that scholars researching ELF who have an interest in language pedagogy do not simply discuss the 'implications' of ELF for ELT. It does not suffice to say that it is the responsibility of teachers to develop a response to ELF in practice: we need further engagement between researchers and practitioners in order for ELF to figure more saliently in teachers' professional development. Educating the educators is also paramount, since many teacher trainers in the UK do not undertake an MA degree with a focus on ELF and Global Englishes. Moving towards a more integrated approach to ELF in practice will also inevitably be facilitated by a commitment to longer-term professional development, particularly where this promotes critical reflection on current thinking and practice.

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